Introduction

A Brief History of Philosemitism

Adam Sutcliffe and Jonathan Karp

Q: Which is preferable – the antisemite or the philosemite?
A: The antisemite. At least he isn't lying.

Is there such a thing as philosemitism? The concept is often met with skepticism, as this characteristically terse Jewish joke exemplifies. The term is certainly an awkward one, and it has an awkward history. Coined in Germany in 1880 as the antonym to another neologism – antisemitism – the word "philosemitism" was invented by avowed antisemites as a sneering term of denunciation for their opponents. Almost all late nineteenth-century opponents of antisemitism strenuously sought to defend themselves from the charge of philosemitism, insisting instead that they regarded the Jews neutrally and were untainted by prejudice either for or against them.[1] This normalization of attitudes toward Jews has remained the aim of almost all liberal engagements in the field of Jewish–non-Jewish relations, both by Jews and by non-Jews, and from this dominant perspective philosemitism is almost always regarded as deeply suspicious, sharing with antisemitism a trafficking in distorted, exaggerated, and exceptionalist views of Jews and Judaism. Taking these distortions as the essential hallmark of antisemitism, it has seemed reasonable to many to regard philosemitism as a counterfeit benevolence, and philosemites, as Daniel Goldhagen has described them, as "antisemites in sheep's clothing."[2]

[1] Wolfram Kinzig, "Philosemitismus Teil I: Zur Geschichte des Begriffs," *Zeitschrift für Kirchengeschichte* 105 (1994): 208–28, esp. 210–17; Lars Fischer, *The Socialist Response to Antisemitism in Imperial Germany* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 21–36, and his essay in this volume. On the extensive discussion of philosemitism by Wilhelm Marr, the key figure in the popularization of the term "antisemitism," see Moshe Zimmermann, *Wilhelm Marr: The Patriarch of Anti-Semitism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1987), 118–32.

[2] Daniel Goldhagen, *Hitler's Willing Executioners: Ordinary Germans and the Holocaust* (New York: Vintage, 1997), 58.

Yet this negative assessment of philosemitism is itself one-sided and prejudicial. Since the period of antiquity favorable characterizations of the Jewish people have recurrently formed a quiet counterpoint to the more familiar hostile stereotypes. Jews have been idealized not only, in the Christian tradition, as "God's chosen people," but also for such imputed virtues as their superior intelligence, economic acumen, ethnic loyalty, cultural cohesion, or familial commitment. These idealizations have at times had a significant impact on historical events, often directly affecting Jews' status and standing, and for this reason have in some contexts been directly encouraged or even induced by Jews themselves. The vast human cost of antisemitism, and of the Nazi genocide in particular, does not warrant the simple conflation of these idealizations into their negative shadow. Historians must seek to explain not only the expulsions and forced conversions of Jews, but also the numerous times when Jewish settlement has been welcomed and even solicited. Similarly, non-Jewish support for the Zionist idea and for the state of Israel demands explanation and analysis not simply as theological fantasy or political expediency, but as in some cases reflecting genuine sympathy for Jews' historical victimization and admiration of their presumed collective qualities, such as moral refinement, advanced civilization, and will to survive. The normalization of the status of Jews and Judaism in the world, meanwhile, remains an elusive and perhaps unattainable aspiration, and "normality" therefore an unhelpfully simple and ahistorical yardstick for the evaluation of non-Jewish attitudes toward Jews. If we are to understand the meanings and associations with which Jews have long been freighted in Western culture, we must recognize their complexity and approach them from all angles, without a predetermined assessment of their underlying essence as monolithically negative.

The word "philosemitism" remains inevitably tainted by etymological association with its antonym. Why should we continue to echo late nineteenth-century prejudices in associating "Semitism," however it may be prefixed, specifically with Jews? Both "isms" also problematically suggest an underlying fixity in attitudes to Jews. However, although these issues have been widely highlighted and debated by scholars, as has the wider question of the relationship of antisemitism to the broader category of racism, the term "antisemitism" remains firmly entrenched as a category of analysis for ancient and medieval as well as modern history.[3] Language is

[3] See, e.g., Richard Levy and Albert Lindemann, *Antisemitism – a History* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010); Gavin Langmuir, *Toward a Definition of Antisemitism* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1990), esp. 311–52; Peter Schäfer, *Judeophobia: Attitudes toward the Jews in the Ancient World* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1997), 197–211. For a recent reflection on the relationship of antisemitism to color-coded forms of racism, see George M. Fredrickson, *Racism: A Short History* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2002), 40–7, 156–68.

a messy, hand-me-down artifact: in the main we necessarily use the words already in common circulation. Whatever misgivings we may have about the origins or the imprecision of the word "antisemitism," this concept remains overwhelmingly dominant in transhistorical thinking on relations between Jews and non-Jews, and attempts to broaden approaches to this subject must start from an engagement with this reality. "Philosemitism" is as problematic a term as "antisemitism." However, given that antisemitism is a firm fixture in our lexicon and in our thinking, if we are to stretch the subtlety of this inescapable terminology we must think more carefully about the meaning and nature of philosemitism also. This word is uniquely serviceable as a discursive balancer, drawing attention to those facets of attitudes to Jews that are most egregiously misinterpreted or overlooked within a paradigm that recognizes antisemitism alone.

To speak of philosemitism, then, certainly does not imply an unreserved endorsement of the word. Nor does it entail the claim that philosemitism can be or should be neatly separated from antisemitism. Indeed, an intricate ambivalence, combining elements of admiration and disdain, has arguably been by far the most common feature of non-Jewish constructs of Jews and Judaism, while the philosemitism of many Christians has been motivated by a conversionist desire ultimately to erase Jewish distinctiveness altogether. The use of this term as a transhistorical category also should not suggest a belief that it possesses some unchangingly eternal essence. Analogously, the bracketing together as antisemitic of, say, medieval blood libel accusations, Voltaire's antibiblical tirades, and the Soviet treatment of Jewish refuseniks does not imply the existence of some quasi-genetic connection of these phenomena, though it may open up the possibility of identifying certain echoes or common traits. In similar fashion, it is our hope that this volume will bring to attention various lines of continuity and influence, recurrent patterns, and other disparate echoes that link different instances of the positive valorization of Jews or Judaism. By joining these episodes under the analytically imperfect but functionally illuminating rubric of philosemitism, we are better able to explore the nature and scope of these transhistorical resonances and assess the endurance, development, and historical impact of this significant but understudied phenomenon.

A small scholarly literature on philosemitism does now exist, made up of a handful of synoptic surveys as well as some more detailed case studies.[4] The impact of this work has, however, been almost entirely

[4] For existing overviews of the history of philosemitism, see Salomon Rappaport, *Jew and Gentile: The Philosemitic Aspect* (New York: Philosophical Library, 1980); Alan Edelstein, *An Unacknowledged Harmony: Philo-Semitism and the Survival of European Jewry* (Westport, CT: Greenwood, 1982); William D. Rubinstein and Hilary Rubinstein, *Philosemitism: Admiration and Support for Jews in the English-Speaking World, 1840–1939* (Basingstoke, UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 1999). The most notable general articles are Wolfram Kinzig, "Philosemitismus Teil I" and "Philosemitismus Teil II: Zur

drowned out by the vastly greater focus on antisemitism as a keynote in relations between Jews and non-Jews. This fixation was long ago critiqued by Salo W. Baron in his argument against the "lachrymose conception" of Jewish history.[5] In the charged contemporary environment, passionate debates over the existence or otherwise of a "new antisemitism" in Europe intersect with even more passionate controversies over the identification as antisemitic of some strands of anti-Zionist or anti-Israeli politics.[6] Against this backdrop it seems particularly important to highlight the significance of more positive attitudes to Judaism, which have been occluded or distorted when viewed through the dominant historiographical lens of antisemitism.

Much of the existing work on philosemitism is marred by an analytical reductiveness, commonly assuming one of two diametrically opposed alternatives: either that philosemitism is the exact opposite of antisemitism, or that it is itself a form of antisemitism. The first limits the term to rare cases of disinterested, pure, and sincere admiration for Jews, forgetting that all thought is shaped by interests of one kind or another, and that perfect objectivism in the perception of other ethnic groups is, at the very least, extremely unusual. Scholarship in this vein tends to be commemorative in character, celebrating the achievements of philosemites and sometimes admonishing Jews for their failure to appreciate and remember them.[7] The second approach, however, in viewing philosemitism as merely the reverse side of the antisemitic coin, almost inevitably goes too far in the opposite direction, routinely discounting any possible element of sincerity or authenticity in philosemitic utterances. Frank Stern's study of philosemitism in the very particular environment of postwar West Germany thoughtfully examines the ways in which philosemitic speech was shaped by an unspoken but ubiquitous consciousness of antisemitism – but this does not warrant his interpretation of all instances of apparent philosemitism in this context as

historiographischen Verwendung des Begriffs," *Zeitschrift für Kirchengeschichte* 105 (1994): 360–83; David S. Katz, "The Phenomenon of Philo-Semitism," in *Christianity and Judaism: Papers Read at the 1991 Summer Meeting and the 1992 Winter Meeting of the Ecclesiastical History Society* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1992), 327–61; Jacques Berlinerblau, *On Philo-Semitism* (2007), posted at http://pjc.georgetown.edu/docs/philo-semitic.pdf. Most recently, and appearing too late to be fully considered in this volume, see Irene A. Diekmann and Elke-Vera Kotowski, eds., *Geliebter Feind, gehasster Freund: Antisemitismus und Philosemitismus in Geschichte und Gegenwart* (Berlin: VBB, 2009).

[5] Salo W. Baron, *A Social and Religious History of the Jews* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1937), 2:32; "Newer Emphases in Jewish History," in his *History and Jewish Historians: Essays and Addresses* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1964), 90–108.

[6] Among many recent publications see Matti Bunzl, *Anti-Semitism and Islamophobia: Hatreds Old and New in Europe* (Chicago: Prickly Paradigm, 2007); Jeffrey Herf, ed., *Anti-Semitism and Anti-Zionism in Historical Perspective* (London: Routledge, 2007).

[7] See, e.g., Rappaport, *Jew and Gentile*, 134; Rubinstein and Rubinstein, *Philosemitism*, 203.

simply masking an underlying antisemitism.[8] It is also surely unreasonably suspicious and sweeping to follow Phyllis Lassner and Lara Trubowitz, who, echoing the Jewish joke with which we started, characterize philosemitism as a more insidiously dangerous threat than "transparent antisemitism," which at least can be easily recognized.[9] The varying motives and mentalities of apparent philosemites require careful exploration, even when they conceptualize Jewishness in clearly exaggerated, idealized, or reified ways. Our aim should not be to expose "false" or self-interested philosemites, or to identify "true" ones, but rather to comprehend the significance and function of positive perceptions of Jews and Judaism within their broader intellectual frameworks.

The assumption underlying all entrenched attitudes toward Jews, whether admiring or hostile, is that Jews are in some profound sense different from others. The sociologist Zygmunt Bauman has very usefully advanced the evaluatively neutral word "allosemitism" – derived from *allos*, the Greek word for "other" – as an apt term for this belief.[10] In both the premodern and modern worlds, Bauman has argued, Jews have characteristically occupied intermediary, analytically incongruous roles, standing out as anomalous in the social order, and, in the eyes of modernity's discontents in particular, the representatives par excellence of the invisible "sliminess" of the forces of change. Allosemitism itself, Bauman recognizes, is attitudinally ambivalent. Jewish difference is not necessarily a negative observation, and nor, indeed, is it necessarily untrue – though the negative casting of the Jews as "ambivalence incarnate" and as a perpetual source of disruption and disorder is, he shows, central to the history and underlying dynamics of antisemitism.[11] Bryan Cheyette's exploration of the "semitic discourse" that pervaded representations of Jews in late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century English literature is another notable example of the use of analytically neutral critical terminology to draw attention to the ways in which Jewishness can inspire contradictory associations within a given cultural context.[12] But neither the resort to "ambivalence" nor the subsuming of positive prejudices toward Jews in negative ones can account adequately for

[8] Frank Stern, *The Whitewashing of the Yellow Badge: Antisemitism and Philosemitism in Postwar Germany* (London: Heinemann, 1991).

[9] Phyllis Lassner and Lara Trubowitz, eds., *Antisemitism and Philosemitism in the Twentieth and Twenty-First Centuries* (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 2008), 7–8.

[10] Zygmunt Bauman, "Allosemitism: Premodern, Modern, Postmodern," in Bryan Cheyette and Laura Marcus, eds., *Modernity, Culture and "the Jew"* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1998), 143–56.

[11] Ibid., 151–4; *Modernity and the Holocaust* (Cambridge: Polity, 1989), 37–60; *Modernity and Ambivalence* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1991), esp. 18–52.

[12] Bryan Cheyette, *Constructions of "the Jew" in English Literature and Society: Racial Representations 1875–1945* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 8–12, 268–75.

the singularity and richness of philosemitic themes in Western discourse on Jews. And even in those cases where such approaches are justified, the philosemitic strand, so often neglected or dismissed, requires clear articulation. We can only reach an understanding of ambivalence toward Jews if we patiently pick apart its contrasting and sometimes contradictory component threads.

A key aim of *Philosemitism in History*, then, is to explore the complex interplay of positive and negative attitudes toward Jews, highlighting the often highly problematic character of many currents of idealization of Jews and Judaism while taking seriously the significance of non-Jewish impulses to befriend, defend, support, or learn from Jews. The essays in this volume represent a wide range of views of and approaches to this topic. Rather than striving for unanimity, we have invited our contributors to engage critically with this central concept, with no predetermined consensus or constraint. Drawing on a range of disciplinary traditions as well as of regional and chronological specializations, these essays enter into dialogue with each other and together, we hope, offer a salutary and stimulating range of approaches to the topic. Cumulatively, while certainly not definitively pinning down the nature and scope of philosemitism, they do, we believe, convincingly show that the subject they address is broad, complex, and worthy of attention.

Are there any useful generalities to be observed about philosemitism? Despite its many different guises and metamorphoses over space and time, there are nonetheless a number of recurrent motifs and themes that suggest a strong degree of transhistorical integration. It would clearly be reductive to seek to identify a single underlying cause or theory of philosemitism, but it is surely worthwhile to try to make some analytical sense of its internal continuities and connections. Several scholars have already presented their own rough typologies of philosemitism, in which a similar cluster of classifications generally recur: economic, utilitarian, millenarian, humanistic, romantic, intellectual, liberal, Christian, and Zionist.[13] These categories, which overlap with each other and can be grouped together in a number of meaningful ways, provide a heuristically useful listing of the main currents into which philosemitism in the *longue durée* can be divided.

Typologies, however, are limited by their descriptive character. While it is helpful to break down the complexity of philosemitism into more focused components, this does not in itself advance an understanding of the relationships and reactions between these various elements. As a more promising alternative we will in the following pages organize our introductory exploration of the broad transhistorical contours of philosemitism

[13] Hans Joachim Schoeps, *Philosemitismus im Barock* (Tübingen: Mohr, 1952); Rappaport, *Jew and Gentile*, 2–4; Rubinstein and Rubinstein, *Philosemitism*, 111–85; Kinzig, "Philosemitismus Teil I," 227–8.

under three analytical headings: its underlying roots, intellectual content, and historical impact. Each of these, at least for the purposes of this brief survey, can be divided into two loosely countervailing elements, which we will try in the following paragraphs briefly to characterize and exemplify (with an emphasis on instances not covered in the chapters to follow).

The sine qua non of philosemitism is the notion of the Jews as a resolutely distinct people, with distinctively admirable characteristics. Several ancient Greek and Roman writers subscribed to this belief, and the existence of philosemitism in antiquity demonstrates the independence of the phenomenon from Christianity, but the deep roots of philosemitism must equally be situated in the supercessionist but also dependent structural relationship of Christianity with Judaism. The substantive arguments marshaled by philosemites can be roughly split into "pure" and "applied" approaches. There is a long philosophical tradition, most interestingly exemplified by Friedrich Nietzsche, of admiring Jews as themselves particularly intellectually impressive, while economists and policymakers have in many different contexts attempted to harness the wealth-generating commercial utility of Jews. This flows naturally into our third heading: the uses and impact of philosemitism through history. The central theme here is the invocation of Judaic models of political governance or national identity, particularly but not only in the British imperial world. Collective identification with Jews has been a significant element in the self-understanding of many different nations. A special case, demanding independent scrutiny, is the political role of philosemitism in support of Zionism, through which it has been a significant force in shaping modern Jewish history as well.

The close relationship of Christianity to philosemitism raises the question of what role philosemitism may have played in Muslim and Arab cultures. Nineteenth-century Jewish historians, underscoring the history of Christian intolerance by juxtaposing it with the relatively favorable treatment of Jews under Islam, coined the term "the Golden Age of Spain" to highlight the capacity of Jews to thrive in the atmosphere of religious tolerance and cultural integration that had prevailed, they argued, in medieval al-Andalus. There are indeed numerous examples of Muslim rulers welcoming Jews to their lands for the skills and services they could provide. For example, the Ottoman Sultan Bayezid II (1491–1512), to whose lands many Sephardim fled after 1492, reportedly ridiculed the Spanish king Ferdinand for expelling such a valuable population. "Can you call such a king wise and intelligent?" remarked Bayezid. "He is impoverishing his country and enriching my kingdom."[14] That this quotation derives from a contemporary Jewish chronicle and not an Islamic source, however, suggests an important point. While prominent Muslim authorities

[14] Quoted in Esther Benbassa and Aron Rodrigue, *Sephardi Jewry: A History of the Judeo-Spanish Community, 14th–20th Centuries* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000), 7.

sometimes advocated philosemitic policies, they did not necessarily articulate philosemitic viewpoints. This seems to stem from the lesser distinctiveness of Jewish populations living under Muslim as opposed to Christian rule. Jews in Christendom bore a unique theological and sociological status, whereas the Jews of Islam were never the focus of a comparable singularity, being invariably only one among several similarly designated religious minorities (categorized as tolerated *dhimmi*), usually less prominent or problematic than Christians in Spain or Turkey or Zoroastrians in Persia. As Marc Cohen points out, "Islamic law lacked a specific focus on Jews."[15] Nevertheless, a definitive evaluation of Islamic philosemitism requires more thorough investigation, unfortunately not possible here.

Prior to the emergence of Christianity and Islam, the earliest manifestations of philosemitism are to be found in the period of Greco-Roman antiquity, when Judaism became an object of admiration, and even partial allegiance, among a handful of Greek authors and a larger number of pagan "God Fearers." As part of Hellenism's fascination with the East, authors such as Hecataeus of Abdera (fourth century B.C.E.) and Marcus Varro (first century B.C.E.) depicted Jews as particularly philosophically sophisticated, and Judaism as a venerable cult imbued with exemplary customs and a refined monotheism. According to Louis Feldman, Jews were in the third century B.C.E. widely seen as a "philosophical people," admiringly described by Aristotle's successor Theophrastus as "philosophers by birth."[16] Judaism was notably successful in the Hellenistic and Roman periods in winning not only converts but also "sympathizers" – non-Jews who, without converting, adopted certain Jewish practices and whom we might consider as an early type of philosemite. Feldman suggests three reasons for this admiration. The antiquity of the Jews was widely acknowledged, and this was considered an important source of cultural authority in the ancient world. The Jews were also associated, by several writers, with the cardinal virtues of courage, temperance, justice, piety, and (above all) wisdom. Finally, there was a strong ancient tradition of admiration for Moses, who was frequently esteemed, alongside Minos and Lycurgus of Sparta, as one of the greatest leaders and lawgivers.[17]

Praise for the excellence of the Mosaic polity, by authors such as Strabo in his *Geography* (first century C.E.), was widely picked up the early modern era, when this current of political commentary became complicatedly entangled with another idea derived from ancient sources: the ascription

[15] Marc Cohen, *Under Crescent and Cross: The Jews in the Middle Ages* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1995), 54.

[16] Louis H. Feldman, *Jew and Gentile in the Ancient World* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1993), 201–3.

[17] Feldman, *Jew and Gentile*, 177–287, 429–35. See also his "Philo-Semitism among Ancient Intellectuals," *Tradition* 1 (1958–9), 27–38; John Gager, *The Origins of Anti-Semitism: Attitudes toward Judaism in Pagan and Christian Antiquity* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1983), 73.

of Egyptian origins to the Jews. Strabo and Diodorus Siculus (first century B.C.E.) both put forward this notion, claiming that Moses had been initiated into the Egyptian priesthood.[18] For early modern scholars such as John Spencer and John Toland – to say nothing of Sigmund Freud's adoption of this idea in his *Moses and Monotheism* (1939) – the Egyptianization of Moses took on a complicated and ambivalent significance, serving in part to critique the inaccuracy and hubris of the Jews' own account of their origins.[19] There certainly circulated in the ancient world implicitly or explicitly hostile counternarratives to the Jewish Bible, locating the Jews' origins in places such as Crete or Ethiopia and explaining their migration as due to their unpopularity or disease. The most famous summary of these views, in the fifth book of Tacitus's *Histories* (c. 110 C.E.), has almost exclusively been interpreted by scholars as an antisemitic source text and has often been used as such, though strains of philosemitism have also been identified in it.[20] In ascribing Egyptian roots to the Jews and their religious practices, however, authors such as Strabo and Diodorus did not intend to denigrate them. From their pagan perspective, unconcerned (unlike Christians) with the validity of the biblical narrative, this lineage rather reaffirmed the prestige of the Jews, associating them, and Moses in particular, with a familiar and venerable tradition of Egyptian priestly magic.

Prevailing attitudes toward Jews in the Hellenistic and Roman worlds were complex and variegated, and certainly not unremittingly hostile. Judaism, as John Gager has argued, "provoked among Christians and pagans alike profound internal divisions."[21] The cultural influence of the Jews was also significant: according to Arnaldo Momigliano, it was the Jews, rather than the Greeks, who provided the key model for late antique historians' attempts to write "national" histories.[22] Indeed, the anti-Judaic sentiment that did pervade much Roman literature from the first century C.E. can be interpreted as a conservative reaction to the considerable success of Judaism in attracting admirers and sympathizers, even in the highest echelons of the Roman aristocracy. Jews in the ancient world were structurally distinctive in ways that differ significantly but not unrecognizably from the most characteristic features of their distinctiveness in modern history: they were a relatively tightly defined subgroup, with a particularly textual and aniconic religious life and a detailed and deep sense of

[18] See Gager, *Origins of Anti-Semitism*, 67–73.

[19] On this intellectual tradition see Jan Assmann, *Moses the Egyptian: The Memory of Egypt in Western Monotheism* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1997).

[20] Louis H. Feldman, "Pro-Jewish Intimations in Tacitus' Account of Jewish Origins," *Studies in Hellenistic Judaism* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1996), 377–407.

[21] Gager, *Origins of Anti-Semitism*, 269.

[22] Arnaldo Momigliano, *The Classical Foundations of Modern Historiography* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1990), 85.

their cultural origins. It is not, then, surprising that in both eras the Jews inspired both admiration and resentment, and that this dual response was embedded within a wider cultural uncertainty over how to accommodate and value difference within an ostensibly unified and universalist political and social system.

The issue of difference also lies at the heart of the knotty relationship between Christianity and Judaism, formed in the historical separation process of these two religions in the first few centuries of the Christian era. The central concern of Paul, as many scholars have argued, was to reformulate Judaism as a universalistic message, open to all. In interpreting the Jewish law as an allegorical prefiguring of the coming of Christ, which he regarded as having annulled its validity, Paul's underlying concern was with the overcoming of all particularities, of which Jewish particularity stood as emblematic. Paul thus crucially opposed Jewish difference against Christian universalism. In doing so, he was not the originator of antisemitism (as some would have it), but he did reformulate the older Greek antipathy to Jewish distinctiveness, placing the Jews' assimilation within a bold new eschatological schema. Paul indeed retained an intense concern for his Jewish kin and continued to accord the Jews a uniquely meaningful place in history, writing in his Epistle to the Romans that "to them belong the adoption, the glory, the covenants, the giving of the law, the worship, and the promises" (Romans 9:4). His emphasis on the still-favored status of a Jewish "remnant," and on the ultimate restoration of Israel to its former glory (Romans 11:26–32), initiated a current of philosemitic theology that has endured within Christianity ever since.[23]

Medieval Christian attitudes toward Jews and Judaism, most succinctly and influentially captured in the "witness people" doctrine elaborated by Augustine, were shot through with ambivalence and paradox. While interpreting the Jews' dispersal and suffering as God's just punishment for their rejection and crucifixion of Jesus, Augustine regarded Jewish survival as imbued with unique meaning and purpose: the Jews' preservation of their own religious texts and practices provided peripatetic proof of the biblical prophecies that pointed the way to Christianity.[24] This was of course in no sense a philosemitic doctrine, and it coexisted with a sharply anti-Judaic *Adversus Iudaeos* tradition, stridently exemplified by Augustine's fourth-century contemporary John Chrysostom, that demonized medieval Jews as insults to Christianity and emphasized the

[23] For a less universalist interpretation of Paul's relation to Jews and Judaism, see Alan F. Segal, *Paul the Convert: The Apostolate and Apostasy of Saul the Pharisee* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1990), and especially Daniel Boyarin, *A Radical Jew: Paul and the Politics of Identity* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994).

[24] For a succinct and authoritative summary of this doctrine and its influence, see Jeremy Cohen, *Living Letters of the Law: Ideas of the Jew in Medieval Christianity* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1999), esp. 23–65.