ABSTRACT

ANDERSON, ROSS MATTHEW. The Effect of Factionalism on Jewish Persecution: How the Conflict between Bernard of Clairvaux’s Cistercian Order and Peter Abelard’s Scholasticism Contributed to the Equating of Jews with Heretics. (Under the direction of Dr. Julie Mell.)

The burgeoning antagonism of Western Christians against European Jewry must be understood within the context of the battle between two twelfth-century Christian ideologies. The popular movements of Cistercian apostolicism and Scholasticism’s fixation on rationalism offered feuding epitomes of the ideal ecclesiastic model. The climactic meeting between the spokesmen of both movements (Bernard of Clairvaux and Peter Abelard) reinforced a growing hostility toward those who did not meet the ideal of either movement, especially Jews. Both men contributed to anti-Jewish rhetoric as well as to the growing development of likening heterodoxy with heresy in the twelfth-century Church. As a result, the Jew was increasingly placed within that definition of heresy.

Church historians have increasingly studied the works of both Bernard and Abelard to determine the influence each churchman had on anti-Jewish persecution. David Berger’s Persecution, Polemic, and Dialogue: Essays in Jewish-Christian Relations and Abulafia’s Christians and Jews in Dispute are two such works that have respectively argued for the individual culpability of both men in the worsening medieval image of the Jew, but never has a study examined the role that the conflict between the two had on twelfth-century Jews. Lately, individual scholars have independently questioned the role of Jews in the medieval economy, the origins of the Cistercian movement, and the traditional explanation of Bernard’s and Abelard’s conflict at Sens. Having analyzed this recent scholarship, I have written this thesis to demonstrate how the factionalism inherent in the conflict at Sens had a worsening effect not only on the medieval perception of Jews, but also on the view of all religious dissenters. The climactic debate in 1141 France pitted two of the most popular orators in medieval history—the monastic legend Bernard against the Scholastic founder Abelard—and put the latter’s theology on trial for heresy. The council’s ruling demonstrated the lack of conciliatory efforts that later characterized Jewish-Christian relations in the decades to follow.
Building off of the research from Peter Shafer’s *Judaephobia*, I demonstrate how factionalism’s effects on the Christian perception of Jews have a history that stretches back to Ancient Rome. Roman factionalism gave rise to a stigma against Judaism since the time of the Jewish Wars, and this Roman antagonism was encouraged in a budding Christianity. Nonetheless, Church Fathers were ambivalent: Jews were permitted a protection from persecution unknown to heretics and pagans, yet were excoriated as deicides. As factionalism resurfaced in the twelfth century as a result of a millennial spirit of revival and the Gregorian Reforms, twelfth-century ecclesiastics developed a dread of dissenting voices and nonconformists. Rather than be accorded a unique protection by the Church, Jews came to be feared, mistrusted, and identified by wild fantasies or stereotypes. Consequently, the distinction between Jews and heretics diminished.

Building off of Gavin Langmuir’s foundation that the conflict resultant from Church action spurred on newer and more dangerous anti-Jewish stereotypes, my thesis addresses the factionalism between Cistercians and Scholastics as a cause for anti-Jewish persecution. R. I. Moore’s *Formation of a Persecution Society* points to a medieval Christian culture that conjoined Jews, heretics, and other nonconformists, but Moore fails to identify what major events produce this change. It is my contention that the growing hostilities against Jews and the labeling of Jew as heretic were greatly motivated by the conflict of the two budding and rival intellectual Christian movements of the twelfth century, and that the confrontation at Sens was one landmark event in the rise of anti-Jewish sentiment and its eventual association with heresy.

Ironically, both Bernard and Abelard strongly criticized attacks on Jews, held far more tolerant views toward Jewish rights than their contemporaries, and accorded Jews a special role in their theologies. Despite this advocacy, both men regarded Jews as inferior and worthy of damnation. In excoriating the other and in the political manipulation of their conflict, Bernard’s and Abelard’s efforts to demean the rival philosophy resulted in a further dehumanization of any who did not strictly align with their respective views of the ideal Christian identity. Those furthest removed from either Christian ideal became targeted as bestial, monstrous, or inherently dangerous. Jews and heretics were thus conjoined. The divisive nature of the confrontation at Sens led to a hostility toward Jews that either spokesman would have condemned.
The Effect of Factionalism on Jewish Persecution: How the Conflict Between Bernard of Clairvaux’s Cistercian Order and Peter Abelard’s Scholasticism Contributed to the Equating of Jews with Heretics

by
Ross Matthew Anderson

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APPROVED BY:

Dr. Julie Mell
Committee Chair

Dr. Marcus Bull

Dr. Anna Bigelow
DEDICATION

To Braids, who has resolutely been a source of encouragement with a keen eye for improved syntax and grammar. I owe any success of this thesis to you.

To Mom and Dad, for frequent motivation over these past five years, for your model of graduate work by which I have been inspired, and for your assuredly contagious love of history.

To Grandpa and Grandma, for your emphasis on education and for stirring my desire to want to learn about the humanity behind the history.
BIOGRAPHY

Ross Anderson’s interest in medieval history developed since the age of ten, from a love of fantasy and role-playing games to the curriculum he taught to middle school students when he first moved to North Carolina in 2004. An Army brat, he grew up on or near military bases in Massachusetts, Illinois, California, Connecticut, and Panama. Ross earned his Bachelors of History from U.C. Davis and his Teaching License at C. S. U. Sacramento. He joined his family in moving to North Carolina, where he has taught Social Studies for the past twelve years. He was drawn to the study of Jewish-Christian relations after a quick study of the Crusades and now teaches a Medieval Studies course in his middle school every year. Ross lives with his wife in Raleigh.
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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION ..................................................................................................................... 1
The Myth of Chronic Anti-Judaism ...................................................................................... 4
Definition and Role of Factionalism .................................................................................. 8
Historiography on Medieval Antisemitism ........................................................................ 14

CHAPTER 1: PRE-TWELFTH CENTURY FACTIONALISM AND ANTI-JUDAISM ...28
The First Roman Legacy: Anti-Judaism in Antiquity ......................................................... 29
Roman Influence on the Early Church and Anti-Judaism ................................................ 37
The Early Church: Heresy and Anti-Judaism .................................................................... 46
The Second Roman Legacy: Factionalism and Anti-Judaism ........................................... 50
Influence of the Church Fathers ....................................................................................... 55
Jewish-Christian Interaction of the Early Medieval Period .............................................. 60
Jewish-Christian Collaboration .......................................................................................... 63

CHAPTER 2: TWELFTH-CENTURY FACTIONS .................................................................. 66
The Influence of Gregorian Reform and the Crusades ...................................................... 67
The Scholastics .................................................................................................................. 78
Influence of Scholasticism ............................................................................................... 80
Peter Abelard .................................................................................................................... 84
Abelard and the Jews ...................................................................................................... 91
The Cistercians ................................................................................................................. 101
Bernard of Clairvaux ...................................................................................................... 106
Bernard and the Jews ...................................................................................................... 123

CHAPTER 3: THE CONTEXT AND LEGACY OF SENS .................................................. 136
Historiography of Sens ................................................................................................... 139
The Road to Sens ............................................................................................................. 146
Confrontation at Sens ..................................................................................................... 156
How Sens Could Have Been Avoided ............................................................................ 162
The Aftermath of Sens ................................................................................................... 168
Jews and the Use of Polemics in Factionalism .................................................................. 172
The Anti-Jewish Influence of Abelard’s and Bernard’s Polemics .................................... 176
Novelty in Polemics ......................................................................................................... 177
Jewish Stereotypes in Polemics ...................................................................................... 180
The Role of Sens in the Fate of the Jews ........................................................................ 185
*Comminatio Iudaeroum*: The Jewish Threat ................................................................. 190
Conclusion ......................................................................................................................... 202
REFERENCES ......................................................................................................................206
INTRODUCTION

In the twelfth century, Christians began to label Judaism a “heresy.”¹ For twelve hundred years prior, Jews had been labeled creatures of avarice, liars, and killers of Christ, but never heretics.² Exactly why the Church of the 1100s increasingly found fault with the Jews in their midst is summarized in Jeremy Cohen’s Living Letters of the Law. He gives three reasons: 1) The birth of scholasticism and spiritual creativity kindled a new desire to classify religious groups. 2) As territory expanded in Christendom, new cultures and competing religions meant finding ways to confute them. 3) Gregorian reform instituted practices that produced great controversy; this overflowed into a sensitivity to others who were far removed from the different ecclesiastic definitions of Christianity.³ Cohen writes, “The clerical establishment projected its own doubts and insecurities concerning traditional Christian doctrine onto an inverted, demonic, imagined other, who came to personify beliefs and practices catalogued by patristic heresiologists of many centuries earlier.”⁴

As articulate as it is, Cohen’s explanation is missing an often-overlooked factor in anti-Jewish persecutions: factionalism. It was not the inherited misgivings and insecurities

² Agobard, De iudaiis superstitionibus et erroribus, 9, in Greti Dinkova-Bruun, Corpus Christianorum, Continuatio mediaevalis 52 (Turnhout, Belgium: Brepols, 2014) 205. For more see Cohen, Living Letters, 132.
that led to a dehumanization of religious nonconformists, but a narrowing window of what it meant to be Christian. Europeans of the twelfth century felt the pressure of living in a binary world shaped by demands of the strongest rival Church movements of the age. If one did not meet such requirements, the consequences were dire: one’s intellect, salvation, and even humanity were called into question.

This thesis presents the intellectual war within the twelfth-century Church and its damning effect on Jews. My purpose here is to explain how intra-ecclesiastic polemics intended to alienate the rival movement ultimately caused the deterioration of Christian tolerance for Jews. To do so, this introduction clarifies the situation of Jews in twelfth-century Western Europe and the burgeoning accusations of heresy in that century. It will define factionalism and identify its role in the schismatic twelfth-century Church. A brief synopsis of the Council of Sens follows. This introduction ends with a historiography of medieval antisemitism.

To understand medieval factionalism’s effect on worsening perceptions of Jews, I must trace the role that factionalism played in late antiquity in Chapter 1. The intellectual history of Christian theology regarding Jews has a focus here: how did the role of division in the early Church affect its later interaction with Jews? I present the legacy of Patristic writers and how their theology concerning Jews and heresy shaped the goals of the two leading factions in the twelfth-century Church. I finish the chapter by exploring the predominately tolerant interaction between first-millennium Jews and Christians that declined tragically in the twelfth century.
How factionalism exacerbated that dissolution of tolerant relations is the subject of the remainder of the thesis. I expound on the development of factionalism in the twelfth century and the catalysts that instigated its growth, specifically the Gregorian Reform movement and the Crusades, in Chapter 2. What follows is an analysis of the chief history, tenets, and methodologies of the Church’s two most popular factions of the age: the urban, dialectics-centered Schoolmen against those austere monks whom Brian McGuire and Brenda Bolton call the first monastic order. I first discuss the origin of Scholasticism, then the movement’s most prolific spokesman, Peter Abelard. Second, I present the background of the Cistercian order and a study of the beliefs of Bernard of Clairvaux, the figurehead for Citeaux. I also include an analysis of Abelard’s and Bernard’s individual attitudes toward the Jewish people in Chapter 2, as well as an overview of the scholarship on both men.

In Chapter 3, I present the events that led to Sens, its climactic debate, and how its contribution to Christendom’s culture of persecution impacted anti-Jewish persecution. Given the often-confusing events at the Council of Sens, this final chapter will seek to identify the key arguments and motivations of Abelard and Bernard and what drove them to confrontation. Lastly, I will examine the significance of Sens: how it set a precedent for ecclesiasist reaction to dissenting voices, within the Church or without. I conclude Chapter 3

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with the unforeseen anti-Jewish results of Abelard’s and Bernard’s debate, propagating the application of heresy as an indictment against Jews specifically.

**The Myth of Chronic Anti-Judaism**

There is a misconception that bears exposure from the start. Medieval Jews have not been the perpetual victims of perennial persecution. Life for Jewish populations in the post-Roman imperial world assuredly meant facing widespread intolerance, dispossession, and slander, but privileges were established and massacres were the recorded exception. Granted, relevant early medieval primary sources are limited, and Jewish populations were small. Despite the frequent misconception of ceaseless intolerance, plentiful examples exist of Jews and Christians peaceably coexisting in the fields of residential life, commerce, and even matrimony.

For centuries after Roman antiquity, Jews had a legal protection to worship freely, to enter into business with Christians, and even to own Christian slaves. The Carolingian kings protected and made liberal use of Jewish merchants and diplomats in the ninth century. When anti-Jewish slander appeared in the early medieval period, it was ignored by popular

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6 The common misconception will often take the form of a poetic oversimplification, such as in Frank Manuel’s pronouncement of the Middle Ages as “a thousand-year estrangement” in Jewish and Christian coexistence that severed any theological contact between the two people. Frank Manuel, *The Broken Staff: Judaism through Christian Eyes* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard UP, 1992), 15-29.


sentiment and dismissed by royalty. Before the twelfth century, there is little reason to conclude that there was any organized persecution of medieval Jews. Collaboration between Jews and Christians and papal demands for lay enforcement of Jewish protection characterized the early medieval period far more.

The turning point was the twelfth century, drastically altering the relative tolerance for Jews in Western Europe. Across the European continent, irrational antisemitic stereotypes spawned, laying seed for institutionalized persecution of Jews in the centuries beyond. Unprecedented Christian intolerance manifested in the blood libel, ritual murder,

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10 Shlomo Simonsohn, *The Apostolic See and the Jews, Documents: 492-1404* (Toronto, Ont., Canada: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 1988) 4, 23. Gregory I’s insistence on the Jewish right to worship and own property is one of the strongest landmarks of Jewish protection in the early medieval period. For more, see Gregory’s arguments in *Epistolae* 1.14; 1.34; 2.6; 8.25; 9.38; 9.195; 13.15.


rumors of host desecration, the slander of usury, Judensau images, and resulted in the forced baptisms of Jews and vicious attacks on Jewish communities in the Rhineland, Hungary, and elsewhere. Expulsions from kingdoms began by the end of the thirteenth century. Christendom’s unjustifiable fear of the Jew was escalating in proportion to the factional conflict within the Church.

Among the century’s most extreme changes was the contentiousness between ecclesiastic movements and a concomitant increase in accusations of heresy. Some historians have wondered if increased contact between Jews and Christians necessarily meant increased persecution. It is my contention that violence was not inevitable, but that Jews were increasingly equated with heretics and other perceived dangers to the Church due to an increasingly hostile environment brought on by factionalism as seen in the twelfth century.

Several misperceptions concerning heresy are best confronted immediately. Heresy has not always had been linked to social stigma, to witch-hunts, or to our modern designation for the word. The original definition of heresy, originating in the Roman republic before the rise of Christianity, was initially no more than a religious choice or one faction among many. By the fourth century, ascribing to a heresy meant following an unorthodox teacher—a decision worthy of scorn but not death. It was not until the twelfth century, when rival Church movements sought to clearly articulate an exclusively true Christian life, that

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the present definition of heresy took shape.\textsuperscript{16} R. I. Moore identifies how heresy did not so much appear \textit{en masse} in the twelfth century as it was invented by the Church to counter new ideas predominantly within the Church. By 1143, Church figures associated twelfth-century religious dissenters with foreign, ancient heresies.\textsuperscript{17} By 1163 at the Council of Tours, heresy had become a Church-pronounced crime against Christendom, rather than a self-proclaimed defiance.\textsuperscript{18} This precarious response to dissent in and outside the Church channeled irrational fears of any perceived enemies of Christendom, and of Jews most of all. The shift was not instantaneous, as Western Europe could only have transformed away from a tolerant society by degrees. My contribution is to show that factionalism within the Church was one principal step toward Moore’s “persecution society.”

As it was an incremental process, only at the start of the thirteenth century did ecclesiastic authorities prescribe execution as the fate for heretics, albeit reluctantly. Penance was almost always the penalty for a confirmed charge of heresy. Most commonly, clerical leaders intervened in lay executions in which the victims had been merely ignorant of religious creeds, not false teachers. Increasingly, however, Church leaders began to place more faith into rumors of wide-spread conspiracies and sexual cabals. Ecclesiastics increasingly determined such resolute dissenters to be rivals and nefarious factions rather than lost sheep. The growing swell of violence fueled by factionalism took its toll against

\textsuperscript{17} Moore, \textit{Formation}, 22.
\textsuperscript{18} Ibid, 26.
Jews and any others whose lives and creeds were furthest removed from the purported idealized Christian identity.

**Definition and Role of Factionalism**

As it is necessary to understand factionalism’s influence on twelfth-century Church treatment of Jews, it is incumbent first to comprehend the meaning of the word. For the purposes of this thesis, “factionalism” refers to any communal entity in which parties are in violent conflict. Furthermore, the application of the term presupposes that both parties claim substantial influence, orthodoxy, and guardianship over the religio-political body. Factionalism therefore does not describe the violence of a monolithic corporate body enacted upon those outside its dogma. Likewise, the term does not apply to an organization espousing a firmly institutionalized doctrine while seeking to purge itself of fringe minorities with asymmetric views. “Factionalism” is an applicable descriptor only when a set of beliefs have not yet been codified, and the purposed efforts of each party is to cement their creeds as orthodox at the expense of any rival party’s views. Factionalism especially applies when the expressed goal of each party is unity within the body, yet the practice of both is such antagonism to the degree that each would rather eradicate the other’s influence than promote a harmonic co-existence within the corporate whole. Throughout this thesis, the major strife between the two leading ecclesiastic movements is identified as the role of factionalism within the Western Church.
I posit this factor as the missing puzzle piece in Moore’s equation. He identifies the twelfth century as the age when persecution “became habitual.” Violence against individuals had always been meted out by lay and church authorities or by mobs, but “deliberate and socially sanctioned violence began to be directed through established governmental, judicial, and social institutions against groups” defined by race, religion, or culture.¹⁹ Not only did such habitual persecution develop against Jews, it also pooled Jews, heretics, lepers, and other outliers into the same disrepute. As helpful as Moore’s insight has been to subsequent medieval research, however, it has failed to identify the source for such a tragic shift.

I believe that the desperate hostility between Christian factions is what prompted a more general fear of religious nonconformists, and this fear prompted a more antagonistic reclassification of Jews and others. Previously, it has been argued that the growing unity and increasing power of the twelfth-century Church was the prime prerequisite for worsening Christian-Jewish relations.²⁰ But the acquisition of wealth and power in a slowly institutionalizing Roman Catholic Church did not necessarily correspond to an organized effort to persecute minorities, as has been claimed.

¹⁹ Moore, Formation, 5.
There are two reasons to discount the view that the empowerment of the Church necessarily prompted persecution. First, the presumption that centralization of power necessarily prompts violence against minorities is false. Institutionalization—the addition of a stratified hierarchy and the codifying of rites and rules—does not inherently turn an ecclesiastic organization against nonconformists. As mentioned earlier, Jews living in the wealthy and powerful Carolingian empire gained more privileges and were safer than those outside the unified domain of Charlemagne or Louis. There are usually many factors: what is institutionalized, the population of minorities, and conflicts outside the empire. The methods by which differing philosophies are communicated and selected and the precedents set for conflict resolution matter far more than how great a power base is achieved.

Second, the assumption that institutionalism gives rise to persecution is predicated upon a flawed presentism.\textsuperscript{21} The developing twelfth-century Church had not yet the means to enforce papal will on half a continent, a far cry from the efficiency or codified doctrine the Roman Catholic Church is known for today.\textsuperscript{22} Laity and princes, clerics and monks commonly held a variety of beliefs at odds with that of ecclesiastic leadership. There were many challenges to centralized papal power: sluggish communication, political factions, and

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{21} David Fischer, \textit{Historian's Fallacies: toward a Logic of Historical Thought} (New York: Harper & Row, 1970), 137, 139. While the Roman Catholic Church began in the twelfth century to resemble its modern equivalent today, it was not the same universal institution, and mistaking one for the other would venture into the \textit{nunc pro tunc} fallacy.
\end{itemize}
even rival popes. Unity within the Church did not fuel the attack on Jews. If anything, the first half of the twelfth century was characterized by disunity and factionalism.

Modern historians should therefore hesitate before linking the motives of the Church with key events in the Church’s ascendency. There was no monolithic Church antipathy towards Jews—and hardly any universal ecclesiastic identity at all yet. There were anti-Jewish prejudices and slander, as there had been since antiquity, but no systematic persecution at all. Medieval popes did not call for Jewish blood, and infrequent attacks on Jews were neither controlled nor consecutive. The Rhineland massacres had little calculation or political organization behind them. Chazan observes that the First Crusade ethic was free

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23 Central authority of the pope was hindered by frequent political feuding in Rome. Papal elections resulted in a contested milieu of bribery and threats that proved especially fractious between 1061 and 1143. Even after an election, a pontiff could never venture too far from Rome, as the two leading political families of the twelfth century would undermine their rival’s control. The Commune of Rome from 1145-1148 was one such conflict, succeeding in killing one pope and expelling his successor. Likewise, the Papal Schism of 1130 was fraught with factionalism, as the two political alliances of Rome both elected their own pope on the same day. The resultant division stemming from the need to overcome one’s rival at all costs proved to negate any real resolution until 1138 and then only through death. For more on the Papal Schism and the related political factionalism: Ian Robinson, The Papacy 1073–1198. Continuity and Innovation (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990); George L. Williams, Papal Genealogy: The Families and Descendants of the Popes (Jefferson: McFarland & Company, Inc., 1998), 24; Horace Mann and Johannes Hollnsteiner, The Lives of the Popes in the Middle Ages, Vol 8 (London: K. Paul, Trench, Trubner, 1925), 103, 303-304; Philippe Levillain and John O’Malley, The Papacy: An Encyclopedia, Vol II: Gaius-Proxy (New York: Routledge, 2002), 732. For sluggish communication, see Dorsey Armstrong, The Medieval World. (Chantilly, VA, The Great Courses, 2009), Lecture 33. Armstrong describes the lengthy medieval travel time by land. Generally, a message carried on foot might take twenty-three days and seven on horseback, but only one day by ship. Naval transportation had its own dangers, however.

24 Elukin, Living Together, 13. He writes, “Christians were still struggling to shape their own religious identity. We are still not sure what being Christian meant to the mass of people of these largely agricultural societies.”

25 Ever since the eighteenth-century discovery of the Hebrew Crusade Chronicles, Jewish and Christian historians had hastily concluded that the first years of the Crusades were the immediate turning point of anti-Jewish intolerance within Christendom. Extensive arguments from modern historians aver that the First Crusade’s slaughter of Rhineland Jews in 1096 did not initiate a new epoch of persecution for Jewish populations, as was previously believed. For more, see Cohen, Living Letters, 151-152; Chazan, European Jewry, 39, 53. For the Hebrew Chronicles, see Shlomo Eidelberg, The Jews and the Crusaders: the Hebrew Chronicles of the First and Second Crusades (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1977). The only surviving Christian primary source from the attacks in 1096 is a passing reference from Ekkehard in Recueil des historiens des croisades, historiens occidentaux (Paris: Gartier, 1844-45), V:7-40.
of any anti-Jewish rhetoric from the papal or upper ecclesiastic initiation.\(^{26}\) The “growing power, complexity, and militance of European society” that launched the First Crusade was not the death-knell to coexistence between Jews and Christians.\(^{27}\) However, the Crusades did make glaringly clear how the aims of Church leadership were easily eclipsed by the sweeping legacy of the runaway movements that popes and others instigated. An unchecked spirit of religious devotion in 1095 initiated over two centuries of crusades, funded monasteries, and incited numerous pilgrimages, but it also departed from the pontiff’s declared objectives and control.\(^{28}\) Simply put, an organization’s heightened influence does not mean the achievement of its goals, nor does it mean that those goals will remain the same over time.

The propensity for schism and factionalism in Europe was evident to prelates, but church elite were just as likely to further it as to limit it. The reforms of the eleventh century fostered a proto-humanist need to articulate individual spirituality, and this religious creativity nurtured many new visions of a truer, more zealous Christian life among the laity

\(^{26}\) Robert Chazan, *European Jewry and the First Crusade* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1987), 8, 39. For much of anti-Jewish historiography, the First Crusade has been seen as the evident start of ruin for medieval Jews, a centuries-old assumption challenged by Robert Chazan in his *European Jewry and the First Crusade* in 1987. Chazan, unlike Elukin, identifies the twelfth-century as the start of the downward spiral for Jewish populations, but clearly cites many examples of peaceful cohabitation between Christians and Jews throughout most of the century. 1096 was an intellectual turning point, but not a demographic, economic, or psychological one. The Crusades did not begin an era of doom for Jews in which they would nevermore feel safe, but it did shift the relations between Jews and Christians in many ways, most of them negative.

\(^{27}\) Chazan, *European*, 50, 214. For more, see Robert Chazan, *In the Year 1096: The Jews and the First Crusade* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1996). In fact, the Church took strong action to control anti-Jewish violence. Chazan identifies the slanders against Jews as the most blatant portent of worsening Jewish-Christian relations, but does not attempt to explain the cause of such dehumanization. The closest that Chazan comes to conjecturing the cause of the decline of medieval Jewry is to state that the same stereotypes that evoked the enmity of exhilarated crusaders in 1096 were still at work in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries.

and clerics. Peter Abelard and Bernard of Clairvaux were both youths at the time that Pope Urban II preached the First Crusade in 1095. They were equally influenced by this Zeitgeist, as were their peers. The reforms and crusading spirit gave rise to two very different Christian models, as will be discussed in Chapter 2. It is not in the unity, but in the disparity of these inspired thinkers and their movements, that turmoil developed. It is in the nature of zealous partisan groups to corrosively fracture the political and social environment in order to disable their rivals, rather than reconcile themselves to their opponents. The tools of alienation and polemics set in place a climate within Christendom that affected the Jews living there.

One of the most iconic and exemplary events of twelfth century factionalism was Sens. The Council that met in 1141 that sought to resolve the growing debate between Peter Abelard and Abbot Bernard is among the most climactic religious controversies in European history. It has been held up as the first religious example of institutionalized conservatism battling expressive humanism. At other times, Sens is portrayed as the forum in which the threat of scandal and heresy menaces the health and truth of the Church. Yet despite its

29 Colin Morris, *The Discovery of the Individual: 1050-1200* (New York: Sheed & Ward, 1973). The twelfth-century emphasis on proto-humanism and a concomitant increase in religious creativity were impediments to efforts to centralize the Church into any ecclesiastic uniformity. Pope Urban II and his predecessor Gregory were responsible for exciting in the lay people a zeal for a renewed devotion to God. The lay population expressed this search for a truer religious life in a myriad of ways. For more on proto-humanism, see Richard Southern, *The Making of the Middle Ages* (New Haven: Yale UP, 1959), 219-257.

30 Fidler, *Bernard*, 3. Fidler presents Bernard and Abelard as the most prominent of all controversial figures of their time.


legendary status, many historians of the last half century have commonly questioned the influential role Sens has had in Church history.\textsuperscript{33}

I hold that the debate at Sens was historically important, but not because of its effect on theology. Rather, the conflict between Bernard and Abelard at Sens was an influential step toward a burgeoning Christian dehumanization of Jews and other nonconformists. The kind of antagonistic rhetoric used by twelfth-century factions became the mode for viewing any potential threats to what would become the orthodoxy of the Church.

**Historiography on Medieval Antisemitism**

Reasons for exactly why antagonism toward Jews increased precipitously during the twelfth century have only been sought in the aftermath of the Holocaust. The investigation of medieval antisemitism sprouted from the research initiated by Gavin Langmuir in “Majority History and Postbiblical Jews” and his subsequent writings.\textsuperscript{34} Langmuir has labeled the demonization of nonconformist groups beginning on the eve of the twelfth century as

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  \item Gavin Langmuir, “Majority History and Postbiblical Jews,” in *Journal of the History of Ideas* Vol. 27, No. 3 (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, Jul.-Sep. 1966), 343-364. Langmuir questions why there is such a dearth of attention paid to ancient or medieval Jews among his contemporary historians, and why most Christian writers of post-Enlightenment Europe assumed that any meaningful Jewish narrative ended as of 70 CE, and especially why Jews are portrayed as solely moneylenders or the persecuted, if mentioned at all. His inquiries become broader and more developed in his later work “Toward a Definition of Antisemitism.”
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“chimeria” and has contrasted it with the more common ethnoreligious bias of antiquity. He has defined “chimeria” as being made of “assertions presenting figments of imagination, monsters which... have never been seen and are projections of a mental process unconnected with real people.”

But from whence came such irrational antagonism? It was Langmuir’s conclusion that the catalyst for an elevation in violence against medieval Jews was Christian reaction to their own irrational beliefs. Jews were the physical manifestation of doubt in Jesus’ divinity. Jews inspired doubt, and “Christians who were seriously bothered by their own doubts could hardly avoid thinking of Jews.”

Langmuir was opening up virgin ground. Prior to the 1960s, any investigation of antisemitism was pitifully small, and interest in Jewish-Christian relations was virtually nonexistent among medievalists generally, save for those who specialized in Jewish studies.

“Majority History and Postbiblical Jews” analyzed the omission of Jewish presence in histories of the medieval period. Twentieth-century scholars like George Trevelyan, J.R. Green, Henri Pirenne, and W.E. Lunt, some of them medievalists, had averred that the only economic role of the Jew was as a fiscal sponge for the king, if they mentioned Jews at all.


36 Gavin Langmuir, History, Religion, and Antisemitism (Berkeley: U of California Press, 1990) 284. Chimeria is different than xenophobia because unlike the latter phenomenon, there is no kernel of truth upon which to base the destructive superstitions.

“Until a man’s academic position is assured, he cannot dare to let it be known that he is seriously interested in questions relating to Jewish scholarship,” Cecil Roth wrote in 1928. The shift in social interest would not arrive until well after the Holocaust.

However, as interest in Jewish-Christian relations increased, Langmuir became a worldwide authority on the roots of antisemitism. It was Langmuir who has articulated the discrepancy between “anti-Judaism” and “anti-Semitism.” He defines the former as being a common contempt for Judaism as a rival religion, and the latter as the perception of Jews as invented demonic others, the product of chimeria, or Christian mythmaking.

While Langmuir’s explanation of chimeria has inspired many to apply the phenomenon to modern day conflicts, many recent historians have found fault with its simplistic rationale. David Nirenberg avers that irrationality cannot be a suitable label for any act of violence or excoriation of Jews, and that categorization of any kind is detrimental. Any act of mass violence against Jews was due to a set of specific circumstances, rather than to a blanket generalization of generational religious doubt. Anna Abulafia finds fault with applying modern definitions of empirical reason to the medieval notion of rational thought. As she says,

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39 Langmuir, “Majority History,” 343. Langmuir avers that that this was a gradual increase—that the world considers Jewish history to be of little historical value until Dreyfus, the Balfour Declaration, and Hitler.
Reason then was a much wider concept. It was used to denote the God-given gift all human beings were supposed to have to enable them to perceive truth, which could be spiritual as well as empirical. To speak of the period as irrational is to rob it of one of its main features: fascination with the potential of reason and its proper application to matters of faith.44

Nirenberg, Abulafia, and others have noted the missing element from Langmuir’s proposal. The “chimeria,” irrational fear and reaction to Jews, or “illicit reification” based not on ignorance but the flouting of common sense and all empirical evidence,45 lacks a credible starting point. Langmuir believes the imagined anti-Jewish incriminations were born out of Christian dogma devoid of rationalism that Roman Catholics nonetheless felt pressured to accept. Is antisemitism’s appearance confined to post-1096 Europe because this was the first time that Christians have faced irrational teachings? Hardly. Other proposed answers have been forthcoming.

Anna Abulafia focuses on the role of the Gregorian reform and Scholasticism. Europe’s reintroduction to classical writings from non-Christian sources prompted Christendom to reanalyze the identity of and threat posed by the only tolerated and oldest nonconformists: Jews. She propounds the “intellectualist” thesis, laying culpability on key twelfth-century Scholastic polemicists including Peter Abelard, for their rationale that the Jews cannot accept Christian truth because they have no ability to reason, a dehumanization that would pave the way for thirteenth-century persecution.46 She also pinpoints the twelfth

century, not the thirteenth, as the initiation of wild slanders against medieval Jewry. The one failing in Abulafia’s masterful work is that she is unable to identify how an intellectualist argument translated to a movement of the general public.

Amos Funkenstein corroborates Abulafia’s intellectualist thesis that the introduction of rational-philosophical argument into polemics worsened Jewish stereotypes. He then adds a second reason for the widening intellectual gulf between Christians and Jews: the increasing Christian familiarity with postbiblical Jewish literature. Funkenstein does not fixate on Abelard specifically but aver that top churchmen were culpable. Such leaders argued that texts like the Talmud would drive Jews insane, and this irrational madness was contagious. He cites Peter the Venerable’s statement that the doctrines of rabbinic Judaism directed others far away from the truth, to heresy, as they did in the case of Muhammad.

Building off of Abulafia’s and Funkenstein’s work, Jeremy Cohen in his Living Letters of the Law in 1999 analyzes another factor in the rise of twelfth-century antisemitism:

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48 Nahon, “From the Rue aux Juifs,” 332. This inadequacy of the explanation is one Abulafia herself recognizes. Abulafia, Christians and Jews in the Twelfth, 139.


Jews were no longer the only “other” in Europe. The presence of a growing Muslim threat necessitated a reclassification of nonconformists and a decision on whether to tolerate and protect them. The increased sensitivity of Christians to those who would be labeled as heretics in Christendom elevated the mistrust of Jews. Cohen has effectively presented the change in Judeo-Christian relations as being due to many factors on the eve of the twelfth century, among them Norman Cohn’s apocalyptic turn of the millennium, Abulafia’s polemics against Jewish intellect, and Funkenstein’s stigma against postbiblical Jewish literature. He adds to them Franciscan efforts to missionize among Jews in the thirteenth century, rhetoric of papal reform, and various political and religious conflicts. The last half-century of Jewish studies scholars have made these valuable contributions to explain the development of antisemitism, but R. I. Moore was the historian to address how anti-Jewish persecution was only a piece of a much larger medieval culture of persecution.

In his 1987 *The Formation of a Persecuting Society*, Moore insists that anti-Jewish attacks were not the work of dissonance with irrational teachings but the direct result of a system instituted by church and lay leadership. He has posited that the growth of hostilities against Jews and others was orchestrated by “princes and prelates,” and should not be

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53 Cohen, *Living Letters*, 150. Cohen seems to favor the belief that the stronger and more unified the Church was, the graver the situation for medieval Jews. Cohen makes a point to weave into his argument for anti-Jewish animosity the Investiture Controversy and the Crusades, emphasizing that both events exacerbated the threatened social framework in which Jews and Christians lived, most specifically by bolstering ecclesiastic consolidation.
callously blamed on the ignorant masses.\textsuperscript{55} Moreover, antisemitic persecution developed in tandem with persecution against other religious unorthodox, lepers, and the sexually aberrant. Moore tracks the shift in Christendom’s definition of “heresies.” He argues that a “heresy” was previously held to be nothing more than an inaccuracy in theology, but by the late twelfth century, it had become something divisive and deadly.\textsuperscript{56} The names of ancient, extinct theological movements like Manicheism and Arianism were dusted off and reused to apply to popular dissent in a new millennium. Yet the newest movements identified themselves as true Christians, even apostolic. These religious followings were only heretics insofar as the Catholic Church claimed authority, and claimed that failure to adhere to such authority would be heresy.\textsuperscript{57} Moore therefore credits the sudden “recognition” of heretics in Western Europe to be the work of a Church bent on codification and the labeling of dissenters as heretics. Heresy was not a self-definition.\textsuperscript{58} Moore succeeds in demonstrating how the Church reclassified Jews as one of many groups (lepers, prostitutes, homosexuals) alienated by the Church and regarded as intolerable, but he does not explain what events set the stage for such a transformation.

If Moore’s \textit{Formation} has been a giant boon in Jewish-Christian relations scholarship, it does run the risk of oversimplification. Although I agree with Moore’s framework of the

\begin{footnotes}
\textsuperscript{55} Moore, \textit{Formation}, 123. Although he lays culpability for violence against Jews at the feet of Church and lay leadership, Moore does not let the common man off the hook completely, as he explains on p. 108-109.
\textsuperscript{56} Moore, \textit{Formation}, 26; Moore, \textit{The War on Heresy}, 8-10. Moore contends that not until the mid-twelfth century were accusations of witchcraft, carnal banquets, or ludicrous accusations of heresy taken seriously. He also avers that “heresies” such as the Cathars’ ideology, were almost complete inventions of the Catholic Church. For a microcosm of this ecclesiastic practice of the Church in northern France, see Michael Bazemore Jr., \textit{Wellsprings of Heresy: Monks, Myth and Making Manichaean in Orléans and Aquitaine} (Under the direction of Dr. Julie Mell). Thesis. NC State University (Raleigh: NC State UP, 2009).
\textsuperscript{57} Moore, \textit{Formation}, 68.
\textsuperscript{58} Ibid, 70.
\end{footnotes}
Church’s invention of heresy and the incorporation of medieval Jews into that heterodox classification, there are dissimilarities in the way Jews and heretics were initially viewed in the twelfth century. Jonathan Elukin provides a healthy reminder that Jews had a precedent of protection and integration that “unfaithful” Christians did not. Elukin and others argue that a persecuting society was not uniformly at work: Moore assumes the high medieval period to be a “break in the nature of Jewish-Christian relations,” whereas Elukin sees that “the larger trend in European history is one of fundamental continuity.”

Elukin disregards Moore’s “persecuting society” as an anachronism on the grounds that a pre-twentieth century Church could not create and enforce a modern totalitarian state. I have already stated my concurrence with Elukin on this point: the Catholic Church did not have the means to enforce authoritarian rule over a continent. Medieval persecution of the Jews was neither rigidly systematic nor universal.

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59 Elukin, Living Together, 123-125, 134; Bob Scribner, “Preconditions of Tolerance and Intolerance in Sixteenth-Century Germany,” in Ole Peter Grell and Bob Scribner, eds. Tolerance and Intolerance in the European Reformation (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1996), 44-45; Anna Foa, The Jews of Europe after the Black Death (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2000), 159-160; Cary Nederman, Worlds of Difference: European Discourses of Toleraton, C. 1100-C. 1550 (University Park, PA: Penn State UP, 2000), especially his first and his sixth chapters. Reducing the situation for European Jews to a one-dimensional stereotype ignores the frequent periods of peace and myriad instances of protection or collaboration. Robert Scribner also insists that such an organized persecuting society could not be maintained over great distances or time, especially not if controlled by “bureaucratic elites or ‘moral crusaders.’ ” Scribner cautions that “within any culture, stereotypes are continually being formed, modified, forgotten, revived, revised, and discarded.” Anna Foa argues for “a persistence of a traditional attitude toward Jews that allowed for a pattern of ‘alternation of settlement followed by expansions, pogroms, and contraction.’ ” Cary Nederman examines the practical limits of a unified Christendom, and counters Moore’s framework of persecution by focusing on individuals who envisioned a more coexistent Europe.


61 Elukin, Living Together, 140. I concur with this claim but not all of Elukin’s claims. His pronouncement of Moore’s inquiry having a false premise as to why twelfth-century Christendom dramatically turned on the Jews...
Despite this caveat from Elukin, I find Moore’s general premise to be trustworthy and ultimately unshaken. It cannot be reliably argued that Jewish-Christian relations were as tolerant and healthy in the fourteenth century as they had been in the tenth. No condemnations of Jews in the form of ritual murder or blood libel charges, Judensau images, or rumors of conspiratorial cabals of Jews survive from the early medieval period, but they exist in abundance from the twelfth and later centuries. While Elukin demonstrates that twelfth-century Jews were interconnected with Christians if not integrated, Moore provides the more helpful contribution to this thesis. A transforming Christendom clearly perceived unprecedented dangers in unorthodox groups—the inclusion of Jews in that number was a testament to Jewish social and intellectual coherence, as Jews had no political organization and certainly no conspiracy.62

The field of Jewish-Christian relations has also added the work of Norman Cohn in his 1957 *Pursuit of the Millennium*, who cites fear of the end of the world as a precipitant in the demonization of Jews. Although not primarily a work on Jewish-Christian relations, Cohn’s book is groundbreaking as the first book to analyze the patterns of the lay fixation on a messianic end-time. Cohn holds that Church teachings were indirectly responsible for anti-Jewish violence, but for a different reason than Langmuir gives: their encouragement of apocalypticism among the masses rather than illogical doctrine frustrated the lay population. Eschatological expectations were disappointed after the year 1000, but the messianism is difficult to support. It means challenging the wealth of research from Langmuir, Abulafia, Chazan, Cohen, and others.

62 Moore, *Formation*, 151.
continued well after the tenth century to fuel the Crusades and persecution of heretics. Cohn depicts a medieval Europe in which Christians continued to see a war between God and devils with apocalyptic import. By the thirteenth century, Jews most of all were regarded as forces of the Antichrist. The reasoning is simple, according to Cohn: Jews were regarded as self-segregationists with the first self-pronouncement as God’s people, seen as a challenge to Christianity. Jews were considered most responsible for Christ’s death and for the persecution of His Church. Lastly, the Jewish Diaspora was proof of their persistent opposition to Christ, and the delay of their trust in Him was the postponement of a transfigured Holy Land.

Langmuir’s explained origin of “anti-semitism” has also been questioned recently. Peter Schafer’s *Judeophobia* presents the two categories in which historians have traced the origin of antisemitism: the essentialists, who argue that the persecution of Jews is natural in every ancient society and “is as old as Judaism itself and the Jewish Diaspora,” and the functionalists, like Langmuir, who argue that anti-Jewish animus was prompted by concrete political events. In his introduction, Schafer insists that both factors are needed: the irrational claims of the anti-Semite, and the unique Jewish customs and dissonance with the

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64 Cohn, *Pursuit*, 76.

predominant culture. As a further departure from Langmuir’s explanation, Schafer argues strongly that antisemitism was present in antiquity and that Langmuir’s chimeria would apply to the far-fetched Egyptian and Hellenistic complaints of a Jewish conspiracy and misanthropy for all cherished virtues. Schafer argues that Langmuir’s spectrum of anti-Jewish accusations based on reality, xenophobia, or fantasy should be redefined, as it does not account for the critical shift in ancient condemnation of the Jewish people, not just their religious creeds. Instead, Schafer recognizes historic accusations against Jews as crossing over from “justifiable” to “unjustifiable” (and thus from “anti-Judaism” to “anti-Semitism”) whenever portraying Jews as “the evil incarnate,” or the haters of all mankind, or in a conspiracy against the civilized world. Although I share Schafer’s conclusions that Langmuir’s oversimplification that does not do justice to the wild stereotypes in Greece and Rome, I will be using Langmuir’s terms, as they are the more generally recognized.

The call among historians to question the lens through which modernity views the origins of antisemitism has a familiar parallel. In “Majority History and Postbiblical Jews,” Langmuir asked why Jews had been portrayed predominantly as moneylenders by contemporary historians. Despite the evident reasons why most medieval Jews would not

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66 Schafer, Judeophobia, 8. He writes, “...one always needs both components to ‘create’ anti-Semitism: the anti-Semite and the Jew or Judaism, concrete Jewish peculiarities and the intention of the anti-Semite to distort and to pervert these peculiarities. Anti-Semitism always happens in the mind of the anti-Semite, but it needs its object, the Jew or Judaism. The fact that anti-Semitism is sometimes found even in the absence of Jews, as modern history has taught us, is no argument against this, precisely because it is the distorted imagination of the anti-Semite, nourished by real Jews as well as by his fantasies about Jews, which creates anti-Semitism.”

67 Ibid, 208, 210. He writes that Greco-Egyptians authors “turned Jewish separateness into a monstrous conspiracy against mankind and the values shared by all civilized human beings, and it is therefore [their] attitude which determines anti-Semitism.”

68 Ibid, 11.

69 Ibid, 206.
have engaged in moneylending and taken on the fiscal role of the “king’s sponge,” change has been slow to throw off this old trope that originated with medieval superstition. Even decades after Langmuir’s challenge, R.I. Moore had written that the economic power of the Jews was one factor that had threatened the newly-empowered literati during the rise of medieval cities, and so prompted their demonization. Robert Chazan puts great emphasis on Jewish economic power in the late twelfth century in descriptions of their cultural contributions. Change comes slowly in challenging any belief taken for granted among historians. As in the myth of the moneylending Jew, the explanation for the catalyst for anti-Jewish attacks is in question and needs a compelling answer.

The contribution of this thesis is to point out the role of factionalism and the contention it garners against medieval Jews. It is a complement to Moore’s rationale how Jews were combined with other religious abberents in high and late medieval Christendom. Where Moore leaves off without a strong explanation as to why Christian culture dehumanizes Jews and others, I begin with a study of how factionalism as a factor in antisemitism was made possible during the Church’s inception in antiquity. My work is also in keeping with Langmuir’s model of a Christian populace demonizing the Jewish outlier with irrational stereotypes, but I take exception to Langmuir’s rationale for the origins of chimeria. That European Christians who deemed doctrine irrational would transfer that consternation to Jewish populations is the weak link in his theory of causality. I find the resulting disunity from Christian factionalism a more realistic factor in the unwarranted

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71 Moore, *Formation*, 33-34.
rumormongering against the twelfth-century Jews. Abulafia’s argument that the “intellectualist” polemics tarnished medieval Jews and Chazan’s study of anti-Jewish stereotypes of the twelfth century are incorporated into my thesis. Philosophic polemics and unjustified slanders were outgrowths—and only a part—of an expansive Church culture that was growing more familiar with attacking enemies with charges of heresy and dehumanizing accusations of irrationality. Although I agree that there was no one event that prompted a comprehensive contempt for European Jews as Elukin or Nederman has written, an event like Sens is an example of the direction Christendom was headed in its narrowing of what was religiously acceptable.

There were undoubtedly many contributing factors, some greater or lesser: contact with more powerful non-Christians, millennials, Scholasticism’s interest in taxonomy, Gregorian Reform’s specification of practices, and even climate and geography, but corrosive inter-ecclesiastic hostilities is the cause I focus on in this thesis. Furthermore, I agree with Schafer’s conclusion in recognizing the strong link between medieval and classical anti-Jewish hostility, too strong for antisemitic fantasies to merely

73 Cohen, *Living Letters*, 156. Cohen is also cited at the beginning of this thesis’ introduction, on page 1.
74 Cohn, *Pursuit*, 22-23, 64-65, 72, 77-78, 80, 87, 123, 125.
77 For geography, see Jonathan Irvine Israel, “Germany and Its Jews (1300-1800),” in Hsia and Lehmann, eds., *In and Out of the Ghetto; Jewish-Gentile Relations in Late Medieval and Early Modern Germany* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1995), 297; Elukin, *Living Together*, 132. For climate, see Cohn, *Pursuit*, 63, 102-103; Ninennberg, *Communities*, 18-19. Cohn explains that the decade of 1085-1095 saw unbroken famines, floods, and droughts. This encouraged a fascination with and a hope in hermits and holy men. The same climate conditions occurred in the 1140s prior to more slaughter and messianism. Ninennberg draws the same conclusions about conditions two centuries later.
crop up in one age and not have its start in the other, as the next chapter will elaborate. The rise of anti-Jewish hysteria in medieval Europe can be understood better when seen in the context of a culture affected by divisive factions.

78 Schafer’s point is that there is not a clean break between the anti-Jewish hysteria at times in antiquity and the outright antisemitism of the high medieval period. I cannot justify the application of the term “antisemitism” to antiquity as Schafer has done, but a closer study than mine is needed of the instances in which fantastical stereotypes of Jews affected Christian perception in the pre-medi eval period.
CHAPTER 1: PRE-TWELFTH CENTURY FACTIONALISM AND ANTI-JUDAISM

Anti-Jewish vitriol has been present in nearly every ancient culture with which Jews had contact, but at no time in antiquity did it rise to the level of institutionalized persecution that occurred in Europe beginning with the twelfth century. The relative scarcity of violence against Jews in ancient empires is not due to a lack of unjustified or fantastical stereotypes, as Langmuir has supposed, for Schafer identifies many such examples in ancient empires.

With small exceptions, Judaism was tolerantly treated as an accepted religion—albeit a monotheistic oddity—throughout most of antiquity. In most of the Roman Mediterranean world, Jews were integrated and even prospered. However, as Rome ended its days as a republic, even before there was a Catholic Church or an overarching political structure to root out dissenters, factionalism developed. Prior to Christianity’s inception, there was a plentitude of divisive religious groups, including within Judaism, and Roman power struggles set up a political framework in which enemies were vilified. I will discuss in this chapter how powerful Roman individuals labeled Jews as enemies for political reasons and how early Christianity was shaped in this time of Roman partisanship. The Jewish revolts against Rome reinforced a rift and distrust between Jews and the new Gentile Church during the latter movement’s formative period. Although factionalism in the Roman Empire easily overflowed into the conflict between Christians and Jews early on, it would not be until the

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80 Schafer, *Judaeophobia*, 81, 179, 180-192, 206. The transition in the ancient Hellenistic world from “justifiable” complaints against Jews to antisemitism occurred after the Maccabean period. Schafer avers that when Jewish proselytism increased in Greece and Rome, the Jewish people—not only their religious beliefs—were vilified.
reign of Constantine that anti-Jewish prejudice became strategic public policy. Heretics and Jews became the objects of derision, and these conjoined stigmas would ultimately reoccur in more institutionalized and more violent forms in Europe almost a millennium later.

**The First Roman Legacy: Anti-Judaism in Antiquity**

The earliest anti-Jewish attacks can be traced to Egyptian literature, specifically the works of the historian Manetho in 270 BCE. Made popular by successive Greek and Roman historians, these Egyptian claims against Jews were repeated by Chaeremon, Lysimachus, Poseidonius, Apollonius Molon, Apion, and Tacitus. The most infamous examples of Hellenistic-era persecution against Jews include the edict of Antiochus Epiphanes (c. 170 BCE) and the slaughter of thousands of Jews in Alexandria, as recorded by Philo 200 years later.

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83 Philo of Alexandria, “Writings of Philo: Flaccus.” Early Christian Writings. Trans by Peter Kirby, 2016. 7 Aug. 2016 <http://www.earlychristianwritings.com/yonge/book36.html>. Philo recorded that the authorized massacre of 38 CE was carried out by “idle and lazy” mobs due to the demagoguery of Flaccus Avillius, who was keen on portraying Jews as misanthropes. Philo portrays the initial population of Jews in Alexandria as one million, but the destruction makes most of these exiled, homeless, or penniless. Philo introduces Flaccus as a man singular in “his hatred of and hostile designs against the Jewish nation.” However, modern scholarship has questioned the labeling of this massacre as an early example of antisemitism. Gideon Bohak particularly demonstrates how this more accurately exemplifies a majority group attacking a minority, regardless of their ethnic or religious identity. For more on the Alexandrian massacre, see also John M. G. Barclay, *Jews in the Mediterranean Diaspora: From Alexander to Trajan (323 BCE–117 CE)* (Berkeley: U of California, 1999); John M. G. Barclay and Pieter Willem Van Der Horst, *Philo’s Flaccus: the First Pogrom, Philo of Alexandria Commentary Series* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 2003); Victor Tcherikover, *Hellenistic Civilization and the Jews* (New York: Atheneum, 1975); Gideon Bohak, “The Ibis and the Jewish Question: Ancient ‘Antisemitism’ in
What factor precipitated ancient antagonism toward Jews? Greek historians of antiquity blamed such violence on Jewish cultural practices or the “absurdity of their Law.” In one example, Diodorus wrote that Jews were cursed by the gods and belonged to a diseased bloodline. Apion, against whom Josephus wrote, found justification of ancient anti-Jewish stigma by linking the Egyptian word for disease “sabbatosis” with the Hebrew day of rest “sabbaton.” Tacitus deemed that Jews, like pigs, were natural plague carriers.

Despite these severe criticisms of the Jewish people and not merely their practices, the modern concept of a “race” does not translate well to Greco-Roman antiquity. Many Jews were able to, and did, Hellenize—there was no Greek consideration of an unchangeable and inescapable Jewish biology. If this negative prejudice against Jews was not predominantly an

Historical Context” in Menachem Mor et al., Jews and Gentiles in the Holy Land in the Days of the Second Temple, the Mishnah and the Talmud (Jerusalem: Yad Ben-Zvi Press, 2003), 27–43.

84 Flavius Josephus, “Antiquities of the Jews,” The Gutenberg Project. Trans. William Whiston, January 9, 2013. January 4, 2009 <https://www.gutenberg.org/files/2848/2848-h/2848-h.htm>, Book XII, Chapter 1, 5-6; Against Apion, Book I, Chapter 22. Agatharchides of Cnidos blames the Jewish observance of Shabbat as the primary reason Ptolemy son of Lagus was able to conquer Jerusalem in 320 BCE. He is quoted by Josephus. Apion regards the Jewish abstention from eating certain meats as ridiculous. Circumcision “was an obscenity to the Graeco-Roman writers,” as Jerry Daniel states, not to mention the alienating stigma of monotheism. For more see Jerry L. Daniel, Anti-Semitism in the Hellenistic-Roman Period in the Journal of Biblical Literature 98/1 (1979), 45-65, esp. 55-56; Flannery, The Anguish, 25. One of the earliest examples is Hecataeus’ depiction of Jews as recluses and ascetics. Hecataeus of Abdera wrote the first surviving reference to Jews in Greek literature. In his Aegyptiaca, as recorded in Diodorus Siculus’ Bibliotheca Historica 40.3, Moses was an especially eccentric leader of a pariah people who invented a god to distance and distract the Jews from their cantankerous wanderlust and “in remembrance of the exile of his people, instituted for them a misanthropic and inhospitable way of life.” The modern definition of “misanthrope” as of late has been challenged by Katell Berthelot, who contends that Hecataeus used it in a comedic sense, not as an example of hostile antisemitism. Jews therefore were depicted as avoiding intercourse with other peoples, as a result of their Egyptian exile, not as dangerous or uncivilized. For more, see Diodorus Siculus, Bibliotheca Historica, Loeb Classical Library, 12 volumes, trans. Charles Henry Oldfather, Vol. 1-6 (Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1933-1967), 1:28.2-3, 1:55.5, 1:94.2, 40:3.3; Anne Burton, Diodorus Siculus, Book 1: A Commentary (Leiden: Brill, 1973); Katell Berthelot, “Hecataeus of Abdera and Jewish ‘Misanthropy’ ” in Bulletin du Centre de recherche français à Jérusalem 19 (2008). 03 March 2009. 09 October 2015 <http://bcrfj.revues.org/5968>; Flanner, Anguish, 11–2.

85 Diodorus, Bibliotheca Historica, 40:3.3; Schafer, Judaeophobia, 22.

86 Josephus, Against Apion, 2:2; Schafer, Judaeophobia, 88. Apion’s writings have not survived.


incomprehensible ethnic hatred, what compelled anti-Jewish stereotypes in the pre-Christian world?

Some historians speculate that Jews maintained a social isolationism in urban settings that prompted antipathy among neighbors.\textsuperscript{89} Historians like Edward Flannery have explained anti-Jewish persecution as originating with Jewish refusal to participate in Greco-Roman religious customs. This resulted in a “national xenophobia played out in political settings.”\textsuperscript{90} Yet this is surely too simple of an answer. Schlomo Sands has urged that fear of Jews was commensurate with their increasing numbers. Jewish cultural differences were exacerbated by Jewish refusal to fully assimilate and the probability of proselytism.\textsuperscript{91} Rome—the empire constantly on guard against political threats—did not understand the exclusivity of monotheism, but its leaders punished, especially with banishment, those they perceived as instigators of political instability.\textsuperscript{92}

The majority of economic and political interaction between Roman Jews and their Gentile neighbors was peaceable and even mutually beneficial, but there were aspects of

\textsuperscript{89} Victor Tcherikover, \textit{Hellenistic Civilization and the Jews} (New York: Atheneum, 1975). Avoiding gymnasiums and unclean foods likely prompted distrust and a Greco-Roman apprehension that Jews held their Gentile neighbors to be unclean and inferior. Reciprocal sentiments were a natural product. For more, see Ernest L. Able, \textit{The Roots of Anti-Semitism} (London: Associated UP, 1975), 42; John M. G. Barclay, \textit{Jews in the Mediterranean Diaspora: From Alexander to Trajan} (London: University of California Press, 1996), 45.\textsuperscript{90} Flannery, \textit{The Anguish}, 25.\textsuperscript{91} Schlomo Sands, \textit{The Invention of the Jewish People}, trans. by Yael Lotan (New York: Verso Books, 2009), 167. Sands suggests “the Romans did not understand the exclusivity of monotheism, and even less so the urge to convert other people and cause them to abandon their inherited beliefs and customs.” Sands’ conclusions have caused a firestorm of debate. However, almost all of the contentious nature of his work stems from his conclusions that there was no Roman diaspora and is no Jewish bloodline, not from the high probability of conversions to Judaism in the pre-Christian Roman period.\textsuperscript{92} The Roman historian Valerius Maximus is quoted in Menahem Stern, \textit{Greek and Latin Authors on Jews and Judaism}. Vol. I (Jerusalem: Israel Academy of Sciences and Humanities, 1974), 358. Maximus writes of the banishment of Jews from Rome in 139 BCE for attempting to transmit their religious rites to the Romans. Subsequent exiles occurred under the reign of Tiberius in 19 CE and Claudius in 49 CE.
Roman culture forbidden to religious Jews. No doubt Jewish-pagan relations were hindered by the singular practices and rites of Jews, as the devout among them would have to refuse their non-Jewish neighbors’ invitations so as not to violate dietary laws. Some Jews would have had to decline participation in their neighbors’ religious events to ensure that they did not violate the First Commandment. But Rome was the first cosmopolitan city: thousands of deities were represented by the multiplicity of temples in the great city alone, which was home to over one million people. Are we to believe that Judaism was the only religion or sect that had unusual customs that estranged their practitioners from the rest of the populace? Despite the writings of a few historians and statesmen, we have little surviving evidence that Jews were treated any worse than other subject peoples throughout most of antiquity. Additionally, it is unlikely that all Jews complied with such socially restrictive standards. Some assimilation and intermixing was inevitable.

It should not be forgotten that despite anti-Jewish stereotypes in pagan Rome, Jews were granted a measure of tolerance unequalled since the benevolence of their Persian occupation. Under pagan Roman law, Jews were exempt from required offerings to the Roman gods and were protected from conversion, destruction of their synagogues, or

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93 Exodus 20:3, in which the people of Moses are commanded not to worship any god but theirs.
95 Considering the derided customs of the Etruscans, the Christians, and the followers of Isis the Egyptian goddess, it is difficult to identify the Jews as deserving exceptional alienation by the Romans due to Jewish practice. The mystery cult of Cybele involved self-mutilation, dancing, and sexual practices Romans commonly found licentious and immoral. The mystery cult of Mithras allowed for no women and called for a tauroctony, or bull slaughter, as an act of spiritual cleansing by baptism, yet no major persecution ensued.
The initial conquest of Judaea had been unremarkable: Pompeius Magnus claimed the territory for Rome in 63 BCE with minimal losses. Though the Temple had been injured during the three-month siege of Jerusalem, Pompeius took pains to have it restored. Until the first of the Jewish-Roman Wars 130 years later, Jews enjoyed a restricted autonomy, being the only monotheists exempted from compulsory military service. A few Roman leaders made public their fascination with Jewish culture or even praised them.

The end of the Roman lenience came to Jerusalem in the form of five legions under the command of the general Vespasian in the year 67 CE. This was the first of three Jewish-Roman wars and would result in the Temple’s obliteration and the beginning of Rabbinic Judaism. Twelve more legions under Trajan would follow in 132 CE, exiling all Jews to the

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100 Molly Whittaker, *Jews & Christians: Graeco-Roman Views Cambridge Commentaries on Writings of the Jewish & Christian World 200BC to AD200*, vol. 6 (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1984), 76. Seneca lauded Jewish abstinence from certain meats. The emperor Claudius was outspoken in his favor for the Jews; his interest in Jews as monotheists and their peculiar mode of worship was recorded by Cassius Dio. See also Sands, “Invention,” 168.
eastern reaches of the empire, banishing even the name of the land with them. These seventy years of the Judeo-Roman Wars are essential in understanding the growth of an enduring anti-Jewish bias in Europe throughout the next two millennia.

The carnage and aftermath of these three calamitous Jewish Revolts prompted a long-lasting antipathy toward Jews. The security of Rome depended on the efficiency with which it could identify, isolate, and cripple dangerous factions. As Rome waged three devastating wars with Judaea, incurring incalculable losses of soldiers and civilians, Jews were branded among the worst threats to Roman security. I will explain more about the presence of factionalism later this chapter, but the vital point here concerning anti-Judaism is the efficiency with which Roman governance in the late first century CE perceived and portrayed Jews as the insidious threat within the empire. This perception and portrayal of Jews as a deviant faction in the empire at this time pervaded future centuries and future Christian dogma, as the fledging Church first began to establish its doctrine during these formative decades.

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102 Cassius Dio, Roman Histories: Epitome of Book 69 in Loeb Classical Library edition, Vol. VIII (Cambridge, MA: Harvard UP, 1925), 13.3. Dio records that Jewish losses amount to more than 580,000, but that Roman casualties under Hadrian during the Bar Kohkba War were heavy. Dio records that Hadrian omits the usual greeting to the Senate in his letter, “If you and our children are in health, it is well; I and the legions are in health.”
It is hard to overestimate the importance of the cataclysmic end of Jerusalem by 135 CE, not just to the Jewish religion and identity, but to the Roman perception of Jews. Tiberius had ordered their expulsion in 19 CE, and more expulsions and threats followed in the ensuing forty years, but overall Jews throughout the empire had been granted freedom of worship. The Roman-styled “Revolts” of 66, 115, and 132 changed everything: Jews became reviled in the Roman eye, so much so that second-century Christians took pains to identify themselves as anything other than a Jewish sect. This Roman contempt was neither due to odd Jewish practices, nor seemingly to Judaea’s rebellion, and it was certainly not inevitable. It was an intentional stratagem to secure power, specifically over other factions and especially over Roman ones, as I explain later this chapter. Successive emperors not only legitimated but also legislated anti-Jewish practices. The codified

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105 Modern scholars categorize the three revolts in different ways. If the Kitos War (115-117CE) is counted, then three Revolts are enumerated. If not, the Bar Kohkba Revolt (132-136CE) is called the Second Jewish Revolt. This thesis recognizes all three as Jewish wars.

106 Rome faced rebellions and wars from hundreds of enemies, but only Jerusalem and Carthage stand as the two enemies of Rome to be razed, emptied, and vilified as the ultimate enemy.

107 Josephus, “Wars,” 5.334, 6:252-259, 261-266; Martin Goodman, *Rome and Jerusalem: The Clash of Ancient Civilizations* (London: Penguin Books, 2007), 24-28, 440-444. When Titus Andronicus failed to restrain his legionnaires from sacking the city—not the original intent of the Roman army—the general used the opportunity to appear wrathful instead of weak by making desolate even the holiest of sites. Jerusalem was held as a model of challenging the enmity of Rome’s rightful dynasty of emperors.

policies against Jews were so endemic in Rome’s history that medieval anti-Jewish
persecution has been traced to Roman policy. The dehumanizing fear of the Jew was
written of during these Roman wars as a means to bolster Roman authority and to alienate
Jewish rebels from other Eastern factions that may have sought to join them.

In 115, the second of the Jewish-Roman Wars exploded all over the eastern empire.
Legions under Trajan were undermined as Roman garrisons were overcome by pockets of
Jewish insurrectionists, vengeful for the slaughter in Jerusalem 45 years earlier. Cassius Dio
recorded this depiction of the atrocities at the hands of the Jews:

Meanwhile the Jews in the region of Cyrene had put one Andreas at their head and
were destroying both the Romans and the Greeks. They would cook their flesh, make
belts for themselves of their entrails, anoint themselves with their blood, and wear
their skins for clothing. Many they sawed in two, from the head downwards. Others
they would give to wild beasts and force still others to fight as gladiators. In all,
consequently, two hundred and twenty thousand perished. In Egypt, also, they
performed many similar deeds, and in Cyprus under the leadership of Artemio. There,
likewise, two hundred and forty thousand perished. For this reason no Jew may set
foot in that land, but even if one of them is driven upon the island by force of the
wind, he is put to death. Various persons took part in subduing these Jews, one being
Lusius, who was sent by Trajan.

Dio wrote of events occurring forty years before he was born. Understandably,
modern historians have trouble believing that well over half a million Romans were slain by
Jewish hands. The importance, however, is in the legacy that Rome passed on. Jews became

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flocked to the last Jewish Revolt. “Many outside nations, too, were joining them through eagerness for gain, and
the whole earth, one might also say, was being stirred up over the matter.”
111 Cassius Dio, *Roman Histories*, Volume V, 68.32.
a deviant, untrustworthy people. No other subjects in imperial Rome had been banished from their homeland and exiled from the city of Rome so frequently. The stigmas against Jews were no doubt affected by their numbers. Indeed, the population of Jews has been estimated at its peak to make up seven to ten percent of the Roman Empire.\footnote{\textsuperscript{112}} Dio’s history and other Latin accounts like it\footnote{\textsuperscript{113}} were emblematic of Roman antipathy toward Jews, an evident antagonism that greatly influenced the early Church.

\textit{Roman Influence on the Early Church and Anti-Judaism}

There were many factors in the first two centuries CE that encouraged division between most Jews and those who followed Yeshua of Nazareth. As early as 64 CE, Roman imperial law recognized a difference between the Jewish religion and the new offshoot of believers in Rome recently dubbed “Christians.”\footnote{\textsuperscript{114}} Quickly, Roman law gave incentive to

\footnote{\textsuperscript{112} Ancient population estimates are tricky. The figure of seven to eight percent is according to the research of controversial author Schlomo Sand in his \textit{The Invention of the Jewish People}, 167-169. He bases this figure off the prevalence of conversion to Judaism. Some of his proofs include Horace, Tacitus, and Juvenal. Horace wrote, “like the Jews, we [the poets] will force you to come over to our numerous party.” And Seneca, often sympathetic to Jews, wrote that “the customs of this accursed race have gained such influence that they are now received throughout all the world. The vanquished have given laws to their victors.” As stated earlier, Botticini and Eckstein estimate that Jews comprised even more: 10\% of the Roman population. See Q. Horatius Flaccus (Horace), \textit{The Works of Horace: Satires}, C. Smart, Theodore Alois Buckley, ed. (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1863) \textless http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/text?doc=Perseus:abo:phi.0893.004:1:4\textgreater (2016), 1.4.12; Lucius Annaeus Seneca, “De Superstitione,” in Menachen Stern, ed., \textit{Greek and Latin Authors on Jews and Judaism} (Jerusalem: Israel Academy of Sciences and Humanities, 1974), vol. 1, 431; Botticini, \textit{The Chosen Few}, 18.}

\footnote{\textsuperscript{113} See the works of Paulus Orosius, \textit{Seven Books of History Against the Pagans} (Liverpool: Liverpool UP, 2010), 7.12.6.}

\footnote{\textsuperscript{114} The Christian writer Luke in Acts 11:26 credited the inhabitants of Antioch, Syria, as bestowers of the name “Christians” to Jewish believers who saw Yeshua of Nazareth as the “Christos.” The Emperor Julian noted that many nicknames came from Antioch, almost all meant as an insult. For more, see Charles Ellicott, \textit{Ellicott's Commentary on the Whole Bible, a verse by verse explanation: Volume VII Acts to Galatians} (Whitefish, MT:}
widen the divide: after the “Jewish tax” was enacted, requiring Jews to pay their tithes to Rome instead of to the Temple, the emperor Nerva decreed that Christians (as non-Jews) were exempt. There were factors within the budding Church: Paul’s epistles and Luke’s book of Acts blamed Jewish authorities for the violent deaths of key followers. Moreover, the death of Yeshua of Nazareth prompted the greatest accusation of Jewish guilt within the early Church. It is likely that this animosity was reciprocated. But the fundamental link in the anti-Jewish bias of the developing Church was its outgrowth from the Roman perception of Jews as an enemy. As one author writes, “Christian anti-Judaism…is not the first cause here; the Roman war against Judaism is.”

Though Jews had been the objects of fear and ridicule during the three wars, a reversal occurred during the second and third centuries CE. Christianity was labeled even

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115 Literary Licensing, LLC, 2012), 75. The first public discrepancy came under the reign of Nero, when Christians were held liable for sabotage in the wake of Rome’s great fire. Jews were not blamed for the disaster. Prior to this edict of 96 CE, it is unknown to what extent Jews and Christians were identified as one and the same. The edict required Christians to provide hard evidence that they were not Jews. There is debate, due to the brief interval this edict was in effect, as to how concrete the imperial dichotomy was between Jews and Christians in the first two centuries CE. For more, see Stephen M. Wylen, *The Jews in the Time of Jesus: An Introduction* New York: Paulist Press, 1995), 190–192; James D.G. Dunn, *Jews and Christians: The Parting of the Ways, CE 70 to 135* (Grand Rapids, MI: W. B. Eerdmans, 1999), 33–34; Mary Taliaferro Boatwright, Daniel J. Gargola, Richard John Alexander Talbert, *The Romans: From Village to Empire* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 2004), 426.

116 As in 2 Corinthians 11:24. It is seen in the expunging of Jesus’ new sect by Jewish leaders at Yavne, or in the debate between Paul of Tarsus and the Ebionites/other Jewish-Christians who still followed Mosiac mitzvot. Most prominent examples are the deaths ordered by Jewish leadership of James in Jerusalem and Barnabus in Cypress. See Flannery, *Anguish*, 27.

117 Dan Cohn-Sherbok, *Anti-Semitism: A History* (Gloucestershire: Sutton, 2002), 45; Flannery, *Anguish*, 28. It is not certain that rabbinic Jews such as Rabbi Yonatan ben Zakkai identified the Yeshua movement, and equally unconfirmed that the Sanhedrin forbade all Jews in exile from associating with a believer of the heresy. It is a debated point whether synagogues forbade Jewish Christians from worship if they had declined to pay the *Fiscus Judaicus*. But it is a common argument that the sectarianism within a fragmented Judaism was both its defining note during this age and a weakness Rome exploited to control Judaea. For more on the debate, see Jonas Alexis, *Christianity and Rabbinic Judaism: A History of Conflict Between Christianity and Rabbinic Judaism from the Early Church to our Modern Time, Volume 2* (Bloomington, IN: Westbow Press, 2013), 95.

118 Carroll, *Constantine’s*, 86.
more of a detrimental sect and hotbed for sabotage and treachery than was Judaism.\textsuperscript{119} During the reigns of Septimius Severus, Maximinus, Valerian, Decius, and especially Diocletian, persecution against Christians expanded, whereas violence against Jews never reached such peaks during the third century.\textsuperscript{120} Whereas after the revolts Judaism again became accepted and legitimized as an ancient religion in the century, Christianity—now divergent from Judaism—was widely regarded as \textit{superstitio} by Roman emperors, and far more dangerous.\textsuperscript{121} This Roman hostility toward new cults, coupled with the opportunistic factionalism for which Rome was famous, easily encouraged other religions and emperors to incite violence against Christians.\textsuperscript{122}

As a developing early Christian population faced Roman persecution, its Gospel-writers found it best not to center the Gospels on Roman brutality. The canonical Gospels do not mention Rome’s rampant and bloody putting-down of a revolt occurring just after Jesus’ birth, nor the execution of its chief apostles, including Peter and Paul. When Emperor Nero


blamed the new movement for the “Great Fire” that damaged or incinerated five-sevenths of the city,¹²³ the least expected and most foolish Christian reaction would be to incite more slander and unjust accusation of treachery by zeroing in on how Romans had murdered their god. The alternative—an emphasis on Jewish culpability—is what leads Elaine Pagels in The Origins of Satan to conclude that Christians accorded Jews more blame (and less to the Romans) in concert with the greater proximity Christians had to Roman authorities who could do them harm.¹²⁴ In the factional political framework of Rome’s pluribus, disparate groups felt the pressure to compete for Rome’s good graces, often at any rival’s expense.

Mileto the second-century bishop of Sardis was the first to unambiguously excoriate the Jews for being “Christ-killers” in his Peri Paschal.¹²⁵ Prior to the year 167, Jews had been blamed for slaying their own Messiah, but never for deicide. Mileto laid guilt on the Jewish heads of Caiaphas and King Herod, but none on Pontius Pilate.¹²⁶ At a time of particular oppression against Christians, this transposition of blame away from Roman

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¹²⁴ Elaine Pagels, The Origins of Satan: How Christians Demonized Jews, Pagans, and Heretics, (New York: Random House, 1995), 104–105. To illustrate, she highlights that within the Gospel of Mark (written c. 68CE), Satan was said to dwell in disparate entities: a possessed man, the Scribes, Jesus’ family, even Peter. Yet after three decades of ingratiation into the Roman world by 100CE, John’s Gospel emphasizes Jesus’ denunciations of Jews as the offspring of Satan and has no criticism for Rome. The Greek term for the Jews, hoi Ioudaioi, is used predominantly in the negative seventy-one times in John’s Gospel, in contrast to the sixteen times in Mark’s, Matthew’s, and Luke’s altogether, although she makes allowance for John’s reference to Rome as “the Beast.”

powers and onto the Jewish minority was not so much a cry for Jewish blood as a plea for Rome to spare Christians.¹²⁷

The leaders of the new Christian movement, many of them Jewish, further disavowed relations with Jerusalem as Roman legions descended on Jerusalem for the final time. Church fathers saw the exile of Jews from Jerusalem in 135 CE, the diminishing of Jewish proselytizing, and the failure of Julian the Apostate to rebuild the Temple in 363 CE, not to mention the Christianization of the Roman Empire, as signs that Christianity had arrogated the Jews’ former status as God’s chosen people. The second century saw the initial steps of abandonment or usurpation of Jewish practices by the Church.¹²⁸ Rabbinic Jewish writers and Patristic Fathers were often in conflict, and Christian leaders began to define anything opposed to their teachings as “Jewish.” For example, the Church Father Tertullian wrote, “From the Jew the heretic has accepted guidance in this discussion…Let the heretic now give up borrowing poison from the Jew…the asp as they say from the adder.”¹²⁹ Peter of Antioch referred to Christians that refused to venerate religious images as having “Jewish minds.”¹³⁰

Granted the identification of Jew as heretic was in its initial state, Christianity was still in the process of differentiating itself from Judaism. There was a stigma among Church leaders that the Jews had been the chosen people of God, and that Christianity had supplanted them. This was a significant shift in attitudes and beliefs.

¹²⁸ Cohn-Sherbok, Anti-Semitism, 46; Jaroslav Pelikan, Jesus Through the Centuries: His Place in the History of Culture (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1999), 96. Tertullian (c. 160-225) first records the sign of the cross. The common hand signal representing the first Hebrew letter for the Torah was discontinued by rabbinic Judaism when Christians began making the sign of the cross, with a similar manual movement. Tertullian wrote of Jewish persecution of Christians in the second-century, cementing the perceived antagonism, citing a rabbi Tarphon who supposedly invoked a curse on himself if he did not burn all Christian Scripture.
¹³⁰ Michael, Catholic Antisemitism, 28–30.
Fathers against Christians who claimed Jewish identity in the first few centuries CE, which shows that such Jewish Christians existed. Even as Christians distanced themselves from Judaism, commonalities abounded: veneration of the Hebrew Bible, the refusal to worship pagan gods, observation of a weekly holy day, and the persecution at Roman hands. Despite the growing distance between Church and Synagogue, Jewish identity was still widely claimed by many Christians until the radical fourth-century transformation under Constantine. This is when the charge of heresy and the fate of Jews became linked by the binding power of law.

Rome became a unified quasi-Christian empire under the banner of Constantine (272-337 CE). It was quite literally a war banner the emperor claimed to have seen, as his biographer Eusebius proudly recorded, engraved with the words In Hoc Signo Vinces, Under This Sign: Conquer. Christianity underwent such radical change under Constantine’s thirty-

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133 Carroll, Constantine’s, 185. Constantine did not endorse Christianity as Rome’s state religion—that is a common misconception that would not occur until over fifty years after Milvian Bridge. Instead, he legitimized it, and within twelve years demanded its canonical uniformity. Until 324, his religious affiliations were indiscernible. He courted different religious factions for support: Summus Deus became a divine designation for pagans and monotheists alike. The sun god Apollo and various other deities could have been taken for this “Supreme God.” Constantine did not remove the image or words “Sol Invictus” from his coins until 321.
year patronage as to dwarf all three centuries of its history before. Since the overwhelming defeat of his rivals at Marseilles and Milvian Bridge in 310 and 312, Constantine marshaled Christianity into a venue for religious uniformity of the Roman Empire.

Constantine’s recognition of a persecuted faith as a conduit for political hegemony was well rewarded. Christianity was fragmented, malleable, and responded well to his sponsorship. He set out to unify a political empire—one that had been intentionally divided by Diocletian since 285 CE—through defining an orthodoxy for a diffused religion and purging all dissenters. Constantine invaded the eastern half of the empire in 324 CE under the pretext of protecting Christians there and portrayed his civil war with Licinius in religious terms. Whether or not the emperor was a convert himself, he saw support of the Christian faith as utilitarian; it was expanding, was not a millennium-old religion, and had no central seat of authority, quite unlike Judaism.

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135 Andreicuć, Church’s Unity, 214; Henry Chadwick, The Early Church (London: Penguin Books, 1993), 142-43; Robert M. Grant, “Constantius II (317-361),” Encyclopedia of the Early Church, 2 vols. Everett Ferguson, Michael McHugh, Frederick W. Norris, eds. (New York: Garland, 1997), 286-87; Hans Pohlsander, The Emperor Constantine (London & New York: Routledge, 2004), 41-42. For more on Constantius toward Athanasius, see Timothy D. Barnes, Athanasius and Constantius: Theology and Politics in the Constantinian Empire (Cambridge, MA: Harvard UP, 1993), 56-175. To Constantine, there was little separation between a well-managed religion and a well-governed state. His son Constantius decreed that the empowerment of Christianity was “politically expedient for the welfare of the empire.”

Constantine identified Judaism as a detriment to the Church. As long as Jewish law, culture, and heritage remained connected with any Christian demographic, the latter was more difficult to control. In 325 CE, upon his call for a council at Nicaea, Constantine reversed his guarantee of protections for Jews that he had made four years earlier. As the empire’s singular monarch, he excoriated Jews and those who dissented from the orthodoxy declared at Nicaea. One reason for his calling together the Council was to identify the Jewish faith as a nefarious sect.

To do so, he had to distance Christianity from Judaism; this meant forbidding the Church from practicing Jewish customs. Jewish believers in the “Christos” were now required to give up all Jewish connections: practices, holidays, and friends. Already many Christians had distanced themselves from the Jewish rite of observing Shabbat on the last day of each week. Now Constantine decreed Sunday the unequivocal day for worship for Christians. Constantine’s Nicene edict demanded that Easter—a focus on Jesus’ death, 

139 Eusebius, Church History, Book 3, ch. 5-6.
140 Ibid, Book 3, ch. 18, 19.
leaving room for Jewish guilt—would supplant Passover—the celebration of deliverance from Egyptian slavery—still widely practiced by some fourth-century Christians. The first degrees of victory over Jews and heretics are represented in the city’s name: Nicæa was so-called for the Roman goddess Nike. In the early quarter of the fourth century, Jewish-Christian intermarriages became condemned by the Church. Less than thirty years after Constantine’s death, his successor Theodosius ceased all state support of pagan temples and decreed that all those not aligned with the Nicene Creed were heretics, especially the Manicheans. In turn, his son Honorius denounced Judaism as *superstitio indigna*, and confiscated the gold and treasure sent from synagogues to Jerusalem. Constantine’s manipulation of the Church ensured a clear hostility toward, and the de-legitimization of, Judaism as a rival religion, so much so that the Patriarchate of Israel was abolished in 429.


144 Eusebius, *Church History*, Book 3, ch. 6. This fact was not lost on Eusebius.

145 This was determined at the fourth-century Synod of Elvira, held in Spain. One exception was made: Jews who had just been baptized could legally marry Christians. Jews and heretics were lumped together. For more, see: Alfred William Winterslow Dale, “The Synod of Elvira and Christian Life in the Fourth Century: A Historical Essay” (London: Macmillan, 1882) [accessed 17 Aug. 2016] <https://archive.org/stream/synodofelvirachr00dale/synodofelvirachr00dale_djvu.txt>, Chapter V, Section II.

146 Ramsay McMullen, *Christianizing the Roman Empire A.D. 100–400* (New Haven and London: Yale UP, 1984), 90. Honorius’ decree of Judaism as an “unworthy divination” in 399 followed thirty years after his father’s edict that Rome had but one state religion.

The Early Church: Heresy and Anti-Judaism

In his study on turning points in antiquity, Guy Stroumsa comments that Constantine was determined that “the Jews, together with the pagans and heretics, had to be publicly vanquished and humiliated.” Heretics and Jews, linked as common dissenters to a recent Christian orthodoxy, were increasingly merged in Patristic writings; that is a fact. Yet Jeremy Cohen and other historians have observed that it was not until the twelfth century that Jews were accused and found guilty of heresy, as I mentioned on page 1 of this thesis. These two facts are not contradictory. Rather, heresy itself shifted in meaning between antiquity and the high medieval period.

Today and in the medieval world, the term “heretic” pertains to those who, while claiming a religion, are theologically and obdurately outside the established creeds. The original Greek term ἀἵρετικὸς had a simpler, more innocent meaning, comparable to a “chosen creed” or later a “sect.” It only became a contentious term in the first century CE when regarded as a divisive faction, threatening to schismatize the beginning Church. In the Roman world, heresy was a charge directed against Jews and Christians by pagans, and

150 2 Peter 2:1, 1 Cor. 11:19, and Gal. 5:20 all use the term as a danger to the Church.
vice versa, and by Jews and Christians against each other. Even then, there was no
correlation between a heresy and a punishable crime yet.\footnote{Stroumsa, “From Anti-Judaism,” 5. Heresy was not immediately associated with Judaism, especially as belief in Jesus retained a largely Jewish demographic at the earliest stage of the Church. Anti-Jewish sentiments were soon after introduced, though antisemitism was very foreign to this stage of Christianity.}

“Jewish in spirit.”\footnote{Michael, \textit{Catholic Antisemitism}, 28–30.} Irenaeus made popular the use of the word “heresy” as a danger to the
his attacks on the Gnostics with his refutation of Jewish arguments.\footnote{Irenaeus, \textit{Contra Haereses}, 3.21, 4.7, 4.15, 4.24} Both groups denied
the Incarnation of Christ. Irenaeus was convinced that the Antichrist would be a Jew
enthroned in Jerusalem.\footnote{Ibid, 5.30.2. Irenaeus’ second-century belief that the Antichrist would be a Jew from the tribe of Dan was so influential even Thomas Aquinas regarded this as canonical 1000 years later. See also Cohn, \textit{Pursuit}, 77.} As previously mentioned, Tertullian accused the Jew of being the
teacher, predecessor, and poisoner of the heretic.\footnote{Tertullian, \textit{Adversus Iudeos}, 7.1-4, 9.2, 16, 13.24-25.} Throughout his thirty-eight certain
surviving works, Tertullian excoriated Jews and followers of “heretics” like Valentinian and
Marcion alike.\footnote{Tertullian’s \textit{Adversus Judaecus} and \textit{Adversus Valentinianus} were probably composed consecutively. Besides \textit{heresis} and Jews, Tertullian also combatted pagans and the papal decision to admit repentant murderers and fornicators into the Church. He also considered the remarriage of widows a sin.}

With Constantine the link between Judaism and heresy was carried over into public
policy. The empire, prior to the Council at Nicaea, had not lacked for all manner of rival
schools of thought within Christianity. The most overt consequence of Constantine’s imperial control was his immediate standardization of the Church. This “unity” was rather a homogenization of Christianity, meant to determine orthodoxy for a conciliated empire. All nonconformists, Jews and heretics among them, would quickly be disenfranchised. It was not surprising that Constantine, as the head of state, found need of a holy canon and a more rigid structure for the new state religion. The 250 bishops and church leaders summoned to Nicaea in 325 CE were only permitted to leave after arriving at a consensus. At this first Council the Nicene Creed was born. Jewish practices were deemed inconsistent with Christianity; Arianism and Gnosticism were condemned; and three bishops were exiled by the emperor for failing to adopt the new canon.

Following Nicaea, Jews were not the only religious population to be alienated: heretics ran afoul of Roman law as well. Constantine denied the legitimacy of the Donatists and deprived dissenters of their assemblies, their literature, even their humanity. Anti-
Nicene sects saw their places of worship confiscated. The Council of Thessalonica permitted emperors like Theodosian to brand the Arians, Anomoeans, and Macedonians as heretics in 380 CE and to deny them the right to assemble, worship, or evangelize. The late fourth century was a time of increased persecution for haereses, although the Church found exile immensely more preferable to execution as a sentence. Pope Siricius even excommunicated the Roman emperor for the secular execution of heretics, relenting only when the emperor repented. The Church Fathers enforced the protection of heretics and Jews. Before the collapse of Rome, both Jews and heretics were to be despised and made powerless, but not killed.

The late Roman Empire continued to regard heresy as a miscreant strand of Christianity associated with individual preachers or small localized sects. Heresy in antiquity did not take on the meaning of a vast threat to Christendom, as it did later during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. Only after the fall of the western empire did an Eastern Roman emperor care to define a “heretic” as “everyone who is not devoted to the Catholic Church


166 The first Christian heretic to be fatally condemned for sorcery was Priscillian. He and a handful of his followers were executed in 386 by imperial order. The Church rebelled against this precedent: Priscillian’s accusers were excommunicated by Ambrose of Milan and Pope Siricius. The two church men opposed Priscillian’s teachings, but “believed capital punishment to be inappropriate at best and usually unequivocally evil.” For more, see Philip Hughes, History of the Church: Volume 2: The Church In The World The Church Created: Augustine To Aquinas (London: Sheed and Ward, 1979), 27-28; William Kenneth Boyd, The Ecclesiastical Edicts of the Theodosian Code (New York City: Columbia UP, 1905), 47.

167 Dan Cohn-Sherbok, The Paradox of Anti-Semitism (London: Continuum, 2006), 34–35. Roman law rendered Jews impotent and held them at a distance from positions of power. Under the Codex Theodosianus, Jews were barred from civil, military, or legal professions.
and to our Orthodox holy Faith.” Jews surely fit into that notably open definition. For more than five centuries after Rome’s deterioration, Judaism and non-orthodox Christian sects in the early medieval period experienced a relief from the pressures instituted under Constantine and his successors. When the popular definition of heresy changed in the twelfth century to become an immediate threat, lethal stereotypes and stigmas were applied to Jews and others, earning them the dangerous label of “heretics.” This slander of heresy, spurred on by the Roman legacy of factionalism, wrought damage long after Rome’s decline.

The Second Roman Legacy: Factionalism in Late Antiquity.

The future of the Jews was most dramatically impacted by one factor: Rome, unlike any civilization before it, was adept at playing one neighboring people or faction against the other. This demonstrates the first point of factionalism’s culpability in anti-Jewish hostilities: manipulation was required. The Roman civilization was able to last for more than a millennium not merely due to its armies or its early safeguards against monarchies.


169 This pattern of playing factions against each other, not unique to Rome, but done best by Rome, is evidenced in the siege of Jerusalem of 63 BCE, in which Pompeius manipulated both claimants to the Hasmonean throne by acting as arbiter. Eventually he left the surviving faction’s figurehead Hyrcanus II as High Priest but stripped him of his royalty. This complexity of Rome’s success in playing one faction against another is my own historical explanation, although I am indebted to Shafer’s Judaeophobia, Goodman’s Rome and Jerusalem, and Peter Heather, The Fall of the Roman Empire: A New History of Rome and the Barbarians (Oxford: Oxford UP, 2007). For more referential support of factionalism, see: Josephus, “Antiquities,” 14:70-71; Josephus, “Wars,” 1:152-153; Samuel Rocca, The Army of Herod the Great (Oxford: Osprey Publishing, 2009), 7; Maurice Sartre, The Middle East under Rome (Cambridge: Harvard UP, 2005), 40-42; Ben-Sasson, A History, 222-224.

170 Thomas Madden, Empires of Trust: How Rome Built—and America is Building—a New World (New York City: Plume, 2009). Fear of the legionnaire precipitated the coexistence of hundreds of different cultures in the same empire, but the reality of the Pax Romana is that massive invasions of Scythians, Persians, Germanic tribes, and later Huns and Goths were not kept at bay by military strength, but by clever treaties with dual factions, and promises of rewards for the winner.
Romans were unprecedented in the ancient world for their system of alliances and manipulation of loyalties. Rome successfully portrayed a threat as a common enemy to other peoples, and in its latest centuries was able to pit one enemy against another without going to war itself. This degree of control and manipulation compelled British author A.N. Wilson to declare that Rome “was the first totalitarian state in history,” citing the absolutism with which they influenced and governed.\(^{171}\) For an ancient city of seven hills that reigned over an estimated 15-20% of the world’s population,\(^{172}\) such skullduggery in their politics and conquest was not only expected; it was a necessity.

Rome’s recent history had nurtured a fear of other factions. The Roman civil wars of 91-30 BCE emphasized the division within the empire and set the stage for hyper-vigilance against domestic dangers on the part of Roman leaders.\(^{173}\) Because its republican origin had ordained that power must never be centralized around a small group or a single man, its government rested on the will of a large aristocratic body, subject to one political coalition’s popularity before the next rose to power. A frail hold on power was easily defeatable, and even the existence of a rival faction meant competition and eventual conflict. This developed a keen culture of manipulation, fear tactics, and the ability to malign any populace for the

\(^{171}\) Wilson, Paul, 9; Carroll, Constantine’s, 80.  
\(^{173}\) Rome was never without partisan conflict, but her factions were political parties, not religious. Particularly corrupt in the last century of the Republic, factions were infamous for resorting to bribery, extortion, rioting, and assassination to gain control politically. The root word factio in truth refers to one of the four chariot-racing companies in Rome. These red, white, blue, and green teams inciting mass enthusiasm and often a thirst for blood from the crowds understandably contribute to a different definition for the term, inspiring similar competitive spirit and invective. For more, see Barbara F. McManus, “Notes on Roman Politics,” College of New Rochelle. Last modified July 2003. Last accessed 18 Aug. 2016, http://www.vroma.org/~bmcmanus/politics.html; Jo-Ann Shelton, As the Romans Did: A Sourcebook in Roman Social History (New York and Oxford: Oxford UP, 1998), 338.
danger it posed to the empire. When Roman legal philosophy was reclaimed by the Church in the eleventh and twelfth century, it came with a political culture that subjected a specific demographic to stigma and scapegoating.\textsuperscript{174}

The manipulation and very nature of Roman politics that reinforced division was not lost on the Romans. The Roman statesman Sallust lamented the political culture that pitted opposing parties against the greatness that results from unity.\textsuperscript{175} He even proposed that Roman virtue and greatness were only attainable when Rome was arraigned against a common enemy like Carthage. Fear of a foreign enemy was needed as it conquered domestic dissension.\textsuperscript{176} During the first and second century CE, Jews became that enemy, but there had been writing on the wall in the century before.

The senator Cicero delivered a speech in October 59 BCE seeking to exonerate a governor named Flaccus who had overseen the deaths of thousands of Jews. Cicero’s words initiated what Schafer has termed “the first evidence of Roman ‘anti-Semitism.’ ” The greatest of Roman statesmen identified Jews as the incongruity with and the antithesis of Rome’s traditional values, derided Jews as the embodiment of \textit{barbara superstitio}, and even

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\textsuperscript{174} Harold J. Berman, \textit{Law and Revolution: The Formation of the Western Legal Tradition} (Cambridge, MA: Harvard UP, 1983), ch. 3. Roman law became incorporated into every Western European kingdom by the twelfth century. This was mostly due to the discovery of a large segment of Justinian’s \textit{Codex} unearthed sometime between 1070 and 1135. When the \textit{Digesta}, the compilation of comparative Roman legal practices, was rediscovered in Amalfi, Italy, it ultimately prompted the founding or became the major project of the first proto-university in Bologna, Italy. Studying it was a long-term project. Applying comprehensive Roman law to medieval courts did not come until the late eleventh century. See also Peter Stein, \textit{Roman Law in European History} (Cambridge, MA: Cambridge UP, 1999), part 3.


\textsuperscript{176} Brenda M. Fields, “Sallust’s \textit{Bellum Iugurthinum}: Reading Jugurtha as the Other,” Thesis. (Gainesville, FL: University of Florida, 2007), 7, 48-49.
pointedly whispered at one point to make it less easy for the conspiracy of Jews to overhear.\textsuperscript{177} Cicero’s speech was not only the earliest example of Rome’s antisemitism, but also of a powerful trend in Roman power politics, of which Jews would play a part. As a result of these already-present cultural stereotypes about Jews as a misanthropic people at odds with the Hellenistic world, Rome was effective in interacting with Jews as a faction to be played against other minorities “competing with each other for Rome’s favor.”\textsuperscript{178}

The year before Jerusalem was sacked and demolished by Vespasian’s legions, the city of Rome saw a tumultuous civil war. Upon Nero’s suicide, four generals claimed the throne. Vespasian, among the claimants, left the siege of Jerusalem in the hands of his son Titus Andronicus. When Titus’ army had breached the wall, he was unable to restrain his soldiers from pillaging the city. Knowing the danger of appearing weak as his father tried to secure the throne, Titus chose to make the city an example of Rome’s wrath, and flattened even the holiest of Jewish sites. Historian Martin Goodman points out that this total destruction of an enemy city was not typical for Roman conquest and must have been devised as a show of power against rival factions that opposed Titus’ father.\textsuperscript{179} The dangers


of Rome’s system of factionalism—playing groups against others in a bid for power—had not been lost on the family of Vespasian or on the Jews of Jerusalem.\(^{180}\)

This conflict, exacerbated by two subsequent Jewish Wars and partially fanned by Rome’s neglect and disdain for Judaea, left the Jews with a virulent stigma. Cicero’s speech and Roman laws betray a pervasive need to control its empire by encouraging minorities to compete, rather than to work together politically, to vy for Rome’s favor. Although initial Roman antipathy toward Jews was a political conflict, not a religious one—Roman perception of Jews as the common enemy faded after Jews were banished from Palestine—Rome’s culture of factional conflict imprinted the anti-Jewish stigma on a fledgling Christianity. The Roman framework that encouraged a pitting of one faction against another only widened the difference between Jews and Christians. Finally, the emergence of Christianity as the faction chosen by the state was the final separation.

Constantine was the most influential agent in this rift, but he too was a product of Rome’s factional conflict. In his bid for the throne against three rivals, he knew he either had to claim and consolidate or be outmaneuvered. The factional mindset of Rome to identify and weaken one’s rival at any cost in order to secure power drove the actions of Constantine, whose influence over the Church has been seen. A principal faction of Christians, never having known political power, readily submitted to Constantine’s imperial patronage and

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\(^{180}\) Goodman, *Rome and Jerusalem*, 443. Upon Vespasian’s claim to the crown in 69 CE, his rival Vitellius led his own faction into Rome and seized Vespasian’s brother Flavius Sabinus, who served as the prefect of Rome. The mob subsequently hacked Sabinus to death.
became the centerpiece by which he could weaken any groups over which he had less control.\textsuperscript{181}

The Roman perception of the Jews as enemies shaped the subsequent image of the medieval Jew. The anti-Jewish attacks from Church Fathers like Justin Martyr, Melito of Sardis, Tertullian, Origen, Eusebius of Caesarea, Ephrem the Syrian, Aphrahat, John Chrysostom, and Ambrose of Milan have often been cited as garnering medieval hatred for Jews.\textsuperscript{182} Yet the two most influential Church Fathers to write of Jews were responsible for protecting the rights and lives of Jews well into the high medieval period. These were Saint Augustine of Hippo and Pope Gregory I.

\textit{Influence of the Church Fathers}

Augustine of Hippo (354-430) was the most pre-eminent of all Patristic writers, and more than any other, set the stage for medieval doctrine in the West.\textsuperscript{183} This is especially true for writings on preferred treatment of the Jews, despite the relative dearth of subject matter

\textsuperscript{181} Doyle, Bishop, 3; Andreicut, \textit{Church’s Unity}, 7. Constantine’s objective of one unified empire was multi-layered and anything but immediate. Jews and heretics were Constantine’s first targets to remove from power. The construction of synagogues was forbidden, and specific dissenters were silenced or disbanded. Pagans and orthodox Christians opposed these groups together. All Romans were allowed to join the state-sponsored faction, provided they renounced their old creeds. Finally, within a half century following Constantine’s reign, pagans were prohibited from worshipping publicly. One faction after another had been eliminated.


\textsuperscript{183} His treatises on free will vs. predestination, Trinitarianism, and just war were largely uncontested in the next seven centuries.
he devoted to it. The points in his *Tractatus contra Iudaeos* and other letters had far-reaching consequences, especially in the preservation of Jewish lives well into the medieval period. Jeremy Cohen summarizes the six Augustinian contributions as to why the Jews should be granted protection and even privileges:

1) Jews’ survival and their scattering testify to their divine punishment,
2) Jews’ survival confirms Christianity’s truth, and their blindness fulfills prophecy,
3) Jews both offer proofs that Christians have not forged prophecies, as pagans have supposed, and serve as guardians, scribes, or historians for Christians,
4) Jews’ steadfast refusal to abandon Mosaic law is valuable and admirable,
5) Psalm 59:12 prohibits rulers from killing Jews or barring their religious worship,
6) and refutation of Judaism validates Christianity, especially with Jews’ eventual conversion.

Each of these observations carried weight in later centuries in the consideration of how to tolerate the Jews of Europe. For example, Bernard of Clairvaux borrowed heavily from Augustine’s first, fifth, and sixth points when pleading for Jewish protection. Peter Abelard also referenced Augustine’s fourth point in his *Dialogus* to praise Jewish obedience.

The greatest influence Augustine had on medieval regard for Jews was in his *City of God*, wherein he included a demand to preserve Jewish lives and rights. This passage,

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186 Augustine of Hippo, *The City of God*, trans. William Babcock, notes by Boniface Ramsey (Hyde Park, NY: New City Press, 2012), book 18, ch. 46, 827-28. “But the Jews who killed him and refused to believe in him, to believe that he had to die and rise again, suffered a more wretched devastation at the hands of the Romans, and were utterly uprooted from their kingdom, where they had already been under the dominion of foreigners…
more than any other Patristic writing, has been credited for the tolerant relations between Christians and Jews in successive centuries.\textsuperscript{187} Even into the twelfth century when Church persecution of heretics and pagans began to occur on an unprecedented scale, Augustine’s doctrine afforded some measure of protection for Jews.

However, there are three other points in Augustine’s writings that proved to be detrimental in the later condemnation of Jews as heretics. Despite his positive influence, Augustine regarded Jewish disbelief in Jesus as repugnant, as did his contemporaries. Augustine propounded 1) an inherited Jewish guilt, 2) a Jewish abandonment of their own faith, and 3) a need to convert by force as a last resort.

The accusation of deicide did not originate with Augustine,\textsuperscript{188} but he posited that Jewish blindness to the Gospel was linked to their culpability as killers of Christ. This was an inherited sin, such that contemporary Jews shared in that guilt and lack of understanding. (Otherwise, why would they not convert instantly?) One original Augustinian declaration

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About them this prediction was made: “Even if the number of the sons of Israel be like the sand of the sea, it is only a remnant that will be saved.” (Isaiah 10:20)…In fact, there is a prophecy given before the event on this very point in the book Psalms, which they also read. It comes in this passage, “As for my God, his mercy will go before me; my God has shown me this in the case of my enemies. Do not slay them, lest at some time they forget your Law,” without adding, “Scatter them.” (Psalm 59:12) For if they lived with that testimony of the Scriptures only in their own land, and not everywhere, the obvious result would be that the Church, which is everywhere, would not have them available [to] all nations as witnesses to the prophecies which were given beforehand concerning Christ.”

\textsuperscript{187} Marc Saperstein, \textit{Moments of Crisis in Jewish-Christian Relations} (London: SCM Press, 1989), 11; Carroll, \textit{Constantine’s}, 218-19. The Jewish philosopher Moses Mendelssohn, over thirteen centuries after Augustine penned these words, said that but for Augustine’s “lovely brainwave, we would have been exterminated long ago.”

\textsuperscript{188} Mileto, “\textit{Peri Paschal},” \textit{Kerux}, 5-35. For more on Augustine’s accusations of Jews, see Bibliowicz, \textit{Jews and Gentiles}, 180-182; Shepardson, \textit{Anti-Judaism}, 27; Carroll, \textit{Constantine’s}, 7.
found in his *Tractatus* is “*Occiditis Christum in parentibus vestris,*”\(^{189}\) describing a punishable innate Jewish obstinacy. According to Augustine, this inherited guilt would play a positive role in the spread of the Gospel. The existence of the wandering Jew would reinforce the promise to Christians that the latter were the new *verus Israel.*

The most impudent of Augustinian claims was that the Hebrew Scriptures indicated that the Jews were only to follow the Mosaic law until the time of Christ; afterward, it became no longer binding. Thus Christians are the true followers of the (new) law, and Jews have abandoned God’s commands.\(^{190}\) This argument would become a justification centuries later for violence against Jews accused of heresy.

Augustine’s great passion was unity for the church, but even his irenic motives spelled disaster for those outside orthodoxy. Augustine believed that God called all Romans to be Christians through the laws of the emperors. At first he believed that conversion by force was never to be used. Later he amended his belief; he reasoned that some good may come from conversion by violence for heretic Donatists, who might feign conversion but succumb to God’s grace nonetheless.\(^{191}\) While he never advocated such violence toward Jews, it took little license on the part of later Christians to incorporate Jews into this philosophy.


\(^{190}\) Augustine, *Tractatus*, 7.10-8.11.

Fortunately for the Jews of Europe, Pope Gregory I countered Augustine’s writings on coerced conversions a century later. Gregory declared that any attempt at forced conversion of Jews was punishable by excommunication. “Just as license must not be granted to the Jews to presume to do in their synagogues more than the law permits them, so they should not suffer curtailment in that which has been conceded to them.” Jews were to be treated with kindness rather than violence. This last mandate must be so, he stipulated, such that Jews could be further convinced of the Gospel.

Pope Gregory I (also called the Great) reigned from 509-604 CE and strongly influenced the course of medieval Jewish-Christian relations. However, Gregory was vituperative in his description of the Jews, regarding them as stupid, arrogant, and blind. He reinforced the practices that Jews must neither proselytize nor compel Christian slaves to apostasy. Instead of according Jews a utilitarian value in a Christian world, as Augustine had, Gregory believed Jews were at cross purposes with the Church. “Now that Christianity had spread as far as England, what pagans still required Jewish testimony to validate the scriptural evidence for Christianity?” Jews now served a new function: to remind Christianity of the enemy. Christians are of Christ, while Jews were of the Antichrist.

193 Linder, Legal Sources, 426-427; Elukin, Living Together, 35. Gregory only allowed Jews to have Christian slaves by changing the meaning of slave. Apparently, dependent laborers could work for Jews. Likely, this was not so much to assist Jews than to preserve the current slave labor force. Jews were forbidden to seek conversions among these laborers.
194 Gregory, Homilia in Evangelia 2.32.4-5, Patrologia Latina 75-79, Jacquess-Paul Migne, ed. (Paris: Garnier, 1844-64).
Gregory viewed Jews as needing to be controlled but also protected. Jews must be allowed to worship as they chose, and any efforts made to expel them or destroy their places of worship were dealt with severely. Gregory demanded of lay authorities that Jews be given freedom of worship, and protection from persecution and confiscation of property.\textsuperscript{196} Gregory’s relative tolerance of the Jews was founded on a mixture of humanitarian and theological grounds and, together with Augustine,\textsuperscript{197} supplied the foundation for the next half millennium of secular and ecclesiastic treatment of Jews in Europe.

\textit{Jewish-Christian Interaction of the Early Medieval Period}

As much as Jews had been marginalized and demonized at various times in Roman history, the curious reality is that throughout the majority of the post-Roman world of Western Europe, Jewish and Christian relations were largely peaceably coexistent.\textsuperscript{198} What with Augustine’s and Gregory’s insistence on protection, a lack of a politically strong religious organization, and no continuance of Roman factionalism, anti-Judaism hibernated. During the majority of the early middle ages, Western Europe was notably decentralized, economically impoverished, made up of small communities that did not communicate, and in wide disagreement about proper worship, priestly duties, or the role of the Church.

\textsuperscript{196} Linder, \textit{Legal Sources}, 438; Elukin, \textit{Living Together}, 33. The case of one converted Jew named Peter who tried to ‘convert’ the synagogue by turning it into a church and bringing an image of Mary in July 599 drew Gregory to side with the local bishop and town leadership and stop Peter and his “undisciplined people.”
\textsuperscript{197} Both men cited the epistles of Paul and Psalm 59.
Recorded violence against Jews was exceptionally rare until the eve of the twelfth century. Even in seventh-century Spain—the clear extreme in governmental contempt for Jews in the early medieval period—anti-Jewish threats were rarely enforced. In any case, the Umayyad caliphate ended Visigothic rule early the next century, ensuring more religious freedom for Iberian Jews.\(^{199}\) Under Merovingian or Carolingian dynasties, no plagues were blamed on Jews or were followed by violent reprisals,\(^ {200}\) and expulsions were unheard-of. Even the anti-Jewish polemics of Agobard or Druthmar were mild in contrast to that of the ancient Patristic writers.\(^{201}\) If early medieval church councils issued declarations against Jews, it is practical to recall that these were all scattered gatherings of frequently shifting constituents who held minimal regional influence, lacking the monolithic power the modern world ascribes to them today.\(^ {202}\) The royal biographer recorded the travels of the Charlemagne’s trusted Jewish servant Isaac. After the visit to the court of Harun al Rashid, caliph in Baghdad, Isaac returned with the famous elephant.\(^ {203}\) There is a large void of evidence of the Jewish experience in the fifth through tenth centuries, but early medieval


\(^{200}\) To be sure, there were plagues in the early medieval period, but no accompanying anti-Jewish incriminations have ever been recorded.


references that exist do not bear much in common with the anti-Jewish denouncement of an earlier age.

Early medieval Jews may never have shared an equal footing in terms of liberties in Christian lands, but the same freedoms of worship, travel, commerce, and the right to appeal to their rulers belonged to them as much as they belonged to their Christian neighbors. Restrictions against intermarriage and social intermingling were widely relaxed, and evidence of religious intermixing appears even in royal courts. The only scandalous reporting of a conversion to Judaism of the Early Middle Ages was in c. 839 in the life of Bodo, a Christian deacon. No widespread action was taken against Jews.\textsuperscript{204} In fact, contrary to the later medieval organized efforts to convert Jews, proselytizing was remarkably absent in the early medieval period. According to Bernard Blumenkranz, before the eleventh century, the opposite may be true: that more Christians converted to Judaism than vice versa.\textsuperscript{205} There was so much interaction between Christian and Jewish commoners that Pope Stephen III felt compelled to write to archbishop Aribert, informing him of the existing dangers of allowing Jews allodial lands and intermingling with Christians.\textsuperscript{206} Even into the twelfth century, European Jews and Christians communicated and collaborated in many ways.

\textsuperscript{204} Nelson, \textit{Annals}, 41-42, 58, 65, 74, 202; Elukin, \textit{Living Together}, 48-49. Anti-Jewish violence had little precedent in the ninth century. No recorded repercussions followed the scandal of Bodo. The \textit{Annals of St.-Bertin}, for all its rage against Judaism at Bodo’s conversion, has no documented consequences. In the same text, there are no actions taken against alleged Jewish treachery in Bordeaux and Barcelona. When Charles the Bald was supposedly poisoned in 877, no action taken against his Jewish doctor Zedechias. The same was true for Agobard of Lyons’ anti-Jewish letters to Louis the Pious, whose vitriol produced nothing.


\textsuperscript{206} Elukin, \textit{Living Together}, 47; Linder, \textit{Legal Sources}, 444-45. As shown in Pope Stephen’s letter to Archbishop Aribert of Norbonne, allodial lands are those held freely, and not in a lord-serf relationship.
Jewish-Christian Collaboration

Jews and Christians could never have been total strangers, especially in the developing urban centers of Europe. Most Christians had never seen a Jew, but where there were sizable Jewish populations, there was daily intermixing commercially, socially, even theologically.\(^\text{207}\) The economic and political stability under Charlemagne, and the centralized effort to reproduce works of antiquity, were echoed in Jewish communities. “The knitting together of a Christian consciousness in Carolingian Europe probably had some effect on the self-awareness of Jews.”\(^\text{208}\) It could be that Jews began to form the seeds of modern rabbinic Judaism, influenced by the Christian movement toward unity. Into the twelfth century, most aspects of medieval Jewish-Christian relations had not changed in the near-millennium since the end of Roman power.\(^\text{209}\) “Jews of the hasidei askenaz, the so-called pietist movement begun in the twelfth century, presented their world as one of ‘relatively peaceful co-existence between Jews and Christians.’”\(^\text{210}\)

\(^{207}\) Elukin, *Living Together*, 47.


Evidence of Jewish and Christian scholars working together and exchanging knowledge was recorded in early twelfth-century Occitania and Northern France. Stephen Harding, the third abbot of Citeaux, consulted several Jewish rabbis for elucidation on inconsistent passages in order to standardize his monastery’s Vulgate Bible. The rabbis assisted the Cistercian endeavor for years afterward, until Bernard of Clairvaux criticized the practice. Jews were “key interlocutors for groups of Bible scholars in Paris in the twelfth century; they offered Christians instruction in Hebrew as well as Jewish interpretations of biblical texts. Despite the obvious obstacles to agreement and mutual acceptance, they could speak about the same text with the same kind of religious language.”

Jewish-Christian scholarship was not bound only to regional collaboration; both faiths borrowed from and admired each other’s discoveries. Cistercian Nicholas of Trois Fontaines preferred Jerome’s translation of the Psalms above two others because it was closest to the “Hebrew truth.” As twelfth-century rationalism flourished in cathedral schools, it developed simultaneously in rabbinic centers of learning. Jewish thinkers doubly enhanced European culture, first in Jewish scholarship, then as a strong influence on Christian

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211 Kienzle, Cistercians, Heresy, 39.
212 Julie Kerr, “An Essay on Cistercian Liturgy,” Cistercians in Yorkshire Project, University of Sheffield, <http://win.ocist.org/pdf/Cistercian_liturgy.pdf>, Accessed 21 Aug. 2016, 13. Kerr cites Dijon, Bibliothèque Municipale, Manuscripts 12-15. Kerr records that “Harding’s revisions were largely concerned with the removal of superfluous passages in the Book of Kings – the places are clear from where the parchment has been scraped – and he intended that this corrected Bible should be the official model for further copies; alterations were prohibited. The work reflects Harding’s great zeal for authenticity and uniformity, but is today valued for its beautiful illuminations. It was originally bound in two volumes but now survives in Dijon in four.”
214 Kienzle, Cistercians, Heresy, 65; Smalley, Bible, 78-80.
philosophers. For example, the Latin translation of Solomon ibn Gabirol’s *Fons Vitae* was a much circulated work among Christian readership who did not know it was composed by a Jewish philosopher. Jewish rationalism and mysticism also grew in tandem with their Christian counterparts.

Whatever coetaneous relation existed between Jews and Christians saw a general decline by the end of the high medieval period. The pressures of factionalism returned during the twelfth century, compelling the castigation of all perceived enemies of the developing Church. Many contributing factors brought about an enmity born of fear against Jews and against others branded with heresy. Even men who believed in the protection and freedom of Jews in Christendom would greatly contribute to the anti-Jewish bias—influential men like Peter Abelard and Bernard of Clairvaux.

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217 Yitzhak Baer, “The Social-Religious Tendencies of *Sefer Hasidim*” [Hebrew], *Zion* 3 (1938): 11; Marcus, “Dynamics,” 30. Baer has pointed out how the German Pietist work *Sefer Hasidim* (Book of the Pietists) contains the word “diallektik,” just as the Catholic Church had thoroughly popularized its use in their cathedral schools and universities in the late twelfth and early thirteenth centuries.
CHAPTER 2: TWELFTH-CENTURY FACTIONS

What social pressures brought about twelfth-century factionalism and accompanying anti-Jewish stereotypes? A spirit of apostolicism, the launch of the Crusades, the reintroduction of Roman law, and increased contact with non-Christian empires are frequent answers, but most of these factors were themselves caused by an overarching movement: a spirit of reform within the Church. Messianic predictions foretelling the end of the world at the end of the millennium cultivated an immensely strong drive to experience life in humility and holiness. This desperate messianism had manifested in tenth-century Western Europe, compelling many to found monasteries and scrutinize spiritual teachings. Norman Cohn contends that the zeitgeist developed due to new-found wealth in Europe’s recent empires that caused grave discrepancies between urban and rural populations, an uprooting of local kinship, and a strong search for identity. Gregorian reforms incited the search for a holier life and for a more Christ-like Church, launching unparalleled social movements of longevity and influence among the laity and elites alike.

The three great aims of these reforms were to establish the centrality of the Church within Western Europe, to eradicate all clerical traditions and practices deemed unhealthy, and to pattern monastic life after the glorified days of previous centuries. The third goal was also the first chronologically, as bands of monks initiated a professed return to a more Benedictine life. Chief among them were the monasteries of Cluny, Brogne, and Gorze.

218 Cohn, Pursuit, 58-61. Cohn argues that the growth of cities resulted in the dissolution of bonds of kinship and of the local identity among serf or peasant populations. Many trades with exporting markets had sweatshops or poorly paid labor forces, rather than guilds. He credits this pattern as a contributing factor in the development of desperate messianism.
which sought to spread ideas and train monks in order to return to “an idealized view of an earlier Church.” The popularity of Benedict of Nursia and other founders of monastic rules expanded precipitously. Unprecedented evangelism saw tenth-century mass conversions in Poland, Scandinavia, Russia, and Hungary.

This preaching of a more reformed monasticism beginning in the tenth century initiated a hunger for the \textit{vita apostolica} that would flourish in Europe for the next several centuries. The emphasis on poverty, preaching, and communal living—all cornerstones of the medieval reformation based on a particular interpretation of the book of Acts and the Gospels—prompted a multiplicity of resultant movements. The social demand for an ideal Christianity compelled great changes in the Church, and the factionalism of the twelfth century was founded on the major components of the eleventh.

\textit{The Influence of Gregorian Reform and the Crusades}

Inspired monastic leadership sought to strengthen and reform the Church. With the founding of the monastery of Cluny in 909 and its subsequent accumulation of power, a concerted effort was made to consolidate papal control and establish a more hegemonic

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\item[220] Bolton, \textit{The Medieval Reformation}, 20; Uta-Renate Blumenthal, \textit{Pope Gregory VII between Canossa and Church Reform} (Darmstadt: Primus Verlag, 2001), 106; Ernest W. McDonnell, “The ‘Vita Apostolica’: Diversity or Dissent” \textit{Church History} Vol. 24, No. 1 (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, Mar. 1955), 15-31. Apostolicism was the simple emulation of Jesus and his apostles, as the name \textit{vita apostolica} suggests. The desire for the apostolic life developed at least by the eleventh century, as its primacy was urged by Pope Gregory VII, the pope for whom the Reform movement was named. The \textit{vita apostolica} was a coupling of love for neighbor (showing Christian love while living in the \textit{world}) and living like the apostles (choosing the simplicity of God’s way rather than worldly treasure). These dual ideals encouraged the explosion of preaching at the outset of the twelfth century. Alan of Lille therefore posits Preaching as the chief virtue in 1185 on his list of seven virtues.
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conformity within the Roman Catholic Church. Over the next two centuries, Cluny and other orders determined to purge the corruption and investiture from the Church—first from the monasteries, then from the Church, and finally from all of Christendom.

The way to a more uniform, hierarchical, and powerful ecclesiastic body had many obstacles, however. The emphasis on individual holiness in the eyes of God prompted a diversity of interpretation on what apostolic life meant. Small gatherings of communal Christians were more eager to follow impassioned preachers than an occasional disobedient monastery or an inconsistent priest. Lay rulers held unchecked power over ecclesiastic appointments. Self-governed monasteries like Cluny that were answerable only to the Pope were the great exceptions. The past accumulation of wealth, especially among ecclesiastic communities, had prompted laity to seek their own spiritual answers. Lastly, the papacy itself was subject to the rulings of secular lords, and the pontiff had been reduced to governing as would a Roman patrician, rather than as a Father over a continental Church.

Apostolicism was not enough; consolidation and codification were called for, and the Gregorian Reforms were initiated. The eventual election of one Cluniac monk Hildebrand—renamed Gregory VII (1073-1085 CE)—inaugurated the successful campaign against simony, investiture, clerical marriage, and heresy. Three more Cluniac popes

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221 Southern, *The Making*, 219-257; Elukin, *Living Together*, 69; Colin Morris, *The Discovery of the Individual: 1050-1200* (New York: Sheed & Ward, 1973). The build-up to the twelfth century was a predecessor of humanism, which scholars have named “discovery of the individual,” but what Elukin argues should more accurately be “discovery of the self.” Medieval people saw themselves as more intensely individual “in relation to each other, as well as in relation to God.”

222 At times, the papacy has been warred over as if it were a secular title. In 963, Emperor Otto I appointed a pope from three rival claimants in a gridlocked Rome. A century later, three simultaneous popes had to be deposed by Henry III in 1046 and replaced by his appointment.

followed. Ultimately, Cluny was mother to at least 314 houses throughout Europe, establishing a direction of conformity within the church, opening more access to education through monastic training, accumulating a new kind of wealth for the Church hitherto unseen, and wielding unprecedented influence amid and over lay rulers.  

A new hierarchy developed in Christendom in which all laity were subject to all ecclesiastics, and all clergy subordinate to the Pope. The vast influence of these reforms was aided by Cluny’s growing reputation, its altruistic motives, and its appeal to a former glory of the Church.  

Scholasticism was a reason-based movement founded by eleventh-century reformers like Anselm and Lanfranc. A passion for the preservation of texts helped reintroduce selected works of Aristotle that spurred on the Scholastic movement. Monasteries had maintained classical literature first during the reigns of Charlemagne and Louis the Pious, but

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225 Kienzle, Cistercians, Heresy, 28; Edward Peters, Inquisition (New York: Free Press, 1988), 40-41; Jeffrey Burton Russell, Dissent and Order in the Middle Ages: The Search for Legitimate Authority (New York: Twayne, 1992), 3-4, 9-11; C. H. Lawrence, Medieval Monasticism: Forms of Religious Life in Western Europe in the Middle Ages (New York: Longman, 1984), 76-96, 178-179; Bolton, Medieval Reformation, 37-44, 81-82, 94. On Cluny’s origin and ascent, see: H. E. J. Cowdrey, The Cluniacs and the Gregorian Reform (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1970), esp. 8-15; Raffaello Morghen, “Monastic Reform and Cluniac Spirituality,” Cluniac Monasticism in the Central Middle Ages, Noreen Hunt, ed. (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 1971), 11-28; Kassius Hallinger, “The Spiritual Life of Cluny in the Early Days,” Cluniac Monasticism in the Central Middle Ages, Noreen Hunt, ed. (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 1971), 29-55. As to motives: Monastic orders like Cluny were the prime examples of men and women caught up in the apostolic spirit. The aims of the Gregorian reforms were to sanctify the world and to gain salvation for as many souls as possible. Rather than pursuing power for its own sake, Cluniac efforts toward more systematic statements of belief and rules for behavior were means toward a spiritually salvific end. These standards would lead to the Fourth Lateran Council and a hardening of these goals for Christendom championed by Cistercians. As to its appeal to glory days: Gregory VII and his adviser Humbert of Silva Candida averred the “solidification of ecclesiastical organization followed upon the rebuilding of the empire under Charlemagne.” Cluny also harkened back to Benedictine Reforms and earlier.  

226 Ninth century Johannes Scotus Eriugena of Ireland is credited as the earliest of the four founders of Scholasticism, but his works of translation occurred centuries apart from any fellow champion of reason. For more, see Anne Freemantle, ed., “John Scotus Eriigena,” The Age of Belief: The Mentor Philosophers (Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin, 1954-55), 72–87.  

227 The preservation of texts by Carolingian and Cluniac scribes whetted the appetite of philosophers and learned monks, allowing the infusion of Spanish/Muslim “lost” works of Greek authors to be in strong demand. For more on the Iberian contribution to Latin literature, see Lindberg, Science, 60-61.
now it could be sustained by a new growth of burgeoning cathedral schools. Aristotle’s *De Interpretatione* and *Categoriae* were thus in wide circulation, and dialectics, logic, and reclassification were the new cherished tools of regular canons and philosophers. Scholasticism championed both Aristotelean ratio to undergird faith and the reform movement’s purpose to establish a new hierarchical taxonomy.

The drive for reform within the Church and the pursuit of a more disciplined monasticism also gave rise to Citeaux’s founding. The Cistercian Order—the most powerful and well-organized monks of the twelfth century—grew out of the reform movement’s improbable hope to return to an idyllic, holy monasticism. The Cistercians adopted Cluny’s reverence for the Benedictine Rule and its freedom from secular control, but in most points Citeaux saw Cluny as still too rooted in the world. Citeaux created a more regimented hierarchy which enforced more accountability and looked less like the Cluniac

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229 Marvin Perry, Myrna Chase, Margaret C. Jacob, James R. Jacob, Theodore H. Von Laue, eds. *Western Civilization: Ideas, Politics, and Society*, (Wadsworth Cengage Learning, South Melbourne, Australia, 2008), 261-262; “Medieval Philosophy,” *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, The Metaphysics Research Lab, Center for the Study of Language and Information, Stanford University, 2004, <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/medieval-philosophy/>. Translated six hundred years previous by Boethius, they were the only two works to have wide circulation in the tenth through early twelfth centuries. The Recovery of Aristotle, begun in the later twelfth century would circulate forty more works of Aristotle and would further expand Scholastic studies, due to a rediscovery of Greek texts and the commentary by Averroes.
230 Aristotle’s foremost known work *Categoriae* was prized by Scholastics. Taxonomy was the Philosopher’s greatest scientific achievement. For more on Aristotle’s love of logic and classification, see Ammonius, *On Aristotle’s Categories*. S. Marc Cohen, Gareth B. Matthews, eds. (Ithaca, NY: Cornell UP, 1991).
231 Monks and clergy who became increasingly disgruntled with Cluny’s relative wealth, power structure, and looser adherence to Benedict’s Rule advocated for a reform to differ themselves from the Cluniac model. Citeaux was the most famous example, but other ascetic groups seeking a more radical apostolicism flourished: Carthusians in 1084, Premonstratensian c. 1120, Waldensians c. 1173, and Beghards and Beguins. These five movements were not orders of monks, but lay people moved by the apostolic zeitgeist of the mid-eleventh to mid-twelfth centuries. For an overview on all these movements growing out of the same spirit of apostolicism but averse to Cluny’s form, see Joseph H. Lynch, *The Medieval Church: A Brief History* (London: Longman Group UK Limited, 1992), 206-7, 210, 214-215, 221.
model based purportedly on secular fealty. The Gregorian Reforms’ intensified focus on Christian customs, proper burial, baptism, and religious rites gave unprecedented attention to a more sharply defined Christian identity. Cistercians went one step further: their reform of monastic rule was focused on Benedict of Nursia’s concentration on hard work and individual obedience, but Cistercians were even less moderate in their avoidance of distractions (such as women, beautiful art, and urban temptations) and the age of oblates.

The Gregorian Reforms elevated the priority to return to accepted monastic and secular ritualized practice. By the twelfth century, the Church developed stronger and tighter standards for a reformed Christendom. Yet as rival groups disagreed on the ideal rites and customs, the focus on proper behavior and ritual also set in motion an urgency between rival Church movements to condemn opposing Christian voices. The Reforms of the tenth and eleventh centuries paved the way for a more institutionalized Christian framework in the twelfth and thirteenth, a prerequisite for factionalism.

The components of factionalism were present in the grassroots spirit of Christian awakening and the Gregorian Reform movement. Often, tenth- and eleventh-century voices demarcate an ultimatum: those that lived apostolically were lauded; those who chose

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233 Giles Constable, *The Reformation of the Twelfth Century.* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1996), 28. Cluniac abbots and subordinates were referred to as “rex” and “princeps.” These complaints of Cluny date far before the emergence of Citeaux. My own conjecture is that ecclesiastic fealty resembled that of the nobility of Northern France, whose land in the Aquitaine had been donated for Cluny’s autonomy.

234 Constable, *Reformation*, 42. Bolton defines the era in these terms, “…the conflict between the desire of the reformers to break out of the established forms of religious life and to find new ones suited to their spiritual needs and their continued adherence to and confidence in existing institutions. The new and relatively formless communities felt a pressure to institutionalize both from their own need to survive and from the ecclesiastical and secular authorities, who wanted to fit them into a recognized and controllable framework.”
the world were condemned. Propagandists of reform called simoniac clergy “servants of Satan.” Tenth- and eleventh-century monks were the holy archetype, while bishops and secular priests were sometimes excoriated as frequently as Jews were, prompted by differing interpretations of the *vita apostolica* and eschatological expectations. Church leadership—Pope Urban II among others—noticed the rift. Much of the success of Cluny’s reforming efforts stemmed from the longevity of its leadership, but as Cluniac hegemony and authority suffered in the first decades of the twelfth century, newer movements gained popularity. As the *vita apostolica* was championed by the new monks from Citeaux, the manifestation of monastic poverty became a strong critique of Cluny’s wealth. A more passionate Christendom was more prone to schism. Verbal condemnations manifested in sudden physical bloodshed with the onset of the Crusades. Systemic persecution against the Jews did not result because of one event, even an event as calamitous as the Rhineland massacres. Violence was present in the second millennium as early as 1009 with Jewish deaths as a reprisal for the fall of the Holy

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235 Cohn, *Pursuit*, 83-86. Clergy or “false clerics” were accused by the millennial masses of ties to the Antichrist for the absence in their lives of apostolic virtues: poverty, charity, humility. The choice was simple: churchmen were either apostolic or demonic.

236 Ibid, 39.

237 Constable, *Reformation*, 23. Monasticism was in vogue. And it was not an escape from the world, as it would be argued in the late medieval period. It was a “call to a more difficult and demanding life, and one that excited almost universal admiration.”


239 Lawrence, *Medieval Monasticism*, 80. Cluny enjoyed its apogee of power under the rule of two men over the incredible course of 115 years (Odilo 994-1048 and Hugh 1049-1109). The incredible longevity that contributed to Cluny’s consistent growth was abruptly halted under the subsequent abbot Pons (or Pontius) to the point that his successor Peter the Venerable worked years to undo the damage and erase his predecessor’s name from Cluniac records.
When Urban II made his call-to-arms in 1095, the resultant Jewish violence was not at all what he had envisioned. The carnage of 1096 was brutal and sudden, but it was neither calculated nor organized.

It was not the first time that ecclesiastic leadership had encouraged physical violence against another religion. What was different about the initiation of the Crusades was that it was the first opportunity for laity to join what had previously been available only to milites: war with enemies of Christendom toward salvific ends. The unintended audience of Urban’s speech interpreted this holy quest to begin with the deaths or forced conversions of the Jewish citizens of Rhineland communities. Primarily from the spring to the summer of 1096, whole populations of Jews in Mainz, Speyer, Cologne, Metz, Worms, and other cities were threatened, robbed, or killed, if not forcibly baptized by waves of crusading armies.

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Unknown hundreds died. Some Jews allegedly emulated Christian martyrology through the act of *Kiddush HaShem*: a form of mass self-execution in order to avoid apostasy or falling into crusader hands. After the last of the marauding crowds had passed, the majority of Rhineland Jews returned to their homes and their faith and foraged for normality.

What this means is that the First Crusade did not inaugurate an immediate period of Christian intolerance or of unrelenting insecurity for Jews. Robert Chazan writes, “When the violence of the spring months subsided, much of Jewish life returned to the status quo ante…the Second Crusade brought with it little actual violence against European Jewry. The slanders of the twelfth century occasioned anxiety and fear, but little bloodshed.”

Rhineland Jews seemed to treat 1096 as an impulsive, tragic outburst, not the dawn of a new age of fanaticism. After all, some burgher neighbors had attempted to save Jewish lives

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244 Eidelberg, *The Jews and the Crusaders*, 23, 25-27, 81, 83-84, 101-106, 124-125; Jim Bradbury, *The Routledge Companion to Medieval Warfare* (New York: Routledge, 2004), 182. Bradbury concludes that 800 Jews were slain in Worms when they refused to convert, and 1,100 Jewish lives were taken in Mainz that season.
246 Chazan, *European Jewry*, 39, 53. Chazan observes that the First Crusade ethic was free of any anti-Jewish rhetoric from the papal or upper ecclesiastic initiation. There is a paucity of Christian sources about the First Crusade’s attacks on the Jews because it was the perverse, unorganized, unauthorized factions that laid waste to Rhineland communities. These unruly serfs of the so-called People’s Crusade were not the glorified victors, so they deserved little attention from Christian sources. Not until the anti-Jewish attacks in Jerusalem itself is the violence relevant enough to record. The only accounts of the noble-led expeditions preying upon the Jews are in the Hebrew Chronicles of the First Crusade—in the aftermath of the initial bloodbath, Godfrey of Bouillon—the only unit to travel through ‘Germany’—exploited Jewish fears by demanding and gaining an extorted sum from at least two Jewish communities, as negotiated by the German royal court. For a direct translation, see Shlomo Eidelberg, *The Jews and the Crusaders*, 100.
during the attacks in 1096. Jews of Speyer had been granted autonomy in social and judicial affairs. Jews of Mainz had been strongly loyal to their city. If 1096 was not the turning point for anti-Jewish violence, then what influence did it have?

First, the Crusades were influential in developing an ecclesiastic utility for violence. Nearly all actions of the Church before 1096 were to hinder the brutality of *milites*—the Peace of God and Truce of God being attempts starting in the tenth and eleventh centuries to prohibit wanton violence among the laity. In the aftermath of the First Crusade, Church leaders were engaged in promoting a functional and even holy use of Christian belligerence while acknowledging the lamentable penchant for armed pilgrims to ravage Jewish communities. Church elites like Bernard of Clairvaux took steps to mitigate and denounce anti-Jewish violence while inciting following crusades, but rhetoric and hostility against

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249 Chazan, *European Jewry*, 24-25, citing Alfred Hilgard, *Urkunden zur Geschichte der Stadt Speyer* (Strassburg: K.J. Trübner, 1885), 305. He quotes, “Just as the mayor of the city serves among the burghers, so shall the Jewish leader adjudicate any quarrel which might arise among them or against them.” Bishop Rudiger of Speyer guaranteed Jews who had been recently exiled from Mainz the right to “conduct community business” in accordance with Jewish law and even commissioned the erection of a wall around the Jewish sector, anticipating the resentment of their neighbors.


251 Thomas Head, “The Development of the Peace of God in Aquitaine (970-1005)” *Speculum* 74.3 (July 1999), 656-686.

Jews nonetheless became interwoven with the crusader ethos. Such blanket violence against an enemy of Christendom removed inhibitions against attacking other Christian factions, as long as they posed a potential danger to the Church.

Second, the Crusades prompted a reevaluation in the validity of coerced conversions. Some Jews had chosen baptism to escape the violence of 1096. Conversion rather than annihilation had been encouraged by the crusading armies. “All this they planned because they did not wish to kill them—rather they labored to seize them and to forcibly convert them.” Church doctrine, from Augustine and before, prioritized the conversion of Jews as a goal, and emphasized it as an eschatological good omen. Whereas ecclesiastic leadership since the time of Gregory the Great had insisted that conversion by force would never validate any confession of faith, the popes of 1198 and beyond followed Innocent III’s new

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253 Eidelberg, *The Jews and the Crusaders*, 24-25; Chazan, *European Jewry*, 53. Men like Godfrey of Bouillon were the exception during the First Crusade, but later crusaders followed his example. According to the Chronicle of Solomon bar Simson, “He swore wickedly that he would not depart on his journey without avenging the blood of the Crucified with the blood of Israel and that he would not leave a remnant or residue among those bearing the name Jew.”


dictum: Even if Jews had been tortured and threatened, still they “might properly be forced to hold to the faith which they had perforce, lest the name of the Lord be blasphemed, and lest they hold in contempt and consider vile the faith they had joined.” 256 This shift in the theology of forced baptism was a dangerous portent in twelfth-century violence: the ends now justified the means. 257 If Jews’ souls were endangered, why not use violence to persuade them? Why not use this violence on heretical Christians’ souls as well?

Last, the Crusades initiated a shift in the evaluation of Jews as a viable threat. As R. W. Southern argues, 1096 was the impetus for a scrutiny of non-Christian elements. 258 The Western Church was quickly scrambling to frame non-Christian others in a worldview that identified a rival religion as a threat to Christianity’s existence. This redefinition had begun for Iberian and Eastern European Christians centuries before: the threat of Muslims made it more dangerous to be a Jew amidst Western Christians. It was a seed of distrust that cultivated wild stereotypes and fears of one’s enemies. Factional conflict was fueled by a fear


257 Andreicu, Church’s Unity, 9-10; Frend, Donatist Church, 241-42; Lamirande, Church, 24; Willis, Saint Augustine, 133; Peter Brown, Religion, 260, 263-264. It took small effort to extrapolate Augustine’s teaching that if Donatists could be forced into baptism for the salvation of their souls, why not Jews?

258 Southern, The Making, 13. Chazan discusses the effects of this scrutiny in European Jewry, 210-11.
of the other, something the two greatest factions of the early twelfth century Church amply demonstrated.

The Scholastics

Scholasticism grew out of the educational system of the monastic tradition. With an emphasis on education, the Carolingian dynasty was responsible for founding a schola in every abbey of the empire in the eighth century. For more than three hundred years, the monastic school was the primary source of training in Europe. Young men in these schools were instructed by a single instructor in the same room where monks prayed or Mass was held. Change came in the late eleventh century. Cathedral schools were urban educational forums where curriculum was taught often by itinerant masters, more prone to welcome debate and recently translated classics. Students were more likely to be ambitious, cosmopolitan young men, not the meditative oblates who joined secluded monasteries. Cathedral schools as in Paris offered a more diverse education in the developing cities and the promise of a more political vocation than what monastic schools could offer.


261 The beginning of cathedral schools is in tandem with the study of re-emerging Roman law and other classical disciplines. The cathedral school in Bologna opened in 1088 in order to decipher and apply the Digesta. Paris and Oxford developed within the next twenty years.
The heart of the new movement was the art of dialectics. The \textit{scholasticus} taught through posing questions or proposed contradictions between classical and medieval arguments, then responding in counter-arguments and rebuttals. In the early twelfth century, students would literally sit at the foot of the master, listening for several years to the lessons and answering questions posed to them to provoke thought. “By doubting we come to questioning, and by questioning we learn truth,” Peter Abelard averred. This dialectic style flourished in manuscripts like Peter Abelard’s \textit{Sic et Non}, a rationalist study of the beliefs of early Church fathers. Scholastics favored a more fluid dialogue between teachers and students that contrasted with the less interactive format of monastic schools.

Aristotle was the quintessential philosopher for Scholastics. The writings of the “Philosopher” had begun to reinvigorate the use of \textit{logica} in eleventh-century schools. Copies of the \textit{Categoriae} and \textit{De Interpretatione} were in high demand in Paris and Oxford. Aristotelian thinkers promoted the utility of Reason to uncover truth, arguing that Faith was

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263 Baldwin, \textit{Scholastic Culture}, 45. The years required to graduate with a degree are astonishing by modern standards. In thirteenth-century Paris, it took four to five years to become a master of the arts, and another twelve years to then be a master of theology. In Bologna, a master of the arts could then become a master in canon law after six additional years, or in Roman law after eight additional years.


no longer the sole bulwark in religion.\textsuperscript{266} This elevation of \textit{ratio} as a standard for truth was groundbreaking and provocative. Despite the ineffective denunciations of such sentiments from fideists like Bernard of Clairvaux and Stephen of Tournai, rationalism grew exponentially in cathedral schools and eventually universities.\textsuperscript{267}

Scholasticism exhibited its first signs of factionalism before the dawn of the twelfth century. Roscelin (c. 1050-c. 1125), a Scholastic Benedictine monk and the first teacher of Peter Abelard, was ridiculed by his Scholastic contemporaries for his conclusions that God was made of three separate essences as if they were three divinities. For this, he was charged with the heresy of tritheism, or the worship of three deities, and was threatened at the Council of Soissons in 1092 with excommunication or worse.\textsuperscript{268} Roscelin summarily recanted.

Finding truth through reason did not necessarily involve peaceful reconciliation.

\textit{Influence of Scholasticism}

Scholasticism would not reach its peak in European culture until the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, but it profoundly impacted the intellectual climate in both beneficial and destructive ways. One positive contribution of Scholasticism was its responsibility for the development of universities and higher learning throughout Europe. Due to the recent

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\item \textsuperscript{266} Anselm of Canterbury, \textit{Monologion}, Ch. 1, in Jasper Hopkins and Herbery Richardson, trans., \textit{Complete Theological Treatises of Anselm of Canterbury}, (Minneapolis: The Arthur J. Banning Press, 2000), 7; Saint Anselm (1033-1109) in his \textit{Monologion}, his famous argument for God’s existence, wrote that if a moderately intelligent man could gain understanding of God’s self-sufficiency, power, and goodness, “he could at least convince himself of most of these things by reason alone.”
\item \textsuperscript{268} Richard J. Utz, “Medievalism as Modernism: Alfred Andersch's Nominalist \textit{Littérature engageé},” \textit{Studies in Medievalism} 6 (1993), 76–90.
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reintroduction of Greek texts such as Aristotle’s *De Interpretatione*, Scholastics translated such work, though it required a new addition of philosophic words to the Latin language. Scholasticism has been credited with honing the languages of education in Western Europe into eloquent and articulate literary ones. Deliberation over the perfect words to express the Greek scientist’s precepts ultimately improved the quality of Western Europe’s educational forums. Michael Signer recognizes that the negative effects were equally profound. Besides a predisposition to regard unorthodox beliefs as dangerous (as seen in the case of Roscelin), Scholasticism contributed to the dehumanization of Jews. I have expanded on Signer’s and others’ work to demonstrate the three major ways this happened: through Scholastic language, through Scholastic taxonomy, and their ascribed prerequisites of reason.

Signer and Abulafia identify the first factor as stemming from Scholastics’ contributions to the Latin language. The academic dialogue provided many Scholastics with a confidence in their empowered faith, girded by logic, and an evidence of their rational minds. Dialecticians translated the text eagerly, incorporating newly minted philosophical terms heretofore only written in Greek, but at a cost to those who did not speak Latin. This difficulty with the new language of logic was to be the first setback for Jews. The Jewish scholar did not speak or write this newly advanced form of Latin—the vaunted language of

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271 The first point of the three is Signer’s and Abulafia’s; the second and third are mine.
reason. If a Jewish scholar’s arguments did not include this Aristotelian terminology, then he could not be seen as a competent rational peer.\textsuperscript{272} When Hugh of St. Victor and Joachim of Fiore provided the narrative and tropes for their anti-Jewish arguments, these fundamental criteria for rational dialogue were absent from Jewish camps. “No matter how convincing [Jewish arguments] may be, it was possible to claim that the Jews simply did not have the appropriate context for their grammatical exploration.”\textsuperscript{273} Jews and Muslims, no matter their intellect, were pitiably unable to reach divine truth through dialectics.\textsuperscript{274} The Scholastic scrutiny over the words to communicate rationally would become one diagnostic that deprived Jews of any rebuttal against charges of heresy.

Another Scholastic shift was the renewed interest in classification. The growing desire to reclassify humans in the taxonomical style of Aristotle was a disadvantage to Jews of twelfth-century Europe, as it was to those labeled as heretics. During an earlier century, Jews had no place within Aelfric of Eynsham’s framework of functional medieval society of warriors, workers, and those who pray.\textsuperscript{275} The intellectual impetus on classification brought

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  \item \textsuperscript{274} Alex Novikoff, “Reason and Natural Law in the Disputational Writings of Peter Alfonsi, Peter Abelard, and Yehuda Halevi,” \textit{Christian Attitudes Toward the Jews in the Middle Ages: A Casebook}, Michael Frassetto, ed. (New York: Routledge, 2007), 109-131.
  \item \textsuperscript{275} Aelfric, “Letter to Wulfstan,” in Duby, Georges. \textit{Three Orders: Feudal Society Imagined}. Trans. Arthur Goldhammer (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980), 105. It is unlikely that Aelfric, leading figure of eleventh-century monastic reform though he was, recorded an idealized account of hierarchical estates. Far too
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about by the Gregorian Reforms further alienated Jews as an incompatible part of a Christian world. By the twelfth century, Jews were less welcome as one of the many disparate European peoples trying to survive the manifold threats from the outside. By the thirteenth century, they were often reclassified as the outside threat. The anti-Jewish rhetoric of Scholastics’ polemics still made use of biblical indictments of Jews, but went to great lengths to explain through logic why the Jew was bereft of the intellectual recognition a Christian possessed. Often, the new brutal identification for Jews relegated them to being enemies of Christ, and thus of Christendom.

The third dehumanizing impact Scholasticism had on Jewish identity was in its criterion for rational thought. Saint Anselm, one of the founders of Scholasticism, taught that the element of reason links man with angels, and the element of appetite with the animals, and sentient will links all three. He also believed that faith was the foundation upon which reason developed. Without the former, dialectics would be ineffective—thus, Jews and pagans would benefit little. The inference is that if Jews could not reason, they had no place with the angels; their lot must be that of the beasts. Many of Anselm’s disciples argued even rigid to be accurate, his classifications leave Jews outside the bounds of Christian society. His model, then, is more emblematic of a broadening tendency to scrutinize the roles all played to expand Christianity within Europe. Jews were certainly not bellatores, and from Patristic writings, they were denounced for their failure as laboratores. John Chrysostom, the most vituperative of Church Fathers, wrote, “When animals are unfit for work, they are marked for slaughter, and this is the very thing which the Jews have experienced.” Although they may be classified as oratores, it was not to the right deity. Was not the latter’s role to intercede to God and to “promote Christianity among Christianity in God’s service?” This was hardly a welcome place for a Jew. For more on anti-Jewish writings, see Paul Cavill, Vikings: Fear and Faith (New York: Harper Collins, 2001), 130; Rosemary Radford Ruether, Faith and Fratricide: the Theological Roots of Anti-semitism (New York: Seabury Press, 1974), 179.

276 Anselm of Canterbury, Monologion, ch. 9.
more vociferously against Jewish ability to reason\textsuperscript{277} and against their ability to see anything beyond material gain.\textsuperscript{278} Some argued that rational discourse would be as ineffectual against a Jew as it would be against heretics like Roscelin.\textsuperscript{279} Reason was also used to exclude Jews from the dawning humanist sentiments of the twelfth century.\textsuperscript{280} This devaluation of Jews as irrational, superficial, and incompatible is a motif in which Abelard also engaged.

\textit{Peter Abelard}

In Scholasticism, no figure reached a greater fame than Peter Abelard. Born Pierre le Pallet to a nobleman in Brittany in 1179, he foreswore his sizable inheritance and trekked to

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Abulafia, \textit{Christians and Jews}, XI: “Christian Imagery of Jews in the Twelfth Century: A Look at Odo of Cambrai and Guibert of Nogent,” 24, 33. Guibert of Nogent identified the Jew with \textit{literaliter} or \textit{carnaliter} mindset, and so cannot “enter the sphere of faith.” Thus a Jew must let his will “lean towards reason for him to perceive the existence of a spiritual meaning lying beyond the plain meaning of the text. The combined efforts of man’s will, reason and intellect will open to him the realm of moral teachings; intellect is the vehicle to a mystical union with God.” Thus, an irrational Jew had no relationship with his God. For more, see Abulafia’s salute to Klaus Guth in \textit{Christians and Jews}, XI, 33
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Abulafia, \textit{Christians and Jews}, XI: “Christian Imagery,” 30. Guibert in his \textit{De Vita Sua} further argued that Jews could not see the divine reasons for Jesus’ sacrifice because they were able to comprehend only the material world, due to their innate cupidity. Jews can only look forward to material rewards, according to the Law of Moses, so the celestial reward Jesus promises cannot be grasped.
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Gilbert Crispin, \textit{Disputatio cum Judaeo}, 27-29; Constant Mews, “St. Anselm and Roscelin: Some New Texts and Their Implications,” in \textit{Reason and Belief in the Age of Roscelin and Abelard} (London: Ashgate, 2002), 86-98. Gilbert Crispin, another disciple of Anselm, followed his mentor’s model in that just as his master would not have debated a heretic who was no longer Christian, reason should not be employed against non-Christians. It is clear Gilbert was criticizing the fellow Scholastic and nominalist Roscelin in his polemic. In Gilbert’s \textit{Disputatio}, in which he imagined a debate with an anonymous classical philosopher, he asserted that reason would have no effect to convert a Jew, who would have no use for rationality. Gilbert distinguished his text in a departure from the norm of Jewish-Christian discourses. Anselm’s “calm method of unravelling problems” such that the debate was more respectful and less controversial was present in Gilbert’s disputation as well. Even so, Gilbert’s conclusion that Jews were incapable of logical cognition further undermined their humanity in Christians’ eyes.
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Abulafia, \textit{Christians and Jews}, XIV: “Twelfth-Century Humanism and the Jews,” 170-171. Hildebrand, bishop of Lavardin, was not a theologian, but he used classical, especially Ciceronian, natural law to explain how original sin was begun by the first Adam, but was negated by the second, Jesus. Because Jews did not deem Christ to have given them new life, they did not take part in this transformation. This focus on the renewal of man, says Abulafia, can be a creditable acknowledgement of the humanism, albeit non-secular humanism, alive in the twelfth century, but it is one derailment of Judeo-Christian relations, as Jews are exempted from the humanism of the age precisely because they are Jews.
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various regions of France to become a scholar. Abelard was charismatic, highly intelligent, and fair in appearance. As a philosopher he was unparalleled in oratory and self-confidence. His autobiography *Historia Calamitatum* is the primary source from which modern scholars have learned about his life. As the title suggests, it does focus on the persecutions and insults he suffered, as well as his affair with Heloise and its aftermath. In spite of Abelard’s often pretentious tone, historians have little reason to doubt the accuracy of his account, written within the last ten years of his life.

According to his autobiography, Abelard tired of one teacher after another as he sought an intellectual equal. He gained a reputation as one who had little respect for authority due to position, belittling his elders’ arguments during the lesson. Before the age of twenty-one, he had taken to debating with his first professor, the aged Roscelin, who was still espousing his controversial nominalism, albeit more discreetly after the council’s accusations of heresy. By 1100, Abelard challenged his next teacher, William of Champeaux, the most reputed scholar of Notre Dame—the most famous school in Christendom—arguing so convincingly that he called for William to admit his errors before his room full of students,

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281 Peter Abelard, *Ad amicum suum consolatoria*, ed. J. Monfrin, *Historia Calamitatum* (Paris: J. Vrin, 1959), foreword. Abelard penned, “This I do so that, in comparing your sorrows with mine, you may discover that yours are in truth nought, or at the most of small account…”

and William did so. When William successfully had Abelard banned from Notre Dame, Abelard began his own school by the age of twenty-three first at Melun, then at Corbeil, then at Montaigne, St. Genevieve. Feeling he had mastered dialectics, around his thirty-fifth year, Abelard turned next to theology and sought the tutelage of the best-known living Scholastic, the sage-like Anselm at Laon. Despite the latter’s age and reputation, Abelard swiftly tired of his elder’s platitudes. He likened Anselm to the tree with barren branches that lives under a curse. Abelard’s Biblical allusions implied that he believed Anselm’s faith was dead.

As he had tired of yet another master’s teaching, Abelard’s response was to gather students to himself once more. Intensely loyal, these peripatetics hastened to Abelard from the classroom of the famed Anselm in such numbers that Abelard was prohibited from teaching in the city. Styling himself “The Peripatetic of Le Pallet,” Abelard moved back to Paris in 1115 to take over his former teacher William of Champeaux’s role as Notre Dame’s most famous master. In Paris, his star rose to its heights. His quality of argument,

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284 Abelard, *Historia Calamitatum*, Monfrin, ed., 68. Anselm of Laon had studied under the Archbishop of Canterbury of the same name. Abelard’s infamous complaint of Anselm was that “he had a wonderful facility with words, but it was contemptible with regard to meaning and devoid of reason. When he lit a fire, he filled his house with smoke, but he did not fill it with light.”

285 Ibid, 68. Also Matthew 21:19, Mark 11:13, and Romans 11, in which Paul the Apostle compared unbelieving Jews to dead branches fallen from God’s tree.

286 Constant J. Mews, *Abelard and his Legacy*, Variorum Reprints (London: Ashgate, 2001), VII, 129. Abelard did this in the model of Aristotle. However, Mews notes how the latest rediscovered works of Aristotle’s had not become widely known by the time Abelard had studied and become famous. He was behind his contemporaries in Aristotelian logic. And what he had learned and written was at least a decade old by the time his teachings were denounced at Soissons.

287 Jaeger, *The Envy of Angels*, 244. William of Champeaux had retired in 1108 to St. Victor’s to teach the canons there, and his prohibition against Abelard no longer carried weight.
eloquence, comely appearance, quick responses, and temerity drew at least 5,000 pupils over
the course of his lifetime, among them Peter Lombard, Arnold of Brescia, Otto of Freising,
and at least two future popes, not to mention his future wife Heloise. 288

Abelard has been known best not for his theological contributions, but for his affair
with his gifted student Heloise. 289 She was at most seventeen when her uncle Fulbert eagerly
arranged her private tutoring with a thirty-eight-year-old Abelard. In his autobiography,
Abelard described pursuing, seducing, and impregnating Heloise. 290 Abelard ascribed a
devious intent to his motives from the outset, as he had done whatever needed to be in the
company of this girl who had transfixed him, comparing himself and his student to a
ravening wolf and a tender lamb. He also accorded great praise to his prestige and
comeliness, that “no matter what woman I might favour with my love, I dreaded rejection of
none.” Within a few months, the romance was certainly a matter of public knowledge. Such
was his persuasive prowess that Abelard was able to convince Heloise’s uncle that he would
marry the girl, even though married men at the university could not be promoted beyond their
current stations in the Church. 291 In his autobiography, Abelard stated that Heloise convinced

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288 Ailbe J. Luddy, *The Case of Peter Abelard* (Dublin, Ireland: M. H. Gill and Son, Ltd., 1947), 7. Popes
Alexander II and Celestine III were his staunch supporters. Pope Celestine II in his youth had sat at his feet. It is
said that twenty cardinals and fifty bishops were numbered among his listeners, according to Bernard of Clairvaux, *On Consideration*, Trans. George Lewis, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1908), Historical Introduction,
Press, 1900), 369.
289 Fidler, *Bernard*, 124-125. Abelard had no history of amorous affairs whatsoever before this tutelage was
arranged between this Master and the beautiful seventeen-year-old. Abelard himself may have written and
distributed the love sonnets that were sung throughout Notre Dame of the schola’s greatest philosopher and his
pupil.
291 Baldwin, *Scholastic Culture*, 47. Clerics were permitted to marry; they just had to give up their benefice and
future church promotion. It is most likely his ambition, in concert with Heloise’s urging, that put him on the
path to castration.
him to have a secret wedding and that she volunteered to live as his wife clandestinely in a
nunnery. 292 Her vengeful uncle Fulbert concluded that Abelard had shunted his beloved niece
aside for the sake of Abelard’s career—not altogether untrue—and subsequently arranged for
the master’s castration by the hands of local ruffians.

This tragedy was the turning point in his life. Abelard credited his downfall not to his
wanton affair with Heloise but to his own pride. 293 Likewise, his contemporaries (including
Bernard of Clairvaux) had no public criticism for Abelard’s scandal; in fact all evil intent
was accorded to the uncle and his thugs. 294 Only after Heloise’s birth of their son Astralabe295
and Abelard’s abnegation of his role at Notre Dame did his contributions in the world of
theology begin. Retiring to the monastery of St. Denis, he composed his first and most
contentious text Theologia sometime after 1118 in order to record his explanations of the
separate qualities of the Trinity. He was undoubtedly still teaching students, as he credited
their questions as the impetus for its creation. 296 Later works would be his legacy: Sic et Non
as has been mentioned, Dialogus inter Philosophum, Judaeum, et Christianum which will be
discussed shortly, Introducitio in Theologia, and Ethica Seu Scito Te Ipsum.

292 Abelard, Historia Calamitatum, ch. 5 and 6.
293 Ibid, ch. 5, p. 65. He wrote, “But prosperity always puffs up the foolish and worldly comfort enervates the
soul, rendering it an easy prey to carnal temptations. Thus I who by this time had come to regard myself as the
only philosopher remaining in the whole world, and had ceased to fear any further disturbance of my peace,
began to loosen the rein on my desires, although hitherto I had always lived in the utmost continence.”
exception is found in Roscelin’s letter from 1121; in seeking to demonize Abelard, Roscelin called Heloise
“Abelard’s whore.”
295 Although frequently referred to as “Astrolabe,” the original texts spell his name as “Astralabe.” For more on
the life of Abelard’s son, see Brenda Cook, One Astralabe, or Two? The Mystery of Abelard’s Son. The Society
296 Abelard, Historia Calamitatum, 122. Abelard frequently cites his reason for extrapolating his claims about
the separate attributes of God as Scholarium nostrorum petitioni—at the request of my students.
The influence of Abelard’s writings on the twelfth-century Church was profound. Heralded as the greatest medieval logician, he popularized the modern application of the term “theology.” Church doctrine followed Abelard’s lead in attributing intention rather than action as the primary spiritual criteria in spiritual purity and ethical behavior. Abelard’s theological explanation as to what happens to unbaptized babies upon their deaths was codified during the thirteenth century, replacing the previous theology insisting that such souls could never escape Hell. Despite his ostentation, Abelard is respected today as the last of the founders of Scholasticism. He was a reformer seeking to revolutionize and improve the Church in his works through dialectic and rational argument.

However, Abelard’s writings were also his path to ruin. It is probable that Abelard was correct in deducing that his opponents merely used his contentious work Theologia as a pretext to have him appear before a papal legate at the Council of Soissons and accuse him of heresy to answer for his humiliation of a former teacher. Without his writings, there could

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297 Baldwin, Scholastic Culture, 90. Before Abelard, those who studied matters of doctrine could graduate as “masters of the sacred page.” Baldwin writes that Abelard “gave currency” to our modern title “master of theology.”


have been no means for his enemies to trap him. There he was made to recant in 1121, to recite the Athanasian Creed, and burn his own book.  

From this point onward, his life was steeped in controversy. Still under the shadow of Soissons, in 1122 he wrote *Sic et Non* in order to debate apparent contradictions made by Church Fathers. When he “retired” to the wilderness and built the chapel he named “The Paraclete,” students flocked to it in such numbers that Abelard’s critics even found fault with the chapel’s name—apparently, naming it after the Holy Ghost evoked scandal. In 1126 he agreed to lead the monastery of St. Gildas but left soon thereafter, reportedly after several botched attempts at his life on the part of the monks. Unable to resist the role of the master, he returned to the lectern at Notre Dame in 1133. His composition and distribution there of the latest copy of his *Theologia* are what brought on renewed charges of heresy at the Council of Sens in the spring of 1141.

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301 Abelard, *Historia Calamitatum*, ch. 9. Abelard did not believe the grounds for heresy were theologically-based. He blames the meddling of envious, inferior men—at Soissons, the instigation of two followers of William of Champeaux, who could find no fault with his arguments, so they deceived an archbishop who convinced an unlearned legate to declare his works heretical. His words were, “Quia autem legatus ille minus quam necesse esset litteratus fuerat, plurimum archiepiscopi consilio nitetur, sicut et archiepiscopus illorum.”

302 Abelard, *Sic et Non*, Prologue, 54-85. Abelard was most likely trying to logically prove Patristic writers’ doctrine by subjecting supposed contradictions to the rigors of intellectual reflection. It was not interpreted that way by critics, who were aghast at his seemingly inconclusive response to posed incongruities and his less than reverent commentary.

303 His critics objected that there was no precedent for dedicating a chapel to the Holy Ghost. Abelard’s response was that first, dedicating a chapel to the Holy Ghost was not a sin, and second, “Paraclete”—Comforter in Greek—was in fact referring to Christ, as it doesn’t necessarily have to mean the Holy Ghost. See John 14:16, 26 for the word’s use.

Abelard and the Jews

Controversy continues to surround Abelard in modern times. Current historians have scrutinized his surviving writings to determine how his beliefs affected medieval conflicts. Most applicable to this thesis are the studies of Abelard by Anna Abulafia, Constant Mews, and Jeremy Cohen that elaborate on Abelard’s influence on anti-Jewish rhetoric. My interest in this study is clear: If Abelard was responsible for furthering anti-Jewish stereotypes, he was then another factor in the factionalism of the twelfth century that undermined Jewish-Christian relations.

Abulafia is the first to analyze Abelard’s effects on Jewish stereotypes. She contends in Christians and Jews in Dispute that Abelard believed the Church did not monopolize Truth. She points to Abelard’s claim in his Dialogus that pagan philosophers like Aristotle and Plato deduced God’s nature through logic. Abulafia is clear that this veneration of classic philosophers did not equate with religious egalitarianism, however. Judaism occupied the lowest rung of godly truth. Pagan philosophers were better, but Christianity was God’s ultimate conduit for Truth—a perfect blend of faith and reason to harmonious effect. While Abulafia identifies ways in which Abelard was more generous to Jews than his contemporaries, she presents how he frequently employed a gamut of illogical Jewish

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305 Abulafia, Christians and Jews, XIII, 16. Just as God had revealed himself to the Biblical patriarchs and prophets, he had revealed by way of reason His truth to the Philosophers of Ancient Greece. Plato’s Timaeus contained the Word of God about the Trinity as well, if one knew how to look for it. For more on Abelard’s belief in the power of reason to enact salvation, see Abulafia, Christians and Jews, XIII, 19-20; Peter Abelard, Dialogus inter philosophum, Judaeum et Christianum, R. Thomas, ed. (Stuttgart-Bad Cannstatt: Frommann, 1970), 93, 97-98, in English translation, Trans. Pierre J. Payer (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Medieval Studies, 1979), 81-86, 87. Abelard wrote that absolute reasons exist for all of the mysteries of God, and Man will find probable reasons for all of them.
stereotypes, the worst of which was that of their inability for rational thought. In the end, Abulafia credits Abelard’s most potent contribution as the dehumanization of Jews into creatures devoid of reason.\textsuperscript{306}

Abulafia’s conclusion concerning Abelard’s intolerance challenges a traditional interpretation of Abelard as a free-thinker and a champion of tolerance.\textsuperscript{307} But Abulafia in turn has been challenged. Modern historians Marks and Niggli contend that Abelard demonstrates a rare empathy for Jews and a rationale for interreligious coexistence.\textsuperscript{308} Even Abulafia feels the need to acknowledge Abelard’s praise of Jewish resilience, patience, and longsuffering.\textsuperscript{309}

It is little wonder why Abelard has traditionally been regarded as a tolerant figure toward Jews.\textsuperscript{310} The logical arguments present in his book \textit{Ethical Writings} challenged

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\textsuperscript{306}Abulafia, \textit{Christians and Jews}, XIII: “Intentio Recta,” 30. Abelard believed in the sincerity of Jewish faith, but he held that faith to be \textit{erronea}, not \textit{recta}. He drew a line of distinction in which Reason was one more incapability of Jews to be like right-minded Christians. This only broadened the rift between Christendom and Judaica. Abulafia’s conclusion is contested by Constant Mews in “Abelard and Heloise on Jews and \textit{Hebraica Veritas}” \textit{Christian Attitudes Toward the Jews in the Middle Ages: A Casebook}, Michael Frassetto, ed. (New York: Routledge, 2007), 83-107. Mews acknowledges Abelard’s anti-Jewish stereotypes but claims they shifted into a genuine respect for Jewish worship and scholarship as Abelard aged, based on Abelard’s and Heloise’s correspondence.

\textsuperscript{307}Cohen, \textit{Living Letters}, 287-288; Carroll, \textit{Constantine’s}, 291-296; McCallum, \textit{Abelard’s Christian Theology}, 101; Armstrong, \textit{History of God}, 203. Cohen points out how Abelard exonerates Jewish guilt for killing Christ, according to his philosophical equating of sin with intention. Langmuir finds that Abelard surpasses all his peers in his “understanding of Jewish attitudes.” The French Revolution presented Abelard as a lover and a warrior against traditional institutionalism—authors McCallum and Armstrong still present the theologian as the first humanist and one who wished to treat Jews as near-equals.


\textsuperscript{310}Merks, \textit{The Three Rings}, 123, 137-140; Carroll, \textit{Constantine’s}, 291-296; Armstrong, \textit{History of God}, 203.
common hostilities: why shall the Christian hate the Jew, when the Jews responsible for Christ’s death believed that they were doing right? For Abelard, God cared more about intentions than He did actions. Thus sin was not the disobedient act; it was the consent to such an act. Ignorance likewise did not qualify as sin. “No one’s ignorance is a sin, and neither is the disbelief with which no one can be saved.” As if to answer Guibert’s condemnation of Jews, Abelard wrote that the persecutors of Christ, unaware of His divinity, would have sinned more had they betrayed their morals and allowed a blasphemer to live. “Thus those who persecuted Christ or his followers [like Stephen], and believed they should be persecuted, we say sinned through action. Nevertheless, they would have sinned more seriously through fault if they had spared them contrary to conscience.” According to Abelard, Jews are condemned because they are humans without a Savior, but not because they persecuted the Savior and His followers, believing them to be false.

Constant Mews is the strongest voice to challenge Abulafia’s conclusions. He does not wholly disregard her claims, but praises Abelard for the frequency with which the Notre Dame presented Jewish opinion as worthy of sympathy and credibility. To Abelard, Jewish-Christian relations were never the principal issue; Jews are only referenced as a means to demonstrate the role of reason in morality and religion. Along with historian Micha Perry,

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Mews claims that Abelard had definite contact with Jewish commentary and thinkers. Abelard portrayed Judaism as inferior to Christianity, as did all major twelfth-century churchmen, but Mews stipulates that Abelard’s criticisms of Jews almost always dealt with them as hypothetical or Biblical figures. Precious little of Abelard’s ridicule is for contemporary Jews. Mews avers that Abelard was open-minded enough to be influenced by Jewish philosophy, commended their zeal and emphasis on education, and considered carefully what learned Jews had to say.

However, despite all the recent defense of Abelard’s unusual acknowledgment of Jewish humanity, most modern scholars consider him no less intolerant than his twelfth-century peers. Jan Ziolkowski avers that no one caused as great a polarization in the ecclesiastic debate between canons and monks as Abelard. The Scholastic had little patience for arguments ungirded by Aristotelian logic. The master of Notre Dame decried the

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316 Mews and Perry, “Peter Abelard, Heloise and Jewish,” 18.


318 Peter Godman, *The Silent Masters: Latin Literature and Its Censors in the High Middle Ages* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton UP, 2000), 85. Godman finds Abelard insensitive to any parties who could not support their claims through reason. Godman points to Abelard’s advice to his son in *Carmen ad Astralabium* to discredit those whose claim to truth is less convincing than his.

319 Peter Abelard, *Letters of Peter Abelard: Beyond the Personal*, trans. Jan M. Ziolkowski, (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 2008), 19, 150-152. Abelard’s *Epistolae* 7 and 12 to Heloise and his Sermons depict monks having a superior dignity over canons. Ziolkowski writes how Abelard was obsessed with the rivalry between monks and clergers (canons), just as Bernard of Clairvaux saw the discrepancy between monks and scholars as a cosmic fight between good and evil. Abelard believed Gregory the Great’s quote, “Faith has no merit with God when it is not the testimony of divine authority that leads us to it, but the evidence of human reason” to mean that faith in itself cannot be enough—else the most illogical of any religions’ creeds could claim verity! For more on Gregory’s quote, see Gregory, *Homilia in Evangelia*, 26, I, *PL* 76, 1197, cited in Brooke, *Europe*, 412.
obsolete worship of custom rather than the adherence to reason, indicting not only Jews but also many monks as well.\textsuperscript{320} According to Abelard, the age of faith and miracles was fading; the era of logic and dialectics was at hand.\textsuperscript{321}

Jeremy Cohen in his \textit{Living Letters of the Law} concurs with Abulafia’s conclusions in ascribing Abelard’s culpability in anti-Jewish animus. A central pillar of Cohen’s argument in \textit{Living Letters} is that Christendom’s rendering of “hermeneutical Jews”—of which Abelard surely took part—was ultimately devastating in furthering irrational stereotypes of Jews into the twelfth and thirteenth centuries.\textsuperscript{322} Cohen charges that Scholastics invented a Jewish caricature reminiscent of the biblical Pharisee in the Gospels rather than interact with contemporary, nonfictional Jewish interlocutors. While Cohen agrees with Mews that Abelard is too often simplified, much of Abelard’s writings of Jews seem contradictory: Abelard depicted Jews as worthy of pity, yet placed them on the same level as pagans, Muslims, and heretics—traditional enemies of Christendom. Abulafia regarded Pauline teaching about Jews as holy, but unlike Paul—who likened natural law and Hebrew Scripture as impossible to live out perfectly and thus grouped all humans as

\textsuperscript{320} Peter Abelard, \textit{Epistola} 4 in Abulafia, \textit{Christians and Jews}, XIII: 29-30, citing “The Personal Letters between Abelard and Heloise,” J. T. Muckle, ed., \textit{Mediaeval Studies} 15 (1953), 85. In a letter to Heloise about wayward monks, Abelard wrote, “Better to keep silent, as it is shameful to speak of their wretched blindness that is wholly contrary to the religion of Christ which belongs to the poor. At heart they are Jews, following their own custom instead of a rule, making a mockery of God’s commands in their practices, looking to usage, not duty.”

\textsuperscript{321} Abelard, \textit{Dialectica}, L. M. De Rijk, ed., 470, lines 3-4; Mews “Peter Abelard on Dialectic,” 37-53, esp. 43. In his \textit{Dialectica} Abulafia said, “Dialectic, to which all judgment of truth and falsehood is subject, holds the leadership of all philosophy and the governance of all teaching.” The use of logic could construct the elements of faith on the basis of rational argumentation. In his \textit{Epistola} 13, Abulafia concludes that God converts through miracles and logic, but since miracles have become more infrequent since the days when Jesus founded His Church, it more rests on the shoulders of logic to teach the ways of God. There is room for error in Logic, but that is only more reason to study dialectics, to avoid spiritual falsehood.

\textsuperscript{322} Cohen, \textit{Living Letters}, 2-3. The “Hermeneutical Jew” is “the Jew as constructed in the discourse of Christian theology” rather than resulting from debate or any contact with living Jews.
sinners—Abelard denigrated both natural and Mosaic laws themselves as inferior to evangelical law.\[323\]

It is necessary to see how Abelard’s depiction of Jews entered into the factionalism of the twelfth century. My thesis supports Abulafia’s and Cohen’s assessments; there are more than enough examples of the deleterious effects that negative depictions of Jews had on future centuries, and Abelard’s stereotypes played a part. I must disagree with Mews’ conclusion that the question of Abelard’s tolerance of Jews is largely a non sequitur.\[324\]

Granted, it cannot be ignored that Abelard’s peers had vastly worse recriminations to write about Jews than had Abelard, and the intent of Abelard’s use of Jewish caricatures is benign in comparison. The Scholastics Guibert of Nogent,\[325\] Odo of Cambrai,\[326\] and—as Constant Mews points out—especially Cluny’s great abbot Peter the Venerable\[327\] are three twelfth-century examples that make Abelard appear the epitome of tolerance by contrast.


Nonetheless, Abelard’s dismissal of Jews’ ability to reason was an unmistakable dehumanization that would have profound influence on virulent anti-Jewish sentiment in later Scholasticism. Abelard’s condescension toward Jews was gentler than his peers, but at no point did Abelard advocate for them—their presence in his writings was merely a means to an end, usually to prove a theological point rationally. The Jew persisted as the foil to the rational Christian in Abelard’s writings. In his work *Dialogue Between a Philosopher, Jew, and a Christian*, Abelard presented the Jewish character as neither offensive nor stupid, but nonetheless presented Jewish law as archaic and Christian reason as superior.

The *Dialogue* opens in a dream, Abelard being approached by three figures. The three say that Abelard alone had the insight to judge which among them had the philosophy of the highest good. The *Dialogue* is segmented into two debates: the Philosopher questions the Jew in the first and the Christian in the second. Abelard agreed to mediate the two debates, though he deigns only once afterward to interrupt the interlocutors.\(^{328}\) The Philosopher effectively silences the Jew’s rebuttals but is overawed by the Christian’s answers, an unsurprising outcome. A common interpretation is that Abelard’s own views are represented in the voice of the Philosopher, the voice of natural law.\(^{329}\) The tone of the *Dialogue* is respectful and even sympathetic. A summation of the Jew’s complaints follows:

> We’re regarded by everyone as worth so much contempt and hatred that whoever brings some injury upon us believes it’s the greatest and justice and the supreme sacrifice offered to God...Look at the kind of people our wandering banishes us to live among, and in whom we must place our trust for patronage. We turn our life over to our worst enemies, and are forced to believe in the faith of the faithless. Sleep itself...makes us restless with so much anxiety that even when asleep we aren’t


allowed to think of anything but the danger to our throat... The princes who preside
over us and whose patronage we’ve bought at high price desire our death to the extent
they more freely rob what we possess. If we’re even allowed to live, constrained and
oppressed as much as if the world were plotting against us alone, that itself is
amazing. It isn’t permitted us to own fields, vineyards or any earthly possessions.
Thus the main thing left to us is profit...  

Abelard’s rendition of life for twelfth-century Jews is one of unendurable torment. His motive in the Jew’s extended monologue was likely to evoke sympathy and compassion. Whatever Abelard’s best intentions, the appeal for mercy is rife with anti-Jewish fantasies, as Cohen has noted. The trope of Jew as moneylender, the belief that Jews could not work land, or the medieval stereotype of Jews as the “the king’s serfs” are all present in Abelard’s depiction. Cohen argues effectively that it is highly improbable that any real intellectual Jew in the 1130s perceived their station as one subject to chronic malevolence, or that a contemporary Jew reflected the antiquated views of Abelard’s Jewish character.  

Abelard created a religious framework that classified Jews, pagans, and Christians. His depiction of the three philosophies in the Dialogus stemmed from his understanding of theosophy—the revealed nature of the divine as observable within natural law. To Abelard, God spoke to man in one of three ways: Natural law, Mosaic law, and Evangelical law. That God could speak to man through lex naturalis was evident in the works of the

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331 Cohen, Living Letters, 284-286.
332 Cohen, Living Letters, 276-278, 284-287. On the long-standing debate as to when the Dialogus was written, see the extensive debate in Cohen, Living Letters, 277. Modern consensus favors authorship in the middle- to late-1130s.
333 Antoine Faivre, Theosophy, Imagination, Tradition: Studies in Western Esotericism. SUNY series in Western Esoteric Traditions, trans. Christine Rhone (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 2000), 4. Theosophy is the study of the natural wisdom given by God. It has been defined in a variety of ways until modernity. In antiquity, it was synonymous with “theology,” but by the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, it came to be applied to the use of hidden knowledge revealed in nature to discover truths about God. Abelard in the Dialogus attempts to use natural wisdom as a litmus test to contrast the three religious arguments.
pagan philosophers. Abelard also considered Enoch and Abraham to have become aware of God not from any written law, but from the inborn discernment men have to tell right from wrong. In a letter to his Heloise, Abelard made allowance for men like Aristotle to know and dwell with God:

Surely it concurs with justice and reason that we consider that those people can hardly be damned who by way of natural law recognize God as the creator and remunerator of all and cling to Him with such zeal that they try not to offend Him in any way through consent (which is said to be sin). What is necessary for them to know to be saved, can be revealed to them by God before they die either by inspiration or by some arrangement by which they can be taught about those things…It seems that one must by no means despair of those who, although they know not Christ, sustain death for God out of zeal for law. For it is easy for God to immediately inspire such people with what must be believed about Christ before their souls depart from their bodies so they do not die as unbelievers.334

For Abelard, Reason may lead a wise man toward Heaven, but Mosaic law was less forgiving. In his Dialogus, the Philosopher asks the Jew, “Is God pleased by the way Jews try to serve Him?” Not disrespectfully, the Philosopher argues that Mosaic law has no universality, thus no appeal. Jews must circumcise the flesh, but the act offers no salvific reward.335 Abelard was not the first to make the critique that Jewish law focused predominantly on the outward requirements, though he conceded that Jews gained some spiritual meaning from their law. Yet for a man like Abelard, who valued ratio over consuetudo and intention over tradition, the perceived superficial and repetitive traditions of the Mosaic law were at best a vestigial protective measure. “A purely literal application of the precepts of the Pentateuch to the dos and don’ts of one’s daily life could easily have

seemed intolerable” to Abelard, Abulafia writes. The *lex evangelio*, on the other hand, was the instruction by which men could truly know God. Abelard, if speaking with the Philosopher’s voice, proclaims that “the highest good that man yearns for is in the afterlife, the ever-increasing beatitude of the vision of God,” a reference to the evangelical law, which fulfills and trumps natural law.

Abelard appears to have believed that men’s faculties ultimately fall short in comprehending God—only God could know God. He lamented that the Jews, failing to recognize Jesus Christ as God, could never know the only Mediator to reach the Almighty. Thus, without Christ, Jews could not grasp the deeper, spiritual truth. As Abelard’s Philosopher states, Jews were without the hope of any spiritual truth. They could expect no more from this life than enduring as “beasts of burden: physical comfort if they behaved and blows if they did not.” They were alienated from the spiritual things, so their predilections were closer to animals than rational men. “Surely, the Jews alone, since they are animals and sensual and are imbued with no philosophy whereby they are able to discuss reasoned arguments, are moved to faith only by miracles of external deeds, as if it were the case that it

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338 Abulafia, *Christians and Jews*, XIII: “Intentio Recta,” 18, who cites R. Thomas, Der philosophisch-theologische Erkenntnisweg Peter Abaelarts in Dialogus inter Philosophum, Judaeum et Christianum (Bonn, 1966), 67-68, 166-67, 183, 185, 195-6, 200-2. In his *Ethics*, Abelard identifies the insufficiency of reason. He explains that Man on his own cannot understand God. The one mediator to this unsolvable dilemma is the incarnate Word the Son. Without him, the wisdom of the ancient philosophers is never fulfilled.
belongs to God alone to effect these things and that no illusion could be produced in them by
demons."\textsuperscript{340}

Could it be said that Abelard was tolerant of Jews? Abulafia defines tolerance as the
concession that someone with differing beliefs may be right, or the genuine respect for
another’s right to hold that belief.\textsuperscript{341} Granted, medieval figures did not possess modern
standards of human rights. However, if Abulafia’s definition serves, then Abelard clearly
ranked Jewish belief as inferior to Christian doctrine and Jewish disbelief as worthy of
damnation.\textsuperscript{342} Even their humanity, deprived of the capacity to know God, is lesser. Abelard
has pity for the Jews and assigns a modicum of worth to their intentions, but any human
might do the same for an animal. Abelard believed in the sincerity of the Jew’s belief, but
ultimately his writings introduced the ability to reason as one more line of distinction
between erroneous Jews and right-minded Christians. His writings were not the only new
attack on Jewish humanity in the twelfth-century. A second would come from the spokesman
of a burgeoning order of white-hooded monks.

\textit{The Cistercians}

The 1100s have been called the Cistercian century. Unlike the gradual emergence of
Scholasticism, the Cistercian order was born on the eve of the twelfth century, when an abbot
Robert of Molesme, seeking a more authentic and apostolic model of the Benedictine Rule,

\textsuperscript{340} Abelard, \textit{Dialogus}, 90, trans. Payer, 78.
\textsuperscript{342} Abelard, \textit{Ethics}, trans. Luscombe, 62–63. “It is sufficient for damnation not to believe in the Gospel, to be
ignorant of Christ, not to receive the sacraments of the Church, even though this occurs not so much through
wickedness as through ignorance.”
founded the first monastery of its kind in 1098. The monks that accompanied him called themselves the Novum Monasterium. Robert had not the chance to endure this austere existence for long, for he was unhappily recalled to his former abbey, leaving in charge his assistant Alberic, who proved a worthy successor. For nine years this builder of the first Cistercian house led his meager number of persevering brothers through famine and pestilence. Upon Alberic’s death in 1108, the last of the legendary Cistercian abbots was appointed: Stephen Harding, a young Englishman, who ably directed the monastic movement as it suddenly became the most prominent order in Christendom.\footnote{343 Louis Julius Lekai, The Cistercians: Ideals and Reality (Kent, OH: Kent State UP, 1977); C. Warren Hollister, The Making of England, 55 BC to 1399. Volume I of A History of England, ed. Lacey Baldwin Smith (Boston: D.C. Heath, 1992), 210. The Cistercians rose in popularity as adherents to the spirit, if not surpassers to the letter, of the Rule of St. Benedict and as genuine representations of the apostolic spirit.}

The order was named after Citeaux, the small town in Dijon, a swampy province of France. The Cistercians prized austerity and self-sufficiency, which they deemed to be stark contrasts with the more indulgent lifestyle found in Cluny or Rome. Due to the success of the Gregorian Reforms, even apostolic orders of monks had become known for their wealth, architecture, and lavish artwork. In the early twelfth century, the white-hooded monks of Citeaux became a welcome exception.\footnote{344 Bolton, Medieval Reformation, 47-51. With the rise of the apostolic spirit in the twelfth century, popular support championed unsanctioned movements that owned few possessions and professed a simple life of manual labor or even itinerant preaching. Not all these movements were monastic. This lay support was a natural outgrowth of the Gregorian Reforms, as described at the start of this chapter.} Within the first two decades of the order, Cistercians enjoyed popular support as a critique of, and an alternative to, Cluny’s affluence. Citeaux’s focus on agriculture and seclusion more closely mirrored the original teachings of Benedict of Nursia to balance work and prayer, and so the order grew in fame and exponential numbers. The early Cistercians were largely democratic albeit within feudal
classes, electing their leaders, and followed a Biblical model in the expansion of their order. An abbot and twelve monks would be appointed to plant a new monastery, in the same apostolic configuration as Jesus and His disciples.

Within two generations, its reputation and influence grew. The Cistercian reforms influenced other orders of the Church. The most famous Cistercian act was the Charter of Charity, or Cartis Caritata, attributed to one of the first councils under Stephen Harding’s leadership. Cistercians disavowed rich food, elegant artwork, and interaction with those outside the order, and required manual labor for all brethren, hours of prayerful devotion, and limited contact with women. Stephen Harding also disallowed the practice of oblates (child monks), as Cistercian creeds emphasized individual choice. Citeaux was the first order to grant a monastic vocation to illiterate peasants. These lay brothers or conversi worked the land and lived by a more relaxed Cistercian rule. Refusing to accept tithes, Cistercians were bound to farm the land themselves, believing the labor to be an offering to God. The order also contributed to the revival of biblical scholarship in the twelfth century.

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345 Constance Berman, *The Cistercian Evolution: The Invention of a Religious Order in Twelfth-Century Europe* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2000), 46-92; Janet Burton and Julie Kerr, *The Cistercians in the Middle Ages* (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2011), 30-36. Berman has argued that the debatable nature of the Carta Caritatis and other early Cistercian documents demonstrates that the Cistercian order was not a recognized monastic system but merely a “way of life.” At the very least, her research has effectively questioned the age of the charter and established that it could have been a connivance to establish centralized control after Bernard of Clairvaux’s influence.


347 Bolton, *Medieval Reformation*, 48-49. Also called half-monks—in some places these rural illiterate recruits outnumbered the “chorus monks” two or three or even four to one. At first content to work long hours while unpaid, they ultimately rose up against this practice until it was called into question ethically by the papacy by the thirteenth century.

348 Kienzle, *Cistercians*, 65; C.R. Dodwell, *The Pictorial Arts of the West, 800–1200* (Yale: Yale UP, 1993), 211-214. Cistercians were initially well known for their art of copying beautifully illuminated manuscripts. The almost-immediate cessation of Cistercian expertise came with Bernard’s denunciations of monastic
Although the *Rule of St. Benedict* moderated asceticism, Cistercians were criticized for an overly-abstemious lifestyle that was ruinous to their health. Considering the weak constitution of men like Bernard of Clairvaux, this criticism can hardly be considered spurious. Such was the distaste for luxury that, beginning with Alberic’s abbacy, Cistercian monks wore uncolored wool for a robe, rather than the dyed black habits Benedictines traditionally wore. Henceforth, Citeaux’s brothers were known as “the white monks.” Yet in apparent conflict with their vows, Cistercian monasteries grew in riches almost in direct proportion to their popularity. Despite their strict refusal of developed lands from the nobility—349—the foundation of earlier Benedictine monasticism—Cistercians increased their wealth dramatically due to their reputation for honest economic practices, the accountability of the abbots, their reputation for charity, and their seclusion from the expenses of urban life. 350 Authors Martha Newman and Brian McGuire have demonstrated the attraction for medieval men and women who sought to join an order known for their charity to the poor and their spiritual transformation through land acquisition.351

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349 Hollister, *The Making of England*, 209. Or if the land was developed, the white monks moved the serfs elsewhere and farmed it themselves.


Yet this astounding development of the order in numbers and prestige cannot be credited to any of the first three abbots. In the first twenty years, the house at Citeaux had been on the brink of starvation, economic ruin, and dissolution. With such spartan living conditions, there was little new enrollment and little hope that Citeaux would not escape the fate of many failed experiments in monastic life. All that changed with the arrival of thirty men from Fontaine in 1112 or 1113. At the head was an eloquent 22-year-old nobleman’s son named Bernard. He had convinced all of his companions to take the tonsure, among them four of his five brothers, two uncles, and two cousins. Within three years, this Bernard would rise to the role of abbot, found a daughter-house at Clairvaux, and would prove to be the hope that Citeaux had prayed for, just as the New Monastery would become the desired model for the apostolic life throughout Europe.

Clairvaux was among one of the first four daughter-houses of Citeaux, and these five initial Cistercian houses became mothers to what became—at its peak by the fifteenth century—742 monasteries and 900 nunneries. By the 1120s, the abbots of each house would meet at annual councils to preside over matters of discipline, common practice, and theology, as demanded in the Carta Caritatis. Each daughter-house was officially answerable

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353 William of St. Thierry, *Vita Prima* I.19; John McManners, *The Oxford Illustrated History of Christianity* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1990), 204. The season was spring of 1112 or 1113, and their arrival occurred at Easter-time.


to its mother-house, but most monasteries had autonomy over their daily affairs. This organization differentiated itself from the loose Cluniac hierarchy, generating far more accountability and intercommunication among Cistercian houses, so much so that it became the model for all monastic orders by 1215. The chief voice at these annual meetings was not the abbot of Citeaux Stephen Harding, but Bernard, the recent abbot of Clairvaux, whose direct involvement in the growing factionalism within the Church would have profound consequences.

Bernard of Clairvaux

Bernard of Clairvaux did not look the part of a celebrity, yet it is difficult to envision the twelfth century without this thin, frail monk from Burgundy. He was subject to coughing, gastrointestinal agony, and spells of weakness during which he was forced to lie bedridden for weeks to recover. He commonly went without sleep, adequate food, or rest between the urgent missions the papacy had for him. His biographer and friend described him as having a modest bearing and well-disciplined gait with a preference for humility and a temperance that uplifted all who saw him. He has been called the Mellifluous Doctor, the Confessor,

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356 “Fourth Lateran Council,” Canon 12: “In every kingdom or province let there be held every three years… a general chapter (commune capitulum) of those abbots…who have not been accustomed to hold one… Let them invite in charity, at the start of the this innovation, two neighboring Cistercian abbots to give them appropriate advice and help, since from the long practice the Cistercians are well informed about holding such chapters… This kind of chapter shall be held continuously over a certain number of days, according to Cistercian custom.” See also Robert L. Cooper, The Benedictine Face of Religious Poverty: The Formation and Growth of the Silvestrine Congregation in the Medieval March of Ancona. Dissertation. (Davis: University California Davis, 2007), 178.

357 William of St. Thierry, Vita Prima, I.21.

358 Geoffrey of Auxere, Vita Prima, III.1.5. Geoffrey described as “very thin;” his gaunt body was sometimes misconstrued for height, with reddish-blond hair that went gray in later years.
the Cistercian, or simply the Abbot. With a reputation for miraculous healings and a “forceful and intelligible” voice, Bernard was canonized within twenty years of his death, remarkably quickly by medieval standards.

More has been written about the honey-tongued Bernard than any other Cistercian founding father. His trumpeted call to return to Benedict’s dictums on seclusion and living in holiness made the Cistercian order the most popular monastic movement of its time. He was nominated for the throne of the Vatican multiple times, but always refused—brushing aside any promotion higher than his initial abbacy. Instead, his influence has been seen in

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359 Lekai, Cistercians, 34, 44; Cohen, Living Letters, 221; Hans Kung, Christianity: Essense, History, Future (New York City: Continuum, 1995), 396. Cohen calls him the “Guiding light of the Cistercian Order, consultant to popes, prelates, and princes, ideologue of the Second Crusade, and pioneering champion of monastic theology and mysticism.” Lekai writes, “The amazing fact that the Cistercian Order virtually exploded and by the middle of the twelfth century possessed at least 331 houses in every country of Europe with at least 11,600 monks, can be explained, however, only by the dramatic character of the ‘man of the century’ Saint Bernard of Clairvaux.” Kung refers to him as “the secret emperor of Europe.”

360 Christopher Holdsworth, “Bernard of Clairvaux: his first and greatest miracle was himself,” in Mette Bruun, The Cambridge Companion to the Cistercian Order (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2013), 180. Holdsworth records 337 miraculous events, two-thirds of which are healings, found in the Vita Prima, which amounts to 840 events when coalesced with all other contemporary accounts.


362 Robert Chazan, In the Year 1096: The First Crusade and the Jews (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1996), 188; Robert Chazan includes at least eight bibliographies from an incomprehensive list concerning solely Bernard’s mystic or theological beliefs.

363 David Berger, “The Attitude of St. Bernard of Clairvaux toward the Jews,” in Proceedings of the American Academy for Jewish Research 40 (1972), 89. “He chastised kings, advised popes, and exercised an undeniable influence upon the most significant religious and secular decisions of his time.”

medieval and current Church doctrine. The Bernardine concept of the essence of the Trinity, “Among all things called one, the unity of the divine Trinity holds first place,” became Catholic doctrine a century later within Thomas Aquinas’ *Summa Theologiae*. His model of Cistercian reform paved the way for mendicant orders in the thirteenth century, and he advanced the Cult of Mary as a theological principle. Bernard provided the ecclesiastic support for the military orders of crusaders, and he was responsible for the refutation of the Immaculate Conception, a view Thomas Aquinas adopted. Whether as a defender of the Church or as an intolerant assailant of new ideas, Bernard’s incontrovertible loyalty to the developing Christian faith is something indelibly affixed to his reputation.

The predominance of what we know of Bernard comes from his incredible wealth of epistles and the biography of his life, composed over the course of fifteen years by three of his fellow monks: William of St. Thierry, Arnold of Bonneval, and Geoffrey of Auxere. *Vita Prima Sancti Bernardus* chronicles Bernard’s life from birth to death and the miracles attributed to him, but the work is truly meant as an appeal for Bernard’s canonization. Although the *Vita Prima* could hardly be called an impartial account of the abbot’s life, it is a dedicated attempt in five books to recall all of Bernard’s great accomplishments and is

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365 Newman, *Boundaries*, 14; Ailbe J. Luddy, *The Order of Citeaux* (Dublin: M. H. Gill and Son, Ltd., 1932), 36. Cistercian studies have always been subject to strains of “Great Man history.” Yet Newman avers that it is impossible to write anything on the early Cistercians without focusing on Bernard and the guiding voice of Christendom in the midst of the twelfth century. Ailbee Luddy calls him “indisputably the first man in Europe,” an adjudicator of popes, silver-tongued, and the conscience of Europe.

366 Kreeft, *Philosophy*, Lecture 6. Thomas Aquinas in his thirteenth century *Summa Theologiae* quoted Bernard directly in order to confirm “that the doctrine of the Trinity does not contradict the absolute unity of God.”


368 Arnold of Bonneval, *Vita Prima*, xxv, II.14, II.25, II.38, II.47, III.21. Biographers Arnold and Geoffrey included frequent parallels between Bernard and Jesus in that the veneration shown to Bernard “went beyond what was due to a mortal man.”
almost unrivaled for its reliability and accuracy for such a lengthy medieval biography. To add to Bernard’s biography and his own mountain of epistles and treatises, other great chroniclers of the twelfth century wrote of Bernard’s influence, including Otto of Freising, Abbot Suger, and Odo of Deuil.

In studying Bernard’s views and life, we can learn much about the Cistercian Order that he—more than anyone—brought about. Bernard wrote that except to meet the needs of the Church, he would never have left the isolation of Clairvaux. He was a mere twenty-five-year-old when he took on the role of abbot in the newly appointed monastery ninety miles north of Citeaux in eastern France. The unfertile plot was called the Vallée d’Absinthe, or Valley of Bitterness. Bernard rechristened it Claire Vallée, or Clear Valley, and forever after “Bernard and Clairvaux thence became inseparable.” As the father of the monastery, by general accounts, he worked harder than any of his “sons” to construct it, but the weight of leadership and especially the malnutrition and strains of agriculture in a fruitless

371 Suger, Historia gloriosi regis Ludovici VII, A. Molinier, ed. (Paris: Picard, 1887), 157–159. Known as the foremost historian of his age, Suger wrote both the impressive Historia of Louis VII and the Vita Ludovici regis of his father.
environment nearly killed him. He was counseled by his contemporaries that he had to learn to balance his ambitions with practicality, advice he appeared to take lightly throughout the rest of his life.\textsuperscript{375} From Clairvaux he led his monks for nearly sixteen full years, welcoming new \textit{conversi} and setting up scores of daughter-houses.\textsuperscript{376}

Bernard was unabashedly proud of his Cistercian order and of Clairvaux in particular. As adamantly as Abelard propounded a Scholastic route to understanding the divine, Bernard was convinced that the Cistercian monasticism was the surest path to salvation.\textsuperscript{377} Clairvaux was the new Jerusalem.\textsuperscript{378} Bernard’s youthful fervor and eloquence convinced many that he was right. When his friend the Benedictine abbot William of St. Thierry visited the newly founded Clairvaux, William was so impressed he determined to resign his post to become a

\textsuperscript{375} William of St. Thierry, \textit{Vita Prima}, I.31-32. He was counseled by correspondence from and finally in the person of William of Champeaux—Peter Abelard’s subdued former teacher—to radically alter his diet and work habits. Bernard credited the elder monk’s timely advice (and the month of personally supervising a deathly ill Bernard) with saving his life.

\textsuperscript{376} Geoffrey of Auxerre, \textit{Vita Prima}, V.15, 20; Adriaan H. Bredero, \textit{Bernard of Clairvaux, Between Cult and History} (Edinburgh: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1996), 250-251; Lekai, \textit{The Cistercians}, 34, 44; Martha Newman, “Foundation and Twelfth Century” in \textit{The Cambridge Companion to the Cistercian Order}, Mette Berkedal Bruun, ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2012), 20-37. While Lekai cites 131 houses by 1151, Bredero amends that Bernard had personally been responsible for 167 daughter houses of Clairvaux by the end of his life (1153) new Cistercian houses. Bredero and Newman cite the thirteenth-century filiation charts as their source, which list each Cistercian house with its mother monastery. Geoffrey recorded twice that by the time of his death, Bernard left behind more than 160 daughter-houses with at least 700 brothers in them.


Cistercian monk there—something Bernard abjectly and frequently refused.\textsuperscript{379} For many clerics and to the masses of Europe, the Cistercian order brought revitalization to the Church.\textsuperscript{380} Some thought monasticism was the only holy ideal.\textsuperscript{381} Bernard was said to have claimed that were Judas a Cistercian, he would have been saved.\textsuperscript{382} It was during this time that he wrote letters to the heads of other orders, sometimes instructing without solicitation, sometimes denouncing certain practices he deemed unworthy of monks’ activity.

One such indictment was made against the Cluny order. Emerging from the Gregorian Reform movement, Citeaux claimed an embodiment to the \textit{vita apostolica} and a return to the Benedictine Rule.\textsuperscript{383} Cluny had also begun as a revival of the same Benedictine Rule, but in order to emphasize education and scholarship, Cluny had ceased mandating agricultural labor for monks. Cistercians and others also criticized Cluny for its elegant artwork, the autonomy of its individual monasteries, and its diet. When Cluny in turn criticized Citeaux for its overzealous austerity, the young abbot of Clairvaux took up his pen in his \textit{Apologia} to vindicate the wrong in a scathing public letter of accusation against the

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\item Bolton, \textit{Medieval Reformation}, 46-47. Many critics called Citeaux the “new Pharisees” because of their unwillingness to compromise, but such apppellations inspired many more like Jacque de Vitry to credit Cistercians with being essential in the renewal and \textit{renovatio} of the western Church.
\item Ibid, 22-23. As Cistercians arrived in England c. 1100, William of Malmesbury wrote that monasticism was the ‘surest way to Heaven.’ By late in the twelfth century, this claim was very contested. Some thought that coenobic monasteries could not effectively demonstrate the apostolic life in urban, complicating society. Bernard most of all did not react well to the lessening interest monks took in higher education.
\item Conrad of Eberbach, \textit{Exordium}, Introduction, in \textit{Great Beginning}, trans. Ward et al, 43. Conrad dedicated his work to the glory that Citeaux was founded “to restore the purity of the Order according to the meaning of the Rule of Saint Benedict.”
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Cluniacs. From his letter’s distribution and his standing as a holy man, Cistercian reputation flourished as the reformed model of St. Benedict.

It would be the first polemic in a lifetime of such works. Bernard had already composed *De Gradibus Superbiae et Humilitatis* and *De Laudibus Mariae*, but by 1120 he had found that his efforts were suited for Church controversy. In zeal and persuasion, Bernard was a juggernaut. His letters compelled the loyalty and amenability of Peter the Venerable, abbot of Cluny and Abbot Suger, friend and counselor to Kings Louis VI and VII of France. Bernard’s acclaim grew with the composition of so many stirring letters to bishops and secular rulers, which can be counted in the thousands by the time he reached his mid-thirties. Whether dictated or penned personally, he tirelessly wrote more missives than any other church leader of his generation. It was in this decade of life that the first of many miracles attributed to him were reported. This reknown and boldness precipitated his summons to the papally-convoked Council of Troyes in 1128.

The abbot of Clairvaux was asked by the bishops of the council and the presiding cardinal to act as secretary. He drafted the council’s synodal statutes, and he successfully argued to have a bishop deposed. Additionally, Bernard championed the papal endorsement

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387 Gillian R. Evans, *Bernard of Clairvaux* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 2000), 68-71. Bernard was peerless save for Anselm of Bec for the artistry inherent in his poetic language, imagery, and use of plays on words. I would add that Bernard rendered beautiful, coherent Scriptural excerpts from memory in all his major correspondence. Bernard’s eloquent letter-writing was a sharp contrast to Abelard’s, who employed discontinuous, paraphrased Biblical quotations in his writing. For example, see Abelard, *Dialectics*, trans. Spade, xxvii.
of the new order of monastic warriors, the Knights of the Temple. Bernard’s lettered affirmation in *Liber ad milites templi de laude novae militiae* was the winning argument.\(^{388}\)

At the council’s end, Clairvaux’s abbot was first accused of power-mongering and being a monk who should know his place—meaning, not to venture out of his abbey. The incrimination came from a powerful cardinal in Rome, but Bernard’s response was so effective that the cardinal was endeared to Bernard and became a future ally afterward.\(^{389}\)

While Bernard longed to return to his idealized “clear valley,” Rome in the 1120s was awash in political factionalism. Early twelfth-century papal elections were subject to manipulation by the top Italian families, and demagogue-led mobs chronically threatened violence against rival cardinals or even against the papacy. The two leading families were the Frangipani, an old noble clan that controlled the Lateran Palace, and the Pierleoni, a patrician clan operating in the Jewish sector of Rome.\(^{390}\) Honorius II, supported by the Frangipani, had

\(^{388}\) Bernard of Clairvaux, *Liber ad milites templi de laude novae militiae* (*In Praise of the New Knighthood*), Prologue-Ch. 5, trans. Conrad Greenia, in *Bernard of Clairvaux: Treatises Three*, Cistercian Fathers Series 19 (Kalamazoo, Cistercian Publications, 1977), 127-145; Bernard of Clairvaux, *De Consideratione*, trans. George Lewis (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1908), 6. This public statement, regarded as his most exemplary distillation of passion, praised the order founded when eight noblemen took vows of chastity, poverty, and obedience—just as monks did—but in defense of the Temple in Jerusalem, where they were headquartered. Bernard wrote the letter in response to his friend, a founding Templar Hugh de Payens.


\(^{390}\) Robinson, *The Papacy*, 8-12. “Pierleoni” literally means ‘sons of Peter Leo,’ originating from a prosperous tenth-century Jewish convert to Christianity Leo de Benedicto or his father. The Pierleoni were proponents and financiers of Gregorian reform popes. Urban II died in July 1099 in a Pierleoni estate. Pope Paschal II made Pietro Pierleoni into a cardinal by 1116.
been appointed pope only after the Pierleoni candidate had been unanimously elected, enthroned then brutally wounded by an invading Frangipani-led mob. 391

Around his fortieth birthday, Bernard learned firsthand of the factional politics of Rome. In 1130 he was summoned to Etampes and then to Reims to play a leading role in the selection of the next pope. At Pope Honorius’ death, the same divisive Roman factions had elected two popes almost simultaneously. Bernard became the presiding voice supporting Innocent II against the Pierleoni family’s more powerful candidate Anacletus II. Over the next eight years Bernard traveled to England, Aquitane, the Regnum Teutonicum, Milan, Pisa, and other Italian city-states and gradually convinced most of the secular rulers and ecclesiastic elites to favor Innocent. 392 Even Anacletus’ death in 1138 did not conclude the Papal Schism, despite Bernard’s passionate efforts, for a new Pierleoni candidate succeeded Anacletus in Victor IV. 393 It was not until Bernard journeyed to Rome to conference privately with Victor that the latter resigned and brought the rift to a gradual close. The Papal Schism of 1130 is the controversy that marked the turn in Bernard’s tireless life; henceforward, the majority of his abbacy at Clairvaux would be spent not in his beloved

391 Mann, Lives of the Popes, Vol 8, 303-304; Levillain, The Papacy: An Encyclopedia, Vol II, 732. Honorius II’s wounded predecessor Celestine II abdicated and Rome fell into factional warfare afterward. It was only until Honorius also resigned from the papacy did he secure the confidence of the cardinals to unanimously elect him in 1124.
392 Arnold of Bonneval et al, Vita Prima, II.1-12, 24-25, 32, 36, III.12; Innocent II, Privilegium Sancto Bernardo concessum, in Patrologia Latina 183, Jacquess-Paul Migne, ed. (Paris: Garnier, 1844-64), 554-556; Evans, Bernard of Clairvaux, 12-16; Sanna, Loving God, 17. According to Citeaux’s annalist (Vita Prima II.6), Innocent II stayed with Bernard for a time in Clairvaux. They then set out for the Holy Roman Empire and Italy together. Upon Innocent’s undisputed victory over the Pierleoni in 1138 and his proclaimed support in the Privilegium of his Cistercian spokesman, Bernard’s place was assured as the favored papal emissary.
monastery, but traveling abroad, speaking, writing, and advocating for a monastic orthodoxy in the name of the Church.

Now preeminent as a preacher, activist, and reformer, Bernard’s espousal of chaste living and apostolic discipline made him the pope’s first choice to wage war against Christian sects with questionable creeds. The close of the Schism in 1138 was a natural catalyst for an ecclesiastic dedication to put an end to dissenting voices. Bernard assisted in directing the Tenth Ecumenical Council, Lateran II, which condemned any remnants of the Anacletus faction.394 The Council also forbade all unorthodox sects headed by troublesome preachers who had urged violence against clergy. These groups were labeled heretics at the Council—the first such ecumenical condemnation of the multitude of unorthodox movements resulting from the widespread spirit of apostolocism.395 The wording of Canons 15, 23, and 30 indicate that attacks on the established Church structure—whether that be specifically on Innocent’s claim to papal authority or generally on the physical persons of clerics—rather than erroneous doctrine, was more a factor in anathematizing dissenting voices.

Innocent’s reign was born of factionalism, and it was intensely difficult for him or for Abbot Bernard to extinguish this vigilance against perceived encroaching enemies once the schism ended. Already the apostolic spirit in Europe had been gaining ground in Europe: for

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394 “The Canons of the Second Lateran Council,” H. J. Schroeder, *Disciplinary Decrees of the General Councils: Text, Translation and Commentary* (St. Louis: B. Herder, 1937), 195-213. The Council clarified the strictures of excommunication and standards for bishops and issued a prohibition against Christian usury and tournaments. Arson, consanguinity, nepotism and simony were likewise forbidden. The main focus, however, was to undo the works of Anacletus and rejuvenate the health of the Church.

395 “Second Lateran Council,” Schroeder, *Disciplinary Decrees*, Canons 15, 23. These sects were typically French followers of men like Peter of Bruys and Henry of Lausanne. The radical Arnold of Brescia—a disciple of Peter Abelard—was considered so dangerous, he was forbidden from preaching or from setting foot in Rome at all. Arnold was not labeled a heretic but the threat of excommunication was made directly for him. Arnold would later be excommunicated and burned at stake by Innocent’s successor.
Bernard, Christians could now reach a utopian apogee of simple faith if the Church could only maintain its vigil against its plentiful enemies. Many other church reformers and popular leaders swayed by the same apostolic spirit held a similar sentiment, but strongly disagreed on what or who such enemies were. The many interpretations of the twelfth-century vita apostolica thus enabled Christian factionalism. Peter of Bruys and Henry of Lausanne, for example, interpreted threats to the true Church as the lascivious wealth of bishops, idolatry of the church edifice rather than the deity, the baptism of children, and the disturbing institutionalization of custom. The Italian canonist and student of Abelard’s, Arnold of Brescia, preached apostolic poverty and was so popular in his denunciations of ecclesiastic proprietorship that his followers chased Pope Eugenius III from Rome in 1145. Needless to say, these rival passionate interpretations often pitted movements against one another. As indicated at Lateran II, the papal authority’s response was to label rival apostolic movements as heretical. Bernard the monk advocated foremost for the ascendancy of monastic culture, but also left a foundation for the vita apostolica to reach new heights nearly a century later under the popularity of the mendicant orders.396 Within the year after Lateran II, Bernard learned of Peter Abelard’s teachings—given Abelard’s contentious nature, scandalous past, and purported writings that challenged monastic orthodoxy, the Council of Sens consumed Bernard’s next efforts.

Sens would be the first of many papal-directed missions of Bernard’s next decade of life to proactively rid the Church of schism and sacrilege. He was hand-chosen to root out

396 Donald Weinstein and Rudolph M. Bell, Saints and Society: The Two Worlds of Western Christendom, 1000-1700 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982), 247.
what was now labeled as heresy throughout southern France in the years following his clash with Abelard. After Innocent’s death, the frail abbot of Clairvaux was the choice emissary of Innocent’s successors—the third of which was Pope Eugenius III, Bernard’s own Cistercian protégé. The proselytizing of the Petrobrusians, Henricians, and Cathars gained many converts when preaching against the avarice of southern French Catholic clergy, but found few when Bernard, with apostolic reputation and ascetic appearance, preached against them from June 1145 to the end of 1146. When Edessa fell in 1145, Eugenius commissioned Bernard to recruit for and coordinate a new crusade—a monumental effort that spanned years and took a great toll on the abbot’s health. With the Second Crusade’s failure, he was unanimously elected to head a new one—with papal endorsement—until Cistercian abbots put a stop to the decision, primarily due to his failing health. In 1148, Bernard was called to oppose Gilbert de la Porree, a student and ally of Abelard’s, in a trial of heresy of which the pope himself was the adjudicator. In his letters, he raged against the rebellion of 1148 that had driven Pope Eugenius III from Rome, fomented by Abelard’s acolyte Arnold of

397 Evans, Bernard of Clairvaux, 16.
398 John McManners, The Oxford Illustrated History of Christianity (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1990), 211. The Petrobrusians followed the teachings of Peter of Bruys, later championed and edited by former Cluniac monk Henry of Lausanne, whose followers became known as Henricians.
399 “Eugene III: Summons to A Crusade, Dec 1, 1145.” Latin text available in Michael Doeberl, Monumenta Germania Selecta, Vol 4 (München, J. Lindauerische Buchhandlung, 1889-94), 40, or Select Historical Documents of the Middle Ages, trans. Ernest F. Henderson (London: George Bell and Sons, 1910), 333-336. The papal call for what modern scholars call the Second Crusade had been attempted unsuccessfully when Pope Eugenius III contacted Bernard to direct the summons almost single-handedly. Its failure was blamed almost exclusively on Bernard, who responded c. 1150 with his De Consideratione, defaulting responsibility of Christendom’s defeat instead on a continental lack of faith.
Bernard interpreted any drastic departure from the monastic tradition, especially in the guise of "reform," to lead only to schism and chaos.

Bernard spent little time in his own abbey, yet during these prodigious years, he somehow recorded many of the later texts for which he is best remembered. Among them are his *Sermones super Cantica Canticorum*, *De Diligendo Deo*, and *Liber de praecepto et dispensatione*. There are also 547 of Bernard’s surviving letters.

From this wealth, modern scholars have learned much about the way in which this Doctor of the Church dealt with the factions of his lifetime. Traditionally, Bernard has been erroneously depicted as the spokesman for Faith against Abelard’s advocacy for Reason. I have submitted a more complete historiography of their conflict in Chapter 3, but it is sufficient for now to say that not one chronicler of the medieval period used such a juxtaposition of *fides contra ratio* in describing Sens, nor did the participants themselves. Bernard deemed Cistercian devotion to be a praiseworthy worship of Christ and Abelard’s irreverent dialectics in the realm of theology to be an assault on Heaven. Bernard saw no war between faith and reason. Rather, he accused Abelard of misappropriating reason in order to achieve what faith had already revealed. Bernard was a mystic, believing that the power of God manifest in Christianity was felt, not intellectually conceived.
could not be understood by rational argument, although reason did have a vital purpose in aiding faith.\textsuperscript{406} Trained in the Roman form of logical argument but not an enthusiastic supporter of it,\textsuperscript{407} Bernard used marvelous dialectics in his many epistles and sermons. However, he strongly opposed the use of dialectics in public debates or classrooms as an ostentatious distraction from a quiet life of faith and solitude. Bernard frequently employed the Aristotelian question-and-answer format in his letters,\textsuperscript{408} but he spoke bitterly of its use to question what he deemed traditional doctrine. The fact that Scholastics like Abelard might have done so, if only to prove such orthodoxy rationally, made it no less corrosive.\textsuperscript{409}

The abbot’s writings reveal one other relevant aspect: Bernard’s intellectual contradictions. Though he represented the whole of the Order of Citeaux and defended its highest things are impertinently asked, the Fathers scorned because they were disposed to conciliate rather than solve such problems. Human reason is snatching everything to itself, leaving nothing for faith. It falls upon things which are beyond it...desecrates sacred things more than clarifies them. It does not unlock mysteries and symbols, but tears them asunder; it makes nought of everything to which it cannot gain access and disdains to believe all such things.”

\textsuperscript{406}Bernard of Clairvaux, De Consideratione, II.1, in Bernard’s Treatise on Consideration (Dublin: Brown and Nolan, 1921), 31-39, esp. 35-36. God must be \textit{experienced} in a faithful heart. When travesties happened, as they did to Bernard when the Second Crusade ended in abysmal failure, he deemed it was because the people had not the adequate faith for God to perform His miracles. He asked, “Was there a moment during the whole journey when they were not returning in heart to Egypt? And if the faithless Jews were overthrown in the desert and “perished by reason of their iniquity,” [Psalm 72:19] ought it to surprise us that the Christians, who committed the same crimes, have suffered the same chastisement? No one surely will pretend that the fate of the former belied the promises of God. Consequently, neither did the destruction of the latter.” For more on Bernard’s mysticism, see Anthony N. S. Lane, “Bernard of Clairvaux: Theologian of the Cross” in The Atonement Debate, ed. D. Tidball, D. Hilborn, and J. Thacker (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2008), 249-266.


\textsuperscript{408}John R. Sommerfeldt, Bernard of Clairvaux on the Life of the Mind (Mahwah, NJ: Newman/Paulist Press, 2004), 132-134.

\textsuperscript{409}Abelard, \textit{Sic et Non}, Prologue, trans. Lewis et al. Abelard had presumed to resolve apparent contradictions among Church Fathers in \textit{Sic et Non}, as I have stated previously. A quote such as in Abelard’s prologue drove Bernard to great worry: “If in the Gospels themselves some things are corrupted by the ignorance of scribes, we should not be surprised that the same thing has sometimes happened in the writings of later Fathers who are of much less authority.”
reforming, apostolic spirit; no one altered Cistercian theology and practices more. Bernard’s obedience to Stephen Harding’s leadership at Citeaux did not preclude Clairvaux’s fame as the quintessential Cistercian ideal or Bernard’s voice being the final word on Citeaux’s original practices. One example is the elimination of any illumination in Cistercian books after Bernard’s denunciation, despite the early artful work at Citeaux under Stephen Harding’s direction. Prior to this, Cistercian illumination was regarded as the most prolific in Western Europe. Another contradiction in Bernard’s ministry concerned the Doctrine of the Two Swords, Bernard being a strong proponent of the separation of physical and spiritual power between secular and ecclesiastic authorities. His contempt for clerics who accumulated political power notwithstanding, Bernard was still willing to summon and direct the Second Crusade, then to take the helm of a new crusade in 1150, albeit miserably.

Bernard was not blind to his own inconsistencies. In one letter he defined himself as a chimaera, incapable of definition—in a world of clearly defined roles for abbots and churchmen, this was decidedly meant as self-criticism. He vehemently criticized other

413 The Two Swords Theory was proclaimed as papal policy during the fifth-century reign of Gelasius I. It was based on Augustinian doctrine, wherein all spiritual power was controlled by the Church and control over earthly power remains in the hands of princes. The medieval interpretation was taken from Luke 22:38. For more on the Doctrine of the Two Swords, see David Knowles, “Church and State in Christian History,” in Journal of Contemporary History, vol. 2, no. 4, Church and Politics (Sage Publications, Oct. 1967), 3-15. For Gelasius’ proclamation, see Gelasius I, “On Spiritual and Temporal Power, 494” in J. H. Robinson, Readings in European History (Boston: Ginn, 1905), 72-73.
monks for leaving their cloisters to preach or go on pilgrimage without leave: Adam the pilgrim-monk,\textsuperscript{415} Arnold of Brescia,\textsuperscript{416} and Radulf\textsuperscript{417} are some examples. Throughout the latter half of Bernard’s abbacy, however, he himself spent comparably little time in Clairvaux in order to preach, recruit for crusade, or confer with Europe’s monarchs.\textsuperscript{418} Recent historians have provided ample justification for this.\textsuperscript{419} However, Brian McGuire writes of Bernard’s grotesque inner torment over being the monk who urges all to seek their rightful place within the monastery, yet cannot find peace enough to reside there himself.\textsuperscript{420}

A monk should remain apart from the world in order to intercede for it; a monk should have no “contempt of authority,” Bernard proclaimed, yet the ever-traveling Bernard was no blind obedient. He challenged any ruling—lay or ecclesiastic—that he deemed contrary to his understanding of scriptural or Patristic text. He even contested papal rulings, as in the cases of the overwhelmingly popular election of Anacletus II in 1130,\textsuperscript{421} the papal


\textsuperscript{417} Bernard, \textit{Epistola} 365, in \textit{Patrologia Latina} 182:570.

\textsuperscript{418} John R. Sommerfeld, \textit{Bernard of Clairvaux on the Spirituality of Relationship} (Mahwah, NJ: Newman/ Paulist Press, 2004), 114. He estimates at least one third of all of Bernard’s abbacy was spent away from his monastery.

\textsuperscript{419} Archdale A. King, \textit{Citeaux and Her Elder Daughters} (London: Burns & Oates, 1954), 218; John Sommerfeldt, “The Social Theory of Bernard of Clairvaux,” \textit{Saint Bernard of Clairvaux: Studies Commemorating the Eighth Centenary of His Canonization}, Basil M. Pennington, ed. (Kalamazoo, MI: Cistercian Publications, 1977), 47. King writes, “For well nigh 50 years, the life of St. Bernard was the history of Europe, although it should not be forgotten that the Saint for the first 15 years at Clairvaux remained in his monastery, except for visitations, and it was the appearance of the antipope Leonis (Anacletis II) that brought him into the arena of European affairs.”


selection of Eugenius III, or the pontiff’s support of a popular election. Bernard lectured his disciple Pope Eugenius III in his letters so much that the pope rhetorically asked whether Eugenius was pope or Bernard. There are other contradictions historians have seen in Bernard’s ministry. The contradiction most germane to this thesis is Bernard’s theology concerning the Jews.

**Bernard and the Jews**

Bernard’s portrayal of Jews is one of his most prominent and controversial dualities of thought. Much as Abelard’s theological reasoning called for empathy for Jewish intentions if not actions, Bernard’s theological reasons for protecting Jewish populations earned him the

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422 Bernard of Clairvaux, *Epistolae* 237-238, *Patrologia Latina* 182:268; Arnold of Bonneval, *Vita Prima*, II.50; Evans, *Bernard of Clairvaux*, 16. Bernard had strongly opposed Eugenius’ appointment, given the exhausting duties of the pontificate—believing his student to be too innocent for the office, but he nonetheless took advantage of his role as teacher toward the impressionable pope. Eugenius had even named himself after Bernard—his monastic name was Bernardus Pignatelli—when he first entered the priesthood at Clairvaux. Eugenius had been unanimously elected as pope because of his connection with Bernard and because none others wanted the role. Two popes had died while in office already within that year and immediately after conferring the title, the pope and all cardinals left Rome in fear for the their lives amid the republican insurrections in the city.

423 Bernard of Clairvaux, *Epistolae* 275-276, 280. The election of Auxerre had already been approved by Pope Eugenius III, but Bernard was able to persuade his former pupil to reverse his decision.


425 His asceticism and long life were likewise a contradiction. In an age when the average man lived to be “not much older than 35,” and the average Cistercian aged twenty-eight because of the miserable austerities of early Cistercian monasteries, the devoted son Bernard—plagued by ill health since youth—lived to be sixty-three, expending his body for the sake of Mother Church. For more on medieval lifespans, see Stephen Tobin, *The Cistercians: Monks and Monasteries of Europe* (Woodstock, NY: Overlook Press, 1995), 73; Lionel Adey, *Hymns and the Christian Myth* (Vancouver, British Columbia: UBC Press, 1986), 95; Holdsworth, “Bernard of Clairvaux,” 172-174.
name “friend of the Jews.” Yet the abbot’s descriptions of Jews include defamatory language and possibly even racial epithets. Bernard easily eclipsed Abelard in the preponderance of references to Jews in his writings. The Abbot reminded the pope of Augustine’s unique protection of the Jews in De consideratione. Bernard wrote of the fact that Jews can love God, though never as much as Christians do, in De diligendo. In Bernard’s Epistolae 363, 364, and 365, he wrote specifically to protect Jewish populations in the Rhineland from the fate that had befallen their grandparents during the First Crusade as he drummed up support for the Second. The majority of his allusions to Jews are liberally throughout his Sermones or his letters during and after the Schism of 1130-38, some of which were recorded in his biography. Most of these references to Jews are indirect, examples of what Christians should abhor. “Synagogues of Satan” and “new Pharisees” were sobriquets throughout his letters that denounced Christian greed or arrogance. Historians David Berger, Robert Chazan, Alfred Havercamp, and Jeremy Cohen have analyzed the effect of Bernard’s letters on Christendom as it shaped opinion about Jews.

426 Joseph ha-Kohen, The Vale of Tears: Emek habacha, Joseph Hacohen and the anonymous corrector. Transl. plus critical commentary, Harry S. May, ed. (Nijhoff: Springer, 1971), 22; Michael Brown, Our Hands, 12;
430 Bernard of Clairvaux, Epistolae 125.1 and 139.1, in Opera, Leclercq et al, ed., 7:308, 7:335-336. As the most persuasive of Innocent II’s supporters, Bernard denounced the claimancy of Anacletus to the papacy, calling the descendent of Jews “that beast of the Apocalypse,” “the enemy of the cross,” and that it was “an injury to Christ for someone of Jewish lineage to have seized the throne of Peter.”
431 Arnold of Bonneval, Vita Prima, II.1, II.45, trans. Costello, 80, 129.
The first published work that scrutinized Bernard’s own influential beliefs was David Berger’s “The Attitude of St. Bernard of Clairvaux toward the Jews” in 1972. It was the first scholarship of its kind to explore the apparent contradiction in which Bernard passionately vilified but preserved Jews. Berger finds that Bernard “was an unusually strong opponent of the destruction of Jews, yet an equally strong spokesman for anti-Jewish stereotypes and prejudices.” Ultimately, Berger claims Bernard preached a more tolerant message than his contemporaries, but his tirades against Jews wrought unintended horror for Jewish populations.

Historians have since built off Berger’s work. Robert Chazan adopts Berger’s view that Bernard’s passionate efforts were both harmful and helpful to twelfth-century Jews, but focuses more on Bernard’s personal efforts to silence anti-Jewish preaching. In Chazan’s “From the First Crusade to the Second,” he states that the difference between Bernard’s anti-Jewish polemics and that of others (like Peter the Venerable’s) was Bernard’s scriptural focus. Whereas Peter saw the current dangers that Jews posed through sacrilege, usury, blasphemy, and undermining Christendom, Bernard saw the great Jewish crime as the historic, biblical one: rejection of Christ. Both are anti-Jewish rationales. However, Chazan

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435 Robert Chazan, “From the First Crusade to the Second: Evolving Perceptions of the Christian-Jewish Conflict,” *Jews and Christians of the Twelfth Century*, ed. Signer and Van Engen (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2001), 47-50. Peter the Venerable’s advice to the king of France stopped short of murdering the Jews, but he counseled Louis to tax Jews as Christians were taxed for the Crusades and impoverish them as punishment for their alleged crimes against Christendom. Peter’s perspective is emblematic of the new, growing animus. The “perceptions of Jewish enmity became more firmly entrenched in the here-
notes how Bernard insisted that Jewish disbelief should never be met with violence, and that reason is a better weapon than force to deal with a nonbeliever.\textsuperscript{436} The Jews should be met with kindness rather than the sword, given their providence of the law, prophets, promises, and even Jesus, the Cistercian argued.\textsuperscript{437} While Bernard agreed with the sentiment that Jews were the enemies of Christendom, his first priority was seeing that God was obeyed. The Augustinian doctrine was simple: the Jews must be protected.

While Chazan portrays Bernard in a generous light in contrast to his peers, Alfred Haverkamp’s “Baptised Jews in German Lands during the Twelfth Century” argues for the more deleterious dimension of Bernard’s actions toward Jews. The Cistercian’s antisemitism regarding Anacletus’ controversial heredity during the Papal Schism\textsuperscript{438} and the abbot’s incitement of crusader zeal during the Second Crusade\textsuperscript{439} are what led to animosity against Jews as a religiously isolated minority. Like Berger and Chazan, Haverkamp amply references the three letters Bernard wrote during the Crusade: the letter to Henry, the Archbishop of Mainz; the letter to England to Summon the Second Crusade (1146); and the letter to Eastern France and Bavaria Promoting the Second Crusade (1146).\textsuperscript{440}

Jeremy Cohen has followed most closely Berger’s conclusions by emphasizing both the beneficial and negative impacts Bernard’s writings had on Jews. Cohen posits that instead

\textsuperscript{436} Chazan, European Jewry, 176-177. Chazan bases this argument off of Bernard’s renunciation of the anti-Jewish demagogue Radulf in Bernard’s Epistola 365.

\textsuperscript{437} Bernard of Clairvaux, Epistola 365, Sancti Bernardi Opera, trans. Leclercq et al, 8:320-322.

\textsuperscript{438} Haverkamp, “Baptised Jews,” 265.

\textsuperscript{439} Ibid, 261.

\textsuperscript{440} Bernard of Clairvaux, Epistolae 363-365, Patrologia Latina 182:567-570.
of Jews being unwanted and unwelcome in Bernard’s idealized Cistercian world, they were vital agents ordained to be there by God, just as Augustine believed. Cohen’s lengthy book *Living Letters* (1999) is titled after Bernard’s phrase that Jews were reminders of the Lord’s wrath on the disobedient. “The Jews are for us the living letters of Scripture, constantly representing the Lord’s passion.” Cohen uses Bernard’s sermons and letters and the Hebrew crusade chronicles in order to portray the abbot’s worldview that crusades and Christian violence would not be necessary if all non-Christians were subjugated as the Jews had been. Cohen deems it possible to credit Bernard as both a peace-maker and a precipitant in the dehumanization of Jews.

Bernard had been no more than six years old when hundreds of Rhineland Jews had been slaughtered by the first waves of crusaders in 1096. Like nearly all clergy, he was horrified that Christians could have wrought such fiendish violence against Jewish communities. When he was asked by Pope Eugenius III to preach another crusade to rescue the recently conquered county of Edessa, Bernard wrote to local bishops and lay rulers, but included in each letter the strong insistence to protect Jewish populations. “Jews must not be persecuted, slaughtered, nor even driven out. Inquire of the pages of Holy Writ. I

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441 Bernard, *Epistola* 363, *Sancti Bernardi Opera*, Leclercq et al, ed., 8:311-17; Cohen, *Living Letters*, 2; Jeremy Cohen, *The Friars and the Jews*, ch. 6. In this context, Bernard insisted that Jews were not to be persecuted, killed, or exiled, but to serve as a testament to God’s faithfulness, when at last in the Last Days, Jews would become reconciled to God.


know what is written in the Psalms as prophecy about the Jews. ‘God hath commanded me,’ says the Church, ‘Slay them not, lest my people forget.’

His labors were in vain. In late spring of 1146, crusaders on the way to the Levant sated their demands for Jewish bloodshed, spurred on by clerical anti-Jewish rhetoric. The urgent appeals he received back from bishops of cities with Jewish populations prompted Bernard to leave for the Rhineland to stop these pogroms himself, countermanding papal orders.

Bernard found the impetus for these attacks had been the demagoguery of a young monk named Radulf, alternatively called Raoul or Rudolf. The itinerant preacher had begun his vitriol against Jews in northern France. When Bernard got wind of Radulf’s violent message, the young monk had by then traveled to the Holy Roman Empire, urging the crusading peasants to kill and punish Jews in the Rhineland. It is likely that Bernard found it most abominable that Radulf was of the Cistercian order, possibly from his own monastery. Bernard wrote of Radulf in his letter back to Henry Archbishop of Mainz,

445 Bernard, Epistola 364.10, “Bernard of Clairvaux, the Jews and the Second Crusade (1146);” Saperstein, Moments of Crisis, 19.
446 Otto of Freising, Gesta Friderici Imperatoris, I.37-40, 43, trans. Mierow; Odo of Deuil, De profectione Ludovici VII in orientem (The Journey of Louis VII to the East), trans. and ed. Virginia Gingerick Berry (New York: Norton, 1948), 12-13; Evans, Bernard of Clairvaux, 16-17; John G. Rowe, “The Origins of the Second Crusade: Pope Eugenius III, Bernard of Clairvaux and Louis VII of France,” The Second Crusade and the Cistercians, ed. Michael Gervers (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1992), 79-80, 82-3. Pope Eugenius III had demanded that the Regnum Teutonicum not participate in the armed pilgrimage to free Edessa, as the German empire was needed elsewhere, either to war against the pagans to the east or to secure Eugenius’ power in Rome instead. Bernard violated Eugenius’ decree in preaching crusade after a Christmas service following his confrontation with Radulf. Bernard’s message was said to be so impassioned that Conrad dropped to his knees, weeping, donning the cross.
447 Bernard of Clairvaux, Epistola 365, in Patrologia Latina 182:570; Tyerman, Fighting, 48. Although Christopher Tyerman acknowledges Bernard’s extreme displeasure with Radulf (or Raoul), he finds Bernard’s rant against his younger Cistercian brother to be hypocritical. He argues that Bernard’s recent inciting of crowds for crusade was more at fault than Radulf’s.
448 Annales Rodenses, in Monumenta Germaniae Historica, ed. G. H. Pertz (Hanover, 1869), xvi; Otto of Freising, Gesta Frederici Imperatoris, 74; Bernard, Epistola 393, Sancti Bernardi Opera, 8:365; Watkin Wynn Williams, Bernard of Clairvaux (Manchester, England: 1935), 266; Christopher Tyerman, God’s War: A New
The fellow you mention in your letter has received no authority from men or through men, nor has he been sent by God. If he makes himself out to be a monk or a hermit, and on that score claims liberty to preach and the duty of doing so, he can and should know that the duty of a monk is not to preach but to pray. He ought to be a man for whom towns are a prison and the wilderness a paradise, but instead of that he finds towns a paradise and the wilderness a prison. A fellow without sense and void of all modesty! A fellow whose foolishness has been set up on a candlestick for all the world to see! I find three things most reprehensible in him: unauthorized preaching, contempt for episcopal authority, and incitement to murder.\textsuperscript{449}

Upon arriving in Mainz, seeing the crusaders’ bloodlust in a grim repeat of the carnage in the Rhine half a century before, Bernard detained Radulf and dismissed him to his monastery—a sort of house arrest.\textsuperscript{450} There is little account of what Bernard said in his reprimand to the itinerant monk.\textsuperscript{451} With Radulf’s removal and prohibitions against further anti-Jewish preaching, the attacks in Speyer, Worms, Cologne, and elsewhere dissolved throughout the Rhineland, as recorded in Otto of Friesing’s account of the Second Crusade.\textsuperscript{452} The only Jewish record resembling a transcript of Bernard’s intervention was

\textit{History of the Crusades} (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard UP, 2006), 282-283. Radulf was another manifestation of apostolic preaching: he was likely a hermit and was remembered by many as “a splendid teacher and monk,” who argued that if lords were intending to protect Jews, then common men should rebel against their lords. This last point did not endear him to Otto of Freising.\textsuperscript{449} Bernard, \textit{Epistola} 365.1, \textit{Patrologia Latina} 182:570.\textsuperscript{450} Bernard, Ep. 393, \textit{Sancti Bernardi Opera}, 8:365; Tyerman, \textit{God’s War}, 284-285.\textsuperscript{451} Bernard, \textit{Epistola} 365, \textit{Patrologia Latina} 182:570. There is also a brief synopsis in Ephraim of Bonn’s account of the attacks.\textsuperscript{452} Otto of Freising, \textit{Gesta Friderici Imperatoris}, 59, trans. C. C. Mierow (New York, 1953), 37-40; “Sefer Zekhirah,” or “The Book of Remembrance of Rabbi Ephraim of Bonn,” in Neubauer, \textit{Hebraische}, 59; Habermann, \textit{Sefer}, 116, Eidelberg, \textit{The Jews and the Crusaders}, 122; Joseph ha-Kohen, \textit{The Vale of Tears}, May, ed., 22; Geoffrey of Auxerre, \textit{Vita Prima}, III.7; Chazan, \textit{European Jewry}, 174-179; Tyerman, \textit{God’s War}, 281-288; Sanna, \textit{Loving God}, 25-26; Hay, \textit{Thy Brother’s Blood}, 41-44. Otto chronicled Bernard’s trek to the Rhineland “both that he might stir by the word of sacred exhortation stir the heart of the prince of the Romans to accept the cross and that he might silence Ra[dul]ph.” Ephraim and Yosef ha-Kohen described an in-person visit from Abbot Bernard. Geoffrey did not write of Bernard’s encounter with Radulf, but the biographer off-handedly stated that Bernard needed a translator when speaking to the German people. Chazan also determines that Bernard personally confronts Radulf near or amid his crusading listeners, then counter-preached directly against anti-Jewish violence. Sanna states that he traveled to the Rhineland to put a stop to the riots himself. Hay states that although Bernard knew no German, he would have arranged through local bishops and interpreters to quiet the crowds.
recorded in the *Sefer Zekhira*, attributed to Rabbi Ephraim of Bonn—who was then a thirteen-year-old witness of Bernard’s preaching and the crimes against Jews in Cologne.453

The *Sefer Zekhira* chronicled Bernard’s words to the Christian mob:

The Lord heard our outcry, and He turned to us and had mercy upon us. In His great mercy and grace, He sent a decent priest, one honored and respected by all the clergy in France, named Abbe Bernard of Clairvaux …[who] spoke raucously, as is their manner; and this is what he said to them: “It is good that you go against the Ishmaelites. But whosoever touches a Jew to take his life, is like one who harms Jesus himself. My disciple Radulf, who has spoken about annihilating the Jews, has spoken in error, for in the Book of Psalms it is written of them: ‘Slay them not, lest my people forget.’”454

Despite Bernard’s timely deliverance, Berger, Haverkamp, Hay, and other historians have strongly pointed out the abbot’s own language provided the initial spur for such violence, and other evident hypocrisy on Bernard’s part.455 Christopher Tyerman writes that “Bernard’s message of intolerance to Christ’s enemies spilled over into more anti-Jewish violence in the Rhineland, although this was rather disingenuously blamed on a maverick monk called [Radulf].”456 Tyerman states that the Abbot’s speeches to energize tens of thousands of Europeans to wage war were the truer catalysts for violence. Malcolm Hay

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454 “Sefer Zekhirah,” in Eidelberg, *The Jews and the Crusaders*, 128; Carroll, *Constantine’s Sword*, 270; Cohen, *Living Letters*, 234-244. Bernard likely repeated warnings against slaying Jews found already in the letters he had written prior to his personal intervention in the Rhineland. Cohen points out that Bernard is the only non-Jew praised in Ephraim of Bonn’s work.
455 Berger, “The Attitude of St. Bernard,” 106-108; Tyerman, *Fighting*, 48; Hay, *Thy Brother’s Blood*, 53-57; Haverkamp, “Baptised Jews,” 261-265. In his confrontation with the demagogue Radulf, Bernard accused the renegade monk of breaking faith with Saint Benedict’s injunction for monks never to preach or flee residence in a cloister. As discussed previously, Bernard was guilty of the same infraction of St. Benedict’s Rule. Hay also places Rudolf as a Cistercian who had left Clairvaux to preach without authorization. As such, Bernard would have been responsible for teaching his “son” such anti-Jewish defamation as was in his sermons, yet disingenuously calling Rudolf “ignorant” when the young monk incited violence based on such vitriol.
notes the extremely light scolding Radulf received from Bernard, and concludes that this is a mere slapping-on-the-wrist, not by any means pursuant of Christian justice.457

While I affirm Bernard’s culpability in anti-Jewish violence, I caution that the assertions above must not be taken out of its twelfth-century context. It is a worthy counterpoint to recall that Bernard’s words were directed toward murderous crowds, encountering immediate local hostility among Radulf’s devoted supporters.458 A harsher penalty than Bernard’s “slapping on the wrist” as punishment for Radulf’s incitement to mass murder would hardly have been tolerated by crusaders who had already shown their neglect for the Abbot’s persistent demands to protect Jewish life. Bernard’s praise of the peasant mobs for their zeal and light sentence for Radulf was meant to placate their bloodlust.

Ephraim of Bonn’s assessment of Bernard’s mild scolding was an indication that the crusading mob was a “poorer segment of the population who derive joy from things of no consequence,”459 but it a better explanation to note that the unlearned laity probably acted sincerely at clerical instigation. Although the crowds followed Radulf’s demagoguery which countermanded Bernard’s explicit instructions to preserve Jews, once most Jews had sought refuge elsewhere and the peasant armies had been lauded for their zeal, they took Bernard’s instructions without any recorded resistance.

Bernard never acknowledged causality between his preaching of crusade and violence against Jews, nor did his contemporaries. Bernard was preaching a crusade: violence against

458 Otto of Freising, Gesta Friderici Imperatoris, ch. 37-40. Otto also states that “the people were very angry, and wanted to start an insurrection, but they were restrained by Bernard’s saintliness.”
unbelievers was clearly not the travesty to him; indeed, the crusaders’ passion to kill Muslims in 1146 was praiseworthy to Bernard. Killing Jews was another matter, though, as it precipitated divine wrath. First, because God had forbade it. Second, because Jews were to be a testament to Christians and would join the ranks of the faithful one day. Third, because such violence diverted the energies of the crusade from its primary objectives. The Cistercian differentiated the fate of enemies by their power. Muslims and other pagans, as Saracens were often called in the twelfth century, were to be conquered physically because theirs was a path of violence. Jews were both protected by divine mandate and by their subservience. Thus Bernard saw no contradiction in inciting war against the Saracens and not against the Jews. He maintained that were Muslims as submissive as Jews, they would be equally protected from violence. The Abbot says as much at the outset of crusade: “It is an act of Christian piety to ‘vanquish the arrogant’ and also to ‘spare the subjected.’” Ultimately, the role of Bernard’s preaching of crusade in the causation of anti-Jewish violence is as apparent to modern scholars as it was invisible to Bernard.

In practice Bernard’s protection of the Jews was renowned, but even a cursory look at his attitude towards the Jewish religion demonstrates a strong belligerency. His frequent

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462 Bernard, *De Consideratione*, II.1, in *Bernard’s Treatise*, 31-39; Cohen, *Living Letters*, 241; Hay, Thy Brother’s Blood, 42-49. I submit in the frequent references Bernard made to Jews through this chapter of *De Consideratione* that Bernard included the sin of killing Jews in the Rhineland as among those that disqualified the Christians of the Second Crusade from achieving victory.
references to Jews as disingenuous, bestial, or avaricious, or in one letter as a “synagogue of Satan,” heighten an already common Christian negative assessment of Jews in the twelfth century. In a sermon to the monks of Clairvaux, he preached,

A Jew might complain, perhaps, that I go too far in baiting him when I term his understanding ‘ox-like’… ‘The ox,’ he says, ‘knows his owner, and the ass his master’s crib; Israel has not known Me, My people had no understanding.’ You see, O Jew, I am milder than your own prophet: I put you on a par with the beasts, he puts you beneath them!

It seems safe to assume that Bernard had little respect for the Jews themselves. Why, then, would he risk his reputation—indeed his life—on their rescue? The telling answer can be seen in his “Letter to the People of England:”

The Jews are not to be persecuted, killed, or even put to flight… The Jews are for us the living words of scripture, for they remind us always of what our Lord suffered. They are dispersed all over the world so that by expiating their crime they may be everywhere the living witnesses of our redemption. Hence the same Psalm [59] adds, ‘only let thy power disperse them,’ …If the Jews are utterly wiped out, what will become of our hope for their promised salvation, their eventual conversion?

In other words, Jews were to be preserved not because of their value as human beings, but because of their Christological importance, and because it was so ordered by God

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465 Bernard, Epistola 19.4. Bernard’s letter to Abbot Suger compares monks who follow the will of earthly princes rather than God with the den of thieves rather than a house of prayer. The anti-Jewish epithet from Revelation 3:19 was also used by contemporaries of Bernard’s.

466 Bernard, Sermones super Cantica canticorum 60.1.5, in Patrologia Latina 183, Jacquess-Paul Migne, ed. (Paris: Garnier, 1844-64), 1068; Edward A. Synan, The Popes and the Jews in the Middle Ages (New York: Macmillan, 1965), 77; Cohen, Living Letters, 230-231; Carroll, Constantine’s, 304; Michael Brown, Our Hands, 12. Bernard quoted Isaiah 1:3—Nihilominus intellectum grossum et certe bovinum (O intellect no less crass and certainly bovine)—addressing the Jews, stating that he had more leniency on them than Isaiah did. Like Anselm and his followers, Bernard believed logical conception of Christ was impossible to an irrational Jewish mind, but Cohen goes further: crediting Bernard with furthering the medieval idea that Jews were therefore bovine, and thus bestial and inhuman.

467 For my and others’ argument for Bernard’s personal visit to the Rhineland to stop the slaughter of Jews rather than merely his letter-writing efforts, see footnote 452.

468 Bernard, Epistola 364.10, “Bernard of Clairvaux, the Jews and the Second Crusade (1146);” Saperstein, Moments of Crisis, 19; Carroll, Constantine’s, 271.
and the Patristic writers of antiquity, and supported by Church doctrine. God meant for the Jews to be a witness in the Final Days who would then be converted from their obduracy into Christian brothers.\footnote{Bernard, \textit{Epistola} 364.10.} Bernard’s interpretation of Psalm 59:11 as a divine order to safeguard Jews stems directly from Augustine’s theology.\footnote{Augustine, \textit{City of God}, bk. 18, ch. 46, 827-28.} No one worked harder than Bernard to keep Jews safe as he called forth a crusade, which is why the author of the \textit{Sefer Zekhira} lauded Bernard, “Were it not for the mercy of our Creator in sending the aforementioned Abbé and his later epistles, no remnant or vestige would have remained of Israel.”\footnote{“Sefer,” in Eidelberg, \textit{The Jews and the Crusaders}, 122. The quote can be found at the start of the narrative attributed to the Rabbi of Bonn.} Yet the way in which the abbot labeled Jews undermined his own efforts. Robert Chazan identifies the effects of Bernard’s ambivalence toward the Jews, “To label a group the most heinous of enemies and then to demand for them tolerance (albeit limited) and safety is probably to make demands that the human psyche, over the long run, must have difficulty in meeting.”\footnote{Chazan, \textit{In the Year 1096}, 144.}

Some historians have conjectured that the abbot of Clairvaux more than most of his contemporaries purveyed a hostility toward the Jews as a people rather than a religion. Bernard’s references to Jews as beasts were hardly novel. However, the implication that Jews’ bovine intellects could not grasp the Truth before them was similar to Abelard’s writings that led to the dehumanizing of Jews, as Abulafia has argued. Jeremy Cohen argues something similar to Abulafia’s reasoning, that the medieval idea that Jews were bestial, inhuman, and unthinking stems from comments like Bernard’s.\footnote{Cohen, \textit{Living Letters}, 231, 261. See Cohen’s bibliography on n. 121.} The first Cistercian
implication of a taint in Jewish bloodlines was voiced by Bernard in 1130, hinting at the poor pedigree of Anacletus II, whose ancestry was Jewish. It was not mere muckraking against a rival faction. Bernard declared Anacletus “that beast of the Apocalypse,” and “the enemy of the cross.” Most specifically, the Cistercian thought that “it constitutes an injury to Christ for someone of Jewish lineage to have seized the throne of Peter.” Bernard correlated the Pierleoni faction with bribery, embezzlement, and other abuses of Rome’s economy, as well as encouraging the eager Jews of Rome to smash Church relics when Christians were too afraid to do so. As Anacletus (Pietro Pierleoni)’s grandfather or great-grandfather was Jewish, it is pertinent to know that Bernard probably regarded Jewish lineage as carrying negative qualities, even among distant descendants of Jewish converts. He was certainly not alone in this prejudice. His polemic against Anacletus II both was emblematic of and influenced intellectual sentiment throughout the literate Regnum Teutonicum. However, Haverkamp argues this was mostly found among the ecclesiastic orders, not the commoners, and there was not even consensus there.

I have thus far written what the individual influences of two intellectual twelfth-century giants had on Jewish-Christian relations. Both men grew to be masters of their spheres. Both were committed to reform, both were passionate and outspoken, and both seemed born for confrontation. The eleventh and twelfth centuries were filled with

475 Arnold of Bonneval, Vita Prima, III.1, trans. Costello, 80.
476 Bernard of Clairvaux, Epistola 248, in Sancti Bernardi Opera, ed. Leclercq, 4:158; Cohn, Pursuit of the Millennium, 80-81. Bernard fell prey to millennial demonization of his enemies, Peter Abelard and Arnold of Brescia being among them.
controversy, unprepared for coordinated mechanisms for inhibiting intellectual dissent.\textsuperscript{478}

Into this cauldron of change and factionalism, Bernard and Abelard were the most prominent of all controversial figures of their time and leaders of powerful movements.\textsuperscript{479} As Christendom grappled in vain for a process to peaceably harmonize factions in conflict, “…we can trace a well-known and comparatively well-documented chain of events that demonstrates the inefficiencies that characterized institutional responses to the challenges posed by clerics belonging the intellectual elite.”\textsuperscript{480} The Council of Sens became the first event emblematic of a new system in Western Europe to deal with religious conflict.

\textsuperscript{478} Fidler, Bernard, 1.
\textsuperscript{479} Ibid, 3.
\textsuperscript{480} Moore, War on Heresy, 29-31; Yossef Schwartz, “Authority, Control, and Conflict in Thirteenth-Century Paris: Contextualizing the Talmud Trial” ed. E. Baumgarten, J. Galinsky, Jews and Christians in Thirteenth Century France (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015), 93-110; Godman, The Silent Masters, 339, 344. As Godman avers, twelfth-century methods to encompass an ideology of intellectual power were underdeveloped but were primogenitures for the evolution of institutional corporations by the 1240s that sought to solve “problems often posed but never solved by the intellectuals of the twelfth century.”
CHAPTER 3: THE CONTEXT AND LEGACY OF SENS

The twelfth century, awash in the apostolic spirit, experienced a sudden upsurge in religious expression and a diversity of idealism. An unprecedented miscellany of apostolic creeds gave rise to grassroots movements, the majority of which bore no papal approval. Beverly Kienzle terms this century the rise of religious dissent, but I find this title too presumptive: there was little codified orthodoxy, much less heterodoxy, by 1100. Without comprehending the common origin of these disparate expressions of the vita apostolica, Church prelates reacted out of a fear of disorder and a desire for accountability. They linked unauthorized itinerant preaching with dangerous centuries-old heresies, and these ancient heresies with social upheaval. In general thereafter, ecclesiastics denounced heresy as a secular crime, not merely as a stigma. By the century’s end, heresy was so common an accusation within Christendom that Pope Innocent III made it his personal mission to decide himself what constituted heresy and what did not.

Twelfth-century factionalism emerged as contestation over multiple interpretations of the apostolic life. The abounding enthusiasm for a renewal of the Church expressed in the

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481 Kienzle, Cistercians, Heresy, 1.
483 Bolton, Medieval Reformation, 97-103. The poor were fed at feasts under Innocent III, who understood the vita apostolica as the reason for such diverse lay movements. He himself had an undyed woolen garment, rather than rich clothes. However, his understanding did not stop him from trying to expunge all those deemed to be heretics from Christendom.
tenth and eleventh centuries had sprung from the millenialist expectation that Christendom could be miraculously reformed. Laity and ecclesiastics alike envisioned a return to a romanticized past in which all of the future Church followed Christian charity, lived apostolically, and came together in unity. Yet with so many diverse interpretations of the vita apostolica, these hopes were disappointed by the start of the twelfth century. Instead of a universal conscience within Christendom, the Church turned to codification. As Bolton summarizes:

At the beginning of the period it was hoped that reforms initiated by the papacy and the codification of canon law might deal with the [new spiritually-aspiring] problem but this was not to be so. A long and continually changing crisis occurred, often highlighted by the beliefs and actions of many differing individuals and groups but perhaps the most significant was the institutional response to a religious life, at once systematic and yet more spiritual and apostolic, came with the founding and growth of organized monastic orders.485

At times the pontiffs with their Curia compromised and tolerated newly emerging grassroots sects who claimed the banner of Church reform as much as the Cistercians had.486 However, ultimately ecclesiastic leadership found it necessary to denounce some interpretations and patronize others, and to draw up lines of acceptability and loyalty among religious movements similar to the political factions still active in Rome.

The previous chapter of this thesis traced the impact on European Jews that the spokesmen of both Scholasticism and the Cistercian order have had. Individually their

Harvard UP, 1982), 229-233; Kienzle, Cistercians, Heresy, 29; Moore, Formation, 153. Gregorian Reforms had spillover effects: the Church breaking away from secular control was mirrored in the sovereignty claimed by cities and their drive for independence from an institutionalized control of the Church. Kienzle writes, “The reforms’ solidification of a literate and elite clerical class led to the development of mechanisms of persecution.”

486 Ibid, 94. Some popes were more tolerant of these new unorthodox movements than others: Urban II (1088-99), Alexander III (1159-81), and Innocent III (1198-1216).
influence is noticeable, but as Abelard and Bernard went to war intellectually, they set a precedent for religious conflict within the Church. The Council of Sens in 1141 not only resulted in incriminations of heresy, but also in political and spiritual alienation, demotic polemics, and a legacy of distrust and fear. As Yossef Schwartz explains, Sens became a precedent where the alleged challenge to authority “was neither an outsider nor a political enemy (such as Saracens or Cathars) but a privileged individual or community that held a claim to orthodoxy and was sheltered by patronage.” This case at Sens was the primary example of the cultural reaction to religious factions, developing a mechanism to identify heresy among those less privileged or popular.

Jews became liable for heretical beliefs. Just as Church condemnation of Christian usury in turn applied to Jewish usury, incriminations of heresy spread from the Christian quarter to the Jewish. Rumors of Jewish conspiracies and stereotypes born of fear-mongering were first coined in inter-ecclesiastic debate. Bernard used apocalyptic language in his accusations of Abelard’s purportedly diabolic influence. For his part, Abelard was prone to abandoning conciliatory resolutions and portraying opponents as devoid of reason and spirituality. The weight of the two greatest speakers in mid-twelfth century Europe was no small factor in expanding the condemnation of dissenting voices.

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487 Schwartz, “Authority,” 94.
488 Mell, The Myth, ch. 5.
Historiography of Sens

Modernity is aware of the events surrounding Sens because of a few prevalent medieval texts. Bernard’s biographer and friend (and former student of Abelard) Geoffrey of Auxerre recorded Bernard’s actions, albeit in the most positive light, in Book III of the Vita Prima. Otto of Freising, Abelard’s student but also a Cistercian, presents a briefer but less partisan account in his Gesta Friderici imperatoris. Another of Abelard’s peripatetics, John of Salisbury, discreetly presents Abelard as the great martyr in his Historia Pontificalis. There are also letters and polemics from both Bernard and Abelard that provide insight on the often-confusing events leading up to the Council.

Sens was not a battle of faith versus reason. Despite the larger-than-life personalities involved, contemporaries did not regard the conflict as anything more than a clash between two temperaments. Peter the Venerable, a friend to both Abelard and Bernard, concluded it was a simple conflict of wills. It was not until the eighteenth century that Abelard’s and Bernard’s conflict became popular in historical studies as tropes of anticlericalism and

489 Helinand of Froidmont, Chronicon, in Patrologia Latina 212, Jacquess-Paul Migne, ed. (Paris: Garnier, 1844-64), 1035A-C; Mews, Abelard and Heloise, 235-240. Helinand recorded his teacher Ralph the Grammarian’s reference that both and Geoffrey were taught by Abelard.
490 Otto of Freising, Gesta Friderici imperatoris, ch. 49-51. It is a testament to the popularity of Bernard and Abelard in Europe at the time, or how widely known their reputations were in Germany, for the Deeds of Emperor Frederick is largely a chronicle of the most important events in the Regnum Teutonicum. Otto’s coverage of Sens is seen as a great tangent from the focus of his work.
493 Murray, Abelard and St. Bernard, 5.
intolerance. The age of Enlightenment and the French Revolution transformed Abelard from the arrogant false teacher to the initial humanist, the Parisian to first throw off the shackles of a constraining religiosity. Historians were interested in framing Bernard and Abelard as a set of archetypes meant to prove their point in the modern age. Nineteenth-century writers presented Abelard as the martyred rational artisan against Bernard’s antiquated intolerant heterodoxy. And only in the twentieth century was it possible to read of Abelard at Sens apart from his more sensational and renowned affair with Heloise.

A critical effort to analyze Sens began in 1932. Historians eagerly explored the theological issues rather than the larger-than-life personalities. Despite this being the initial analysis of the debate over creeds, most still regarded Sens as a showdown between reason and faith. This binary interpretation was first portrayed in the Enlightenment, and it held sway for most of the twentieth century. In the 1970s and ‘80s, historians made a concerted effort to plumb the primary sources related to Sens, spawning great debate and scholarship.

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495 Until the late modern era, almost any post-medieval reference to Peter Abelard labeled him a heretical challenger to orthodoxy or an example of promiscuous scandal.
for well over a half century. Drawing on chroniclers mentioned above as well as William of St. Thierry, William Godell, Robert of Auxerre, and even Walter Map and Berengar of Poitiers, historians have rightly claimed that Sens is what the medieval chroniclers attested it to be: a contest of personalities and pressures, not of old versus new. Sens may not have been the romantic clash between faith and reason, or reform and heresy, but it illustrates a broader fact within the Church: that factional conflict was an essential

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503 William Godell, Chronicon, in Recueil des Historiens des Gaules et de la France, vol. 13, Martin Bouquet and Leopold Delisle, eds. (Paris, L’Imperie Royale, c. 1870), 675; Reginald Lane Poole, Illustrations of the History of Medieval Thought: In the Departments of Theology and Ecclesiastical Politics (London: Williams and Norgate, 1884), 196-197. The English monk Godell’s very brief chronicle of Sens was published in 1173.

504 Robert of Auxerre, Chronicon, in Monumenta Germaniae Historica, Scriptores 26, Oswald Holder-Egger, ed. (Hanover, 1882), 235; Sikes, Peter Abailard, 20-21.


element in the development of a “persecuting society.” In presenting Sens within this context, I have built off the foundational research of historians William Fidler, Constant Mews, and Wim Verbaal.

William Fidler’s 1981 *Bernard of Clairvaux: Polemics* made headway in exploring the conflict between the Scholastic and the Cistercian as something beyond theology or personalities. Fidler argues that Sens is not a conflict between reason and irrational traditionalism; it is the best example of the contrast between two methods of debate—both calculated, not impulsive or psychologically unstable. Bernard’s polemic style was intentionally apocalyptic, meant to inspire fear, and yet purposed with irenic and reconciliatory ends. In contrast to previous scholarship, Fidler finds Sens to be not only the climax of Bernard’s polemic career, but also evidence of the new shift in the Church’s effort to determine orthodoxy and the means to achieve it.

The landmark work in the reconsideration of Sens’ importance is Constant Mews’ 2002 “The Council of Sens (1141): Abelard, Bernard, and the Fear of Social Upheaval.” Mews overlays all the chaotic political machinations in Europe ongoing around Sens. He strongly urges 1141 as the year of the Council—historically 1140—and identifies secular leaders as masterminding the confrontation in order to deescalate urban insurrection that was occurring then in Rome and France. The central issue in Mews’ argument is that because

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509 Ibid, 144; Murray, *Abelard and St. Bernard*, 22. Fidler specifically refutes Murray’s conclusions, arguing that Bernard’s attacks of what he deemed threats to the Church is a summa of his spirituality, not uncontrolled or wild denunciations.
510 Fidler, *Bernard*, 5, 120.
the political radical Arnold of Brescia was aligned with Abelard, the two men were targeted to be isolated and weakened by ecclesiastic leadership. Mews presents Bernard and especially Abelard as pawns in a larger schema.\textsuperscript{513} Much of this chapter of my thesis is built on Mews’ contributions in determining the role religiopolitical factionalism played in the reasons why Abelard’s teachings were found heretical. Most importantly, Mews has argued that “the Council of Sens needs to be seen as marking a key stage in the institutionalization of the process by which heresy was identified.”\textsuperscript{514}

Wim Verbaal’s 2005 “The Council of Sens Reconsidered: Masters, Monks, or Judges?” reevaluates the circumstances and sources for the Council at Sens to determine that the proceedings were faulty, the hagiographic accounts hopelessly biased, and the legacy devastating. He agrees with Mews’ conclusions that the traditional portrayal of Sens as a theological or intellectual dispute is false. Verbaal urges that every medieval chronicler—Scholastic or Cistercian—must be viewed within their own context and agenda.\textsuperscript{515} Verbaal’s main contribution is the stipulation that the organizers of Sens—not Abelard or Bernard—did not so much intend to resolve the theological debate between Cistercian and Scholastic, as to safeguard northern France from radical apostolic preaching. Verbaal confirms Mews’ findings that the Council was a politically engineered trap for Abelard and a convergence of many tensions of the time. He identifies Sens as a turning point in that it stands as the first

occasion when the danger of political upheaval was deemed by Church prelates as grounds for an accusation (and conviction) of heresy. Sens was a new direction for the Church “in which individual rights are asked to yield to the needs of political structure and authority.”

Constant Mews and Wim Verbaal have demonstrated how political factions influenced the proceedings at Sens. Political alliances were sometimes fragile, as Abelard learned when his previous benefactor, Etienne de Garlande the Lord Chancellor of France, had fallen out of favor in the royal court and was compelled to retire in 1137. By the time of Sens, French clergy had become divided into two factions, as both the young king Louis and the insecure Pope Innocent II demanded the sovereignty over ecclesiastical appointments. The rift between Louis and Innocent was born out at Sens in the conflict between the French under the earnestly reformative leadership of Bernard and the Italians who, having “familiarity with Papal machinery,” came to look on Abelard’s writings as novelties rather than heresies.

Rome was the epitome of political factionalism. Abelard’s supposition that he had friends in the Curia who could protect him was not unrealistic. Those cardinals loyal to the Pierleoni faction were enemies of the Innocent II’s Frangipani faction and thus were more

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516 Verbaal, “The Council,” 460-461. Verbaal considers the Council at Sens’ proceedings and official report to have “bequeathed us centuries of distorted historical interpretation.”
517 Ibid, 493.
likely to support Abelard. It is natural to connect the papal factions, the fractious French and Italian power play, and political measures against urban insurrection with the growing rift between Peter Abelard and Bernard of Clairvaux. Up until this time of controversy, men could discuss theological issues with less worry of heretical accusation. “The expression of thought was relatively free,” especially in Paris. Sens was the first occasion when Europe’s political infighting transferred to the religious arena. Cistercians and Scholasticism bore the same cutthroat mentality previously seen only among feuding political camps.

Although I caution against seeing Sens as only a careful subterfuge against political tumult, it is clear that Abelard’s purportedly heretical theology was not the primary motivator for the Council. Mews and Verbaal have convincingly demonstrated the multiplicity of tensions present at Sens and that the Council became a precedent for the discord present in rival factions both claiming authority within the Church. There was, as Mews has phrased it, an “atmosphere of fear and suspicion of urban insurrection” growing in Europe. The debate at Sens embodied this fear of rival factions in Italian and French cities. Apostolic preaching, urban insurrection, and looming foreign heresy were being identified together by a fear of a demonized rival faction. The Church had no greater example as to how creative religious expression became indistinguishable from false teaching than when its two greatest movements could not reconcile their ideologies. If the interaction between the two most

523 Murray, Abelard and St. Bernard, 159.
popular factions within Christendom resulted in excommunication and book-burning, how much more would this be the model for fringe groups with rapidly diminishing rights? As the fear of political rivals in Ancient Rome encouraged a mutual distrust of Jews and heretics, the increasing practice of accusing any group with an indiscernible or esoteric creed of heresy in the mid-twelfth century would culminate in the lumping together of Jews and heretics by the next century.

The Road to Sens

If either Abelard or Bernard had not given in to the pressures of party politics that grew in France that decade or to their own personal fears, the proceedings at Sens could have set a very different precedent. Many historians maintain that each initially had a discernible respect for the other. When an alarm was sounded against Abelard, no other figure in Europe besides Bernard had deigned to investigate Abelard’s teachings, and Abbot Suger and other church leaders would have trusted only Bernard to possess the reputation and acumen to challenge Abelard’s legendary skills. Had Bernard declined to throw his weight against Abelard, it is doubtful any case would have been made. Abelard, for his part, demonstrated ill judgment in order to clear his name of the alleged heretical teachings. As the

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526 Bernard, Epistolae 190 and 327, in Sancti Bernardi Opera 8:17-40, 263; Geoffrey of Auxerre, Vita Prima, III.13; Fidler, Bernard, 94. Bernard and Abelard were initially at least hesitant and probably intimidated about engaging the other.

527 William of St.-Thierry, Epistola 326: Disputatio adversus Petrum Abelardum, in Patrologia Latina 180, Migne, ed., cols. 249-282. The papal legate Geoffrey bishop of Chartres had received the same letter that William of St. Thierry had sent to Bernard, but there is no record of Geoffrey acting on this or alerting others of Abelard’s alleged threat to orthodoxy.

next section will explain, had Abelard taken less affront at Bernard’s investigations or had not attempted to outmaneuver his opponent, there would likely never have been any hearing. Both men acted out of fear in attempting to stop their rival—had either man demonstrated the rationalism or irenic temperament for which they were respectively lauded, the confrontation could have ended amicably.

The confrontation began with a letter from Bernard’s trusted friend and initial biographer William of St. Thierry, a former Benedictine who had resigned his abbacy to become a Cistercian monk at Igny. William had also written to the papal legate Geoffrey of Chartres, cautioning both recipients that the Church and their own souls were in danger if they did not take action against an embryonic threat in the form of Abelard’s dangerous teachings. William, once a friend to Abelard at Notre Dame, had deemed the great Scholastic a false teacher once he had read Abelard’s original *Theologia*, the work that would be burned at Soissons. It was William of St. Thierry who had helped to organize the initial condemnation of Abelard in 1121. After reading Abelard’s latest edition of the *Theologia* two decades later, William’s letter was fearful, desperate, even threatening to his readers if they did nothing. In it, William warned of the catastrophe inherent in Abelard’s pronouncement that there were three gods, that works yielded no good effect, and that Christ’s death was not expiatory. Bernard gleaned the charges against Abelard from William

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529 Thomas Michael Tomasic, “William of St.-Thierry against Peter Abelard: A Dispute on the Meaning of Being a Person,” *Analecta Cisterciensia* 28 (1972), 3-76. William of St. Thierry had once been a friend to Peter Abelard, but after the latter’s provocative teachings on the Trinity from *Theologia* were shared throughout northern France, William instead did what he could to stop Abelard. William was one of the primary agents who brought about Abelard’s hearing at Soissons. The letter was written during Lent of 1140. For more, see Ziolkowski, *Letters of Peter Abelard*, 99-100; Mews, “The Council of Sens,” 353.
of St. Thierry’s letters then ultimately added a few from his own reading. Nineteen accusations were finally collated.\textsuperscript{530}

Bernard did not enter into confrontation lightly. He urged caution and patience to William, promising his attention to the latter’s accusations against Abelard.\textsuperscript{531} After his own research which affirmed William’s fears, Bernard believed the most appropriate response was to meet individually with Abelard, in accordance with the biblical model which called for a conference with the offending brother to privately make him aware of his sins.\textsuperscript{532} Verbaal identifies this ecclesiastic manner of confrontation as \textit{correptio}, common in the mid-twelfth century and codified sixty years later by Innocent III. Bernard took such care to hold to the prescribed method to confront sin in the Church that the bishops detailed his every step of the process when they wrote to the pope at the council’s end.\textsuperscript{533} Bernard journeyed to St.

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{enumerate}
\item William of St.-Thierry, \textit{Epistola 326: Disputatio adversus Petrum Abelardum}, in \textit{Patrologia Latina} 180, Migne, ed.; Anthony D. N. S. Lane, \textit{Bernard of Clairvaux: Theologian of the Cross} (University Park, IL: Liturgical Press, 2013), 80-86. See also the commentary by Luddy, \textit{The Case}, 21, 39. The \textit{capitulae} are 1. That Faith is only opinion (\textit{aestimatio}), 2. Names of the Trinity are not proper names of God, but describe how multitudinous the Supreme Good is, 3. The Father is all power, Son a species of power, and Holy Spirit no power, 4. That the parts of God are not of same substance, 5. The Holy Spirit is the soul of the world, 6. That our good efforts can be independent of divine grace, 7. Christ did not take flesh and suffer in order to deliver mankind from the power of the evil one, 8. Christ is not the Second Person of Trinity, 9. “That in the sacrament of the altar the accidents of the natural substances remain suspended in the air after Consecration,” 10. The evil one uses virtues to inspire evil, 11. Man inherited from Adam the penalty of original sin but not the guilt, 12. Sin is only evil intent and contempt of God, 13. Being ignorant, delighted, or concupiscent is just natural instinct, not sin, 14. Denial of free will to God, 15. God does no more for the predestinate before grace is accepted than He does for the reprobate, 16. God has not power to prevent evil, 17. That Jews committed no sin by causing Christ to be crucified, 18. Christ’s soul did not descend into Hell when crucified, and 19. Priests have not the power to forgive sins.
\item Bernard, \textit{Epistola 327}, \textit{Sancti Bernardi Opera} 8:263.
\item Verbaal, “The Council,” 481. This process of confrontation was known by the time of Sens as \textit{correptio} or \textit{correctio fraternal}. By the reign of Innocent III, it would be more universally instituted as the \textit{denuntiatio evangelica} based on the divine command in Matt. 18:16. See Ivo of Chartres, \textit{Panormia} IV.34, 95, \textit{Patrologia Latina} 161, Migne, ed. (Paris: Garnier, 1844-64), cols. 1190D and 1202B.
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Genevieve just outside Paris to meet with Abelard during the late autumn months of 1140. Historians have two sources for these meetings. Here Bernard enumerated to Abelard the dangers found in his *Theologia* and suggested that Abelard amend certain beliefs and dismiss them from his teachings.

If both men had chosen reconciliation at this point rather than conformity to the political factionalism and pressures of their time, the Council of Sens would have been a forgotten event in history and accusations of heresy would have gained no power. Instead, nervous distrust and cynicism are evident from the subsequent records. Bernard had honed his many resources over the last two decades, including cajolery, threats, flattery, and paternalism, but he chose affability to win over the intimidating Schoolman. Bernard’s friendliness and his lack of success are equally clear from Abelard’s following letter, wherein the Scholastic declared the Abbot to be “always an enemy in secret, yet to have feigned until this moment to be a friend, yes even the best of friends.”

According to the strict standards of *correptio* when confronting a brother in error, Bernard had to bring two or three witnesses to the last meeting. This he did. In Geoffrey of

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534 For more on the preference of 1141 rather than 1140—the traditionally held year of Sens—see Mews, “The Council of Sens,” 345-354.
536 At this meeting, I conclude that Bernard focused on Abelard’s proofs of the three separate substances of the Trinity and the primacy of Jesus’ expiation of sin: these are what he focuses on his initial denunciations in his *Epistola* 189 to the Pope Innocent II.
537 Bernard, *Epistola* 337.2 in *Patrologia Latina* 182, col. 541B; Verbaal, “The Council,” 481. The bishops, in seeking to justify their verdict that Abelard had been forewarned at these meetings, wrote to Innocent II, “What is more, Bernard had urged Abelard ‘in a friendly and confidential way’ to correct his writings and to keep these teachings far away from his audience.”
Auxerre’s account, Abelard agreed to renounce his doctrines and correct his writings, but this does not comport with Abelard’s persistent denial of wrongdoing. It is possible the Scholastic said what he felt would avoid further confrontation, and this was interpreted as penitence.

The sequence of what occurred next is debated, though the contentious outcome was undoubtedly spurred by the agitation of both men. Bernard was encouraged to preach to the students of Notre Dame after his meeting with Abelard, probably on All Saints’ Day 1140. To the east of Paris, Reims had still been awash in the urban violence of a bloody commune since 1139. Prelates in Paris were frightened that this urban dissent would visit their city, and they invited Bernard to dispel the threat of commune. The Cistercian obliged by proclaiming the dangers of the scholastic model to the students of Europe and urging scholars to flee immediately to the purity of a monastic wilderness, though he was careful to make no mention of Abelard or his teachings.

The threat of an urban uprising was never far from the minds of the king and prelates of France. Communes were begun in twelfth-century France as revolutionary governments that sought to emulate the self-sovereignty of Rome’s early republic. In addition to Reims,

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540 Bernard’s *Epistola* 337 contradicts Geoffrey of Auxerre’s claim that Abelard later recants his avowed corrections due to bad advice. The bishops at Sens indicated in their letter to Pope Innocent II that Abelard made no such admission of guilt. For more, see Bernard, *Epistola* 337; Geoffrey of Auxerre, *Vita Prima*, III.13; John Marenbon, *The Philosophy of Peter Abelard* (Cambridge, MA: Cambridge UP, 1997), 29.
541 *Annales Remenses et Colonienses*, in *Monumenta Germaniae Historica, Scriptores* 16:733, ed. Georg Heinrich Pertz (Hanover, 1859); Mews, Council, 350.
543 Verbaal, “The Council,” 488, 491. Verbaal has concluded that the first draft of Bernard’s *De consideratione* was written immediately following the abbot’s initial speech to the students of Paris. It was expanded to twice its length and endowed with a stronger stance against Scholastic pedagogy and urban temptations. See Bernard, *De Consideratione*, 13-14, in *Patrologia Latina* 182, 88.
cities like Poitiers in France or Ostia in Italy attempted a communia, guided by apostolic preaching that urged a return to the romanticized life of the apostles in the first-century Church.\textsuperscript{544} Preachers like Arnold of Brescia believed that an impoverished priesthood meant a healthy Church.\textsuperscript{545} Arnold’s preaching so undermined the Church hierarchy that Innocent II silenced and exiled him at the Second Lateran Council,\textsuperscript{546} but the action was not enough to stop Arnold from fomenting the Commune of Rome sixteen years later, revolting against Pope Eugenius III and driving Bernard’s protégé into exile. Abbot Suger and other Church elites deemed the itinerant Arnold, his republican supporters, and any commune a grave danger whose existence in France was impermissible. The young king Louis VII had begun his reign by destroying the commune of Orleans in 1137.\textsuperscript{547} Suger urged King Louis to dissolve Poitiers’ commune by force as well the next spring, the king following through with such tenacity that Suger afterward pled for clemency for the city.\textsuperscript{548} Urban dissent was to be met with violent repression, and any Scholastic rhetoric that encouraged anarchic or rebellious factions needed to be expunged.

It was in this milieu of distrust of urban dissension that Bernard challenged the scholars of Paris to flee the perils of a sinful Babylon. His second visit and round of sermons


\textsuperscript{545} Bernard, \textit{Epistolarum} 195-196, 242. There are no texts that remain from his preaching, as Arnold was ultimately excommunicated and executed in 1155 after his books had perished similarly in flame.


to Notre Dame around Christmastime initially resulted in no support from students and in his momentary despair. Yet by the next day, Bernard had succeeded in convincing some peripatetics to leave Paris and journey with him to Clairvaux. Among these recent converts was his future secretary and chief biographer Geoffrey of Auxerre.

Abelard’s reaction to Bernard’s intrusion into his academic jurisdiction was predictable. The Scholastic’s sphere of influence lay in his students—former and present—and his pamphlets; by early 1141 he had composed and disseminated a call-to-arms against the Abbot specifically. A modern apologist for Bernard of Clairvaux has called Abelard’s work a “venomous lampoon” against Bernard, whom Abelard accused of “blindly denouncing doctrines he was unable to understand,” but a careful reading of his pamphlet demonstrates a desperate defensiveness on Abelard’s part rather than irreverent mockery, as

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550 Bernard, De Conversione, 21:37, Sancti Bernardi Opera, ed. Leclercq, 4:113; Werner Robl, “The Council of Sens in 1141 and Its Aftermath,” The Trial against Peter Abelard in the Light of Contemporary History. Published online May 2003. Web. 03 Oct. 2016. <www.abaelard.de/030029senseng.htm>. Bernard’s treatise De Consideratione did not refer to Abelard by name, but ridiculed the practice of self-appointed clerics who “claim to possess the key to science and authority, without being called.” Robl writes that Bernard wrote “in his De Consideratione approximating the speech he gave to the students of St. Genevieve, ‘Flee this Babylon, and save your souls. Fly to the monasteries of the wilderness where solitary rocks and forests teach more piety than mortal masters.’ In phrases which inspired subsequent monastic authors, he contrasted the harmony, serenity, and certitude of the cloister school where Christ was the sole master with the contention, disputation, and doubt of the urban school where fallible masters held their lessons.”


552 It is apt to deem Notre Dame to be Abelard’s jurisdiction. As the preeminent master at Paris and likely its most senior in age, Abelard commanded great authority at Notre Dame. His reputation was enough to court the respect from Cluny’s abbot Peter the Venerable, who had inscribed on his tombstone, “Est satis in tumulo, Petrus hic jacet Abaelardus/Cui soli patuit scibile quidquid erat.” From Richard Salter Storrs, Bernard of Clairvaux, the Times, the Man, and His Work: An Historical Study in eight lectures (New York: C. Scriber’s sons, 1901), 439, citing the tombstone at St. Marcel. See also Peter the Venerable, PL 178, 19.


554 Luddy, The Case, 25. Luddy, a Cistercian, is certainly a defender of Bernard’s actions, but does credit Abelard a righteous indignation.
if he were pre-emptively striking to evade any charge of heresy. Both men were no strangers to polemics. Abelard’s two works Confessio fidei “Universis” and his subsequent Apologia violently denied all allegations against him in Bernard’s Apologia adversus Abaelardum. Abelard soon began to pressure local bishops to write to Clairvaux and urge the Abbot, as he admonished in his pamphlet, “that, if he wanted to persevere in his accusation, he would find me ready on the Octave of Pentecost to answer him on the statements to which he objected.”  

Abelard feared that Bernard’s preaching would gain more clout than Abelard’s influence in his local sphere of Paris, but a public disputation would settle the matter in his and Scholasticism’s favor. 

Since his visits to Paris, Bernard showed increasing alarm at the prospect of orthodox matters being discussed in the streets. His letters bore distrust of not only Abelard’s actions in Paris, but also of the entire Scholastic model of dialectics-centered education. Possibly at first Bernard had interpreted Abelard’s private renunciations as a public recanting, but Abelard’s recent attacks on Bernard’s character were afterward seen as the actions of a daunting and treacherous opponent. Bernard’s letter to the Curia and the pope presented Abelard as both serpentine and foolish.  

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556 Bernard, Epistolae 190, 330, 331-333, and 338 in Sancti Bernardi Opera, 8:2, 8:267-68, 8:270-271, 8:273, 8:278; Verbaal, “The Council,” 479, 487. Bernard metaphorically likened Abelard to a beast of the same ilk as Anacletus and Arnold of Brescia, devastating the unity and authority of the Church. Bernard furthermore emphasized strongly Abelard’s widespread influence, pointing out Abelard’s connections to the cardinals of the Curia. As Bernard put it, the mysteries of faith were being dismissed as rational simplicities.  
557 Bernard of Clairvaux, Epistola 190, Sancti Bernardi Opera, 8:2; Joseph McCabe, Peter Abélard (London: Forgotten Books, 1901, republished 2013), 320-321; Carroll, Constantine’s, 296. It is most probable that Bernard did not openly speak of Abelard’s avowed mistakes to the students at Paris, especially not referring to
We have fallen upon dangerous times. We have amongst us doctors with ‘itching ears’ and disciples who ‘turn away their hearing from the truth but attend to fables.’ Here in France we have a monk without a Rule to follow, a superior without subjects to exercise his solicitude, an abbot without a community to guide in the ways of God. I speak of Peter Abelard who spends his time in discussing problems with children and holding colloquies with women. In his books he has set before his disciples ‘stolen waters and hidden bread,’ and his lectures teem with profane novelties both of thought and terminology… I have procured copies of his books, and sent them on to you. His character may be known from his writings. You will remark how this theologian of ours distinguishes, with Arius, degrees and proportions in the Trinity, exalts, with Pelagius, free will above grace, and with Nestorius, dividing Christ, excludes from association with the Persons of the Trinity the assumed Human Nature of the Word. These are a few examples of his many errors. Shall none be found amongst you [the College of Cardinals] to “compassionate” the sufferings of Christ, none to prove that he loves justice and hates iniquity?  

Bernard referenced the corrosive-sounding heresies of the past to cry an alarm for a false prophet as though the life of the Church were at stake. Bernard frequently equated his rivals with anachronistic heresies, a model repeated thereafter by later twelfth-century Christians.

In any case, the Scholastic master had issued a challenge to Bernard, and the archbishop of Sens Henry le Sanglier was eager to incorporate the raging dispute into something resolvable within an ecclesiastic format. A council in May of 1141 had already been scheduled at Sens, and Abelard moved quickly to ask for a forum to debate and clear his

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559 Luddy, *The Case*, 26-28. Ailbe Luddy has suggested that the Archbishop of Sens approved of Abelard’s idea of a public debate perhaps as a means to amuse his guests, but Henry of Sanglier’s words at the Council, as mawkishly recorded by Berengar, indicate instead that he took these proceedings very seriously. For more on Berengar, see Thomson, “The Satirical Works,” *Mediaeval Studies* 42: 89-138.
name. Portraying himself as the wounded party, his effort was to draw the Cistercian into a civic setting, but initially Bernard delayed in agreeing.

Bernard feared such a contest of oratory even more than he feared the damage done by Abelard’s teachings. Some defenders of Abelard have accused the Abbot of using the delay to drum up support among any in the monastic camp who were similarly scandalized by Abelard, but this suggestion is not supported by Bernard’s own writings. There are likely many factors. Verbaal believes that Bernard had concluded that his part of what was required of him in the denuntiatio evangelica was finished. Meadows writes of Bernard’s fear of what the validation of public endorsement would bestow upon a winner of such public debate. Yet the primary reason is simple and to be expected: Abelard’s dialectical skills were legendary and Bernard felt incapable of defeating him in a battle of oratory and logic. The Abbot responded with his chronic plea to be left in Clairvaux in peace.

Suddenly, Bernard’s recalcitrance for engaging his opponent’s intimidating debating prowess disappeared. Geoffroy of Auxerre merely recorded that Bernard was convinced by
“mighty men.” Mews contends that the king’s political agent Abbot Suger needed to disarm Arnold of Brescia’s political reactionaries by removing Arnold’s patron and mentor as well as his source of for recruitment. This could only be done by subtly turning Abelard’s demand for scholastic disputation into an ecclesiastical court for heresy. Suger related in confidence that Bernard would be the prosecution in a trial of Notre Dame’s great logician rather than his equal in a dialectic debate. Bernard trekked to Sens.

**Confrontation at Sens**

The deliberations of the Council on May 25, 1141 were well attended. The Council was such an attraction that the twenty-year-old King Louis VII and his highest clergy were present. The Council had originally been called to draw prestige to the relics gathered at Sens’ new cathedral. Peter Abelard had once served as a canon at Sens, and he retained many powerful disciples, among them two future popes. In attendance were powerful men who supported Abelard’s faction: the papal legate Geoffrey of Chartres, Thibauld the count of Champagne, and Hyacinth Bobo, one of Rome’s sharpest legal minds. Such was Abelard’s celebrity that after his castration twenty years prior, two of the perpetrators had been caught.

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568 Horace K. Mann, *The Lives of the Popes in the Middle Ages*, Vol 9 (London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner & Co., 1925), 105, 383-441. These two were Guido de Castello, who would succeed Innocent II to the papacy as Celestine II in 1143, and Hyacinth Bobo—in Italian Giacinto Bobone—who would be Pope Celestine III in 1191, preceding his nephew Innocent III.
569 Geoffrey of Auxerre, *Vita Prima*, IV; Lister Matheson, *Icons of the Middle Ages: Rulers, Writers, Rebels, and Saints*, vol. 2 (Santa Barbara, CA: Greenwood, 2012), 34. Thibauld’s loyalties were divided. He was a patron to Abelard, but he benefitted from the reputation of Clairvaux, as the monastery was in his territory. He was also highly praised by Bernard as the model lord. Hyacinth Bobo was well versed in the new Roman legal policy recently being implemented and acted as legal counsel to Abelard.
by his students and emasculated in retaliation. Even so, he may have been harassed in the streets by the anticipating crowd as the Council was about to meet. Bernard also had his constituents, Abbot Suger included, and it is likely the two of them conferred on the Cistercian’s strategy. Bernard did not trust his strength in oratory against Abelard, but he excelled at private meetings.

The night before the council, the Abbot met with four of the bishops present at Sens. He read off the nineteen capitulae to these judges and asked whether each of Abelard’s points should be condemned. The surviving report of Bernard’s procedure that night is deemed trustworthy, as it conforms with Bernard’s exact process seven years later at the council assembled for Abelard’s supporter Gilbert de la Porree. At Bernard’s urging, the bishops at Sens reached near-unanimity: the charges were damning.

The next day, the Council met. From the start, Abelard recognized that his bid for a scholastic disputation in which he could outmatch his accuser had backfired. Sens had turned into a hearing on heresy, and from the closing of Archbishop Henry’s opening statements, Bernard began his denunciation of Abelard’s teachings before the bishops. The most

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571 Abelard, *Historia Calamitatum*, 40, in Peter Abelard, Héloïse, and William Levitan, *The Letters and Other Writings* (Indianapolis: Hackett Pub., 2007), 23; Armstrong, *History of God*, 203. Twenty years earlier, Abelard had certainly been attacked at Soissons, where Abelard claims to have been nearly stoned by the crowd. There is little reason for Abelard to have exaggerated on this point: those accused of heresy were often harassed and attacked. Roscelin was mocked, beaten, and robbed—and this was after the nominalist’s acquittal.
572 As reported by John of Salisbury and Otto of Freising. Geoffrey of Auxerre does not mention any meeting. Berengar’s satire elaborates the most on Bernard’s process that night to undermine Abelard before the Council. Samson the new archbishop of Reims stated in his letter to the pope that the bishops had condemned Abelard’s teachings the night before, but not condemned the man. He was joined with Joscelin of Vierzy bishop of Soissons, Geoffrey bishop of Chalons-sur-Marne, and Alvisus bishop of Arras. For more on Bernard’s conduct at the hearing of Gilbert de la Porree, see John of Salisbury, *Historia pontificalis*, ed. and trans. Chibnall, 17; Otto of Freising, *Gesta Friderici Imperatoris*, 45, in *Monumenta Germaniae Historica*, Pertz, ed., 54-56. For more on Samson’s letter, see *Epistola* 191 in *Sancti Bernardi Opera*, 1:738, 8:41-42. For Berengar’s account, see Thomson, “The Satirical Works,” *Mediaeval Studies* 42, 111-30.
puzzling moment came when Bernard had finished his introductory remarks and awaited Abelard’s answer.

The master’s response was brisk, “I will make no reply to the Cistercian. I appeal from this Council to the Apostolic See.”\textsuperscript{573} Abelard’s student Berengar recollected that the Scholastic also uttered, “I am a son of the Roman Church. I do not want my case to be judged as that of an unbeliever.”\textsuperscript{574} He then walked out with his followers, turning away from the gathered royalty and Church leaders without leave. What had compelled his enigmatic, sudden departure from the council hearing he had sought? It is most likely he knew of Bernard’s clandestine meeting the night before.\textsuperscript{575} Abelard’s objection might have been made to pose a likeness to Christ’s own unfair trial.\textsuperscript{576} One conjecture is that the strongest protest Abelard could make was through a silent exit, as if to nullify the proceedings.\textsuperscript{577} Some have asserted that Abelard’s silence was a result of illness like Parkinson’s disease or brain cancer.\textsuperscript{578} It is difficult to know the reasoning of a man frantic to escape the reiterated accusation of heresy. The likeliest rationale is that his appeal was a strategic step to buy himself time and to spare further humiliation. At the outset of the proceedings, Abelard had

\textsuperscript{575} Luddy, \textit{The Case}, 37-39. Luddy argues that Abelard may have been invited to the meeting beforehand, and just declined.
\textsuperscript{576} Luddy, \textit{The Case}, 38; Murray, \textit{Abelard and St. Bernard}, 42; Poole, \textit{Illustrations of the History}, 144. Luddy believes that Abelard’s words were just a stalling tactic, but Murray and Poole argue that Abelard did not want to cast his pearls before swine if the Council were not willing to listen.
\textsuperscript{577} Meadows, \textit{A Saint and a Half}, 76; Verbaal, “The Council,” 473. It is most probable that his reply was calculated and not a sudden reaction to Bernard’s accusations, in the same mute style as Christ’s at his own trial. The brief refusal to defend himself was likely urged by Abelard’s supporter and attendant Deacon Hyacinth Bobo, who, four decades later, would be crowned Pope Celestine III, uncle of Innocent III.
realized that the Council would follow a judicial format rather than a dialectic one—one in which he was sizably less proficient. In this decision, he was greatly assisted by Hyacinth Bobo, a learned man in new Roman jurisprudence, who knew that appealing to the Pope could delay the Council’s judgment. Abelard was therefore able to counter with a legally valid judicial response. Abelard concluded he should seek a less tainted judge, thus an appeal to Rome—as Paul had done, as was within the Apostle’s rights. It was a gamble for Abelard, for an appeal was not truly within his rights—it was only meant for bishops—but twelfth-century judicial law was still in its infancy. The arbitors at Abelard’s trial were men keenly familiar with the local law, but Abelard’s trial, initially conceived as a public debate, had no commissioned papal legate. Thus no one at the Council stopped Abelard’s departure.

The Council’s purpose as orchestrated by Abbot Suger had succeeded in its aim, but with a tarnished reputation. The bishops, under Bernard’s leadership, composed a letter to the pope to justify their proceedings and persuade Innocent II to silence the Schoolman’s teachings that they had already condemned the night before. Bernard himself never betrayed any second thoughts about the unorthodox precautions he took against any victory for Abelard or his supporters, but many of the Cistercian’s contemporaries deemed his meeting

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581 Acts 25:11-12, 21. As a Roman citizen, Paul appealed to Caesar when in the court of Governor Festus, who granted his appeal.
582 Bernard noted this in his *Epistola 191.2*, *Sancti Bernardi Opera*, 3:42; Verbaal, “The Council,” 480.
583 Geoffrey of Chartres, a past legate, was present at the Council, but had not been ordered by Innocent II to convene the proceedings. He was there to witness only.
the night before amateurish or unscrupulous. John of Salisbury voiced his disdain for Bernard’s questionable tactics.584 Otto of Freising regarded the Cistercian abbot’s actions to be that of a zelotypus—a jealous man.585 Overall, seeking to determine the guilt before the trial did not impress Bernard’s contemporaries.586

Abelard’s hopes to appeal to the Vatican were doomed. Abelard’s withdrawal from the Council confirmed the immediate condemnation of his beliefs in his absence, and Pope Innocent II agreed with the Council’s findings. No great prompting was needed: Bernard had linked Abelard to the dangerous radicalism of Arnold of Brescia and to the schismatic Hyacinth Bobo, a one-time supporter of Anacletus and the Pierleoni faction. Innocent’s response was two-fold: the immediate concern was to eliminate Arnold as a threat, and his second directive was to finalize the council’s decision against Abelard.587 Abelard’s offensive writings were burned publicly outside St. Peter’s Basilica, and Abelard himself was excommunicated in a papal bull to be in effect by July 21 of that year. In so doing, the pope ordered his imprisonment in a monastery.

Sens proved to be Abelard’s final confrontation. He had left the council with the ostensive but abstruse destination of Rome. In fact, Abelard never left France. The appeal to the papacy proved to be either a ploy or a decision he quickly reversed. In the aftermath of the council’s ruling and letter to Innocent II, Abelard sojourned thirty miles north—away from Rome—and sought asylum at the Saint-Ayoul in Provins, the community he had fled to immediately after Soissons in 1121 and 1122. Werner Robl writes of Heloise’s good word for Abelard and the refuge Abelard received from friends. Peter the Venerable had invited Abelard to his monastery before Innocent’s final ruling, and it was to Cluny that Abelard traveled next.

Peter the Venerable believed Sens to be a contest of stubborn wills, not a climactic contest of theological arguments. He too had endured a strong controversy with Bernard, exchanging critiques of Cistercian austerities or Cluniac extraneous privileges in the budding years of Bernard’s abbacy. Throughout the conflict, however, Peter had assured Bernard of his friendship. As a result, the abbots of Cluny and Clairvaux had become allies, and Peter

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588 Peter the Venerable, *Epistola* 98, in *The Letters of Peter the Venerable*, 1st vol. of 2, ed. Giles Constable (Cambridge, MA: Harvard UP, 1967), 258–59; Robl, “The Council of Sens in 1141.” It is unclear what Peter the Venerable means in his letter by the word “transitus,” referring to Abelard’s future. Werner Robl contests the conclusion that Abelard ever intended on journeying to Rome. The Latin word Peter the Venerable uses could refer to an eternal journey or conversion to monastic life.


the Venerable wished to use that friendship to advantage. Sheltering Abelard, then in poor health, Peter the Venerable wrote to the Pope and to the Cistercian abbot, asking for a reprieve.

The abbot of Cluny reconciled the two men, urging Abelard to expunge from his writings “all things offensive to pious ears,” never implying that what Abelard had written was heresy. Abelard did so, and with Bernard’s consent, the Bull was retracted. Abelard died less than a year after Sens on April 21, 1142, free from ecclesiastic indictment but not at peace. He was sixty-three. His last words were of disillusionment or exhaustion, “I don’t know.” Similarly, a decade later, a sixty-three-year-old Bernard joined his rival in death after the exhausting efforts and failures of the Second Crusade had taken their toll on him spiritually and physically.

How Sens Could Have Been Avoided

The unexpected conclusion to Sens set an unforeseen precedent. The two factions that supported Bernard and Abelard at the Council might have learned that two powerful movements could be reconciled if theological differences had been civilly discussed and understanding was sought. Instead, actions of both men predicated on the fear of what damage the other could do to the Church or to his reputation made Sens the first great

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594 Abelard’s consent to Peter the Venerable’s counsel stands as the strongest evidence against some historians’ conjectures that Abelard composed anti-Bernardine polemics or Dialogus after Sens and during his time in Cluny. The Council of Sens saw that Abelard never taught again, and it is unlikely that he would have undertaken another written work that may have risked controversy again.

595 Meadows, A Saint and a Half, 82-83.

example of how factionalism within the medieval Church resulted in the subjugation of one movement and in the silence and excommunication of its spokesman. Bernard had chosen to sidestep “the normal process of conflict resolution” in order to undercut his opponent in his polemics and in the meeting the night before the trial. 597 Abelard can be afforded responsibility in this matter as well. His fear of facing an indictment of heresy and a public recanting compelled him at his and Bernard’s first meetings at St. Genevieve to placate the Abbot rather than to advocate strongly for himself or ease Bernard’s fears of the dangers of a Scholastic education. Abelard need not have demanded a dialectical debate, or once it had backfired, he could have still argued bravely and effectively against Bernard’s claims at Sens, as his student Gilbert de la Porree succeeded in doing in 1148. Unfortunately, because Abelard removed himself and his self-advocacy from the council’s proceedings, Bernard was free to condemn his rival’s beliefs without a word of dissent. Verbaal writes, “So once more, Abelard did not himself protest against a procedure that threatened him with condemnation for heresy.” 598 Both men held an uncanny sway over their monumental followings, and both demonstrated a desperate impulse to defeat his rival at whatever cost. Had either Abelard or Bernard been willing to reconcile differences with his rival prior to Sens’ council, a very different precedent could have been set for the Church in how to resolve grave theological discrepancies.

By 1140, both men had seemed genuinely tired of controversy. Bernard wrote of his greatest desire to return and remain at Clairvaux, but at each controversy, he was compelled

by “mighty men” to combat the dangers he saw threatening the Church. Abelard did not long for the solitude of a monastery—he had found little comfort at St. Denis or St. Gildas—but his foremost hope seemed to be to avoid any more stigma of heresy. Pride was not the direct catalyst for the theological confrontation. What prompted Bernard was his fear of contamination within the Church, and what prompted Abelard was his fear of incriminations of heresy.

The abbot of Clairvaux, lauded since 1130 as the man who would fix the Church, had learned to quickly categorize an influential figure as friend or foe. His advocacy of Innocent II against an overwhelming rival, his travels throughout the continent, and in 1139, his unstinting exertions at Lateran II to purge the Church of schismatic elements, namely those of Anacletus but also including seemingly apolitical sects, had left him tired but vigilant for potential dangers. His conditioning that decade left him with a discerning frame of mind to root out any unorthodox belief as poisonous to the Church.

Fear of persecution was Abelard’s chief concern at Sens. The master of Notre Dame had seen what charges of heresy had wrought against his first teacher Roscelin, a teacher so despised by Abelard he did not deign to even mention him in his autobiographical Historia Calamitatum. Abelard as a forty-two-year-old professor was called to task in 1121 for his own unorthodox beliefs at the Council of Soissons, despite the many followers who had

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599 Geoffroy of Auxerre, Vita Prima, III.13; Bernard of Clairvaux, Epistolae 17 and 190, Sancti Bernardi Opera 7:65, 8:17-40; Luddy, The Case, 15-18; Fidler, Bernard, 94; Verbaal,”The Council,” 491.
600 Geoffroy of Auxerre, Vita Prima, II.1-5; Evans, Bernard, 14. 1130 was the year of Bernard’s summons to the Council of Etampes where he was selected to arbitrate who should be pope.
601 Matheson, Icons of the Middle Ages, 3; Peter Abelard and Heloise, The Letters of Heloise and Abelard: A Translation of Their Collected Correspondence and Related Writings, Mary Martin McLaughlin, Bonnie Wheeler, eds. (New York and London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), 338. Abelard’s years of study under Roscelin were not even deemed worthy of reference in Abelard’s Historia Calamitatum.
made him a celebrity in Paris and beyond. Two resentful followers of William of Champeaux by the names of Alberic and Lotulf had significant sway with the local archbishop and the papal legate to call for a hearing. In March of 1121, his work *Theologia* was confiscated, and he was made to defend himself before the council. Abelard blamed the unfriendly verdict on his detractors’ skullduggery beforehand. An elderly Roscelin himself attended the hearing in order to denounce Abelard. Abelard, made to recant and deny his work, lamented:

> I was immediately summoned before the council, and with no preliminary discussion they compelled me with my own hand to cast my book into the fire, and it was burned up…. When I arose to profess and explain my faith using my own words, my opponents declared that nothing else was required than that I recite the Athanasian Creed, a thing any boy could do. And that I might not offer as an excuse that I did not know it, as if I were not familiar with its wording from use, they had the text brought to me to read. I read it as best I could amid my sighs, sobs and tears.

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603 Abelard, *Historia Calamitatum*, ch. 9. Abelard charged that his critics Alberic and Lutolphe, former fellow students under Anselm of Laon, had persuaded the archbishop Rudolph to convince the judge and prelate Conon of Praeneste before the final day of the Council to find Abelard guilty of heresy when they could not win by conventional argument. “*Quia autem legatus ille minus quam necesse esset litteratus fuerat, plurimum archiepiscopi consilio nitiebatur, sicut et archiepiscopus illorum.*”


605 Herbert Richardson and Jasper Hopkins, “On the Athanasian Creed,” *The Harvard Theological Review* 60.4 (Cambridge, MA: Cambridge UP, Oct. 1967), 483–484; Carroll, *Constantine’s*, 189. Athanasius’ authorship of the Creed has been in question since 1642. By the nineteenth century, no historians regarded it as genuinely Athanasius’ work. Abelard would not know this. Interestingly, the Creed Abelard was made to profess was named after Athanasius, the foremost bishop exiled after the Council at Nicaea by Constantine for his unconformity.

From this scarring tragedy only a few years after his castration, Abelard retained an abiding distrust of ecclesiastical courts. After Soissons, Abelard always sought to protect himself from further calumny or persecution.

The two churchmen had many similarities that were often overlooked by medieval historians. Both men were subject to taking offense and to ill tempers, if not to pride. Bernard’s use of the charge of heresy was a common method to evoke fear and Abelard employed similar evocative language when denouncing his enemies. Both were accustomed to asserting their wills and were incredibly proficient in the use of tongue and pen to win over or silence opponents. Both were the object of personality cults. Both churchmen criticized the other for being a monk who should have never left his habit to preach about what was none of his business. Charles Homer Haskins calls Abelard “a vain man,” “full of arrogance of intellect and joy of combat.” “Abelard lived in a state of constant irritation that men should be widely esteemed who in his eyes were stupid and intolerant,” writes biographer A. Victor Murray. Abelard’s student Otto of Freising discredited him as “arrogant and self-confident, subtle, and rather cheap,” though he also

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607 Bernard of Clairvaux, Epistolae 330, 331, and 336, Patrologia Latina 182, ed. Leclercq-Rochais, 8:266; Fidler, Bernard of Clarivaux, 136.
608 Abelard, Epistola 14, in condemning Roscelin’s theology, is one such example. It can be found in Patrologia Latina 178, Jacquess-Paul Migne, ed. (Paris: Garnier, 1844-64), 355-358, or Ziolkowski, Letters, 194-195.
610 Haskins, The Renaissance, 258.
611 Murray, Abelard and St. Bernard, 6.
considered the vaunted abbot of Clairvaux to be as much a bigot in his religious zeal as he was genuine due to his simple nature. \(^\text{612}\)

Accompanying the personal weaknesses, Abelard and Bernard shared many passions and strengths. Both men were children of the Gregorian Reforms and wrote avidly of returning the Church to a bygone age of purity. \(^\text{613}\) In addition to their identification as reformers, they both equally railed against corruption. They both quoted the same Augustinian and biblical passages to condemn the same sins. \(^\text{614}\) Had Bernard conferred more closely with Abelard, he would have found that many times the Scholastic wrote that Faith was preeminent over Reason—the opposite of which Bernard misconstrued and later repeated as a heretical charge against Abelard. \(^\text{615}\) The Cistercian and the Scholastic had both been abbots, had mutual friends and allies, were befriended by members of the Curia, and both preached that Jews must be protected. The two would have found themselves potent confederates in a number of conflicts to save the Church. As William Fidler writes,

> In the end, Christian theology and spirituality have not been able to do without Bernard and Abelard together. As is now frequently acknowledged, the two men had many complementary insights, which, if it had only been possible for them to join talents instead of squaring off, would have resulted in an impressive union of “felt” with “verbal” theology—a marriage that could have done much to avoid the excesses

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\(^{613}\) Evans, *Bernard*, 9; Marenbon, *The Philosophy*, 21. Bernard frequently harkened back to the days of St. Benedict, when austere, simple living brought on holiness for a Christianizing Europe. For Abelard, this meant not only living apostolically but with more incorporation of classic philosophers. Both men idealized the world of Augustine, and both pushed for reform at their respective monasteries.

\(^{614}\) Juanita Feros Ruys, “‘He who kills himself liberates a wretch:’ Abelard on Suicide,” in *Rethinking Abelard: A Collection of Critical Essays*, Babette S. Hellemans, ed. (Leiden: Brill, 2014), 243-49. Both men referenced the same Augustinian doctrine, such as the Church Father’s *De Civitate Dei*, especially Augustine’s rationale for the protection of the Jews. For favored texts of both men, see Gregory the Great, *Homilia in Evangelia* 26.1, in *PL* 76:1197; Augustine of Hippo, *De Civitate Dei*, 1.21, 1.26, 1.31; Augustine, *Tractatus adversus Judaeos* 8, *Patrologia Latina* 42:60.

\(^{615}\) Luscombe, “The School of Peter Abelard,” 115-141; Little, “Heresies of Peter Abelard,” 313.
of late scholasticism and high-medieval pietism alike. This marriage never, in the event, reached the altar, and we are left with the difficult task of elucidating the positions of men who clearly failed to enlighten one another. Bernard and Abelard would both appeal, no doubt, to their good intentions. But in the end, one may, perhaps, be permitted to wish they had settled for more precision and fewer protestations of personal righteousness. Whether even this would have made it possible for two of the most articulate, intellectually proficient Christians in the twelfth (or any) century to make themselves understood, one to the other and both to history must be left an open question. In the meantime, we have all been made the poorer by their failure.  

**The Aftermath of Sens**

I have reviewed how Sens was a jurisdictive abnormality. The lack of a presiding papal legate, its pretext as a public debate, and the conclusive appeal to the See add to the council’s oddity. Many modern historians have written Sens off as a mere formality or a kangaroo court with a makeshift judicial proceeding for appearances. The Council has been called a “show trial,” in which Bernard took full advantage of Abelard’s silence to render a foregone conclusion. These descriptors, however, do not reflect the scrupulous detail and legitimacy the Church leaders of Sens sought. The steps of the *denuntiatio evangelica* were strictly followed by Bernard, as the bishop noted in their letter, the most legitimate legal process had been utilized, and the Council had summoned the highest authorities in France. Bernard’s meeting the night before had been unconventional but not illegal. Yet Sens was an anomaly, understood best as a mixture of extemporaneity and calculation. The

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Church leadership used what judicial model they had to create something new. It was not for a lack of legitimate proceedings that it became the twelfth century’s most controversial council, but because a legitimate judicial program had permitted political mechanisms to engineer a theological censure of the voice of one of Western Europe’s most powerful movements. Sens became the first recognized step in Church institutionalism that could condemn and disenfranchise any party through a legal means in the name of resolving political turmoil.620

The precedent the Council of Sens set in censuring unorthodox Christian beliefs was both unforeseen and immediate. Within months of the papal denunciation of Abelard, William of St.-Thierry wrote to Bernard of a new threat from William of Conches, another French Scholastic who purportedly spread a modalist view of the Trinity. William of St.-Thierry urged Bernard that the grammarian’s errors were worse than Abelard’s and that William of Conches’ “diversity of expositions” combined natural science and theology in unholy ways.621 An exhausted Bernard was extremely reticent to lock horns with yet another popular Scholastic. Fortunately for him, a sagacious William of Conches immediately revised his controversial work rather than expose himself to charges of heresy.622 The

622 William of Conches, A Dialogue on Natural Philosophy (Dragmaticon Philosophiae), trans. Italo Ronca and Matthew Curr (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1997). His initial De philosophia mundi had attracted the attention of William of St.-Thierry, no doubt now alert to any possible heresy among prominent Scholastics. William of St.-Thierry perceived unorthodox teachings about the Holy Spirit in De philosophia that reminded him of the third-century Sabellian creeds in which the three persons of the Trinity are only three faces
grammarians’s action was evidence of the frightening legacy Sens directly had on the intellectual ecclesiastic community. With Sens, the Church had taken the first steps toward developing not only a method to prohibit powerful dissenting voices within the Church, but a methodology to find such enemies as well.

Within another seven years of Sens, another Scholastic threat loomed large enough to summon Bernard of Clairvaux to combat heresy again. Perhaps in the interim between 1141 and 1147, the fatigued Cistercian would have been prevailed upon to oppose other supposed heretical dangers to the Church, but throughout that time, he had been coordinating and campaigning for the Second Crusade and before that, preaching throughout Toulouse, successfully countering the unorthodox teachings of Henry of Lausanne on apostolic (and ecclesiastic) poverty. Bernard was at last called upon to act as accuser of Gilbert de la Poree, a master logician and a colleague of Abelard’s, at the Council of Reims in 1148. Bernard had suspected Gilbert of heresy since before 1142. Gilbert’s trial would be one of four foundational ecclesiastic efforts to try a prominent academician for heresy for which the

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or modes of the same one God. Before publishing his comprehensive Drmaticon, William of Conches removed many controversial references that might have been prone to interpretation as modalist heresies. Geoffrey of Auxere, Vita Prima, III.6, Patrologae Latina 185:312-13; Kienzle, Cistercians, Heresy,3; Moore, Formation, 25. Kienzle also discusses Bernard’s mission in chapter 3. In 1145, Bernard chased after Henry the renegade monk from Burgundy to Gascony, attempting to persuade the people to reject “the manifest enemy of the Church.” Henry had denounced ministers and sacraments. John Marenbon, “Gilbert of Poitiers,” A Companion to Philosophy in the Middle Ages, eds. Jorge J. E. Gracia and Timothy B. Noone (Malden MA: Blackwell, 2003). Gilbert had been the head of the Chartres School when it had supported Abelard at Sens, thus earning Bernard’s suspicions. After Gilbert had written his Commentary on Boethius’ Opuscula Sacra and become the bishop of Poitiers by 1142, the accusations of heresy began: archdeacons Arnaud and Calon accused him of opposing Trinitarian dogma based on his interpretation of Boethius. By 1147, the formidable Peter Lombard denounced him as a heretic. For more on Gilbert’s controversial text, see Gilbert de la Poree, Commentaria in Boethii opuscula sacra, ed. Nikolaus M. Häring (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of mediaeval studies, 1966).
details of the proceedings were recorded. From these precedents, a new standard for the judicial prosecution of heretics emerged. At Reims, Pope Eugenius III himself presided over the case. Bernard, intimidated by the Scholastic bishop, again met with the judges the evening prior to condemn Gilbert’s teachings beforehand. Yet Gilbert had learned from Abelard’s example, putting his labyrinthine words to use in defending himself at the trial, claiming that the import of his writings was lost on the uneducated. Whereas Abelard had remained silent, an eloquent Gilbert escaped condemnation.

It is paramount to understand the legal processes developed by the Church after Sens that legitimated a new identification and means to root out heresy in Europe. In a recent work, R. I. Moore recognizes the significance of a standard formal procedure in cases of heresy. There were practically no mass church-sanctioned executions of heretics recorded anywhere in Europe until 1143 in Bonn, Germany. Two years after Sens, the trial at Bonn of three men followed a complicated and extensive legal procedure, loosely mimicking that which condemned Abelard, wherein Church authorities condemned the suspects then handed them over to the secular authority. Eversin of Steinfeld, a prior of a Premonstratensian community near to Bonn, had even written to Bernard of Clairvaux immediately following the public burning, seeking to rouse the abbot’s help and raise the alarm at the expansion of

625 Verbaal, “The Council,” 471-473; Schwartz, “Authority, Control,” 93-95. The first defendant being Berengar of Tours; the case was presided over by the pope, and it took twenty years by 1059 to censure what the judges deemed heresy. Berengar recanted. The second was Abelard’s first trial at Soissons in 1121. There a papal legate presided, thus appealing to the pope would have been out of the question. The third was Sens.
627 Moore, The War on Heresy, 7. The burning of church-pronounced heretics in Bonn was the first of its kind in seven hundred years, with the notable exceptions of the burning of heretics in 1028 in Milan and hangings in 1056 in Goslar, Germany. These last two are harder to trace, but may have used legal processes to determine guilt of heresy beforehand.
heresies. The formation of a legal response to dissenting religious beliefs that had been documented at Sens did not occur in a vacuum and would grow after 1141.

The diatribes unleashed at that Council and in the years around the confrontation did not die with their spokesmen either. Bernard and Abelard were the two greatest mouthpieces of their age. They were “among the last representatives of what has been called ‘the charismatic culture’” in which the power of their personalities was the predominant force in the methodical cultivation of a Christian movement. As such, their arguments affected the next many centuries, and unintentionally assisted in persecuting populations they would have tried to save.

**Jews and the Use of Polemics in Factionalism**

It is essential in viewing the greater scope of Jewish-Christian relations to see Sens as an important step in the Church’s development of “heresy” for religious interpretations considered to be incompatible with orthodoxy. It is not enough to say that the council’s irreconciliatory conclusion was a powerful example of factionalism: future ecclesiastic

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628 Eversin of Steinfeld, *Epistola ad Bernardus in Patrologia Latina* 182, Migne, ed., 676-680, trans. R. I. Moore, *The Birth of Popular Heresy* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1975), 74-78; Kienzel, *Cistercians, Heresy*, 4. Eversin was evidently shaken by the burning of men so convinced that they chose a gruesome death over conversion to the Catholic Church. The heretics were steadfast to the end, claiming that they were the “true followers of the apostolic life,” and “the poor in Christ.” Eversin pleaded for Bernard to “awaken your vigilance against this many-headed evil,” for “they have a great multitude of adherents all over the world.” For Bernard’s response, see Bernard of Clairvaux, *Life and Works of Saint Bernard*, vol. IV, ed. John Mabillon, trans. S. J. Eales (London, 1896), 393-409.

629 Jaeger, *The Envy of Angels*, 4-9; Mia Mundster-Swensen, “‘Medieval Virtuosity’—Classroom Practice and the Transfer of Charismatic Power in European Scholarly Culture c. 870-1200,” delivered at *The Cultural Heritage of Medieval Rituals III: Confronting the Heritage* (Copenhagen, December 10-13, 2004); Verbaal, “The Council,” 192-193. Jaeger characterizes Abelard and Bernard as belonging to a vanishing Charismatic Culture as opposed to the Intellectual Culture that had become the norm by the twelfth century, although Mundster-Swensen points out that “the charisma of the schoolmen... is a result of deliberate, methodical cultivation.”
condemnation of disparate religious movements, some of which claimed membership of the Church to the last, had a legal precedent.

Factionalism within the political sphere was influencing the world of theology. It had emerged first at Lateran II in 1139 with the papal denunciation of all sects deemed loyal to or manipulated by Innocent’s rival faction the Pierleoni. This influence of factionalism grew wings at Sens. Many had reason to worry over Abelard’s loyalties, methods, and influence. Abelard was the chief voice for Scholasticism; he exposed biblical truths to public scrutiny; his work questioned the apparent contradictions of patristic authorities; and he had sympathetic friends in Rome among the Pierleoni faction. As noted earlier, this last fact especially posed a threat to Abelard, as did Abelard’s strong ties to Arnold of Brescia—his former student and supporter—who likely attended his master’s trial, as Bernard noted strongly. Such an allegiance pitted French prelates against Abelard, as the urban dissent in Reims was stoked by Arnold’s anti-clerical preaching. Constant Mews and Jules Michelet have linked Abelard’s teachings with the claims to freedom in French urban communes. There were political implications to Abelard’s guilt or acquittal at the Council, and removing

Abelard as a support base for Arnold was expedient for bishops well-schooled in political dangers.\textsuperscript{633}

The ecclesiastic charge of heresy was founded when the papacy linked the diversity of apostolic movements with the political dangers of rival factions in the mid-twelfth century. The two factions of Rome—the Frangipani and the Pierleoni—had demonstrated a willingness to divide and incapacitate the Church in order to claim the papal office since the eleventh century.\textsuperscript{634} The Papal Schism that dominated European ecclesiastic policy in the 1130s set a tone for extreme apprehension toward any new religious support for the rival faction. Lateran II at the end of the decade mandated that misaligned movements were not only politically forbidden; they were heretical.

This link between the political threat of Anacletus’ faction and the theological teachings of Abelard can be seen in Bernard’s letters immediately following Lateran II. The Cistercian, alerted to the political insurrection and abandonment of the faith purportedly inherent in Abelard’s work, wrote consecutive letters conjoining the Scholastic with the usurper Anacletus. In one example written to Cardinal Guido, Bernard wrote: “We have escaped the roaring of Peter the Lion [Anacletus II], only to encounter the hissing of Peter

\textsuperscript{633} John of Salisbury, \textit{Historia pontificalis}, ed. and trans. Chibnall, 64; Otto of Freising, \textit{Gesta Friderici Imperatoris}, 2.23 in \textit{Monumenta Germaniae Historica Scriptores} 46.134; Mews, “The Council of Sens,” 375. John recorded that Arnold had been Abelard’s acolyte in France, and after Arnold’s expulsion from Italy, he had returned to Abelard’s school at Montagne St. Genevieve to teach, but could not drum up adequate student attendance to last. Otto wrote that once Arnold was expelled from Italy in April 1139 he went to Zurich, but Mews believed he went to France first. Arnold attended Sens’ council on May 25, 1141 and spoke against Bernard and the ruling afterward. By December he had been exiled from France as well and took residence in Zurich. As Mews explains, “The fact that Arnold of Brescia, a notorious critic of episcopal and papal power, attached himself to Abelard helped make Abelard’s theological critique of traditional understanding of divine omnipotence appear to be subversive thinking.”

\textsuperscript{634} Robinson, \textit{The Papacy}, 66-70.
the Dragon [Abelard].” In a subsequent letter, Bernard considered Abelard to be “an enemy of the cross of Christ,” and “within he is a heretic.”

The use of such evocative apocalyptic imagery in Bernard’s letters condemning Abelard commands two observations: 1) Bernard was sincere in his urgency that the threat Abelard posed was as great a threat to the unity and safety of the Church as Anacletus had been, and 2) Bernard believed that the same fearful danger posed by the political faction he had campaigned against for a decade was now manifesting itself ubiquitously in the religious teachings of a cathedral school. Bernard’s language conjured conspiracies of educators and papal claimants that sought to work with Antichrist to end the Church. His polemical incriminations might justifiably be called fear-mongering, but they are neither the wild denunciations of an uncontrolled mind nor the fanatic ramblings of a zealot; they are a calculated style to combat what Bernard deemed to be the disastrous antithesis to his monastic interpretation of the apostolic life.

To Bernard, the threat of Peter of Abelard had to be stopped by whatever means necessary.

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635 Bernard of Clairvaux, *Epistolae* 242, 332, in *Patrologia Latina* 182, Leclercq et al; Sommerfeldt, *On the Life*, 123; Layton, “The Council of Sens and the Legacy,” 5; Stephen Robson, *With the Spirit and Power of Elijah: The Prophetic-Reforming Spirituality of Bernard of Clairvaux as Evidenced in His Letters* (Rome: Editrice Pontifica Universita Gregoriana, 2004), 340-341. For more polemics against Abelard, see *Ep*. 242, where Bernard likened Abelard to “the friendliness of Absalom” [Anacletus] and the “kiss of Judas” [Arnold of Brescia]. The Abbot also wrote, “Our theologian [Abelard] lies down with Arius…Pelagius…Nestorius [a reference to fornication]; he is a “persecutor of the faith.” The second and third quotes come from *Epistola* 243, where Abelard was also “like a twisting snake,” and “like a hydra.” In *Epistola* 244, Abelard’s teachings were called the “hissing of Peter the Dragon.” In *Epistola* 246, Bernard wrote, “because of Peter, the garments of Christ are being divided, the sacraments of the Church are torn to shreds.” In *Epistola* 248, the Cistercian wrote, “Peter Abelard has gone before the face of Antichrist to prepare his way.” In *Epistola* 249, Abelard is an “enemy of the Church,” and a “persecutor of the faith.”


637 Fidler, *Bernard*, 141, 144. “It would be inappropriate to explain the entire controversy as a matter of rhetorical style, editorial interest, or psychological anxiety.” Fidler sees Bernard’s polemical attacks as a summa of his spirituality.
R. I. Moore established that the emergence of the persecution society came about with the onset of labeling, isolation, and demonization of individuals by the mid-twelfth century.\textsuperscript{638} It is necessary to draw a clear link between the demotic language used at Sens—and afterward against dissenting Christian movements—and with the dehumanization of Jews by the late twelfth-century. Moore stipulates that a cultural shift occurred by the mid-twelfth century manifested in the dehumanizing of heretics, Jews, and others.\textsuperscript{639} While Moore even identifies Sens as a critical “part of a larger process by which new structures of authority came to be imposed,”\textsuperscript{640} he fails to identify key events that acted as catalysts for such a social change.\textsuperscript{641} Built on Moore’s premise, I attribute the religious factionalism of the twelfth century as the predominant cause of this general rise in anti-Jewish stereotypes, and Sens as the prime manifestation of such religious in-fighting. The ravages of factionalism and its effects on Jews can be seen in Abelard’s and Bernard’s polemics.

\textit{The Anti-Jewish Influence of Abelard’s and Bernard’s Polemics}

Both Abelard and Bernard used Jewish stereotypes in their polemics. This thesis has already explored in Chapter 2 what both men thought and wrote about Jews in general. Aside from the damaging anti-Jewish claims Abelard and Bernard wrote in “peacetime,” what is even more relevant is a study of their rhetoric against one another in the years and especially

\textsuperscript{638} Moore, \textit{Formation}, 6-11.
\textsuperscript{639} Moore, \textit{Formation}, 66-68, 88, 98-99.
\textsuperscript{640} Moore, \textit{The First European Revolution}, 124-25, 158, 190; Mews, “The Council at Sens,” 380.
\textsuperscript{641} Moore, \textit{Formation}, 24-25. Moore attributes the shift in the reclassification of heresy with the reaction in the Church to centralize or form a uniform response to it. Thus bishops strategically expelled heretics at first, but this would only give rise to fears that the heretic “fled to disturb other regions and infect them with his poisonous breath.”
months before Sens. These polemics reinforced a link between Judaism and heresy in two ways: by emphasizing novelty as a characteristic of heresy and by their use of Jewish stereotypes in their denunciations of their enemy.

**Novelty in Polemics**

The first such barb was the “Adtendite a falsis prophetis.” It was an anti-Cistercian diatribe in the style of a sermon, circulated c. 1127-28, and was probably written by Abelard.642 Cistercian attire, asceticism, needless vows, pretense of meekness, and lack of care for their followers earned them the names of hypocritae and wolves in sheep’s clothing. The sermon’s criticisms bear a resemblance to other references of Abelard’s, especially when referring to the Cistercian order as a new development.

The reference of “newness” was never a commendation in medieval polemics. In the early 1130s Abelard wrote in his *Historia Calamitatum* of some “new apostles,” one of whom “boasted that he had reformed…the life of the monks.” It is possible that he was not referring to Bernard of Clairvaux specifically, but the reference was a criticism of Bernard’s goals to reform the Cluniac monastic model.643 The monks of Citeaux had referred to the monastery as the *Novum Monasterium* since its inception.644 However, newness was an

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643 Abelard, *Letters*, ed. Ziolkowski, 77. Historians have most often depicted the *Historia Calamitatum* having been written circa 1132-33.
644 Conrad of Eberbach, *Exordium Magnum*, 2.4. Founder Robert of Molesme’s attempt to differentiate Citeaux from his previous monastery in Molesme gave rise to the name novum monasterium; it was soon applied to the whole of the Cistercian order.
insinuation of heterodoxy within this context. From antiquity to the medieval era, the predominant perception of anything novel was viewed as a threat.

Abelard’s polemics were hardly the only examples in which novelty was treated as defamation. According to Berengar, Henry the Archbishop of Sens had used the same descriptor at the start of the Council, “Peter always disturbs the Church. He always invents something new.” At the initiation of the conflict, William of St. Thierry had warned Bernard and the papal legate of the Scholastics’ “new things.” Bernard repeats this same sentiment in his letters to the Pope and the Roman Curia to show them the danger that Abelard presents for the Church. This was a common critique for the Cistercian, employing the same terminology when addressing the crimes of Radulf and elsewhere against Abelard, whom he accused of conjuring a “profane novelty of words or meanings.” Bernard later wrote of the dangerous Scholastic influence in his De Consideratione, “A new foundation and new faith is being laid and forged in France.”

A link was clearly established in the twelfth century Church between the stigma of novelty and its inherent danger to lead Christianity astray. At Sens’ conclusion, the bishops

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646 William, Epistola 326, Patrologia Latina 182, Migne, ed., 531B; Mews, ‘The Council of Sens,” 364. “For Peter Abelard teaches new things again, writes new things; his books cross the seas and traverse the Alps; his new opinions and dogmas about faith are carried through the provinces and kingdoms, are preached with celebration and are freely defended, so much that they are said to have authority in the Roman curia.”
648 Bernard of Clairvaux, Epistola 365, Patrologia Latina 182:570.
650 Bernard of Clairvaux, Epistola 239, to Pope Innocent, trans. James, 318; Carroll, Constantine’s, 296; Fidler, Bernard, 141.
wrote to Innocent II of the “dangerous influences of Abelard's teaching, linking it to the widespread discussions in France about questions of faith and to the emergence of ‘profane inventions.’”\textsuperscript{651} This “newness” would be a crucial appellation in the charges against Jews and others labeled as heretics. Hebrew writings like the Mishnah, Talmud, and other commentaries that the Church had little contact with would appear new and profane, and thus condemnable. As an extra-biblical text, the Talmud specifically was eventually viewed by prelates as a sudden Jewish abandonment of the Hebrew Bible. For this reason Franciscans and Cistercians eagerly facilitated mass burnings of the Talmud and other Jewish commentaries 101 years after Sens.\textsuperscript{652} Jeremy Cohen concludes that the thirteenth-century condemnation of the Talmud unambiguously originates in the polemics of the mid-twelfth century.\textsuperscript{653} Amos Funkenstein avers that Peter the Venerable—the peacemaker in Abelard’s and Bernard’s conflict—deemed “the Talmud as genuine heresy, containing human traditions which are not intended to interpret the Bible but to compete with it.”\textsuperscript{654} Thus the denunciation of the Talmud—the most infamous charge of heresy levied against medieval


\textsuperscript{653} Cohen, \textit{Living Letters}, 262-265.

\textsuperscript{654} Funkenstein, \textit{Perceptions}, 189.
Jews—had its roots in twelfth-century polemics. Abulafia and others have likewise found the origins of the blood libel in the new attitude of anti-Jewish stereotypes shortly after Sens.655

Jewish Stereotypes in Polemics

This equating of the new and unfamiliar with heretical belief was only half of the defamation against Jews for which Abelard’s and Bernard’s denunciations were responsible. When finding opponents or any offensive parties contemptible, both men referred to them with Jewish epithets. In a letter to Heloise, Abelard wrote with disgust at the wayward trust monks had in custom, rather than in reason, and their similarity with Jews, “Better to keep silent, as it is shameful to speak of their wretched blindness that is wholly contrary to the religion of Christ which belongs to the poor. At heart they are Jews, following their own custom instead of a rule, making a mockery of God’s commands in their practices, looking to usage, not duty.”656 The dross of superstition and bias, which made monks indiscernible from Jews, needed the crucible of Ratio.

Bernard had likewise used the image of Jews to vilify his enemies. Bernard’s denunciation of a secular cleric charges him with making a house of God into a “synagogue of Satan.”657 He later refers to monastic cells with poor standards by the same name.658 The

ad hominem attacks were especially rife with anti-Jewish vitriol. Bernard made use of the slur “Judaize” to denounce men who prey on their fellow Christians through usury. The Abbot denigrates such men’s faith by calling them rather “baptized Jews.” His regard for such men as “worse than Jews” demonstrates the low esteem in which Bernard held such men, in another letter. In the abbot’s letter to Cardinal Ivo of Asbach, Bernard viewed Abelard as duplicitous and does not miss the chance to liken him to a despised Jew, “Herod on the inside, John on the out.”

Twelfth-century Jews were not yet the foremost victims of chronic persecution as they would be in later centuries, although the seeds had been planted. “Christians were used to describing and denigrating each other with a vigor and venom that rivaled their descriptions of Jews.” Popes and emperors, monks and lords would use the same brutal language against each other. Twelfth-century defamation of Waldensians and Cathars outweighed criticism of Jews. Mongols and Muslims were also similarly demonized. Anna Sapir Abulafia warns that language against Jews fit in the normal discourse of criticism of its day: “Accusations of carnal or unreasonable behavior were limited neither to Jews nor to the twelfth century. Christians would happily employ similar terms of abuse against those with whom they disagreed on all kinds of issues. Invective was very much a commonplace in the

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660 Bernard of Clairvaux, Epistola 364, “Bernard of Clairvaux, the Jews and the Second Crusade (1146).”
661 Ziolkowski, Letters, 156. The praise that Bernard receives comes from Abelard’s Studi monastica 3, in which he credits Bernard as being the “prototype of the contemplative life and therefore of monasticism.”
663 Paul Freedman, Images of the Medieval Peasant (Stanford: Stanford UP, 1999); Elukin, Living Together, 93.
disputations of the eleventh and twelfth centuries.”  The propagandists of Gregorian-style reform had denounced simoniac clergy as “servants of Satan.”  Saint Anselm had condemned his contemporary Roscelin as a non-Christian. Bernard of Clairvaux demonized his opponent in 1130, excoriating Anacletus II—referring to his side as that of the Antichrist. The twelfth century saw a growing number of heretics throughout Europe predominantly because ecclesiastic factions were more willing to accuse disparate, esoteric, or misunderstood religious groups of heresy.

What makes the excoriations of Abelard and Bernard especially significant is that each man’s diatribes against Jews were circulated in proportion to his reputation. With the exception of Peter the Venerable, no controversial figure of the early twelfth century had a greater effect on the medieval attitude towards Jews than the rivals at Sens. Due to the shifting redefinition of “heresy” and its application for political expediency at Sens, the references of these two men became especially dangerous when applying them to the sudden

666 Abulafia, *Christians and Jews in Dispute*, V: “St. Alselm and Those Outside the Church,” 133. In Anselm’s mind, says Abulafia, “A Christian must adhere to what the Catholic Church teaches. He may never ask how what the Church teaches may not be, but he is allowed to seek the reason why it is, if he holds undoubtingly to his faith. Roscelin has broken these rules and therefore he can no longer be a Christian.” Relying on dialectics made one a Scholastic, but using it to dissent with tradition made one a heretic.  
668 Kienzle, *Cistercians, Heresy*, 11; Jeffrey Burton Russell, *Lucifer: The Devil in the Middle Ages* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell UP, 1986), 184, 190-192; Moore, *War on Heresy*; Bazemore, “Wellsprings of Heresy.” Russell focuses on the demonization of minorities. Moore’s book is a strong argument against putting too much stock into medieval classifications for heretics. The Cathar faith, specifically, is a misnomer: it was not a monolithic religious institution that rivaled the Catholic Church. Rather, “Cathars” were a medieval plethora of various dissenters from the early eleventh century to the thirteenth who should not even be identified as following the same central theology.  
search for heresy within the highest circles of the Church. The Papal Schism and the Council of Sens brought on an atmosphere of fear of heterodoxy, and heretics were seen naturally as those who had the furthest ideologies from Christianity. Rhetoric did not have to be laden with anti-Jewish stereotypes to still prepare the way for charges of heresy and violence.

After an indignant Abelard had composed his Apologia to answer the nineteen capitaela Bernard had disseminated to brand him with heresy, Bernard lost no time in responding to it. Both Apologia and rebuttal were widely disseminated, as the intended audience was for any readership, especially ecclesiastical. The Cistercian wrote:

In his “Book of Sentences,” and also in his Exposition of the Epistle to the Romans, this rash “searcher of majesty”—as I remember to have read—undertakes to discuss the mystery of our redemption... What shall I judge to be the more intolerable in these words, the blasphemy or the arrogance? What the more damnable, the temerity or the impiety? Does not he who uses such language deserve to be beaten with rods, rather than refuted with arguments? Bernard denounced Abelard in this polemic, and in so doing he set a model in place for the treatment of any who held an articulate, recalcitrant view opposing his own. The Cistercian solidly defended Augustine’s doctrine to “slay them not,” but one can easily read into this quote above an application of force of arms against the Jews and other twelfth-century minorities. “Such language” that argues against the devil’s subjugation over Man, or especially against Jesus Christ’s expiatory death, was deserving of violence, said the Abbot. Were Bernard’s readers never to apply these words to Jews, the most ardent deniers of Christian truth? As the last excerpted sentence indicates, Bernard’s own poetic language

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670 Bernard, Apologia ad Guillelum, in Ziolkowski, Letters, 111-113. Abelard’s Apologia has survived only in two fragments. It is unknown how much of the original is missing, or how many revisions Abelard composed.

hardly hid the savagery it implied: Christians who espouse a theology other than his own “deserve to be beaten with rods.” How much more so those outside the Church, who did not even recognize the Son’s divinity or the Church’s authority?

Bernard’s letter continued in question-and-answer style, “Does not he whose hand is against every one provoke against himself the hands of all? ‘All the rest,’ says he, ‘believe in this way, but I take a different view.’ What then is your view? What is this superior wisdom which you have to offer us?”672 In this, Bernard identified any faction that held a view contrary to a perceived orthodoxy a threat, even an attack. The hand that “is against every one” is any belief that differed from the majority (“the hands of all”), and deserved an equal assault. It takes little to interpret Bernard’s explanation to mean that the natural fate for any arrogant dissenters is to be eradicated by force.

Bernard’s words exhibited the developing fear of heresy as a spreading evil and a direct assault on the faith, “Observe how this man makes a mock of ‘those things that are of the spirit of God,’ because he considers them folly; how he insults the Apostle who ‘speaks the wisdom of God hidden in a mystery;’673 how he contradicts the Gospel and blasphemes the Lord Himself.”674 The Abbot deemed Abelard’s contrary philosophy to not only be offensive to Paul, but also to God. Bernard referred to Abelard’s beliefs not as non-conformity with a millennium-old epistle, but as a present-day sacrilege. This premise of heresy as an urgent and present danger to the Church and not merely a theological

672 Luddy, The Case, 73.
673 1Corinthians 2:4.
674 Bernard of Clairvaux, Epistola 190, cited in Luddy, The Case, 84.
misconception was essential in the origin of medieval antisemitism and persecution against other minorities.\(^{675}\)

The specter of Christian-Jewish relations is present here in the polemic debate between Abelard and Bernard. Abelard had written rhetorically in his *Book of Sentences*, “But if Adam’s sin was so grievous that it could only be expiated by the death of Christ, what atonement shall be offered for the crime of them who put Christ to death?” Bernard answered this question with finality, “I answer briefly: the very Blood Which they shed and the prayer of Him Whom they slew.”\(^{676}\) In their polemical battle, both men referenced and endorsed the image of Jews as deicides. Bernard’s response made it clear that the only Jews who could be found innocent were ones baptized in Christ’s blood. As aggressive language and violence were used by the Cistercian and Scholastic against one another, a heightened sense of danger was developing against foreign ideologies. This re-envisioning of the alien danger fomented as twelfth-century Christians reassessed the new threat of the Jews in their midst.

*The Role of Sens in the Fate of Jews*

The mechanisms of political factionalism that strengthened Abelard’s condemnation at Sens powered a new definition of heresy. Roman political factionalism had already turned a *haeresis* into a rival in competition with the Church. With the fear of diverse religious

\(^{675}\) Moore, *Formation*, 88.

opinion manifesting at Sens, heresy was now becoming a blasphemy and a lurking evil. By the end of the twelfth century, fear of heresies took on the shape of conspiracies against the Church, alliances with demons, and sexual cabals. Jews by extension were ultimately regarded as deviant heretics of their own faith.

The descent into fear of a new kind of heresy can be seen in the Lateran Councils following Sens. These two consecutive ecclesiastic rulings declared many nonconforming sects to be hazardous to the Church. The first of these, Third Lateran Council in 1179, was a blow to those identified as heretics: Cathars, Patarines, and Publicans were each deprived of their possessions and rights without detailing which heretical beliefs were responsible for their condemnation. Canon 27 particularly condemned many fringe apostolic movements. Against the backdrop of Lateran III was the anti-heretical campaign in the Toulouse area led by Clairvaux’s abbot and Bernard’s successor Henry of Marcy. Five years later, Lucius III’s decree *Ad abolendam* excommunicated not only Cathars but Waldensians and Humiliati too—groups that had no wish to be in conflict with the Church. Brenda Bolton

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677 Newman, *Boundaries of Charity*, 225. Newman summarizes the fear among ecclesiastic elites, “In the past heresy was primarily viewed as the deviant ideas of the uneducated, but in the twelfth century educated heretics were being produced by the new universities.”


680 Bolton, *Medieval Reformation*, 95. The two Lateran Councils prior to Sens (1123, 1139) were all following a schism or controversy in the Papacy and also paved the way for an institutionalized manifestation of the fear of political and religious heterodoxy.
writes that his papal decree was “the first real attempt to define an official attitude to manifest dissent.”

The extremely influential Fourth Lateran Council in 1215 defined “heresy” anew and implemented preventative measures against it. The language of Innocent III’s Canons, especially 3 and 13, bordered on hysteria and indicated his conviction that heretics were the truest and most dangerous enemy of the Church. Canon 3 condemned all heretics and stipulated, “no matter by what names they are known: they may have different faces but they are all tied together by their tails since they are united by their emptiness.” Canon 13 was a preventative measure against conniving schismatics and heretics who sought papal approval through subterfuge. It stated that no new religious orders were to be founded in the Church. Anyone wishing to enter an order should choose from those already existing. Orders were expected to follow the Cistercian model.

Lateran IV was also the ecumenical source of the restriction of Jewish rights throughout Europe. Canons 67 through 69 demanded punishment for Jewish usury and special dress for Jews and Muslims. The last measure came about because of the fear that disguised Jews, like heretics, would likely intermingle with Christians in order to lure the latter into an impure ideology or sexual union. Princes were charged to prevent Jews, heretics, and pagans (Muslims) from blaspheming Christ.

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681 Ibid, 96.
682 Bolton, Medieval Reformation, 107. The Fourth Lateran Council opened on Nov 1, 1215. It was so well attended by so many European clergy that the aged bishop Matthew of Amalfi was trampled to death on the first day in the rush to enter the Church.
683 Bolton, Medieval Reformation, 108.
The crusaders’ assaults on Rhineland and Hungarian Jews had reintroduced the controversy of what should be done regarding Jews who had been forcibly converted rather than murdered. The most respected Church fathers had unquestionably forbidden coerced conversion. Augustine and Gregory I had disqualified as invalid any baptisms due to violence or threat. At the end of his life, however, Augustine had condoned the practice of forcing baptism on certain heretics so that what began by force might result eventually in genuine faith.\(^{685}\) On the other hand, Augustine argued with the force of biblical mandatae that Jews were never to be subject to such violence.\(^{686}\) Jews were also to be granted specific liberties when it came to their religious rites, places of worship, and holy books. The unique protections and privileges permitted to Jews evinced a clear distinction between Jews and heretics in Augustine’s ancient world. That distinction began disappearing in the late twelfth century such that by Innocent III’s reign, Jews were grouped with, and almost as, heretics.\(^{687}\)

The blatant equating of Jews with heretics is evident in the final decree of Lateran IV. Canon 70 was Innocent III’s clarification of the Church’s ambivalent stance on forced baptism. Lateran IV countermanded Gregory I in determining that those Jews who had not consented to the baptism could return to their odious religion without penalty, but that those who had agreed to conversion instead of martyrdom must remain Christian.\(^{688}\) In effect,

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\(^{688}\) “Fourth Lateran Council,” Canon 70.
forcibly immersed Jews who attempted to ignore their coerced baptism would be treated as apostates and heretics by the Church.

This desperate measure was due to the elevated fear of divisive movements. Heresies were not only a threat to the Church; they were now a sacrilege to God. Similarly, if Christ were present in every baptized Jew, then those who forsook Him were guilty of a personal blasphemyous attack on Christ. For a Christian to become a Jew would be the same as if he had fallen in with heretics. His soul was equally damned. The parallelism of Jew and heretic would expand with Lateran IV so much so that in another fifty years a Spanish council would decree, “Where a Christian is so unfortunate as to become a Jew, we order that he shall be put to death just as if he had become a heretic; and we decree that his property shall be disposed of in the same way that we stated should be done with that of heretics.”

Ecclesiastic councils’ decrees are not the only sources for historians in order to trace the corresponding rise of antisemitism and growing fear of heresies in the twelfth century. I have already cited polemics and biographic contributions that have demonstrated a link between fear of Jews and heretics. In the next section, I will discuss the events that followed.

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689 The Chronicle of Bury St. Edmunds, 1212-1301, ed. Antonia Gransden (London: Nelson, 1964), 58; Robert C. Stacey, “Jews and Christians in Twelfth-Century England: Some Dynamics of a Changing Relationship,” Michael Signer and John Van Engen, eds., Jews and Christians in Twelfth-Century Europe (Notre Dame, IN: U of Notre Dame, 2001), 344-345; Frederic W. Maitland, “The Deacon and the Jewess,” Roman Canon Law in the Church of England: Six Essays (London: Methuen, 1898), 158-179. Stacey writes, “In the 1220s, when a Christian deacon converted to Judaism, he was induced to do so by the beauty of his Jewish lover… In the 1270s, however, when another cleric, the Dominican Robert of Reading, also converted to Judaism, he was said to have been seduced into apostasy by the Hebrew language, which led him on to conversion and death.”

after Sens that demonstrate the effects of the council and its relation to the developing medieval perception of Jews as enemies of Christendom.

*Comminatio Iudaeorum: The Jewish Threat*

The basis for the Church’s twelfth-century redefinition of and opposition to heresy was fear.691 “The Church needed to restate the force of its authority”692 at the Third Lateran Council and with *Ad abolendam*. The profusion of new and unauthorized expressions of the *vita apostolica* was, for leading clerics, a frightening escalation of a fragmenting Christendom. The fear of an unseen, foreign threat dredged up the names of ancient heretical sects and applied them to contemporary itinerant preaching. Defensiveness on the part of Church leaders may have been justified in only a few instances, as in the examples of Eon d’l’Etoile,693 and Arnold of Brescia, who condoned or encouraged violence against those who wielded both mitred and worldly wealth. Most often defensiveness was not justified, but the presence of any belligerence on the part of new apostolic movements was enough to prompt a wary attitude in the papacy. When the political factionalism inherent in the Papal Schism of 1130 polarized the Church, the few acts of hostility against the institutionalized

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691 Moore, *Formation*, 100. Moore titles the stereotypes of heretics and Jews as “the language of fear, and of the fear of social change.”
693 Cohn, *Pursuit*, 44-46; Moore, *Formation*, 24; Moore, *War on Heresy*, 7, 153-154. Eon, also known by a variety of names, including Eudo de Stella, was tried at the same Council of Reims as Gilbert de la Poree in 1148. Eon’s following was enormous, owing greatly to the poor harvests for the past four years in France and what Cohn calls the desperate messianism of the poverty-stricken. His destruction through Brittany and his claims of being divine brought on his condemnation by the presiding pope, but he was spared due to insanity. A number of his sane followers were burned as heretics, however.
clergy incited a stereotype in which new dissenting sects were fearfully linked to physical hostility and a mortal danger to the Church.

It is possible there was some legitimacy, however small, for the new perception of deviant, apostolic groups as a danger. If so, there was no such justification for a similar perception of the Jews. I have reviewed the phenomena affecting Jews influenced by a distrustful factional Christendom: the alleged newness of the Talmud, the supposed irrationality of Jewish minds, and the frequency of anti-Jewish rhetoric in polemics, especially around the time of Sens. For these reasons, the polarizing fear of conspiracies and predatory practices among new “heresies” began to be applied to Jews as well in the years immediately after Sens. Unsubstantiated rumors of Jewish rites that had been ignored earlier by royalty or prelates were being carefully considered and were influential in ecclesiastic policy by the second half of the twelfth century. The prohibition of Jews and Christians intermingling in Fourth Lateran Council’s Canon 70 was prompted by the fear that good Christian souls might be lost if swayed by proselytizing Jews.694 The fear of Christian conversion to Judaism was based on no rational supposition, for there were precious few recorded instances of either Christians or Jews converting to the other religion. “Conversions were rare,” wrote Guibert of Nogent.695 The scarce Jewish baptisms were most frequently followed by apostasy. There were only “at most a handful of Jewish converts [that] can be

694 “Fourth Lateran Council,” Canon 70.
identified who remained Christians for any length of time during the twelfth century, mostly in the decades around 1150.”

If Christians had no justifiable reason to worry about aggressive Jewish proselytism, the reverse was true for Jews. The sudden conversions around 1150 were one of the most unfortunate results of the Second Crusade. Mobs excited by crusade rhetoric followed the footsteps of their predecessors half a century before—murdering and terrorizing Jews or forcing them to convert. Ephraim of Bonn’s Sefer Zehkira and Bernard’s letters are firsthand accounts of the repeated slaughter in the Rhineland of Jewish communities. Peter the Venerable’s Adversos Judaeos also addressed the carnage but encouraged vitriol and plunder even as he urged Christians to spare Jewish lives.

This decade following the Council of Sens saw the sudden rise of new anti-Jewish fantasies. The charge of the ritual murder occurred in Norwich, England, when Thomas of Monmouth cultivated the rumor that the Jews of Norwich had murdered a young apprentice named William. Although the charge was unsubstantiated and the murder was years before, Thomas’ book established a set of new anti-Jewish stereotypes: the belief that Jews religiously must conduct an annual murder to appease their religion, the concept of a Jewish

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698 Bernard, Epistola 365, Patrologia Latina 182:570.
conspiracy,\textsuperscript{701} and the fantasy of the mock crucifixion Jews conducted on their victims.\textsuperscript{702} This ritual murder charge would grow exponentially into the next century, after the fantasy had been used to explain the child murders in Gloucester (1168), Bury (1181), and especially Lincoln (1255). Until the publicity of \textit{William of Norwich}, says Emily M. Rose, Jews had not been subjected to accusations of heresy.\textsuperscript{703} Rose does not clarify what occurred within Christian Europe to pave the way for this sudden incrimination of Jewish heresy. My thesis offers a factor. The sequence of the accusations at Norwich taking place within the decade after Sens demonstrates the apprehension in the Church for malevolent conspiracies in Europe.

Exacerbated by factionalism, the fears in Christendom of divergent Christian sects and Jews manifested as other wild accusations of nonconformists’ religious practices. Ritual murder was soon accompanied by the rumor of the “blood libel,” in which Jews were accused of kidnapping children specifically for the procurement of Christian blood. As if the increase in this violence were not enough, rumors grew of the arcane powers of Jews to curse neighbors and make pacts with the devil.\textsuperscript{704} Ephraim of Bonn’s account implied that an unsubstantiated rumor, such as sorcery or enchantment, may have fueled an attack on Jews at


the coronation of Richard I. The legends of Theophilus and Cistercian exemplars are full of tales of Jews summoning demons, Host desecration, or drafting potions to cure ailments. Frederic Jaher writes of the new twelfth-century association of Jews with filth, lechery, lepers, the devil, his allies (like witches), and heretics. They were drawn with goat feet and horns. The Jew, never a friend of Christendom, was becoming demonic.

The factional vitriol in the polemical writings at Sens had stoked the fear of any whose religious beliefs were not strictly approved by the Church. Abelard was “an enemy of the Church [and] a persecutor of the faith,” Bernard had written, “Within he is a heretic.” This polemical demonization of unorthodox beliefs provoked Christians to associate Jews—the furthest removed from accepted Christian norms—with the feared heretics believed to be such a danger to Christendom. Jews were the obvious outsider: associated with irrationality, usury, suspicious beliefs, and foreign origin. Most of all, Jews were not Christian. The deicidist accusations from antiquity were reused. If learned Christian teachers like Abelard were paving the way for the Antichrist, how much more so those who had spilled Christ’s

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705 Matthew Paris, *Historia Anglorum*, f. 108b, cited in Joseph Jacobs, *The Jews of Angevin England: Documents and Records from Latin and Hebrew Sources, Printed and Manuscripts* (London: D. Nutt, 1893), 342; Trachtenberg, *Jewish Magic*, 3. Using Matthew Paris’ account written c.1189, recent scholars have attributed the reason to the locals’ fears that Jews would enchant their new monarch, although this could also have been a political statement. It is probable that both reasons applied.


blood? The rising phenomenon of making Jews into enemies of Christendom despite any rational grounds is what has prompted Gavin Langmuir to conjecture that the medieval Church’s irrational fear and reaction to Jews or chimeria were based not on ignorance but on the flouting of common sense and all empirical evidence.

Artwork reveals more anti-Jewish fantasies propounded by the Church. The fear of imagined enemies of Christendom gave rise to frightening images and sculptures. In the thirteenth century in what is now Germany, Judensau images were publically presented in churches beginning around the time of Lateran IV. Stone and wooden caricatures of Jews as beasts or unnatural creations linked Jews with usury, greed, sloth, and deicide. The name “Judensau” is German for “Jews’ sow,” so named for the graphic portrayal of Jews suckling from a female pig or consuming its excrement. These were often accompanied by Ecclesia et Synagoga statues in many cathedrals of France and the Regnum Teutonicum, heralding one woman as the victorious Christianity and the other a fallen, blinded, and dissolute Judaism. These twin sister stone figures appeared as early as the ninth century on Carolingian panels, but the most famous pairs were constructed starting in the late twelfth century.

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713 Heinz Schreckenburg, *The Jews in Christian Art* (New York: Continuum, 1996), 331-337. The first surviving Judensau is a wooden carving in Cologne’s cathedral dated c. 1210. The first such image in stone was created for Brandenburg Cathedral about twenty years later.
sampling of artwork in the aftermath of Sens attest not only to the existence of chimeria, but also that Church leadership was responsible for its expansion.

Violence against Jews naturally accompanied the grotesque and incredible stereotypes. As charges of heresy and treachery became synonymous during the twelfth century, ancient Augustinian protections against equating Jews with heresy were loosened. Rumors of Jews as secret blasphemers or desecrators of relics grew during the second half of the twelfth century, but never with evidence. In Bohemia c. 1161, twenty-seven Jews were executed for poisoning wells.\(^{715}\) Ten years later, more than thirty Jews were burned in Blois, France for nothing more than a ritual murder rumor.\(^{716}\) Ephraim of Bonn’s account and Rabbi Yaakov ben Meir’s letters reference what is known as “The Blois Incident.”\(^{717}\) One citizen of Blois had claimed to see a Jewish neighbor throw a baby into the nearby river. Despite the fact that no body was ever found, all the Jews of the city were executed for the “crime” after the accuser had successfully passed his trial by ordeal. Robert Chazan indicates that the ritual murder charges (of 1144—really, 1150—and 1171 in Blois) were signs of Christendom’s increasing willingness to blame Jews for murdered or dead Christian bodies.

\(^{715}\) Frojmovic (Leiden: Brill, 2002), 129-163. These twin statues always appear as attractive, slender females. Ecclesia has a crown, a cross or an erect pendant, and a chalice, whereas the defeated Synagoga possesses a broken staff, is blindfolded and downcast, and about to drop a Book of Law.

\(^{716}\) Trachtenberg, The Devil and the Jews, 97; Jaher, A Scapegoat, 58; Carroll, Constantine’s, 277, Jeffrey Richards, Sex, Dissidence, and Damnation: Minority Groups in the Middle Ages (New York: Routledge, 1991), 99-104. The details are hard to substantiate. Trachtenberg contends it was 87 Jewish victims blamed for a conspiracy to poison a community well.


throughout Christendom. The dramatic air of suspicion of European Jews was such that kings and popes had to repeatedly advocate for them. Blois was the first time Jews were executed in this way. Earlier in the twelfth century, burning was reserved for relics and books—oftentimes as a test for sanctity. Blois was another precedent. Jews were perversely tested for heresy in the flames, and were found impure.

Emily M. Rose therefore declares the murders at Blois to be a turning point in Christian treatment toward Jews, but does not explain what prompts this turn-about. Anna Abulafia likewise identifies the twelfth century, and not the thirteenth, as the initiation of largescale cultural anti-Jewish violence, but does not identify the intellectual antecedent for this change. R. I. Moore more specifically recognizes the formation in European culture of an anti-semitic persecution occurred by the middle of the twelfth century, though his purpose is to explain the society rather than its origins. My thesis clarifies that the increase in anti-Jewish attacks was an outgrowth of the change in the perception of heresy brought on by the religious factionalism of the twelfth century. Granted, such a factor did not alter Judeo-Christian relations all at once. Just as 1096 or 1147 or 1171 did not herald the sudden floodgates of physical violence against Jews of Europe, the failed efforts at religious

719 Ephraim of Bonn, Sefer Zekhira, in Neusner, Hebraische, 34-35; Habermann, Sefer, 145-146. Kings had to combat charges explicitly. This was as a result of large diplomatic lobbying on the part of northern European Jews. King Louis VII, “Now, all you Jews in my land, be aware that I harbor no suspicions in this regard. Even if Christians discover a slain Christian either in town or in the countryside, I shall say nothing to the Jews on that score.” Nobility and bishops took part in defense of the Jews. The count of Champagne decreed, “Nowhere in the law of the Jews have we found that is it is permitted to kill a Christian. Yesterday, on the eve of Passover, a rumor spread in Epernay, and I accorded it no reliability.”
721 Abulafia, Christians and Jews in the Twelfth, 139; Nahon, “From the Rue aux Juifs,” 311.
reconciliation at Sens were a gradual shift away from the theological restraints from anti-Jewish violence. Heresy had always been answerable within the Church, but now Jews, bereft of reason, apostolic faith, definitional distinction from heretics, and millennium-old safeguards, were subject to the same pressures.

How had Augustine’s and Gregory’s protections of Jews dissolved so easily in the twelfth century? According to Robert Chazan, as crusading Christians began to view Jews as less archetypic and more earthly, “perceptions of Jewish enmity became more firmly entrenched in the here-and-now, with accelerating concern over Jewish economic activity, over Jewish blasphemy against Christianity and its symbols, and over murderous Jewish hostility to Christian neighbors.”

722 Jewish conspiracies, predatory moneylending, and anti-Christian sacrilege had no basis in fact, but belief in the danger these falsehoods posed substantiated a growing fear of the Jews. This lack of evidence was especially true with regard to Jewish usury. The vast majority of Jews were not moneylenders or associated with usury, and yet by the thirteenth century, Jews were frequently being equated with avarice. 723 Church actions prohibiting Jewish commerce were incongruous with the minute number of European Jews actively involved in usury in Europe. 724 In addition to these examples of evidence demonstrating the rise in anti-Jewish prejudice, there are papal bulls and council

722 Chazan, “From the First Crusade,” 47.
723 Mell, The Myth, ch. 5; Ethan Margolis, Evidence that the Majority of Medieval English Jews were not Moneylenders, with an Emphasis on Document E. 101/249/4, Thesis. (Raleigh: North Carolina State University, 2015) His work, after a study of the Document E, presents the small Jewish population in the city of London, only a few of which are moneylenders.
724 For more on the relations between Jewish usury and Christian commerce see Mell, The Myth, ch. 5. Although traditionally viewed as an economic arrangement, Mells documents the societal stereotyping as a religious one.
decrees that detail how Jews lost rights and property, were kicked out of cities, or lost their lives.

As the violence worsened into the thirteenth century, the final nail on the coffin would be found: a heretical text—the Talmud. The mid-thirteenth century put a higher priority on public debates and Jewish conversion. As Franciscan friars and Scholastic dialecticians opposed Jews who were ordered to take part in partisan debates, translations of Hebrew to Latin unearthed Jewish literature that scandalized the Christian populace. The Talmud, the Mishnah, and anti-Christian polemics served as proof that a Jewish animus against Christ thrived. Additionally, Christian polemicists felt justified in claiming that Jews had abandoned their own faith because Jews were trusting in something more than the Hebrew Bible. Anti-Jewish diatribes attested that the Jews’ “new” texts had driven the Jews insane or that Jews were no longer subject to ancient protections if they were no longer the same ancient Jews. The Jewish philosopher Baruch Spinoza, four centuries later, would write, “No heretic without a text,” and here it was. Scholastic works dedicated to proving the Talmud was heresy became commonplace, and these Jewish books were burned throughout Western Europe.

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726 Michael Frassetto, ed., Christian Attitudes Toward the Jews in the Middle Ages: A Casebook (New York: Routledge, 2007), xv. Cities like Mainz had expelled their Jewish populations since the eleventh century, but the growing perception of Jews as a dangerous faction encouraged manipulative kings to expunge Jews during later centuries. Expulsion from kingdoms began in 1290 in England, and 1306 in France, and again in 1322.
727 Moore, Formulation, 70; Michael Brown, Our Hands, 92-97.
728 Peter the Venerable, Tractatus Adversus Judeorum, in Patrologia Latina 189, Migne, ed., vol. 5, 58:152; Cohen, Living Letters, 263; Hood, Aquinas, 12-13. Peter the Venerable’s conclusions about Jewish insanity provide a strong precursor for the Talmud Trials of the 1230s.
One more powerful result of the factionalism at Sens took place in the Talmud Trial in 1240 and the burning of thousands of books in 1241. The Talmud Trial occurred in Paris, which boasted Abelard’s last classroom an exact century before. By the thirteenth century Paris was “the laboratory for experimentation with power,” and not only the most “prominent European intellectual center of that time, but also the most organized, centralized, and scrutinized.” As Yossef Schwartz explains, the legal process first developed at Sens to investigate heresy in theological scholarship was at last applied to Jews. Abelard’s trial and subsequent prosecution of Parisian scholars developed the judicial mechanism used to condemn the Talmuds and Jews of Paris. Schwartz claims the legal proceedings of the 1240 Talmud Trial bears far more likeness with those at Sens in the trial of Abelard than do other contemporary trials of heresy of the mid-thirteenth century. In 1141 and 1241, what befell the scholars of Paris would be felt throughout Europe. In the centuries ahead, such desperate and fearful search for heresy amid believer and non-Christian alike would only grow worse.

Jan Ziolkowski records, “A Christian—whether a person born into a Christian family or a Jew who had accepted baptism under duress—who abandoned the Christian faith and became Jewish ran the risk of capital punishment, because in church law apostasy came to be

730 Ayelet Even Ezra, *The Discourse of Knowledge in the Faculty of Theology, Paris, 1220-1240*, PhD dissertation (Tel Aviv: Tel Aviv University, 2011), 26-43; Spencer Young, *Queen of the Faculties: Theology and Theologians at the University of Paris, c. 1215-c. 1250*, PhD dissertation (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin, 2009).

731 Schwartz, *Authority, Control*, 93.

considered heresy, and heresy was punishable by death.\textsuperscript{733} Had a more reconciliatory resolution been found for the differences in Christian popular factions, a different spill-over effect may have meant a tightening of protection for Jews and other religious minorities, rather than its undoing. The alienation of rival Christian factions became the mode of worsening intercourse for the religious minorities of Europe, set in motion by men who would have strongly denounced the natural consequences of their actions.

Conclusion

The Roman pattern of pitting factions against one another for control targeted Jews during the Jewish Revolts. This excited a strong anti-Jewish animus and competition with Jews in the budding Christian Church. Despite the early rhetoric directed against Jews, the early medieval period saw little Jewish persecution. It was not until the dawn of the new millennium that the spirit of Church reform gave rise to new kindling of religious expression of apostolicism. Even so, by 1096, attacks on Jews were as of yet unsystematic and very infrequent. And from this surge of apostolic spirit and desire for reform, the Cistercian order and adherents of Scholasticism encountered profound success as the two most powerful factions or Church movements of the twelfth century.

The Council of Sens in 1141 was a foretaste of the Church’s identification and censure of heretics. It was not a direct pronouncement against Jews, but the ruling of Sens and the polemics associated with the debate had a direct relation with the formation of future persecution against Jews and other minorities, as it followed the alienation and dehumanization of any unorthodox faction liable for heresy. Previously, ecclesiastic leaders did not have a viable or canonical means to judicially address heresy within a consistent framework. Sens set the stage for European leaders to abandon efforts to reconcile theological difference peaceably and to arrange a hearing such that the alleged heretic would not be given equal opportunity to present his case. Thus, the fearful ecclesiastic precedent followed the old Roman model of encouraging factions toward manipulation and the acquisition of power rather than a more irenic solution.
Sens was not so much the confrontation between the Scholastic education model and the Cistercian monastic ideal; it was a conflict between two great men who were unable or unwilling to look past their fears. Bernard’s fear for the fragility of Church unity brought on his apocalyptic polemics and underhanded strategy to vilify his foe. Abelard was so fearful of what a second verdict of heresy would mean for him that he closed his mouth when he could have explained his actions and beliefs. Both men excoriated and dehumanized the other using anti-Jewish images, defamations of novelty, and arguments that negatively reinforced the worsening Christian ideology of Jewish stereotypes.

I have argued that the association of heresy with Judaism was greatly spurred by the Council of Sens’ ruling. The rise of medieval anti-Judaism was a slow process, represented in centuries of later synods and councils, expanding antisemitic fantasies, and eventual expulsions. Robert Chazan is right in that, “Any effort to identify a central causal factor in this decline is… doomed to failure.” There are many causes economically, politically, and culturally. Nonetheless, nothing set so great a judicial precedent for deeming a dissident ideology to be a political heresy as did Sens. Following the condemnation against Abelard in 1141, a discernible distrust among Church leaders and laity against nonconformists progressed toward a codified label of these dissidents as heretics. The sequence of the legal proceedings of Sens was later utilized to root out heresy in Jewish texts and populations. The subsequent persecution began in the thirteenth century. Papal authority encouraged the institutionalized equating of Jews with heresy.

734 Chazan, *European Jewry*, 211.
R. I. Moore describes the building of a persecution culture against Jews as “peacemeal” throughout the eleventh and twelfth centuries. Together, distinct components constituted the culture of hostility against Jews: the misassociation of Jews with money-lending, the misrepresentation of Jews as hoarders of wealth, and the misconception of Jews as “serfs” of the king. Moore adds to this framework the identification of Jews as particular enemies of Christ and therefore Christians. Economic motives alone did not induce Christian society to persecute Jews. He identifies the Council of Tours in 1163 as the point at which heretics were fixed as enemies of Christendom by ecclesiastic decree and Jews were likewise viewed as secret foes of the Church, though the immediate and contributing events before 1163 are unexplained. Where Moore leaves off, I posit that the Christian factionalism of the twelfth century was the incitation to fear religious nonconformists as though they were a danger to the Church, and this innovation of heresy fueled antisemitic stereotypes and conspiracies.

In the end, Bernard’s and Abelard’s failure to reconcile had far greater implication than either could foresee. The grave danger that Bernard wrote of in his apocalyptic polemics against Abelard was not simply an empty foretelling of doom; it was intentional and highly effective. But the vitriol present in the Church factionalism of the twelfth century spilled over into an ideological demoting of Jews and others as heretics. This impact from the political-turned-religious infighting is a far more explicable rationale for the future anti-Jewish

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735 Moore, *Formation*, 7, 23.
fantasies and persecution than Christians’ transference of doubt. Gavin Langmuir’s scholarship on the rise of antisemitism in the high medieval period has been essential to my work, but his premise of *chimeria* brought on by irrational Christian dogma can be dismissed. Instead, the factionalism present at Sens, the most climactic confrontation of Church movements of the twelfth century, set in motion the ideological categorization of Jews as heretics by the next century.
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