

A NEO-DURKHEIMIAN INSTITUTIONAL THEORY OF ANTISEMITISM¹

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Introduction and aims of this paper

I *what is the issue*

Antisemitism is a worldwide historical-social-political-economic phenomenon, deep rooted and of lasting societal and cultural implications. It is, so it seems, ever present anywhere and everywhere and its consequences are far reaching beyond the protagonists that are its target: Jews, an ancient ethnic group that comprises a miniscule (0.0019) of the world population.² Antisemitism is currently growing in magnitude, spread and intensity – manifested in verbal intimidation, social media abuse, physical attacks (including homicide) and damage to property, that exceed by a wide margin any other targeted ethnic group, anywhere in Europe, the USA/Canada and beyond.

The question I pose here is straightforward: what is the **enduring appeal** of Antisemitism, or simply: **why** is Antisemitism present here and now? I am interested in what might be termed ‘soft’ or ‘passive’ Antisemitism that one may encounter day in and day out, sometimes without intentional harm intended (Scheichl, 1987) or a reluctant acquiesce by the perpetrator – a phenomenon that has been dubbed ‘antisemitism without antisemites’ (Marin, 1980). And an added ‘what’ question is posed: **what** is this soft, passive ‘everyday Antisemitism’ comprised of, and how specific or universal is its content.

The task we face is not an easy one. Overall, social science theories have not singled out Antisemitism as a major topic for examination, though on those occasions that it has taken central public stage, as Antisemitism often does, we were treated to seminal texts such as Marx’s *Zur Judenfrage*, Freud’s *Moses*, Sartre’s *Réflexions sur la question juive*, Arendt’s *Antisemitism* (Part I of *The Origins of Totalitarianism*) And Adorno’s *On Combatting Antisemitism Today*. Yet, no single social theory may put claim that this hostility, traceable over two millennia, rests at its core; and perhaps Antisemitism, or at least some aspects of it, notably the Shoah (Holocaust), defies our disciplines capability for explanation?

The aim of this paper is to examine whether Cultural Theory may hold some keys to such an explanation.

¹ This paper was first presented at the 2022 Mary Douglas seminar, London May 2022.

² The World population clock estimates the current world population close to 8 billion. The Israeli Statistics Bureau puts the number of Jews worldwide as 15.2 million at the end of 2020. That’s 0.0019 of the total.

Cultural Theory (also known as Grid/Group) and increasingly labelled neo-Durkheimian institutional theory, originated by Mary Douglas, has been around for the past fifty years, and is enjoying a healthy and growing following. At its core are four 'ways of life' that encapsulate thought styles directed by the institutional logic in which they are embedded, enacting preferred modes of action and inaction.

II *why may Cultural Theory (G/G) be a suitable theory to explain the issue at hand*
Asking 'big' questions has been a hallmark of Mary Douglas' approach, as was her lack of hesitation in criss-crossing disciplinary boundaries: two assets that are highly relevant to our task here.

Douglas focus on religion throughout her oeuvre is also of paramount importance to this quest. Christianity's hostility towards Jews and Judaism cannot be overstated; after all we are barely sixty years since the Second Vatican Council repudiated the charge of a collective, continuous Jewish guilt for the crucifixion of Jesus; and the belief of Jewish culpability in deicide is still rife: the latest data from Austria (one of the countries from which I will draw examples) has 9% of a representative sample of the adult population state "Jews still have the death of Jesus Christ to answer for" and 27% (!) declare 'no opinion' (one wonders what no opinion on such a question actually suggests) (AP, 2021).

Douglas interest in witchcraft comes handy too. The centrality of the blood libel³ in Jewish and European history⁴ harking back to the early 12th century, bears all the hallmarks of witchcraft accusations. And last but not least, the influence of Basil Bernstein linguistic theory on Douglas' own is highly relevant for our day and age when blatant antisemitism is no longer *salonfähig* and in some countries, such as the UK, France and Austria, it is a criminal offence too. Consequently, perpetrators prefer to resort to innuendo, 'speech codes' and implied references when expressing anti-Jewish views.

I view this paper an exercise in applying Douglas' "cognitive theory of anomaly...a universalist theory about a worldwide negative response to anomaly" (Douglas, 2005 in Baumgarten, 2020, p. 36)⁵ by reference to institutional thought styles corresponding with ways of social organising to the issue of inter-cultural (in the Douglasian sense) relations. Engaging with the 'other' is at the heart of her theory, since each thought style modality is implicitly in competition with and poses a threat to the other three. Here we are dealing with the ways each modality engages with the ultimate, archetypal outsider – the Jew.

³ The accusation of the murder of (mainly) Christian boys by Jews, to use their blood for ritual purposes

⁴ To this day! Simonino di Trento, a two-year old Italian boy found drowned in 1475 has been a longstanding inspiration, including a 2020 painting by Giovanni Gasparro titled "the Martyrdom of St. Simon of Trento for Jewish ritual murder" (<https://www.israelnationalnews.com/news/277933>) (the 'sainthood' of poor Simonino was withdrawn by Pope Paul VI in 1965); and a 2021 QAnon claim that Hollywood and political elites harvest adrenochrome from children's blood (<https://eu.usatoday.com/story/news/factcheck/2022/02/03/fact-check-qanons-adrenochrome-conspiracy-theory-baseless/9268681002/>).

⁵ Douglas refers here to kosher and taboo animals in the Hebrew dietary laws, but the analogy between them and the People of Israel and the latter's position vis-à-vis God and the world at large, is analogous.

Prelim

I *A note on where I am coming from*

I read psychology and hold a PhD in anthropology. Having spent my career in business schools, specialising in Organizational Behavior and Human Resource Management in international and comparative contexts, my professional interest has been dominated by understanding the what, why and how of organizational lives in different cultural milieus.

I have been exposed early in my academic life to the work of Mary Douglas by Gerry Mars (my doctoral supervisor) and was one of the first to bring her theory to the attention of the management and organizations scholarly communities (Altman, 1992, Altman & Baruch, 1998). Over the years I dipped from time to time into the theory and published within its framework, however Cultural Theory has not been central to my scholarship.

For the purposes of this paper I familiarised myself afresh with the different versions of and modifications to Cultural Theory that took place since *Natural Symbols* (Douglas, 1970); some by Douglas herself, others by her followers. I will rely principally on the formulations offered by Douglas *In the Wilderness* (1993, 2001), *Jacob's Tears* (2004), *How Institutions Think* (1986), her last formulation of Grid/Group (2005) and of course I refer to *Purity and Danger* (1985) as well as Douglas' introduction to the Hebrew edition of *Purity and Danger* (Douglas, 2005 in Baumgarten, 2020). I assume the reader's familiarity with the theory. To those who are not, I recommend Douglas latest (and last) formulation of her theory (Douglas, 2005). To facilitate reference for those requiring a reminder of the basic tenets of Grid/Group, an appendix is provided. In the paper I use interchangeably the terms Cultural Theory and Grid/Group.

As to the long-standing and ensuing debate whether Antisemitism should be viewed as a continuous historical phenomenon or a repeated episodic and contextualised one (Consonni, 2022), I refrain from declaring a position, since I am not a historian; but as a social scientist I cannot fail to note the similarities in Antisemitism's manifestations, processes and outcomes over the centuries. As we shall see, Cultural Theory offers an a-historical perspective that may contribute to this debate.

Another current debate I won't go into is the nuanced definition of Antisemitism. I am following the widely adopted and employed *IHRA definition of Antisemitism* (also known as the 'working definition of Antisemitism')⁶. It states: "Antisemitism is a certain perception of Jews, which may be expressed as hatred toward Jews. Rhetorical and physical manifestations of antisemitism are directed toward Jewish or non-Jewish individuals and/or their property, toward Jewish community institutions and religious facilities". The recent *Jerusalem Declaration on Antisemitism*⁷ critiquing the IHRA's confounds an important aspect of contemporary antisemitism: anti-Zionism (and see the Enclave position as regards our topic). By and large, I agree with the proposition in the UK 2016 Parliamentary Report on

⁶ <https://holocaustremembrance.com/resources/working-definitions-charters/working-definition-antisemitism>

⁷ <https://jerusalemdeclaration.org>

Antisemitism⁸ which follows the Macpherson report on police institutional racism⁹ that a racist [Antisemitic] incident is one “perceived to be racist [Antisemitic] by the victim or any other person” (op. cit., p.11).

The examples I use here I have come across in the course my work or through personal encounters in the places I lived in, and specifically refer to the following countries: England, France, the USA, Austria and Poland.

Finally, may I express my thanks to Gerry Mars and Perri 6 for their guidance and support throughout my journey in this paper.

Soft or passive ‘everyday’ antisemitism

Soft or passive ‘everyday’ antisemitism is woven into the social fabric of Western society. It would have been strange had it not, since Jews have been persecuted in Europe and beyond for two millennia, have been citizen with full rights (without overt discrimination) for no longer than the past two or three generations, and since until fairly recently the hegemonic religion in the West – Christianity on its variants, held an official anti-Jewish attitude. Thus, for example, the reason for the ‘fashion’ among American Jews to change their surname, common till the late 1960s, was to make it harder to identify them as Jews in the hope of avoiding occupational and other discrimination (Horn, 2021).

To clarify what I am referring to I will detail a current minor cultural episode, at its centre a name, that attracted some public attention in England.

Rare Earth Mettle in the Royal Court Theatre

In November 2021 a new play was about to be staged in one of London’s well-known theatres. The play, by a noted playwright, Al Smith, has as its main figure an American tycoon, an unsavoury character who robs people of their land in order to make a fortune while damaging the environment. He dons the name Herschel Fink, a Jewish sounding name. Strangely, the character in the play isn’t Jewish nor is there any mention of Jews in the plot.

To be clear, Herschel as first name can only be Jewish – common in Yiddish (Hershel = deer, from Hirsch in German), it does not feature in any other language. As to Fink, the surname Finkler has been indelibly associated with a Jewish character (certainly in literary circles), ever since Howard Jacobson’s novel came out in 2010, *The Finkler Question*, which won the Man Booker prize that year. A search in Merriam Webster dictionary provides as a definition for *fink*, one who is disapproved of or held in contempt (examples given are a strike-breaker or an informer). In other words, the association between a nasty character and a Jewish name is established.

On November 6th 2021, ten days before the first performance was due, the Royal Court issued a statement:

⁸ <https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201617/cmselect/cmhaff/136/136.pdf>

⁹ https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/277111/4262.pdf

‘The Royal Court Theatre apologises unreservedly for this situation. It was a mistake, it shouldn’t have happened, and we are sorry it did...[We] are grateful to those who got in touch to communicate that the character named Hershel Fink was perpetuating an antisemitic stereotype. In response, the writer has decided to change the name to Henry Finn’

Mistakes happen of course, strange as these may be. However, it soon transpired that calling the choice of name a ‘mistake’ may not have been the best term in this case. On December 16th, the theatre issued another statement, saying that while they had only received a formal notification of concern from the Jewish community on November 5th to the effect that

‘the use of this Ashkenazi Jewish name for a ‘Silicon Valley billionaire and CEO’ [...] ‘on a mission to save the world’ [...] ‘and make millions of dollars in the process’ – risked perpetuating antisemitic tropes’

It had now come to the notice of senior management that alarm bells had previously been raised. Hence, the updated statement reported that:

‘The Royal Court Theatre was informed on 13th December 2021 by journalist Kate Maltby that the issue of the name had also been raised by a member of the production team with the director on 4th March 2020.’

An internal review followed and a public statement was published on March 1st, 2022. It emerged that the play’s director had been alerted to the issue on at least two separate occasions. The first time had been on 4th March 2020, at the start of the rehearsal period for the play, when the accent coach had questioned the play’s director, Hamish Pirie, as to whether the character of the billionaire was indeed meant to be Jewish, as the name seemed to indicate. The accent coach did not receive a satisfactory reply. The second occasion happened on 15th September 2021, during a training course for directors, when a Jewish participant on the course observed that it was regrettable that the character portrayed in the play was yet another Jewish billionaire trying to steal people’s land, clearly implying that this was perpetuating antisemitic tropes. The director’s reply was that the character concerned was not meant to be Jewish at all. The director did report back to the internal enquiry that he had resolved at the time to raise the matter with the writer, Al Smith, but never got around to doing so.

It further transpired that the playwright had Elon Musk (no known Jewish connections) in mind when writing the play, seeking an American sounding name that would somehow chime with Elon Musk (both sets of names have 2 syllables for the first name and 1 syllable for the surname). The play was commissioned in 2015 and went through 15 different drafts before it went into production in 2021. The choice of name for the Elon Musk character, namely Hershel Fink, was originally intended to be explained through a rather convoluted ‘contextual’ explanation referring to the character’s admiration for the illustrious German-born British astronomer William Herschel (1738 -1822), who discovered the planet Uranus, among other achievements (and whose father was of Jewish descent). This contextual explanation was expunged from the play in 2019 but the name Hershel was retained for the character, as a first name, without any mention of the

character's admiration for William Herschel, or why the first name Hershel was chosen.

Apart for the Jewish-sounding name there is nothing 'Jewish' in the plot, allegedly. So, the author either wished to insinuate an added, deeper layer of meaning to the play, or somehow believes that a hint of Jewishness is called for to authenticate the character he created. Either way, aren't the spectators inadvertently, sub-consciously, led to connect the dots and reach the conclusion that the shady character is actually Jewish? There is nothing in the play that would contradict such an assumption.

Literature feeds on the deep roots of national and universal culture, and nourishes them in return. In English literature there is no greater playwright than William Shakespeare, who intricately portrayed the figure of Shylock, *The Merchant of Venice*, a masterly Antisemitic portrayal; and none greater a story-teller than Charles Dickens whose *Oliver Twist* Fagin, has established a prototype for a Jewish villain. Both Shylock and Fagin are iconic characters of world literature, created by authors, neither of whom is known to have been particularly antisemitic.

English literature is not exceptional in this regard. In her expertly narrated history of criminal science, criminal trials and crime novels in Germany and Austria over the past century, Susanne Kord (2018) employs the German term *Geschichte* in its double meaning of both 'history' and 'story' as a methodology, demonstrating the power of words (literally) to create and reinforce a 'reality' of its own making. Thus, the message carried through has been that while gentiles might commit crimes and transgress the law, it is the Jews who are criminals by nature.

In highlighting the pervasiveness of soft or passive 'everyday' Antisemitism I am in agreement with Volkov (1978, 2006a, 2006b) about what she calls 'cultural code', in reference to widespread popular Antisemitism in Germany: "the total interconnected ways of thinking, feeling, and acting" subsuming both *Weltanschauung* and ideology, not excluding philosophy, science, and the arts, and "includes traditions that consciously and subconsciously affect such a collectivity, habits of mind, a variety of automatic reactions, and a plethora of accepted norms" (Volkov, 1978).

Socio-cultural codes according to Volkov signify larger important life positions, which stand out in particular at times of crisis and polarity, as was the case, for example, during the Dreyfus affair in France. For Dreyfusards and anti-Dreyfusards alike, Antisemitism was a marker on bigger issues such as Republicanism, the juridical system and the role of the army in society. Similarly, in Poland, Altman et al. (2021) note that upholding or opposing antisemitic beliefs are a marker to other key positions on the economy, religion as well as political affiliation; and so it is in Austria too (Altman et al., 2022).

II *Two detours*

Before diving in the theory, I wish to take two brief diversions. The first is a note about the question of the positivity and negativity of human experience; the second is a historical detour on Antisemitism that involves the godfather of Cultural Theory – Émile Durkheim.

(i) Is it really getting better?

The positive psychology movement heralded by Martin Seligman and Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000) brought in its wake an important new focus on happiness and well-being both as a field of scientific study and in applied practice, but also as a worldview that has been popularised by academic writers such Yuval Noah Harari (2015) and Steven Pinker (2012). Their message in essence has been: the world is a better place than it used to be, aggression and incivility are receding and it's getting better altogether. At the time of writing (May 2022) as we face a war in Europe, the biggest refugee crisis since WW2, a global pandemic, food shortages, a cost-of-living crisis, an energy crisis amidst a climate change crisis – one may be excused for thinking that *Candide* is back in town.

Against that position I wish to evoke Judith Shklar's stand, following Montagne, singling out cruelty: "the wilful inflicting of physical pain on a weaker being in order to cause anguish and fear" (Shklar, 1982, 17) as the primary vice. "When it is marked as the supreme evil, it is judged so in and of itself, and not because it signifies a rejection of God or any other higher norm. **It is a judgment made from within a world where cruelty occurs as part both of our normal private life and our daily public practice.** By putting it irrevocably first - with nothing above it, and with nothing to excuse or forgive acts of cruelty - one closes off any appeal to any order other than that of actuality" (op. cit; emphasis added).

And I wish to evoke Umberto Eco, who in an insightful essay titled 'Inventing the enemy' chronicles the evolution of this construct of the enemy, noting that "Having an enemy is important not only to define our identity but also to provide us with an obstacle against which to measure our system of values and, in seeking to overcome it, to demonstrate our own worth. So when there is no enemy, we have to invent one" (2012, 46).

(ii) Durkheim on Antisemitism (the Dreyfus affair)

The 1890s saw a pivotal event unfolding in the history of France, that also constituted a pivotal event in the history of Antisemitism. I refer to the Dreyfus Affair. Alfred Dreyfus, a Captain in the French army was found guilty of espionage, stripped of his rank and sentenced to life imprisonment in French Guiana ('Devils Island'). Dreyfus protested his innocence, new evidence emerged that suggested a miscarriage of justice and the case

started to gain a following, that culminated in a famous front-page letter by the celebrated novelist Émile Zola under the heading 'I accuse' ("*J'accuse*"), accusing the army and the Ministry of War of a cover-up for the real culprit, eliminating evidence, forging documents and directly interfering in judicial processes. France was plunged into a lengthy social-political crisis, that came close to a civil war, with two camps fighting each other, known as the *Dreyfusards* (the Dreyfus adherents) and the *Anti-Dreyfusards* (their opponents). The latter claimed that innocent or not, Dreyfus' case should be subordinated to the superior interests of the army and the state and the *Dreyfusards* attempt to bring justice to Dreyfus amounts to the subversion of state security and treason.

In Cultural Theory (G/G) terms the Dreyfus Affair is a paramount case of cultural clash between the diametrically opposed Positional culture (high grid/high group) and the culture of Individualism (low grid/low group). The *Anti-Dreyfusards* couldn't grasp how personal human rights may trump one's obligations towards the Army and State. "Theirs not to reason why, theirs but to do and die" in the timeless words of Alfred Lord Tennyson.¹⁰ A Positional culture expects and anticipates its members to accept their station in life (organization). The key test is **loyalty**. Loyalty to the social order and to one's superiors.

To add insult to injury, the culprit was a Jew. From the point of view of the Hierarchists, Dreyfus was a nobody from the provinces, son to a family of no known gravitas, admitted to serve in the army and elevated to its officers' rank, yet daring to challenge the fate his superiors allotted him. The temerity of it. But then, what could one expect from a Jewish boy, member to a community infamous for its disloyalty, dishonesty and double standards. Pogroms broke out throughout France, with riots taking place in most of France's big cities and towns – in some with up to 4000 participants (Wilson, 1973); Jews were attacked, property damaged, shops in particular; and loyal French citizen were urged 'for the honor of France' not to shop in Jewish stores (Wilson, 1973).

Theodor Herzl was covering the Dreyfus trial and aftermath as the Paris correspondent of the *Neue Freie Presse*. A Viennese Jew from Hungary he was accustomed to Antisemitism but the ferocity he evidenced in France was something else. It got him to the conclusion that the future for Jews in Europe is in doubt and he formed a political movement that came to be known as Zionism.

Émile Durkheim at the time was holding his first academic post and it happened to be in Bordeaux, one of the main scenes of anti-Jewish riots, involving people from all strands of life: youth, artisans, shopkeepers as well as the bourgeois. Bordeaux had a branch of the Ligue Antisémitique Française, the most violent of antisemitic organisations and a prototype

¹⁰ Alfred Lord Tennyson *The charge of the light brigade*.

for right wing populist French movements (Wilson, 1973). Durkheim enlisted, cautiously, somewhat hesitantly, with the *Dreyfusards* camp (Fournier, 2013) and wrote

Grid/Group and Antisemitism

Theoretical postulate

Conflict is in-built into Cultural Theory; it is its key structural feature and its main dynamic element. Surely a theory titled 'cultural bias' may provide an apt prism to reflect on a two-millennia enduring hostility? "The greatest source of strength for entrenching a particular cultural bias is the mutual hostility between cultures" states Douglas (2001, 44).

Following Douglas, I will concentrate on the hostility instigated by the thought styles of Hierarchy, individualist and Enclave cosmologies. "Each of the three cultures practises its own distinctive power of exclusion, and what each does is abhorrent to the alternative cultures (op. cit., 46). And when it comes to Enclaves, "**their virulent hatred of the outsider is shocking to the other cultures**" (op. cit., 47; emphasis added). Unlike Douglas, who discounted the Isolate ordering propensity for conflict and aggression, I show that they have their own distinctive way of ordering when it comes to generating hate.

So, here we have a primed **motivation** for hostility. It is an a-priori motivation, foundational to the modus vivendi of society. And it follows directly from the theory, that the drive for exclusion – loath and hostility to the Other – indeed virulent hatred – serves a basic human need.

And we have a **mechanism** for instigating hostility too. It is defilement, which Douglas conceives to be "the basic condition of all reality...the concept of impurity shapes the world" (Douglas, 2001, 21, 24). Impurity is metaphorical as much as it is concrete, as it upsets our sense of order in our world. But impurity has also the potential to reset the order in the world (Douglas, 1985) and as such, it is both dangerous as well as highly potent (which in turn reinforces the embedded threat).

Kristeva (1982) calls this *abjection* and following Freud, Klein and Lacan, attributes it a primary function in early infancy in developing a boundary and differentiating self from the environment. Abjection is a process of exclusion— starting in early childhood subjectification it is a continuous process, carried out throughout life, as it is a necessity to the maintenance of being a subject. Thus, the process of abjection becomes the most fundamental precondition for constituting the subject.

Abjection takes on physical and emotional attributes as the subject is confronted with the abject. the sensation of nausea, disgust, revulsion and horror establishes an aversive relationship between the body and the abject. The abject is not simply annihilated by

exclusion but remains threatening as a concrete as well as abstract entity; it keeps challenging the line between subject and object and thus threatens one's identity.

Returning back to Douglas (2004) the relationship between body – society – cosmos, one mirroring the other, pose here the central argument. The way a Jew's body (in flesh and blood) has been perceived from early Christianity until fairly recently in Western society, has not only ingrained a sense of aversion and dislike, but also a perception of threat to the just order, while at the same time providing the potentiality for re-order, which may be desired, but is deeply resented and feared.

The long Christian tradition of depicting the Jewish body as diseased, the *Judenkratze*, was seen as originating from God's wrath and his punishment for Jews eternal sin. Described as monstrous and smelly, dark skinned, the bodily unsavouriness went hand in hand as markers of a falling from grace—syndromes of a spiritual, racial, and bodily degradation.

Modelled on the Antichrist, the archenemy, the foe not only of man but of God, the Jew has been described thus in a fifth century text: "His head is like s burning flame, his right eye is bloodshot, his left is a cat-like green and has two pupils, his eyelids are white, his lower lip is large, his right femur is weak, his feet large, his thumb flat and elongated (*Syriac Testament of Our Lord Jesus Christ*, Vol. 1, Part 4, quoted in Eco, 2012, 44). In an eighteen century text Jews are depicted as follows: "they generally have a bluish face, hooked nose, deep-set eyes, protruding chin...Jews are also prone to diseases which indicate a corruption of the blood, such as leprosy in the past and now scurvy...it is said that Jews always have bad breath...others attribute these effects to the frequent use of strong-smelling vegetables such as onion and garlic...Yet others say it is goose meat, to which they are very partial, that makes them dark and melancholic" (B-P Grégoire, *Essai sur la Régénération Physique, Morale et Politique des Juifs*, 1788 in Eco, 2012, 45). Richard Wagner, the eminent composer and arch antisemite, had this to say in the nineteenth century: "What repels us above all else is the particular tone with which the Jew speaks...our ears are particularly offended by the shrill, sibilant, strident sounds of his idiom...Listening to a Jew talking, we are inevitably offended by the fact of finding his discourse devoid of all truly human expression" (Richard Wagner, *Judaism in Music*, 1850 quoted in (Eco, 2012, 45).

With the advent of time and medical progress, Jews' degenerative body failings evolved to hereditary failing of the mind. Charcot, the late nineteenth century's foremost neurologist, who trained both the young Sigmund Freud as well as Max Nordau, the co-founder with Theodor Herzl of the Zionist movement, concluded that "Jews were predisposed to mental disorders due to their symbolic lineage of rootlessness, deceit, egoism, and amorality, having suffered from the ultimate trauma of negating Christian salvation." (Shatou-Shehadeh, 2021, 83).

Hence, the first discernible gain anti-Jewish hostility provides to the conflicting and competing institutional cosmologies operating in the same environment and often under the same roof, is a common enemy. This 'contribution' should not be sneered at. It is essential for identity formation to have common symbols that all agree with and adhere to. While an army, on its distinctive professional cultures may pull apart on various matters of substance (Altman & Baruch, 1998); they all operate under the same commander-in-chief, swear alliance to one flag and sing in communion the national anthem. And while these competing cosmologies may 'converse' with each other (Linsley, Beck & Mollan, 2016), even attain 'clumsy solutions' (Verweij and Thompson, 2006); these cannot replace the need for integrative mechanisms (Lawrence and Lorsch, 1967) – an essential element in the successful functioning of organizations. Having a common enemy all can agree on is a contributory integrative mechanism. Thus, while the infantry, the tank corps, air force and navy may have a lot they disagree about, all will agree they dislike the military police.

The role of the Jews in this regard is summed up succinctly by Eco: "For the enemy to be recognized and feared, he has to be in your home or on your doorstep. Hence the Jews. Divine providence has given them to us, and so, by God, let us use them, and pray there's always some Jew to fear and to hate" (Eco, 2012, 47).

Since we are exploring here soft, passive 'everyday' antisemitism, in the next section I will show how the four cultures have enacted Antisemitism in congruence with their institutional thought styles. While the underlying intent is common: marking a boundary and instituting sanctions that differentiate between 'us' and 'them', necessarily the emphasis and detail of these are likely to differ amongst the cultures, corresponding with and reinforcing the core worldviews congruent with the culture.

Individualism

In her last statement on the theory, Douglas (2005, 8) describes this culture as follows: "It is a competitive culture. The well-being of the community does not come above the well-being of the individual. The prominent virtues are individual courage, intelligence, perseverance, and success. Power and wealth are the rewards...It is a tough environment, competition is merciless, the weakest will go to the wall."

In such a culture the gravest sanction one could face is the denial of a level playing field, denial of the opportunity to compete with fair chances, in other words: discrimination. That has been the scene in the USA¹¹ for Jews till the early 1980s. Starting at college recruitment (Korman, 1988a; Slavin, 1976) and continuing in promotion to the corporate top echelons (Korman, 1988a) Jews faced overt and explicit generalized anti-Jewish prejudice (Quinn et

¹¹ The USA is conventionally positioned as the most individualist amongst the developed economies, cf. Hofstede...Globe...Schwarz...

al., 1968). That meant that Jews were side-lined into support functions in organisations and the professions: roles and occupations that required technical skills and intellectual capabilities but were less dependent on social acceptability (Korman, 1988b). Powell (1969) compares the level of hindrance to an executive career based on religion, reporting that Jews were nine times (!) discriminated against than the second most discriminated denomination, Roman Catholics. Moreover, Zweigenhaft (1984) demonstrates that Jews were barred from elite social clubs, a key entry route into the executive suite, while the Ivy's League unofficial *numerus clausus* was in force at least to the early 1960s.¹² All that discrimination was common knowledge, as the following book review of Abraham Korman *'The Outsiders: Jews and Corporate America'* (1988b) (the book title in itself makes that explicit) reveals:

“To grow up Jewish, at least in my time, was to grow up with the knowledge that one's possibilities were limited. One knew that one could not be a member of certain groups, hold certain occupations, even go to certain schools...being a corporate executive was never something that I considered as an open possibility. As I grew older I came to realize that the sense of limitation is deeply a part of the Jewish heritage” (Schwartz,1989: 304)

In America the worst snub is to be branded a **loser**. That is different from failure. Entrepreneurs fail – that's normal; it's part and parcel of risk taking and often the odds may be against you. A loser fails in a competition where competitors have equal chances to win. But when a level playing field is denied, the competition is unfair – probably the highest sanction for one to bear in 'the land of the free and the home of the brave'.

Positional

Douglas (2005, 7) describes this culture thus: “It is a culture that subordinates the good of the individual to that of the whole, ... with its coherent structure of subordination and command... it affords certainty over a large range of questions, inspires confidence and trust.”

I raised the spectre of the deepest crisis in French modern politics, the Dreyfus Affair, not only due to its historical connection to the origins of Culture Theory and its relevance to our topic, but because it is an archetype case of the mode of Antisemitism one gets in this hierarchical 'large family' type environment.

While the public uproar of the *Anti-Dreyfusards* was a charge of treason, their outrage was about the disrespect manifest in the ungratefulness of that nobody – and a Jew on top -

¹² In the case of Yale (<https://www.nytimes.com/1986/03/04/nyregion/yale-s-limit-on-jewish-enrollment-last-ed-until-early-1960-s-book-says.html>)

admitted into the sacred hall at the heart of French establishment: the army officer rank. That was the essence of Dreyfus' betrayal, as seen from atop the hierarchy¹³: placing his personal interest above his obligations to the army in the name of the general good. Consequently, his punishment of life exile to Devils' Island was topped by the humiliation of being publicly stripped of his rank, thus officially branded dishonourable¹⁴, documented for posterity in a drawing in Le Petit Journal.

The construct of the 'dishonourable Jew' has been central to the depiction of Jews throughout Europe and since early Christianity, since the Jew's bodily deformities were associated with and believed to be a manifestation of his fractured morals. That view was particularly prevalent in France (Shatou-Shehadeh, 2021) as we learn from one of the major lights of the Enlightenment – Voltaire. "Lack of loyalty and generosity of spirit are an inherent characteristic of the Jews... as is cowardice, heavily ingrained in their heart, which is the spirit of usury, the hallmark of their engagement"¹⁵ From where did the great Encyclopédiste draw this knowledge in an era when France was almost barren of Jews for some 400 years is a matter of academic interest, but than one does not require the actual presence of a Jew to hold antisemitic convictions, as we learn time and again.

A hierarchy that is not entirely ascribed is inherently competitive, as is the case in France where the vestiges of the *ancien régime* live side by side with Republican virtues (d'Iribarne, 1989). And the French preoccupation with honour has made it a perfect hierarchy, that is, someone is **always** above and **below** someone else, up to the President of the Republic. Thus, in the French academic system, known as the *coconut tree* (Altman & Bournois, 2004) one may locate themselves precisely vis-a-vis someone else in the system, based on academic grading, seniority or number and class of medals one has accrued. Consequently, an honourable person is one whose social standing is intimately dependent on the position in the hierarchy of someone else. Put it another way, one's projected public image and indeed self-esteem are implicitly linked to the extent they may put to shame others and conversely be put to shame by them (Miller, 1993). Shame, the antonym for honour, is its corollary. In the French language they derive from the same root: *honneur* (honour) and *honte* (shame). And honour has a constant presence in everyday life (as has shame) as

¹³ Hierarchy is the more common term used for Positional.

¹⁴ The motto of the French army has been *Honneur et Patrie*

¹⁵ Voltaire, *Tomme* 11 (1785), p. 208. My translation



those familiar with French bureaucracy would instantly recognise, since one signs ‘on my honour’ for anything and everything, from a refund on a bus ticket to a house deed.

The loss of honour and consequent disrespect and shame associated with it, are a matter of grave concern to those who live in a Positional culture.

Enter comedian Dieudonné M’Bala M’Bala and his signature gesture, the *quenelle*, which consists of placing an open hand on one’s opposite arm while extending the latter towards the ground, now officially categorized as a Nazi style salute in an amendment to article 23 of the 29 July 1881 law on the freedom of the press and in reference to the law of 13 July 1990 against racism, antisemitism and xenophobia (passed 24 January 2019)¹⁶. The law considers it a “gesture associated with racist and antisemitic messages and calls for hatred” and consequently outlawed.

Quenelle is a cooked fish mousse that traditionally is formed in elongated three-sided oval shapes¹⁷ that may resemble a suppository. Hence, "*glisser une quenelle*" ('to slide a suppository'), with a gesture evoking fisting, is sending the message of ‘up your arse’. This sexually imbued aggressive message, to which I take personal offence, since the *quenelles de brochette avec sauce Nantua* is a favourite dish, counts as a cardinal insult. What Dieudonné has been knowingly doing is to mock Jews with specific reference to the Shoah, as he would often mention gas chambers in his shows.

It is interesting to note the tactics Dieudonné employed in denying his gesture is antisemitic because they are employed, as we shall see, in the Enclave culture too. First, he claimed that his gesture is anti-establishment, which it certainly is – a strategy common to all cultures’ expressions of antisemitism: a point I will elaborate in the Conclusions. Then he said that he is anti-Zionist but not antisemitic, and finally, he lost a court case and the matter was settled.

Mocking someone is the epitome of disrespect in Positional culture. At the work place, where managers are expected to attain and retain the respect of their subordinates by demonstrating know-how and leadership capabilities, “whenever they do not meet these requirements, they open the door to challenges from their subordinates [who] without necessarily confronting them head-on, rarely fail to use irony and make fun of them.” (d’Iribarne et al., 2020, 84).

The reason it required a great deal effort, including empirical research (e.g. Amadori, 2016), over many years to outlaw this gesture, which has attracted numerous followers (Dieudonné first introduced it in a sketch aired in 2005) was because France is a high

¹⁶ <https://www.assemblee-nationale.fr/15/pdf/amendements/1600/AN/102.pdf>

¹⁷ Ironically, it’s the nearest the French cuisine comes to *gefilte fish* – an Ashkenazi staple diet dish.).

context¹⁸ culture (as all Positional cultures are likely to be) which tend to avoid explicit messages, because as member of the culture one is expected to understand communicated gestures, nods and innuendo (unlike the Individual culture which tends to be explicit and 'in your face'). Proving antisemitism in such circumstances could be difficult.

Enclave (low Grid – high Group)

"A dissenting minority...threatened without by the society that it regards as corrupted by wealth and power, and threatened from within by disaffected members, its political life would be very insecure... The existence of the enclave is continually threatened by defection or by factions and splitting. The leaders react by strengthening the barricades against the outside." This is how Douglas describes this cosmology (Douglas, 2005, 9).

football fans

Let's start with 'Enclave light' cosmologies, such as football fans. Loosely organised, they resemble temporary organisations that come together on a regular basis for a particular goal, watching football is one of them, but not less important is fighting, verbally and physically, rival football fans. The reason they fit best an enclave cosmology is because their internal organisation is loose and unstable, with minimal hierarchy, often without formal leadership and 'enemies' are an essential element in their constitution. Having characterised them as 'enclave light' it should be said that some, known as 'ultras' (extremes) and found throughout the football world, are well organised groups, with a formal organisation, fee paying members and full-time leadership (Buckley, 2007).

For our purposes here, of relevance is the singular importance that the outside, necessarily configured as enemy, assumes. And given this importance, it is entirely in line with the centrality of Jews as the archetypal outsider in Western society, dipping into the collective subconscious, that the opposing party will be endowed with Jewish attributes. And it is probably due to the limited time span of a football match and hence the restricted opportunity for clashing with rival fans, that the opposing side is labelled 'Jews' in the abstract, as this suffices to brand them outcast and defiled; and following from that, address

¹⁸ Hall, E. T. (1966). The Hidden Dimension. New York: Doubleday; (1992). An Anthropology of Everyday Life. New York: Doubleday/Anchor Books.

them with the most extreme abuse, as if to say, ‘we won’t pull any punches’. The following can be heard on the football pitches of Europe:

Poland (Tokarska-Bakir, 2018)

“Your home is Auschwitz / fuck, fuck RTS [a football club abbreviation] / because this red whore / will go to the furnace today”

“We will do to you what the Germans did to the Jews”

“The Aryan horde is coming”¹⁹

England (Verhoeven, 2015)

‘The Yids from White Hart Lane/ Spurs are on their way to Auschwitz/ Sieg Heil/ Hitler’s gonna gas them again’.

The Netherlands (Verhoeven, 2015)

‘My father was in the commandos, my mother was in the SS, together they burned Jews, as Jews burn the best’

Italy (CBC Sports Online, 2005)

‘Auschwitz is your town, the ovens are your houses.’ Displayed on a 50-metres banner

Few European football clubs have a known association with Jews, notably Tottenham Hotspurs in England (the term Yiddo – the unofficial name for a Tottenham fan, appears in the Oxford English Dictionary) and Ajax in The Netherlands; others are concocted relations – Roma and Cracovia Krakow are reputed to have a Jewish association; while the vast majority don’t even have imagined connections with Jews, which does not seem to trouble anyone pouring out abuse from the stands. And since fighting the rival club is a core activity for football fans, addressing the ‘enemy’ as Jews – imaginary or not, is ‘logical’. What is less ‘logical’ (but outside the scope of this article to explain) is the inversion of roles, whereby one side adorn themselves as Nazis wishing to annihilate the other side. The association with the Shoah seems to be perceived as a potent symbolic put-down. And the fraternity generated on the football stands facilitates this vituperation. In countries where public utterance of Holocaust denial or abuse is prohibited by law, as in Germany (Verhoeven, 2015) and Austria (Wodak, 2015) the football match is the only relatively safe haven for such proclivities.

¹⁹ As Tokarska-Bakir points out Poles did not meet the criteria for ‘Aryan’

Clearly the message this perpetuates is chilling. However, it brings out another chilling message that has not been discussed hitherto: hating and killing Jews could be fun. Garrard (2013) puts it squarely: “Antisemitism is fun, there’s no doubt about it... There are (at least) three principal sources of pleasure which anti-Semitism provides: first, the pleasure of hatred; second, the pleasure of tradition, and third, the pleasure of displaying moral purity.”

Having examined the tradition of antisemitic verbal abuse in football matches, we now turn to more formidable enclave institutions with wider ramifications.

On the Far-Right, the German and Austrian *burschenschaften* (fraternities) truly love hating Jews. Fraternities, originating from student associations in the 18th century, notoriously antisemitic and right wing, have traditionally gathered in actual physical enclaves (rural retreats or cellars were common). A scandal that broke out in Austria a few years ago concerning a fraternity connected to the Freedom Party, then in government as junior partner, revealed their official song book, in use in their gatherings around food and drink, revelling in the atrocities of the Nazi period, with marvels such as:

“In their midst comes the Jew Ben-Gurion: ‘Step on the gas, you ancient Germanic peoples, we’ll manage the seventh million,’”²⁰

More recently, a case in Heidelberg, Germany reached the headlines, when in one such student gathering a member was beaten and verbally abused because he got Jewish ancestry.²¹

The Far-Left on the other hand are the custodians of moral purity. The Far-Left may not love hating Jews, but they splash in the delight of anti-Zionism: “You can’t miss the relish with which some people compare Jews to the Nazis, or the fake sorrow, imperfectly masking deep satisfaction, with which they bemoan the supposed fact that Jews have brought hatred on themselves, especially by the actions of Israel and its Zionist supporters” (Garrard, 2013).

When a Far-Left faction led by Jeremy Corbyn took over the Labour party in 2015, both antisemitism and Enclave watchers knew they are in for a treat. For 59% of British Jews consider themselves Zionists (UK, 2016). To engage with this formidable episode in UK antisemitic history in this short paper could not do it justice. Indeed, several books were

²⁰ P. Oltermann Austria’s far-right fraternities brace for protests at annual ball The Guardian 25.1.2018
<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2018/jan/25/austrias-far-right-fraternities-brace-for-protests-at-annual-ball> (accessed 20.5.2022)

²¹ Heidelberger Burschenschaftler verprügeln Mann – mit hanebüchener Begründung 23.9.2020
<https://politik.watson.de/deutschland/analyse/921979117-rechtsextreme-burschenschaften-antisemitischer-vorfall-in-heidelberger-verbundung> (accessed 20.5.2022)

already published on the topic. It may suffice here to say that antisemitism, in the guise of anti-Zionism, was at the heart of this particular grouping, serving well its core beliefs, reflecting its leadership worldview and firing its followers' mettle.

Anti-Zionism proved potent as a means for rallying the troops, practical in streamlining the running of the party on new ideological lines (Pogrund & Maguire, 2020) and it was handy in justifying its inevitable demise (Ware, 2020). In the five years of Corbyn's leadership as the head of Her Majesty's Most Loyal Opposition, we have evidenced a textbook case of Enclave ordering. It had it all: indiscriminate membership intake via peppercorn fees and minimal vetting, which in turn meant that the Party was in continuous flux, unruly and difficult to govern; establishing a vigilante inner enclave (*Momentum*) that posed constant threat to the orderly running of the main Party and to its functionaries; witch hunting, which saw members of parliament resigning or ousted (including four women who reported threats on their life: a true witch hunt); new recruits challenging the established procedures and role holders; creating a sham support organisation (*Jewish Voice for Labour*, reminiscent of Karl Lueger, the founder of political antisemitism who infamously decreed 'I decide who is a Jew'); a series of court cases on defamation; and to top it all, a formal enquiry that passed a verdict of antisemitic conduct of discrimination and intimidation (EHRC, 2020).

Throughout, Corbyn and his circle resisted the charge of antisemitism and to this day he would not accept it, which puts the Labour Party in the interesting position of a former leader not serving in parliament under its banner. The Corbynites cannot conceive how it might be possible to be at the same time anti-racist yet antisemitic. In their world, that is a sheer impossibility.

Isolate (Low Group – High Grid)

Following Perri 6 (2011, 2014, 6 and Richards 2017, personal communication) I differentiate between two structural positions, which, while sharing the same Grid/Group configuration, are very different in their degrees of freedom.

serfs

With little group support, leading to a sense of isolation and belief one has little control over one's fate; options for action are severely constrained. This construes a worldview of one as a victim of circumstance and bad luck. The Jew as an omnipotent outsider, giving rise to fear and loathing, possibly in equal measures, becomes a source for envy and desire for imitation.

The following vignette is about a common folk practice in contemporary Poland: the displaying of a picture of an orthodox Jew handling money in one's home or office as an omen of good luck and hopeful wealth, reported in Altman et al. (2021). It concerns a posting online in a discussion forum.

“Hello. I wanted to write something about this image. I am a businessman and I have often seen such paintings in law offices, consultancy offices, real estate brokers and I will tell you... finally I also hung such a picture at home. How did my business do? Before then I have been working hard but others would benefit from my work. After I hung up this image, strange things started to happen. The people I used to do business with suddenly started calling me, meeting me, and above all, playing honestly with me. So, you have the answer if it really works. My hunch and lesson from life is that hard work led me to this picture - I wish not so late!”

The context here is business and enterprise. The narrator first noticed the picture of a Jew with money hanging in offices... and finally acquired one. Since then his business situation changed for the better. Whereas before he may have had to chase opportunities and was taken advantage of, after hanging the picture clients started to pursue him and deal with him honestly. Hence the picture acts in a dual capacity: as a good luck device it generates custom and as a shield against harm, it counteracts dishonesty.

The tone of the narrative is neutral. There are no judgmental statements except making the point that the narrator deserves the fruits of his hard work (i.e. he earned the right to find out a 'trick' others benefited from), though he is somewhat unlucky not having come across it earlier. The undertone reveals the following: ...an image of a Jew works wonders, demonstrating omnipotence, thereby attributing Jews the might to provide and to ruin. That is necessary because the world is a difficult and deceitful place. Decent folks can't succeed just by hard honest work. One needs magical (demonic?) assistance. Jews, through their image representation, can supply that. People know about this 'trick', but they may not share that knowledge willingly. (op. cit, p. 215).

The Jew may also be a legitimate target for retribution for the powerless. In early medieval England, starting from the reign of Richard I (in fact his very coronation) and up to their expulsion by Edward I, a stretch of some 100 years, the Jews were regular victims of violence by the mob, often induced by interested parties for economic reasons (Singer, 1964; Booth, 2021) with the explicit aim of robbing them of their possessions and killing them as a means of cancelling debts they were owed. Thus, the massacre of York (1190) which saw the eradication of its entire Jewish community was, according to William of Newburgh, as quoted by Booth (2021) due to the citizens of York not being “able to bear the wealth of the Jews when they themselves were in need”.

Despots

Regulated by rules, protocol and tradition, with insufficient resources at their disposal or the lack of discretion to use them, those in that position have to navigate the tension between expectations invested in their role (by self and others) and their inability to exercise but coercive power.

That was the case with Jews in early medieval England. Not entitled to the limited protection accorded by the *magna carta* and as direct subjects of the Crown governed under dedicated statutes (later came to be known as *Schutzjuden*, 'Court Jews'). Jews entirely dependent on the monarch's whims, were a convenient target of exploitation, used as means for deterrence and the demonstration of arbitrary power.

Following the anti-Jewish riots in London on the coronation of Richard I that saw the destruction of its Jewish quarter and mass killing, three men were hanged by the King, but not for their involvement in the riots but because they were blamed for inadvertently setting fire to Christian homes (Booth, 2021 quoting Roger De Hoveden).

Henry III was imprisoned by his barons who, during the *second barons war*, instigated pogroms throughout the kingdom aimed at destroying evidence of their debts to Jews; while Edward I had to agree to the expulsion of the Jews (by then heavily impoverished) as a means of having all the debts to them cancelled, in exchange for the barons agreeing to increase in taxes to the impoverished royal exchequer (Booth, 2021).

One can only imagine the frustration of English kings vis-à-vis the unending concessions demanded of them and their impotence in forcing their rule. Jews were a convenient object of hate, acting as symbolic scapegoat replacement, while at the same time providing a funding of last resort as their possessions could be confiscated and debts to them cancelled at royal will; and the popular endorsement of anti-Jewish measures, benefiting the many economically with the blessing of the Church too, surely did not go amiss by those despots. As indeed we read in the expulsion order of Edward I of England (Rigg, 1902):

The Jews did . . . wickedly conspire and contrive a new species of usury more pernicious than the old . . . to the abasement of our . . . people . . . for which cause We, in requital of their crimes and for the honour of the Crucified, have banished them from our realm as traitors.

Surely, that is a much better explanation than to own up to a deal with the barons, a confession of weakness. Note the words wicked, conspiracy, pernicious in relation to abasement of Christians. In other words, Jews are portrayed as a threat to the good order and character of a Christian kingdom, and of course, their presence represents an offence to the honour of Christ (Shatou-Shehadeh, 2021).

Brief conclusion notes

The four cultures demonstrate four ways of characteristic Antisemitic expressions. In that respect they provide a validation to Cultural Theory from a prism that has not been attempted hitherto: a mode of negation and exclusion that reveals a solidarity's culture, i.e.: **Tell me what is your antisemitic antics are and I'll tell you which culture you are from.**

The theory offers an a-historical explanation for Antisemitism in as much that Antisemitism has and still does provide a useful, indeed essential function, to the *modus vivendi*. In fact, we should be talking about Antisemitisms in the plural, not in a contextual sense, but as an ontology.

As noted, all the four 'ways of life' raise the spectre of the threat from an omnipotent outsider, as such they are all prone to conspiracy theories, which have a long standing in Jewish history, since Jews conventionally fulfil such roles for all four opposing cultures. Jews can be conspiring to control the world as super-capitalists, or undermine it as communists, or inflict it with dishonour, or oppress it morally – take your pick. Indeed, as Jean-Paul Sartre put it: "if the Jew did not exist, the antisemite would invent him (Sartre, 1946)."

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