

**Antisemitism and the Image of Jews and Muslims in Nineteenth Century
French Colonial Algerian Writings***

by *Sharon Vance*

Abstract

This paper focuses on descriptions of Jews and Muslims in writings by officials and journalists in nineteenth century colonial Algeria and their recycling by antisemites at the end of that century. These writers assumed that Muslim Arabs shared their beliefs and would acquiesce to French rule and serve its military imperial expansion.

Francophone descriptions of Jews and Muslims in colonial Algeria began in the decades immediately after the French conquest, creating images recycled throughout the rest of the century. One element of these descriptions, which is the focus of this paper, incorporated longstanding European antisemitic stereotypes that were accompanied by assumptions of Muslim animosity against Jews. These assumptions became a repeated theme that is probably unique to this version of antisemitism, which developed in the colonial context. The nineteenth century antisemitic wave reached its height at the end of that century. When discussing its ideological leadership in colonial Algeria, studies have tended to focus on Édouard Drumont and Max Régis,¹ two major leaders of the antisemitic movement in colonial Algeria. However, their ideas were not original but were repetitions of

* This research was supported by a grant from the Vidal Sassoon International Centre for the Study of Antisemitism (SICSA), The Hebrew University of Jerusalem.

¹ Michel Abitbol, *Mi-Kremyeh le-Peten: antishemiyut be-Alg'iryah ha-kolonyalit, 1870-1940* (Yerushalayim: Merkaz Zalman Shazar le-toldot Yisra'el: ha-Merkaz ha-benle'umi le-ḥeker ha-antishemiyut 'a. sh. Vidal Sason, 1993), 44; Genevieve Dermenjian, *La crise anti-juive oranaise (1895-1905) L'antisémitisme dans l'Algérie coloniale* (Paris: Éditions L'Harmattan, 1986), 140; Sophie B. Roberts, *Citizenship and Antisemitism in French Colonial Algeria, 1870–1962* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2017).

images from earlier stereotypes. In this paper I will focus on how these images and stereotypes were propagated and applied to the colonial situation from the beginning. The role that the mobilization of Muslims played in this disdain for Jews necessitates a consideration of the images of both Muslims, particularly Arab Muslims, and Jews in these writing. They were generated by French military officers, clerics, journalists, and politicians from the early days of the conquest and were repeated by later antisemites in Algeria up to the end of nineteenth century.² The earliest examples were communications, some of which were later published, that were concerned with the stability, progress and expansion of the conquest and gave an appraisal of supposed Muslim support for it. When these rosy predictions of Muslim acceptance, acquiescence and even support for the on-going conquest were proven to be false by the ongoing resistance, Algerian Jews were blamed. The portrayal of Jews and these accusations against them were later attached to the popular antisemitic movement developing in colonial Algeria and France at the end of the nineteenth century, especially as they were articulated by Édouard Drumont, the most well-known and consequential exemplar of nineteenth century French antisemitic discourse. His writings and political activism encompassed both France and colonial Algeria, where he ran for and won a seat in the French Chamber of Deputies in 1898, representing Algiers. While I will be discussing him at the end of this paper, given that his *La France juive* (1886) spawned a number of similar works devoted specifically to colonial Algeria, I will first show how such ideas were developed by these officials prior to his publication. The fact that none of these accusations and stereotypes are original should not be surprising given that antisemitic discourse is characterized by

² Édouard Drumont *La France juive*, 43 ed. (Paris: C. Marpon & E. Flammaron, 1886); G. Meynié, *L'Algérie Juive* (Paris: Nouvelle Librairie Parisienne, 1887). Regarding antisemitism in the Algeria, Benjamin Stora had this to say, "L'antisémitisme n'est pas le seule doctrine fondée sur la haine de l'autre, mais ses formes particulières d'ancienneté, de récurrence, d'intensité, en font un phénomène paradigmatique qui renvoie par son idéologie, ses mots d'ordre, ses pratiques, ses objectifs affirmés ou induits aux différents types de racisme. C'est pourquoi étudier l'antisémitisme en Algérie pendant la période coloniale française reste un sujet d'étude important," in Geneviève Dermejian, "Préface," in *Antijudaïsme et Antisémitisme en Algérie coloniale 1830-1962* (Aix-en-Provence: Presses Universitaires de Provence, 2018), 5. For a discussion of whether there is a meaningful difference between antisemitism and "anti-Judaism" see Dermejian, *Ibid.*, 9; Marianne Moyaert, "Understanding the Difference Between Antisemitism and Anti-Judaism," *Antisemitism Studies* 6, no. 2 (2022): 373-393; 375, muse.jhu.edu/article/868124.

repetition and recycling, with slight variations, of such long-standing myths, allegations, and conspiracy theories.³ What is unique about the colonial Algerian context is that when it comes to antisemitism, the texts discussed here summon Arabs and Muslims as participants in attacks against Jews, as will be seen below. In focusing on these French portrayals of Jews placed in the mouths of Muslims, I am not implying there is a uniquely French origin to anti-Jewish attitudes among Muslims or that such attitudes do not exist. It is important to not overlook the research on the history of anti-Judaism and its contemporary manifestation in the Muslim World and among Muslim immigrant communities in Europe. There is a growing body of research on this unfortunately violent phenomenon and I will only mention a few of the researchers on late 20th and 21th century antisemitism and extremism including Jikeli Günther, Meir Litvak and Robert Wistrich,⁴ along with studies on antisemitism in France by Georges Bensoussan, Pierre Birnbaum, Shmuel Trigano and Michel Wieviorka.⁵ In addition, studies by Camilla Adang,

³ Richard S. Levy, *Antisemitism: A Historical Encyclopedia of Prejudice and Persecution* (Santa Barbara: ABC-CLIO, 2005); Leon Poliakov, *The History of Anti-Semitism* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2003); David Nirenberg, *Anti-Judaism: The Western Tradition* (New York: W. W. Norton 2013), 464; Peter Schäfer, *Judeophobia Attitudes toward the Jews in the Ancient World* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1997), 7; Marie-Anne Matard-Bonucci, *Antisémythes: L'image et la représentation des juifs* (Paris: Nouveau Monde, 2005); Michel Winock, *Nationalism, anti-semitism, and fascism in France* (Stanford University Press: Stanford, 1998), 98.

⁴ Günther Jikeli, "L'antisémitisme en milieux et pays musulmans: débats et travaux autour d'un processus complexe," *Revue d'histoire moderne & contemporaine* 62, no. 2-3 (2015): 89-114; Meir Litvak, "Islamic Radical Movements and Antisemitism: Between Old and New," in *Confronting Antisemitism in Modern Media, the Legal and Political Worlds*, eds. Armin Lange, Kerstin Mayerhofer, Dina Porat, and Lawrence H. Schiffman (New York: De Gruyter, 2021), 133-148; Robert Wistrich, *A Lethal Obsession: Anti-Semitism from Antiquity to the Global Jihad* (New York: Random House, 2010). Regarding contemporary antisemitic violence in Europe see for example the European Commission's Fundamental Rights Agency's European Union-wide data on antisemitic hate crimes and incidents <http://fra.europa.eu/en/publication/2022/antisemitism-overview-2011-2021>; Commission on Security and Cooperation's report on escalating antisemitic violence in Europe <https://www.csce.gov/international-impact/events/alarming-rise-antisemitism-and-its-threat-democracy>. Both accessed June 5, 2023.

⁵ Georges Bensoussan, *Les Territoires perdus de la République: Antisémitisme, racisme et sexisme en milieu scolaire*, 3^e édition augmentée (Paris: Pluriel, 2015) documents governmental loss of control of the public schools in the face of antisemitism, racism and sexism; Pierre Birnbaum, "Jour de Colère," *Revue d'histoire Moderne et Contemporaine* 62, no. 2-3 (2015): 245-259; Shmuel Trigano, "Antisémitisme: Une analyse en forme de déni," *Times of Israel*, December 18, 2014.

Hava Lazarus-Yafeh, Sarah Strouma and Uri Rubin have provided detailed analyses of Muslim anti-Jewish polemics in the medieval period.⁶ The comprehensive *Encyclopedia of Jews in the Islamic World*, edited by Norman Stillman, has entries on the history and status of Jewish communities in that region, along with a detailed overview on the history of anti-Judaism, antisemitism and anti-Zionism.⁷ When discussing the extended history of antisemitism it is important to recognize that negative attitudes towards Jews in both the Muslim World and in European Christian regions waxed and waned over time under various historic circumstances. Old stereotypes were recycled and given new justifications and updated to suit the predominant concerns of a given time and place. Some periods were more conducive to their propagation and acceptance than others. Moreover, some individuals and groups were more receptive to them than others. A further complicating factor is that some individuals could hold negative attitudes towards “the Jews,” while having Jewish friends and associates. As such, case studies of amical relations between Jews and Muslims, a whole other subject of inquiry, do not preclude the existence of overall animosity towards “the Jews” or provide sufficient data regarding their status in society as a whole. A study of anti-Jewish and antisemitic rhetoric, its dissemination, and an examination of whether this defamation led to actual violence are essential for understanding the extent, and significance of antisemitism in any society and time period.

In the early years of the conquest, military commanders played the dominant role in shaping colonial society and in creating the earliest images of the indigenous

Accessed June 5, 2023, <https://frblogs.timesofisrael.com/antisemitisme-une-analyse-en-forme-de-deni/>. Trigano critiqued Michel Wieviorka for rebuking the French Jews, accusing them of particularism and for being responsible for the violence directed against them; Michel Wieviorka, *The Lure of Antisemitism: Hatred of Jews in Present-Day France* (Leiden: Brill, 2007), studied the fear of antisemitism in present day France, including in French schools, emanating, in part, from young French Muslims, and asked whether French Jews are to blame for being targeted (xxiv).

⁶ Camila Adang, ed., *Muslim writers on Judaism and the Hebrew Bible from Ibn Rabban to Ibn Hazm* (Leiden: Brill, 1996); Hava Lazarus-Yafeh, *The Majlis: Interreligious Encounters in Medieval Islam* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 1999); Sarah Stroumsa, “From Muslim Heresy to Jewish-Muslim Polemics: Ibn Rawandi’s *Kitab al-Damigh*,” *Journal of American Oriental Society* 107, no. 4 (1987): 767-772; Uri Rubin, *Between Bible and Qur’an: The Children of Israel and the Islamic Self-Image* (Princeton: Darwin Press, 1999).

⁷ Jonathan Fine, Norman Stillman, İlker Aytürk, and Steven Uran, “Anti-Judaism/ Antisemitism/ Anti-Zionism,” in *Encyclopedia of Jews in the Islamic World*, vol. I, ed. Norman Stillman (Leiden-Boston: Brill, 2010), 221-240.

population, both Jewish and Muslim, under its rule.⁸ As the conquest was consolidated, many soldiers and officers transitioned into the bureaucrats of the Bureaux arabes or became “scholars” upon retirement.⁹ Both often published their memoirs.¹⁰ The correspondence of others, such as Marshal and Governor-General of Algeria Thomas Robert Bugeaud and Captain and later General Melchior Joseph Eugène Daumas were published posthumously.¹¹ Rather than provide a comprehensive overview of all works by French military officers in colonial Algeria, I will concentrate on a few whose writings are available today in digital form. Given that these are still in circulation it is possible to conduct a follow up investigation to see whether they are continuing to influence attitudes today. Of the two, Daumas is a lesser-known figure, yet his descriptions contain themes and images often reproduced by later colonial Algerian officials.

Captain Daumas (1803-1871) arrived in Algeria in 1835 and later helped organize the Bureaux arabes. He eventually achieved the rank of general and wrote other works on Algeria in addition to his correspondence, such as his *Les Chevaux du Sahara* (1851), a book devoted to Arab equestrian skills that also contained a great deal of translations of Arabic folklore, including derisive appraisals of Jews.¹² His

⁸ Patricia Lorcin, “The Soldier Scholars of Colonial Algeria: Arabs, Kabyles and Islam: Military Images of France in Algeria,” in *Franco-Arab Encounters: Studies in Memory of David C. Gordon*, eds L.C. Brown and M.S. Gordon (Beirut: American University of Beirut, 1996), 128-150; Joshua Schreier, *Arabs of the Jewish Faith: The Civilizing Mission in Colonial Algeria* (New Brunswick [etc.]: Rutgers University Press, 2010). Schreier discusses nineteenth century colonial attitudes towards Algerian Jews, framing it in the context of the conquest and colonial discourse and France’s self-appointed civilizing mission without considering its antisemitism.

⁹ F. Gourgeot, *Situation politique de l’Algérie* (Paris: Challamel 1881), 164, accessed June 5, 2023, <https://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/bpt6k5788592b?rk=21459;2>; Lorcin, “The Soldier Scholars of Colonial Algeria.”

¹⁰ François-Charles du Barail, *Mes souvenirs* (Paris: Plon, 1897), digitized by the Internet Archive in 2012 with funding from the University of Toronto, accessed June 5, 2023 <http://archive.org/details/messouvenirsoiduba>; Jacques Louis César Alexandre Randon, *Mémoires du maréchal Randon* (Paris: Typographie Lahure, 1875).

¹¹ Thomas Robert Bugeaud and Henry-Amédée Lelorgne Ideville, *Le Maréchal Bugeaud, d’après sa correspondance intime et des documents inédits, 1784-1849*, ed. H. d’Ideville (Paris: Firmin-Didot, 1885), accessed June 5, 2023, <https://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/bpt6k6479022g?rk=21459;2>; Eugène Daumas and Georges Yver, *Correspondance du capitaine Daumas, consul à Mascara (1837-1839)* (Alger (Place du Gouvernement): Impr. de A. Jourdan, 1912).

¹² Daumas and Yver, *Correspondance*; Daumas, *La Grande Kabylie* (Paris : L. Hachette, 1847); *Le Sahara algérien études géographiques et historiques sur la région au sud des établissements français*

correspondence described animosities and divisions between different Muslim communities (e.g., Arabs and Imazighen), but stated that, despite these internal conflicts, they all held Jews in disdain and would never accept them as equals.¹³ This is a theme, along with that of Jewish deceit and exploitation of others, that would return over and over again throughout colonial Algerian writing.¹⁴ At the end of the nineteenth century these themes were embedded in antisemites' refuted claim that granting French citizenship to Algerian Jews caused the Muslim revolt of 1871.¹⁵ Despite its questionable use in this discourse, the notion of Muslim aversion nevertheless does rest on the fact that in the Islamic World, including in pre-colonial Algeria, Jews were defined as *dhimma*, "protected" subjects with unequal status.¹⁶ These writings equated that status as debased, enslaved and subhuman.¹⁷ Daumas' correspondence is full of accounts of Algerian Jews being robbed, or pretending to have been robbed, and occasionally killed.¹⁸ He and the other military officials saw themselves embarking on a civilizing mission, or at least rendering justice, including their treatment of the native Jewish population, which they considered to be more humane, despite their disparaging depictions of them and the fact that the debate over Jewish citizenship and equality also was not at all clear cut in nineteenth century Europe.¹⁹

en Algérie (Paris: Langlois et Leclercq, 1845); *Les Chevaux du Sahara et les mœurs du désert* (Paris, Lévy, 1858), accessed June 5, 2023, <https://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/bpt6k8838666>.

¹³ Daumas, *Correspondance*, 322, 605.

¹⁴ Geneviève Dermenjian, "Les Juifs d'Algérie entre deux hostilités (1830-1943)," in *Les Juifs d'Algérie Une Histoire de Ruptures*, eds. Joëlle Allouche-Benayoun and Geneviève Dermenjian (Aix-en-Provence: Presse Universitaires de Provence, 2015), 105-133; Abitbol, *Mi-Kremyeh le-Peṭen*, 86-87.

¹⁵ Richard Ayoun, "Le décret Crémieux et l'insurrection de 1871 en Algérie," *Revue d'histoire moderne et contemporaine* 35, no. 1 (1988): 61-87, doi: [10.3406/rhmc.1988.1439](https://doi.org/10.3406/rhmc.1988.1439).

¹⁶ Fred Astren, "Dhimma," in *Encyclopedia of Jews in the Islamic World*.

¹⁷ Daumas, *Correspondance*, 605; du Barail, *Mes souvenirs*, 403.

¹⁸ Daumas, *Correspondance*, 85, 86, 142, 145, 150, 250, 262, 265, 268, 304 and 306, ff.

¹⁹ For a measured appraisal of the change in Jewish status brought by the colonial regime see M. Abitbol, "Le rencontre des Juifs de France avec le judaïsme d'Afrique du Nord," in *Les Relations intercommunautaires juives en méditerranée occidentale XIII^e – XX^e siècles Actes du colloque internationale de l'institut d'histoire des pays d'outre-mer*, ed. Jean Louis Miège (Paris: Éditions du Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique, 1984), 229-242; for a positive assessment of the effect of the conquest on Algerian Jews, see Pierre Hebey, *Alger 1898 La grande vague antijuive* (Paris: NiL éditions, 1996), 15-16. Regarding the status of Jews in Europe see Paul Mandes-Flohr and Jehuda Reinharz, *The Jew in the Modern World A Documentary History*, 3rd ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011).

An additional theme that runs through these texts is the supposed deceitful nature of Jews and their lack of trustworthiness.²⁰ Regardless of whether this was in fact a true reflection of Muslims' attitudes towards Jews, it is a classic theme of European antisemitic discourse.²¹ Yet despite this supposed Jewish deceit, in this early stage of the conquest the French army needed to rely on Jewish translators and merchants for communication and supplies, along with their services as intermediaries.²² Daumas himself harbored suspicions of his own translator that proved to be unfounded.²³ Another leitmotif of French colonial antisemitism in general is the supposed cowardliness and lack of martial skills of the Jews.²⁴ This is contradicted in Daumas' correspondence. In his account of why the Guard nationale was renamed in colonial Algeria, he affirmed that both Algerian Jews and Muslim served in it.²⁵ Yet his *Les Chevaux du Sahara* Daumas quotes Arab expressions that compared their brave warriors with supposed Jewish cowards who abandon their women. According to these sayings Jews were not men but beings similar to horses that could be mounted.²⁶ Along with this reported Arab scorn of Jews, most of Daumas' texts were focused on the Arabs, who, along with the Kabyle and other Algerian Muslims, put up prolonged resistance to the French conquest. His appraisal of them mixed fear with admiration and an assurance that with the proper management "the Arabs" could be aligned as auxiliary military units (e. g. zaouias, spahis, and later tirailleurs) to advance France's colonial interests. In *Les Chevaux*, Daumas' colonial discourse combined paternalism and utilitarianism. He praised "the Arabs" for their equestrian knowledge and warrior spirit, but he did not see them as equal. They enjoy destroying their enemies and their equestrienne skills need to be attached to the French national interest, to make Algeria a part of France and mobilize them in the colonial project.²⁷ Daumas'

²⁰ Daumas, *Correspondance*, 86; *Les Chevaux du Sahara*, 242, n. 2.

²¹ Nirenberg, *Anti-Judaism*, 183.

²² Daumas, *Correspondance*, 102.

²³ *Ibid.*, 123.

²⁴ Daumas *Les Chevaux du Sahara*, 320-21; du Barail, *Mes souvenirs*, 403.

²⁵ Daumas, *Correspondance*, 193, n. 1.

²⁶ Daumas, *Les Chevaux du Sahara*, 321.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 201, 235; Lahouari Addi, "Colonial Mythologies: Algeria in the French Imagination," in *Franco-Arab Encounters*, eds. L. Carl Brown and Matthew Gordon (Beirut: American University of Beirut Press, 1996), 93-105; Abdelmajid Hannoum, "Colonialism and Knowledge in Algeria: The Archives of the Arab Bureau," *History and Anthropology* 12, no. 4 (2001): 343-379, 370.

own derision of Jews is expressed in his gathering, translating, and quoting Arabic sayings with these themes, helping to consolidate often repeated maxims of what would later become colonial Algerian antisemitic discourse. This, along with the idea that the Jew was uniquely responsible for Muslim revolts against colonial rule and for their impoverishment and misery,²⁸ despite the fact that it was caused by the conquest itself,²⁹ would be an important element of this discourse.

Another French military commander wanting to harness the Arab warrior spirit to French imperial interests was General Count François Charles du Barail (1820-1902). He fought with the spahis in Oran in 1840 against Emir Abd al-Qadir, who resisted the French conquest of Algeria. He also participated in the Battle of Isly (1844) between the French army and Morocco, and later in the Franco-Prussian War (1870), retiring in 1887.³⁰ His memoirs were published in 1894 and republished in over a dozen editions. By the time of the first publication, the Crémieux Decree (1870), which was a series of decrees establishing republican rule in colonial Algeria that politically empowered the European civilian colonial population and severely weakened the role of the military, had been in effect for over two decades. The Army, through the Bureaux arabes, saw itself as the “protector” of the native Muslim population from European civilian land grabbing, even as it continued to be responsible for putting down ongoing revolts of that population. After 1870 it was politically weaker than the civilian administration.³¹ In addition, with the establishment of civilian rule over all of Algeria, land was more easily privatized and expropriated from the Muslim population, which still remained under military rule and lacked citizenship. The Crémieux Decree also extended French citizenship to Algerian Jews. Despite these changed circumstances, much of du Barail’s statements regarding Jews and Arabs repeated the previous theme: Arabs justifiably hate Jews, considering them worse

²⁸ Daumas, *Correspondance*, 601.

²⁹ Charles-Robert Ageron, *Modern Algeria A History from 1830 to the Present*, trans. and ed. Michael Brett (Trenton, NJ: Africa World Press, 1991), 53-56.

³⁰ Narcisse Faucon and Corneille Trumelet, *Le Livre d’or de l’Algérie, histoire politique, militaire, administrative, événements et faits principaux, biographie des hommes ayant marqué dans l’armée, les sciences, les lettres, etc., de 1830 à 1889*, vol. 1 (Paris: Challamel, 1889), 37, accessed June 5, 2023, <https://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/bpt6k103575v>.

³¹ John Ruedy, *Modern Algeria: The Origins and Development of a Nation* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2005), 74.

than dogs. To this he added the charge that Jews did not take up arms defending France while Arabs did and were not rewarded.³² He also claimed that Jews caused the 1871 Muslim revolt against colonial rule.³³ Du Barail proposed to quell Muslim discontent by taking supposed Arab feelings and prejudices against Jews into consideration and respecting them.³⁴ However, he cautioned against simply accepting Arab Muslim culture in general. Instead, he proposed that the sons of elite, wealthy Arab noble families be educated in French military schools and be allowed to become officers so they could learn French values and ways of doing things, thereby facilitating their motivation to suppress rebellions in Algeria and guard its borders.³⁵ In this vision, Arabs were mobilized into defending colonial rule and putting down revolts of their own people in an alliance with France. It also displaced the supposed cause of these revolts from the conquest onto Algerian Jews. The basis for such an alliance was a reported shared contempt for Jews, who were seen as “the lowest stratum of society.”³⁶ The glue of this alliance was a distain for Jews and was predicated on a fundamental inequality between the two parties, French and Muslims.

The next source I will consider, by an anonymous French officer, was published two years before the fall of the July Monarchy (1848). It challenges the colonial government’s policy regarding religious freedom for all and preventing the Catholic Church from proselytizing indigenous Muslims. While there was much support for the Church among the military, many of the *colons* (French colonists) were decidedly irreligious.³⁷ Daumas himself applauded the arrival of the bishop in Algiers.³⁸ This work went considerably further calling for the conversion of

³² du Barail, *Mes souvenirs*, 403.

³³ Ibid., 403-404.

³⁴ Ibid., 404. For an analysis of Muslim attitudes towards Jews in the wake of the Crémieux degrees see Benjamin Stora, “Prologue – The Crémieux Degree” in *A History of Jewish-Muslim Relations: From the Origins to the Present Day*, eds. Abdelwahab Meddeb and Benjamin Stora (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2013).

³⁵ du Barail, *Mes souvenirs*, 388, 393 and 399-402.

³⁶ Ruedy, *Modern Algeria*, 103.

³⁷ Charles-André Julien, *Histoire de l’Algérie Contemporaine La Conquête et les débuts de la colonisation (1827-1871)* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1964), 159; Dermenjian, *La crise anti-juive*, 16.

³⁸ Daumas, *Correspondance*, 493.

Muslims as a means of consolidating the conquest.³⁹ The official policy of the colonial regime, enshrined in the Convention of Capitulation of 1830, was freedom of religion for all of the established religions, including Islam.⁴⁰ However, in practice, particularly when it came to Muslim property rights, this was often violated.⁴¹ Still the government's policy in the 1840s was to avoid allowing Catholic missionaries to proselytize Muslims. This officer acknowledged this but considered it a grave mistake because he thought that as long as the indigenous Muslims were attached to their religion, they would be an implacable enemy of France. "It is Muslim fanaticism that gives them the force to resist us."⁴² To counter this he favored evangelizing them, which he assumed would facilitate their work for the colonization, especially in the field of agriculture.⁴³ Their "warrior spirit" could be used to advance France's civilizing mission in Africa and in the process attach a rich empire to France.⁴⁴ The Arab "character," being "simple and ignorant" and always "speaking in God's name," would not allow them to easily separate from their marabouts. The way to achieve conversion would be through a few *mauvais* neophytes whose children would become real Christians.⁴⁵ He recommended educating the children of these new converts, along with translating the Gospel into Arabic, as a means of affecting this conversion.⁴⁶ This text only makes one mention of Jews, along with non-French Europeans, in a discussion of their "petit industries" and "finesse," which the author claimed had resulted in rising prices since the Conquest and made it impossible for city dwelling Muslims in contact with the French, to compete. As a result, they were reduced to misery.⁴⁷ This theme was later expanded and repeated incessantly in French Algerian

³⁹ *De la conversion des musulmans au christianisme, considérée comme moyen d'affermir la puissance française en Algérie par un officier de l'armée d'Afrique* (Paris: J. Lecoffre 1846), accessed June 5, 2023, <https://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/bpt6k5788849c>; Julien, *Histoire de l'Algérie*, 160.

⁴⁰ Ruedy, *Modern Algeria*, 49.

⁴¹ Charles-Robert Ageron, *Les Algériens Musulman et la France (1871-1919)*, vol. I (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1968), 294 ff.; Julien, *Histoire de l'Algérie*, 91 and 240. See also Judith Surkis, who argues that France was interested in assimilating Algerian land, but not its people, *Sex, Law, and Sovereignty in French Algeria, 1830-1930* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2019), 29.

⁴² *De la conversion des musulmans*, VI.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, 35.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 37-38.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 34.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 22.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 10.

antisemitic writings, but by the end of the nineteenth century it focused exclusively on Jews as exploiters of the indigenous Muslim population.

The Bureaux arabes, in addition to being staffed with military personnel, also employed French interpreters, among them François Gourgeot, who later wrote a number of books on Algeria, including *Situation politique de l'Algérie* (1881), and, under the influence of Édouard Drumont's popular bestseller *La France juive* (1886), *La Domination juive en Algérie* (1894). Inspired by Drumont's solution to France's Jewish problem, he proposed the expulsion of Jews and confiscation of their belongings.⁴⁸ Prior to the publication of Drumont's antisemitic diatribe, Gourgeot focused most of his attention on the native Muslims. He saw them as a menace, but not simply those in Algeria. For him the entire Muslim world was a threat. All of Europe looked to France to deal with it and the battle would be fought in the Sahara, where effective repressive measures would be needed.⁴⁹ Moreover, what was needed was a reorganization of the decadent Bureaux arabes and an extensive system of surveillance of the Muslim population and its religious institutions.⁵⁰ For Gourgeot the most significant difference within indigenous society was between the Muslims in the North who could be included in the French army and those in the South who needed to be excluded, along with anyone who was a member of a Muslim religious order. As we saw in the anonymous work from 1846, the idea that Islam was a threat to colonial rule was not new. However, unlike that text, Gourgeot maintained that the Islamic traditions and laws needed to be understood and respected, including those of collective punishment.⁵¹ Such a policy would allow France to promote colonization in safety while insuring the prosperity of the native Muslims.

Regarding the Jews, Gourgeot saw their naturalization as a disaster that led to their domination and caused Muslim insurrections, which he saw as an expression of their protest over Jews being mixed in with "our political affairs." According to Gourgeot "the indigenous" recognize that they will be dominated as a result of the

⁴⁸ F. Gourgeot, *La domination juive en Algérie* (Alger: Pierre Fontana et Co., 1894), 164, 168 cited in Dermenjian, *La crise anti-juive*, 142, n. 49.

⁴⁹ F. Gourgeot, *Situation politique de l'Algérie* (Paris: Challamel aîné, 1881), 1, accessed June 5, 2023, <http://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/bpt6k5788592b>.

⁵⁰ Gourgeot, *Situation politique*, 171-172.

⁵¹ Gourgeot, *Situation politique*, 137, 177 and 185.

conquest, but they reject being dominated by an inferior people such as the Jews.⁵² Gourgeot further developed this theme of contempt that he ascribed to the “indigenous” in his *La Domination juive* (1894), describing the patron client relation between Jews and Muslims in traditional North African society as one of master to slave.⁵³ To this he added the disdain of the French against Jews, not because of “their religion,” but because of their supposed worship of the golden calf in the Bible and supposedly engaging in a cult of conspiracy to oppress Catholics.⁵⁴ Such images were part of the repertoire of nineteenth century French antisemitism, first developed by the utopian socialists and by Catholic antisemitic newspapers such as *L’Univers* and *La Croix*, and later by Drumont, showing a continuity of accusations in both colonial Algeria and France, despite religious and political differences. These images reprised similar themes of classic Christian antisemitic stereotypes of Jews as worshipers of gold, as usurers and traitors, along with the notion that the very name “Jew” was synonymous with these evil traits.⁵⁵ Alongside the military, the Catholic Church was a major institution in colonial Algeria. Until the 1860s, its efforts at evangelizing Muslims were resisted by the authorities, even though it had benefited from the confiscation of mosques that were turned into churches. The colonial government permitted the Church to provide medical services and other works of charity to the Muslim population,

⁵² Ibid., 87 and 97.

⁵³ Gourgeot, *La domination juive en Algérie*, 52-53.

⁵⁴ Ibid., 21: “Ils mettent sur la paille des milliers de familles, ils les détestent, enfin, parce qu’ils sont Juifs et que ce nom seul comporte en soi tous les attributs impurs qui caractérisent leur maudite race!”

⁵⁵ Drumont *La France juive*, 4, 34 and 67; Alphonse Toussenel, *Les Juifs, rois de l’époque: histoire de la féodalité financière*, 3rd ed., vol. 1 (Paris: C. Marpon et E. Flammarion 1886), xx. Toussenel’s work was first published in 1847. See also F. Picard, “Les Juifs,” *La Croix*, February, 1882, 723-726 <https://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/bpt6k503606z/f3.item>; Denis Durocher, “Variétés Le juif contemporain,” *L’Univers*, October 14, 1884, n. p. [5, col. 6-6, col. 1] <https://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/bpt6k704986b/f3.item>; Louis Veuillot, “Les Juifs,” *L’Univers*, November 12, 1869, n. p. [1, col. 1], <https://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/bpt6k698197n/fi.item>; Pierre Sorlin, “*La Croix*” et les Juifs : (1880-1899), contribution à l’histoire de l’antisémitisme contemporain (Paris: B. Grasset, 1967); Auguste Chirac, *Les Rois de la République: Histoire des juiveries. Synthèse historique & monographies*, 3 vols (Paris: P. Arnould, 1883-1889); Marc Angenot, “«Un juif trahira »: La préfiguration de l’Affaire Dreyfus (1886-1894),” *Romantisme* 87 (1995): 87-114; Sharon Vance, “Antisemitism and Socialist Strategy 1880-1917: France and colonial Algeria,” *Patterns of Prejudice* 51, no. 3-4 (2017): 292-317; See “juif,” in *Dictionnaire de l’Académie*, 9th ed., <http://atilf.atilf.fr/academie9.htm>. Links accessed June 5, 2023,

relieving it from having to invest resources in their welfare. This continued under successive French republican governments despite the policies of anticlericalism (*laïcité*), which were never implemented overseas, where these same governments saw the Catholic orders advancing the French language and French colonial interest.⁵⁶ *Laïcité* was not for export.

One important Church official in the early years of the conquest was Antoine-Adolphe Dupuch (1809-1856), who served as the first bishop of Algiers authorized by the government in 1838. In addition to his duties to the Church and its congregation, he also intervened on behalf of French soldiers and civilians held in captivity by the Emir Abd al-Qadir.⁵⁷ After the Emir was defeated in 1846 and imprisoned, in violation of the terms of his surrender, Dupuch wrote an appeal on his behalf. This was part of a campaign to persuade the French government to honor its commitment by engaging the French public, including religious Catholics, to get him released. One way of doing this was to show the Emir's high regard for Christianity, particularly in comparison to Judaism, which, according to Dupuch, the Emir dismissed as a rude and terrible religion. In this appeal Abd al-Qadir praised Christianity as sweeter, as granting of indulgence and enjoying the bounty of God.⁵⁸ The text reminds French readers of Abd al-Qadir's humane treatment of French prisoners under his authority, in contrast to the brutality of French forces under General Bugeaud's command. Dupuch alluded to this while giving an obfuscated appraisal of the "humanity" of General Bugeaud. He stated that the Emir reacted to the attacks against the indigenous civilian population with red faced silence.⁵⁹ The appeal on the Emir's behalf ends with his solemn oath to be a loyal helper to France and not engage in any activity contrary to French or Christian interests.⁶⁰ It included a promise to serve the French and Christians from his new home of exile. Once again Arab Muslims function in this discourse as auxiliaries and helpers to French overseas ambitions, and in the process of

⁵⁶ Pierre Vermeren, *La France en terre d'islam: Empire colonial et religions, XIXe-XXe siècles* (Paris: Belin, 2016), 33.

⁵⁷ Faucon and Trumelet, *Le Livre d'or de l'Algérie*, 240-241.

⁵⁸ Antoine-Adolphe Dupuch, *Abd-el-Kader au château d'Amboise: Dédié à M. Louis-Napoléon Bonaparte* (Bordeaux: Impr. de H. Faye, 1848), 33, accessed June 5, 2023, <https://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/bpt6k5740408g>.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 60-61.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 6, Abd-el-Kader, Letter to Dupuch, n.d., translated by M. l'abbé J. Roth, à Bordeaux.

consummating this relationship, Judaism and Jews are invoked disparagingly by contrast, as if the love of one necessitated the hatred of the other. The Emir was eventually released after a number of his family members died in French captivity and made his home in Syria.

Attempts at proselytizing Muslims, along with contempt for Judaism, continued in the writings of a number of Church officials in colonial Algeria, including: the second Archbishop of Algiers, Louis-Antoine Pavy, who served two decades in that role starting in 1846; an anonymous former priest from Laghouat; and an 1875 address of the Archbishop of Algiers, Charles Lavigerie, at a religious service for the army.⁶¹ In addition to encouraging the conversion of Muslims, all of these Church officials denounced the official French colonial tolerance of Islam, which they felt was a major insurrectionary agent. They also had universal disdain for Judaism and were convinced that Muslims shared this, including an indictment of Jewish supposed attempted deicide.⁶² Added to this charge was the accusation that Algerian Jews were destabilizing the French conquest.

Louis-Antoine Pavy was the second Archbishop of Algiers, serving two decades in that role starting in 1846.⁶³ One of his published works that treated the subject of Jews, Arabs and Muslims was his *Histoire critique du culte de la sainte Vierge en Afrique, depuis le commencement du christianisme jusqu'à nos jours*, published in 1858. According to Pavy, there was an active cult of the Virgin Mary in North Africa, but the Arab "invasion" led to its destruction and that of Christian buildings, along with many martyrs and weak apostates.⁶⁴ His treatment of Muslims is mostly negative, stating that they engage in absurd polemics in the

⁶¹ Gérard Grimaud, *Les catholiques d'Algérie et leur église: histoire et tragédie : 1830-1954* (Paris: Harmattan, 2012), 366; Louis Antoine Augustin Pavy, *Histoire critique du culte de la Sainte Vierge en Afrique depuis le commencement du christianisme jusqu'à nos jours* (Alger: Bastide, 1858), <https://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/bpt6k5806799b>; *Les Arabes et L'Occupation Restreinte en Algérie par un Ancien Curé de Laghouat* (Paris: Challamel Libraire-Éditeur, 1866), <https://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/bpt6k5788849c?rk=21459>; [Charles Martial Allemand Lavigerie], *L'Armée et la mission de la France en Afrique: discours prononcé dans la cathédrale d'Alger le 25 avril 1875 pour l'inauguration du service religieux dans l'Armée d'Afrique* (Alger: Librairie A. Jourdan, Éditeur (Ancienne Maison Bastide), 1875), <https://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/bpt6k103769n>. Links accessed June 5, 2023,

⁶² Pavy, *Histoire critique du culte*, 41.

⁶³ Grimaud, *Les catholiques d'Algérie*, 366.

⁶⁴ Pavy, *Histoire critique du culte*, 49; Addi, "Colonial Mythologies," 103.

defense of their religion, are intolerant, fanatic and persecute Christians. However, they are also curious about Christian processions,⁶⁵ prompting the idea that open affirmation of the religious truth of Catholicism is better than dissimilitude. The work ends with a celebratory summary of the building of churches, cathedrals, seminaries, and hymns devoted to Saint Mary. No such ambivalence exists regarding the Archbishop's appraisal of Jews they are the enemies of Christ and according to the Quran, they tried to crucify him, but God substituted him with Judas.⁶⁶ During times of draught when the Jews pray for rain, they make matters worse with their noisy confused litanies.⁶⁷

A more severe rebuke of Jews attributed to Arabs and Muslims was published in 1866 by an anonymous former priest from Laghouat, to which was amended a letter from Abbé Sauve on the Quran, and a collection of various anti-Jewish folklore attributed to Arab and Spanish sources.⁶⁸ The main text provides a historical overview of the condition of the Jews of Algeria starting with their situation prior to the French conquest and stating that in the beginning they were happy with the arrival of the French because the Muslims attacked them violently. However, by the time of this publication they were lording it over the Muslims because the French treated them as equals, using them as intermediaries. France was doing this despite the Jews' attempt to kill Christ, according to the Muslims, and their defeat by Muhammad.⁶⁹ Now Muslims had contempt for the French and were preparing a holy war due to their pact with the Jews.⁷⁰ They tolerated minor abuses of the administration, but they would not accept an affront to their religion.⁷¹ Despite this seeming concern for supposed Muslim feelings, particularly as expressed in deicidal accusations, this former priest stated that the Quran was the most implacable enemy in Algeria and its teaching should be proscribed.⁷² In addition, he was against the policy of a limited occupation. Instead, he advocated

⁶⁵ Ibid., 89.

⁶⁶ Ibid., 41.

⁶⁷ Ibid., 79.

⁶⁸ *Les Arabes et L'Occupation Restreinte*.

⁶⁹ Ibid., 38-39.

⁷⁰ Ibid., 39.

⁷¹ Ibid.

⁷² Ibid., 63.

the closing of Quranic schools and opening of Christian schools in their place.⁷³ When the government officials attempted to support the Muslim cult by repairing mosques, but refrained from entering Catholic houses of worship, the Muslims concluded that the French are godless. In order to counter this the Catholic Church and the activity of its priests should be vigorously supported, not suppressed in colonial Algeria.⁷⁴ As was the case with the nameless military officer, we see the advocacy of evangelizing Muslims promoted anonymously. Alongside this is the consistent claim that France's reliance on Jews and supposed granting equality to them was provoking the anger of the Muslims. It should be noted that in 1866 at the time of this publication, while French Jews were full citizens of France, Algerian Jews were not. The assumption was that Muslim anti-Jewish hatred and contempt along with indignation over their supposed elevation was arousing Muslim anger, and not the colonization itself, nor the violent actions of the army, nor the attitude of its representatives and of Church officials.

The final clerical statement I will consider is a public pronouncement by the Archbishop of Algiers Charles Lavigerie in 1875 on the occasion of the inauguration of religious service for the army. His statement emphasized the merging of French patriotism and the Catholic Church. According to Lavigerie, France's conquest of Algeria was a crusade, Christianity would provide just rule for the indigenous, and the Church should proselytize among the Kabyles, who were supposedly former Christians and closer to the French than they were to the Arabs. This was part of the French colonial rhetoric that helped justify the conquest.⁷⁵

Regarding the Jews, the Archbishop claimed that they promoted Abd al-Qader's revolt with their gold.⁷⁶ Lavigerie had prior encounters with Jews growing up in France. In his youth he forcibly led young Jews to the baptismal fount.⁷⁷ The

⁷³ Ibid., 51.

⁷⁴ Ibid., 41-45.

⁷⁵ [Lavigerie], *L'armée et la mission*, 25 and 28-29. See Karima Dirèche, "Les écoles catholiques dans la Kabylie du XIXe siècle," *Cahiers de la Méditerranée* 75 (2008): 1-13; on the Kabyle myth see Patricia M. E. Lorcin, *Imperial Identities: Stereotyping, Prejudice and Race in Colonial Algeria* (London: I.B. Tauris, 1995).

⁷⁶ Ibid., 32.

⁷⁷ Claude Thiébaud, "Les Manifestations Pour Le Centenaire De La Naissance Du Cardinal Lavigerie (Rome, Alger, Tunis Et Paris, 1925)," *Revue Historique* 291, no. 2 (1994): 361-399. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/40955760>.

evangelizing he promoted in Algeria vis a vis the Kabyle Muslims had its source in this aggressive proselytizing of French Jews. Lavigerie gave a more expansive treatment of Jews in his history of the Church of Saint Anne in Jerusalem. He admitted that the early Church consisted of Jews, but this does not mean that he held them in high esteem. He quoted a devotional hymn describing Saint Anne as a rose among thorns, that is to say the Jews, in case the reader missed the metaphor.⁷⁸ He claimed that during the reign of Caliph Hakim it was the Jews who instigated the bloody attacks against Christians.⁷⁹ He admitted that Salah al-Din, according to Arab historians, turned the Church of Saint Anne into a madrassah,⁸⁰ but also stated that these historians provided precious records on the Church and Saint Anne's tomb.⁸¹ Later its abandonment to Islam over the centuries left it devastated, but the interior was not hurt because the Muslims were afraid to enter and pillage it.⁸² Finally, it was snatched from the "infidels" by a Frenchman in 1861.⁸³ While Muslim conduct varied over time, in this account the supposed animosity and hatred of the Jews was constant, including their hatred of Christian holy places, despite their knowledge of them.⁸⁴ Their thorny, debased state and their hatred is contrasted against the Mother of God from whom would be born the Lamb of God, who will erase sin from the world, and the place of her birth should be restored to the Catholic Church for its glory and the glory of France.⁸⁵ When looking at both works it is apparent that Lavigerie's attitudes towards Algerian Jews are intertwined with his attitudes towards Jews and Judaism in general.

In both the published works of the highest-ranking military officers and the officials of the Catholic Church in Algeria there is a consistent theme of uniform contempt and disdain for Jews and Judaism, often placed in the mouth of Muslims and Arabs, who are assumed to have even greater, violent, disgust as expressed in

⁷⁸ Charles Martial Allemand Lavigerie, *Sainte Anne de Jérusalem et sainte Anne d'Auray, lettre à Mgr l'évêque de Vannes par l'archevêque d'Alger [Mgr Lavigerie]* (Saint-Cloud: Belin, 1879), 14, accessed June 5, 2023, <https://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/bpt6k5777408g>.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 47.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 60-61.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, 40.

⁸² *Ibid.*, 76-78.

⁸³ *Ibid.*, 75-76.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 23.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 9-10, 18, 25, 72-73 and 75.

their folklore that portray Jews as sub-human. In these texts Muslims and Christians share this antipathy, universalizing it, and creating the conditions for mobilizing a united front of colons and indigenous against the Jews, a theme that would be taken up by the “anti-juive” crisis at the end of the nineteenth century.⁸⁶ The Church and the officer corps were not the only institutions disseminating these ideas. Journalists and politicians also propagated them. Pierre Pascal Duprat (1815-1885) was both. He was elected to the Chamber of Deputies and edited the journal *Revue Indépendante* and a number of other republican journals. He also served as a professor at the Lausanne Academy, later to become the University of Lausanne.⁸⁷ His *Essai Historique sur les Races anciennes et modernes de L’Afrique septentrionale* (1845) is a relatively early work whose ‘racial’ characterizations would be repeated later in the century. It describes both Jews and Arabs, with more attention on the latter. It contains the same themes we have seen so far in more detail. According to Duprat, Jews are a wandering people who never mingled with others and were vagabonds;⁸⁸ they were always dominated, but kept to themselves.⁸⁹ The Jews of North Africa do not look like Berbers or Arabs but are the same type as those of Europe with the same expression of calculation, defiance and ruse, due to persecution.⁹⁰ They have a desire for vengeance, with savage rude instincts, following the bloody tracks of the lions of the French army like jackals; they suffer from sick flesh and live in wetlands.⁹¹ Thanks to the security and improvements in hygiene provided by the conquest, and the fecundity of their women, their population is growing, but they will not be able to dominate because they are a small portion of the total. Despite their resemblance to European Jews, African Jews are more corrupt due to Arab domination since antiquity. They are known to dissimulate due to persecution. Jews could be useful for France, but it is dangerous to associate with them. They

⁸⁶ Dermejjan, *La Crise anti-juive*, 205; Abitbol, *Mi-Kremyeh le-Peten*, 45.

⁸⁷ Lorcin, *Imperial Identities*, 300; Pascal Duprat (1815-1885), accessed June 5, 2023, http://data.bnf.fr/14428722/pascal_duprat/.

⁸⁸ Pascal Duprat, *Essai Historique sur les Races anciennes et modernes de L’Afrique septentrionale* (Paris: Jules Labitte, Libraire-Éditeur, 1845), 215 and 232-233, accessed June 5, 2023, <https://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/bpt6k1058849>.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, 253-254.

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, 259.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*, 261-262.

need to be kept in check, so they don't ruin the majesty of French power. They engage in shameful speculation, industrial abuse; behind private and public scandal is always the figure of the Jew. France's character suffers as a result of this alliance with Jews that corrupt its mores and life. The Turks and Arabs hold Jews in contempt. France will lose its authority should it associate with a people of such unworthy character who are not capable of marching with it.⁹²

Duprat's treatment of Arabs is seemingly more laudatory. Unlike Jews who have always been dominated, Arabs had the highest civilization, thanks to the genius of Muhammad and his leadership.⁹³ Prior to this they lacked discipline, but he gave them religion, laws, and power, allowing them to conquer the world.⁹⁴ France needs to study the history and literature of the Arabs, because they were the former conquerors and the French, as the latest imperial power, are in need of their knowledge.⁹⁵ Arab geographers are the guides and masters of North Africa.⁹⁶ But Arabs cannot be treated as one treats European nations, they are a people of the desert, restless and on the move. France should not have made a pact with Abd al-Qadir, because prior to this the Arabs were divided and isolated, but in 1845, they are united and can rally around a religious fanatic marabout and rebel. They still have great power and France needs to be careful in dealing with them.⁹⁷ France instead should align with the Berbers rather than neglect and irritate them, as they are more ancient on this soil than the other peoples and they exercised more than once the greatest influence over the destiny of this territory. They are the race of the mountain whose "hymen" has never been "penetrated" and have a temperament of stone.⁹⁸

Duprat subscribed to a racialized conception of humanity that was determined by geography and climate, which he assumed influences the character of these "races."⁹⁹ His description of Algeria consisted of a hierarchy of races, based on their supposed character, how useful they were to French interests, how they

⁹² Ibid., 383-385.

⁹³ Ibid., v and 197.

⁹⁴ Ibid., 198.

⁹⁵ Ibid., viii.

⁹⁶ Ibid., 44.

⁹⁷ Ibid., 264, 289, 291 and 294.

⁹⁸ Ibid., 255 and 297; Surkis, *Sex, Law and Sovereignty*, 84.

⁹⁹ Ibid., 262.

responded to the conquest, and how amendable they were to accepting it. He drew on long standing stereotypes from a variety of sources, including classical Greek and Roman authors, along with translations of Arabic poetry. According to Duprat the French are the Greeks of modernity.¹⁰⁰ It is beyond the scope of this paper to trace the sources of these accumulated stereotypes. However, many of his ideas echo those of the military and clerical sources presented so far. In turn, his more detailed characterization, along with geographic and racial determinism, his distrust and admiration of Arabs and Arab civilization, and his complete disdain for Jews, all became an important source for ideas that were to follow, including those later developed by Gustave Le Bon.

Le Bon was one of the founders of social psychology and the author of the immensely successful book *The Crowd*. He also published works on Arabs and Jews, including a multivolume work entitled *La Civilisation des Arabes*, (1884), and an article published in 1888 in *Revue Scientifique* under the discipline of ethnography entitled “Rôle des Juifs dans l’histoire de la civilisation,”¹⁰¹ and discussed Jews in his *Les Premières Civilisations* (1889).¹⁰² In addition to reproducing the same racialized descriptions of Duprat, he also discussed French colonial rule in Algeria. While his work on Arab civilization is full of praise for Muslim architectural achievements, their establishing of a vast empire and their martial skills, he has nothing but contempt for Jews, placing them at the bottom of a hierarchy of civilizations.¹⁰³ Although he sees Jews and Arabs as “Semites” in his ethnography of the Jews, in his *Civilisation des Arabes*, he states that it seems

¹⁰⁰ Ibid., 54-55 and 262.

¹⁰¹ Gustave Le Bon, *La civilisation des Arabes* (Paris: Firmin-Didot et Cie, 1884). At least one translation into Arabic was published recently: ‘Ādil Zu’aytar and Gustave Le Bon, *Ḥaḍārat al-‘Arab*, 2010, n. p. . A republication has also appeared in Algeria: Gustave Le Bon, *La civilisation des Arabes* (Alger: Casbah éditions, 2009); Le Bon, “Rôle des Juifs dans l’histoire de la civilisation,” *Revue Scientifique* 25, no. 13 (1888): 386-93, accessed June 5, 2023, <https://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/bpt6k215111/f389.item>.

¹⁰² Gustave Le Bon, *Les premières civilisations* (Paris: C. Marpon et E. Flammarion, 1889).

¹⁰³ Le Bon, “Rôle des Juifs dans l’histoire de la civilisation,” 387, “... ce petit peuple juif, intolérant, égoïste, vaniteux et féroce, mais ils se greffèrent sur l’idée de monothéisme local vers laquelle a toujours plus ou moins penché l’esprit exclusif et simpliste des Sémites demi-barbares, tel que les Juifs et les Arabes.”

insulting to associate the two peoples together and in a footnote claims that Arabs consider Jews less than human.¹⁰⁴

When comparing Le Bon's treatment of Arabs and Jews often the same traits praised in the former are disparaged in the latter. One example is the trait of nomadism. In his ethnographic article he states that the origins of the Jews were an obscure tribe of ignorant nomads without culture whose beliefs have no scientific value.¹⁰⁵ Yet in his account of Arabs, their origins, and their environment, he describes the fierce and noble allure of the Arab nomads of the desert, which strikes all travelers. And while they are semi-savage and do not have the artifice of civilization, they are intelligent, and their life of freedom and independence in the desert has charm, and, according to Le Bon, is preferable to that of working in a stultifying factory for twelve hours a day.¹⁰⁶ The desert itself takes on different qualities depending on whether it is associated with Jews or Arabs. In his essay on "the Jews" he states that Semitic spirit suffers from its monotonous, vague, and grandiose horizons, apparently losing its charm as a result of this association.¹⁰⁷ As noted above, both Jews and Arabs are Semites according to Le Bon, and share a number of common traits and origins, such as nomadism and desert dwelling, charming among Arabs, but the source of ignorance and aridity among the Jews who, unlike them, contributed nothing positive to civilization.¹⁰⁸

In all of these sources, Jews and Muslims are seen as fanatic, their religions as primitive. Yet Jews and Judaism are singled out for particular defamation. For Catholics they are treasonous and deicidal. For Le Bon the God of Israel is jealous, intolerant, and demanding of massacres, sacrifices, and holocausts, and the Old Testament, showing the real history of the Jews, is full of stories of adultery, incest, prostitution, and summary executions.¹⁰⁹ His appraisal is anything but original.

¹⁰⁴ Le Bon, *Civilisation Arabe*, 3.

¹⁰⁵ Le Bon, "Rôle des Juifs dans l'histoire de la civilisation," 386 and 389.

¹⁰⁶ Le Bon, *Civilisation Arabe*, 42.

¹⁰⁷ Le Bon, "Rôle des Juifs dans l'histoire de la civilisation," 389. "Il ne précise rien, il n'enferme rien dans les formes nettes, arrêtées et multiples, si facilement créées par l'imagination aryenne. Aujourd'hui encore, malgré son islamisme apparent, le Bédouin du désert n'a qu'une religion bien vague et qui ne le préoccupe guère."

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, 386.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, 387-388.

The French Communard Gustave Tridon claimed Jews committed cannibalism.¹¹⁰ The Jews form part of the inferior races lacking in civilization, even constituting an obstacle to it. Their malevolence goes back to Antiquity, as does their mercantile, vengeful, avaricious character. They were opposed to Greeks and Romans, Aryans who are conveyors of Western Civilization. Arabs, on the other hand, are noble Semites who built a great civilization under the genius of Muhammad, whose occupation as a merchant is downplayed or not mentioned at all. In contrast Jews are associated with exploitative merchants but are sometimes useful and necessary as middlemen. For Le Bon the traits shared by both “Semites” are positive when applied to Arabs, as long as they stay in their place as auxiliary helpers overseas, and negatively when applied to Jews, who also live in Europe but are neither European nor real French and can never assimilate into French society. Le Bon also excluded certain Muslims from his positive appraisal, particularly the Kabyle, who seemed to be amendable to evangelizing. Perhaps this is one of the reasons that Le Bon, who demanded the complete separation of Occidentals from Orientals, had such contempt for the Kabyle.¹¹¹ This could also account for his hatred of Jews, who existed in both the East and the West, despite their “semitic race” and Asiatic origins.¹¹² Yet the claim that Jews constituted an inferior, non-Western race was not unique to him, or even nineteenth century writers associated with the political right. Socialists also made such claims.¹¹³

Le Bon also wrote a series of articles against the French Third Republic’s colonial policy and in particular against its educational and assimilationist policies towards the Arabs. This was not due to an anti-imperialist stance per se, however. He praised the British for refraining from trying to change the mores and culture of the natives in India and stated that those who received a British education were demanding independence and that the same would occur in Algeria if the French government adopted such a policy.¹¹⁴ For Le Bon the goal was not Algerian independence, but maintaining French control while keeping apart from the

¹¹⁰ Gustave Tridon, *Du molochisme juif: études critiques et philosophiques* (Bruxelles: E. Maheu, 1884), 127-128, accessed June 5, 2023, <http://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/bpt6k62073w>.

¹¹¹ Gustave Le Bon, “L’Algérie et les idées régnantes en France en matière de colonisation,” *Revue Scientifique (Revue Rose)* 24, no. 15 (1887): 449-457; 454, n. 1.

¹¹² Le Bon, “Rôle des Juifs dans l’histoire de la civilisation,” 387 and 392.

¹¹³ Vance, “Antisemitism and Socialist Strategy.”

¹¹⁴ Le Bon, ‘L’Algérie, 449, 451-452

indigenous population, following the British model of leaving the “natives alone” so they would be content with their lot. Finally, he invoked the precedent of Rome’s collapse, saying it was caused by extending citizenship to the “barbarians.”¹¹⁵ Le Bon’s ideas combined racial determinism, collective psychology, and the valorization of the irrational with an anti-modernist, aristocratic anti-republican admiration of the Arabs as the embodiment of traditions and virtues lost among the French due to the mercantile capitalist spirit embodied by the Jews.¹¹⁶

This association of Jews with capitalism is part of a larger nineteenth century antisemitic literature that often recycled the earlier myths (e.g., “Jewish usury”), and combined them with a reactionary, anti-modernist, anti-democratic political ideology. The idea that Jewish merchants and Jewish capitalists were uniquely powerful and could ruin national economies was accepted on both the French Left and the Right.¹¹⁷ Algerian Jews were accused of impoverishing the native Muslim population. This claim was at first accepted by the French socialist and later Dreyfusard Jean Jaurès.¹¹⁸ As we have seen, it also was voiced by an anonymous French military officer in 1846. What Le Bon admired in the Arabs was their global conquests, something equally admired by the French military officials discussed above, and their monumental architecture. It is curious that he was completely against “intermixing with conquered people” and downplayed it in his discussion of Arab and Islamic civilization despite the fact that this intermixing was pervasive in the Arab conquest and expansion of Islam. Despite his apparent praise for Arab civilization Le Bon subscribed to the theory that the Orientals, which included the Arabs, were fundamentally different, and that they should not intermingle with the West.¹¹⁹

¹¹⁵ Ibid., 449, 454-457.

¹¹⁶ Pierre Birnbaum, *La France aux Français: histoire des haines nationalistes* (Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 1993), 268-271; Zeev Sternhell, *La droite révolutionnaire (1885-1914). Les origines françaises du fascisme* (Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 1978), 17, 148-149.

¹¹⁷ Birnbaum, *La France aux Français*; Sternhell, *Ibid.*; Marie-Anne Matard-Bonucci, ed., *Antisémythes: l’image des Juifs entre culture et politique, 1848-1939* (Paris: Nouveau Monde Éditions, 2005); Vance, “Antisemitism and Socialist Strategy.”

¹¹⁸ Ibid., 295.

¹¹⁹ Le Bon, “L’Algérie,” 456-457.

From all of these works a number of repetitive themes become apparent. Arabs and Muslims detest Jews and see them as sub-human. The clergy added that Muslims prefer Christianity to Judaism and that Muslims revere Jesus and believe Jews tried to kill him, but God saved him. These themes were articulated by military and religious officials, as well as by politicians such as Duprat, before Drumont published his influential *La France juive* (1886). They were repeated afterwards. For the military and intellectuals such as Duprat, and Le Bon, as well as the more well-known leaders of the antisemitic movement such as Édouard Drumont and Georges Meynié, one of Drumont's disciples in Algeria and author of the derivatively titled *L'Algérie Juive* (1887), their supposed character made them unworthy of association with the French. For all of these writers, both religious and secular, the Arabs are brave, fierce, and important role models due to their world conquest and martial skills. For the colonial agents in Algeria, once conquered, the Arabs would be loyal to France and willing to die for it in its hour of need.¹²⁰ For Drumont, the Arabs did their duty as soldiers in the Franco-Prussian war, scaring the Prussians, like tigers rushing into the front and "black devils," with their savage cries.¹²¹ These heroic Arabs, after fighting the French for so long defended them in their hour of need.¹²² While Arabs fought for France, Jews, according to Drumont, applauded their defeat with the most indecent cynicism.¹²³ Indigenous Jews are incapable of being soldiers; in case of an Arab insurrection they would not be able to march with the real French and they would provide a bad example. Drumont had been the instigator of the Dreyfus Affair, which tore France apart after Captain Dreyfus was falsely accused of spying for Germany.¹²⁴ Their presence in French ranks would endanger the fidelity of the Muslim auxiliaries.¹²⁵ Drumont repeated the antisemitic claims that Jews are also

¹²⁰ Drumont, *La France juive*, vol. 2, 11; Meynié, *L'Algérie Juive*, 54 and 159.

¹²¹ Drumont, *La France juive*, vol. 2, 12, "Ces 'diabes noirs,' comme les appelaient les Prussiens, qui bondissaient sous la mitraille, avaient émerveillé l'ennemi à Wissembourg et à Woerth. Albert Duruy, qui, pour aller de suite au feu, s'était engagé parmi ces tirailleurs algériens, m'a raconté maintes fois l'effet presque fantastique qu'ils produisaient avec leurs cris sauvages, leur joie en entendant parler la poudre, leur façon de se ruer en avant comme des tigres. Pour ce camarade, qu'ils nommaient 'le fils du vizir,' ces farouches avaient à la fois du respect et de l'affection."

¹²² Ibid.

¹²³ Ibid., 17.

¹²⁴ Eric Cahm, *The Dreyfus Affair in French Society and Politics* (London: Longman, 1966), 10.

¹²⁵ Drumont, *La France juive*, vol. 2, 25.

responsible for the impoverishment and exploitation of the Arabs after their lands were expropriated.¹²⁶ All these themes were taken up and expanded upon by G. Meynié, in his *L'Algérie juive*, including stereotypes about “fanatic Arabs,” the ‘pitiful’ state of the Jews before the French conquest, and their engagement in shameful commerce under the protection of France.¹²⁷ Once again Arabs are praised for their martial skills, which could be mobilized for France if it did not continue to protect the supposedly exploitative Jews at their expense. He also accused “the Jews” of exploiting European colonists.¹²⁸

All of these writers shifted responsibility for Muslim discontent from the effects of the colonial regime onto the Jews, using reported Arabs and Muslim statements of contempt and dehumanization. According to accounts published after 1870 Muslims revolted because of the Crémieux Decree; Arabs were supposedly upset over Jewish involvement in French metropole and colonial politics. For the military and intellectuals such as Duprat, and Le Bon, and publicists such as Drumont and Meynié, Arabs will eventually accept colonial occupation and even their inferior status under it, but not the equality of the Jews as French citizens. According to them, Jews are universally despised. Sources published before and after 1870 make the same claims. Jews were saved by France from a humiliating existence under Muslim rule. They are not trustworthy and not worthy of French citizenship. Their nature is to be avaricious, vengeful, and greedy exploiters of both colons and Muslims; Jews are the enemy of both by nature.

Given the intense antipathy of this antisemitic rhetoric it should not be surprising to learn that it led to real violence against Jews, which exploded throughout colonial Algeria during the Dreyfus Affair. However, there were incidents prior to this, including in the 1880s, seemingly provoked by objections to Algerian Jewish soldiers attending dances for military recruits, and after elections when the losing political party blamed “the Jews” for their defeat.¹²⁹ In 1897 and 1898 antisemites in Algeria, calling themselves antijuifs, organized politically, establishing

¹²⁶ Ibid. 39.

¹²⁷ Meynié, *L'Algérie Juive*, 3-4 and 10.

¹²⁸ Ibid., 35 and 139.

¹²⁹ Zosa Szajkowski, “Socialists and Radicals in the Development of Antisemitism in Algeria (1884-1900),” *Jewish Social Studies* 10, no. 3 (1948): 257-280; Fernand Grégoire, *La juiverie algérienne* (Alger: impr. Torrent, 1888); Meynié, *L'Algérie juive* (Paris: A. Savine, 1887).

newspapers and printing election paraphernalia that vilified and dehumanized Jews.¹³⁰ Many won their elections in Oran, Algiers, and other cities in colonial Algeria, taking over municipalities and excluding Jews from public sector employment, from vital municipal services such as schools and hospitals and even from the public space, threatening to expel them from Algeria.¹³¹ In those two years there were violent riots throughout Algeria. These were not put down until the French government, motivated by the antijuifs' threats of succession, arrested the leadership, and imposed martial law, leading to the weakening of their movement. Yet antisemitism lived on among colonial administrators and the general population and resurfaced during the Vichy regime.¹³²

Attempts at mobilizing Muslims and Arabs in the violence at the end of the nineteenth century overall failed. Although individuals from these communities took part in the riots, their leadership warned against collaborating with the colonists, given the ongoing structural inequality and violence of the colonial regime.¹³³ The twentieth century would see more violence, including violence directed against Algerian Jews and would eventually lead to their mass exodus in 1962 when Algeria achieved its independence.¹³⁴ The antisemitic rhetoric

¹³⁰ Dermenjian, *La crise anti-juive*, 126-130, 132 and 143-144; Dermenjian, "La Caricature comme élément du discours antisémite européen en Algérie (1830-1939)," in *Antisémythes*, ed. Matard-Bonucci, 395-410; Sharon Vance, "Antisemitism in Colonial Algeria and France in the 19th & early 20th centuries," (Paper Presented at the International Workshop and Conference Jewish Historical Writing: 140 years to Heinrich Graetz's "History of the Jewish People," 9-11 March 2015, Western Galilee College, Akko, Israel); Vance, "Antisemitism and Socialist Strategy," discusses the history of antisemitic rhetoric in both France and colonial Algeria, and the connections between them, along with its expression in violence in colonial Algeria, particularly among those who self-identified as socialists. For an example of a particularly violent cartoon see E. Herzig, *Supplément Illustré de L'Antijuif Algérien*, April 3, 1898, 1.

¹³¹ Abitbol, *Mi-Kremyeh le-Peṭen*, 45; Dermenjian, *La crise anti-juive*, 142.

¹³² Abitbol, *Mi-Kremyeh le-Peṭen*; Pierre Birnbaum, *The Antisemitic Moment* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2011 [1998]); Dermenjian, *La crise anti-juive*; Michael M. Laskier, *North African Jewry in the Twentieth Century The Jews of Morocco, Tunisia and Algeria* (New York: New York University Press, 1994); Henri Msellati, *Les juifs d'Algérie sous le régime de Vichy: 10 juillet 1940-3 novembre 1943* (Paris: Harmatta, 1999).

¹³³ Ageron, "Une révolution manquée: la crise anti-juive," in *Les Algériens musulmans*, vol. I (Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 1968), 583-606; Ruedy, *Modern Algeria*.

¹³⁴ Richard Ayoun and Bernard Cohen, *Les Juifs d'Algérie 2000 ans d'histoire* (Paris: J. C. Lattès, 1982)

incessantly repeated throughout the nineteenth century helped pave the way for this violence.

Accompanying this rhetoric were seeming complements paid to Arabs and to a lesser extent to Muslims in general. However, the compliments by these antisemitic writers, including Le Bon, were backhanded and reinforced colonial discourse and power relations. Yet even this was not extended to Jews, who were threatened with expulsion.

It has been claimed that antisemitism among some Arabs today is the same as the old European antisemitism.¹³⁵ To what extent these generals, bishops, politicians, journalists and publicists and their attitudes towards Jews influenced and still influence the ongoing spread of antisemitic discourse in France and in the Arab and Muslim world in later decades needs to be studied, and the focus needs to be on an analysis of the content, its means of transmission and distribution, and its possible impact on violence and antisemitic hate crimes.¹³⁶ When considering antisemitism among Muslims it is important to remember that these nineteenth century works are not the only sources for the animosity, and that there are also Islamic texts disparaging Jews, yet if such stereotypes and this rhetoric sound familiar, these nineteenth century texts from colonial Algeria are some of their sources.

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¹³⁵ Saïd Ben Saïd, “L’antisémitisme des Arabes aujourd’hui est le même que le vieil antisémitisme européen,” *Le Monde*, November 6, 2017. Accessed June 5, 2023, https://www.lemonde.fr/idees/article/2017/11/06/said-ben-said-l-antisemitisme-des-arabes-aujourd-hui-est-le-meme-que-le-vieil-antisemitisme-europeen_5210836_3232.html.

¹³⁶ An example of such research is Monika Hübscher and Sabine Von Mering, “A Snapshot of Antisemitism on Social Media in 2021,” in *Antisemitism on social media*, eds. Monika Hübscher and Sabine Von Mering (London: Routledge, 2022), 1-16; Navras J. Aafreedi, “Antisemitic Rhetoric in Urdu on YouTube: An Analysis,” in *Antisemitism on social media*, 114-128; Service de Protection de la Communauté Juif, “2017 Rapport sur l’antisémitisme en France,” accessed June 5, 2023, <https://www.antisemitisme.fr/dl/2017-FR>.

Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations. Some of her publications include: *The Martyrdom of a Moroccan Jewish Saint* (Leiden: Brill, 2011); “Conversione, apostasia e martirio: Il caso di Sol Hatchuel,” *Genesis. Rivista della Società Italiana della Storie* 6, no.2 (2007), 75-100, (trans. Giovanni Campolo); “Sol Hatchuel, ‘heroine of the 19th Century:’ Gender, the Jewish Question, and Colonial Discourse,” in *Jewish Culture and Society in North Africa*, eds. Emily Benichou Gottreich and Daniel J. Schroeter (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2011); “Hatchuel, Sol (Lalla Solika),” in *Encyclopedia Of Jews In The Islamic World* (Leiden: Brill, 2010); “Judeo-Arabic,” *Cambridge Dictionary of Jewish History, Religion, and Culture*, ed. Judith R. Baskin (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011); and “Antisemitism and Socialist Strategy 1880-1917: France and colonial Algeria,” *Patterns of Prejudice* 51, no. 3-4 (2017): 292-317.

Keywords: Antisemitism, Colonial Algeria, Jews, Muslims, Nineteenth Century

How to quote this article:

Sharon Vance, “Antisemitism and the Image of Jews and Muslims in Nineteenth Century French Colonial Algerian Writings,” in *Quest. Issues in Contemporary Jewish History. Journal of the Fondazione CDEC* 23, no. 1 (2023), DOI: [10.48248/issn.2037-741X/13912](https://doi.org/10.48248/issn.2037-741X/13912)