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TYPE: Book Chapter

BOOK TITLE: On Christian Nationalism Critical and Theological Perspectives

USER BOOK TITLE: On Christian Nationalism Critical and Theological Perspectives

CHAPTER TITLE: A Fifth Column: New Trends in White Christian Nationalist Antisemitism

BOOK AUTHOR: Shane Burley

EDITION:

VOLUME:

PUBLISHER:

YEAR: 2026

PAGES: 110-149

ISBN: 9781003497578

LCCN:

OCLC #:

PATRON: **Gwynn Kessler**

Processed by RapidX: 1/20/2026 8:20:30 AM

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A FIFTH COLUMN

New Trends in White Christian Nationalist Antisemitism

Shane Burley

On January 28, 2024, something historic occurred when House Republicans filed two articles of impeachment against the U.S. Secretary of Homeland Security, Alejandro Mayorkas. In a play of partisan theater, the first Cuban-Jewish Homeland Security Secretary, Mayorkas, was charged with refusing to “comply with the law” in barring undocumented immigration. Mayorkas was impeached by a single vote including almost the full slate of Republicans, with Mark Green of Tennessee saying he wanted to “deport” Mayorkas, calling him a “reptile.”¹ Mayorkas’ Jewish identity became relevant as Green’s comments employed overlapping antisemitic tropes: Jews as non-citizens to be “deported” for lacking loyalty, Jewish duplicity, and reptileness, and the alleged Jewish role in spurring non-White immigration. While the White House roundly condemned these comments as antisemitic, the impeachment passed through congress. This comes, in part, because of the rightward shift of the GOP after Trump, the alt-right, and the influential ascendancy of organizations like the Claremont Institute. While for a number of years it appeared as though a post-Christian far-right vanguard, such as the alt-right, would take an increasingly leading role in reactionary politics, today White Christian nationalism composes the vast majority of both far-right insurgent movements and the Republican base.

When discussing Christian nationalists, it is useful to draw on Andrew Whitehead and Samuel Perry’s definition of Christian nationalists as people who believe only Christians are truly Americans. Christian nationalists want to move secular institutions into line with theocratic goals, whereby Christian ideologies are considered a neutral truth. In their book *Taking America Back for God*, they indicate that 25% of Americans hold Christian nationalist positions, which in 2024 would be over 85 million people.² A 2022 Pew study found that 5% of respondents were friendly to Christian nationalism by name, though the majority had never

heard of it.³ This likely owes to the fact that Christian nationalists rarely self-apply that label and may use other identifiers, a common tactic for far-right movements attempting to appear mainstream. The Public Religion Research Institute (PRRI) found in a 2024 study that around 30% of respondents were either adherents or sympathizers with Christian nationalism. Republicans are more than twice as likely as independents, and three times as likely as Democrats, to be Christian nationalists, owing to the heavy presence of Christian nationalism on the American Right. Church attendance and evangelism are most linked to this movement, and Christian nationalists are more likely to view political issues through a violent or apocalyptic worldview.⁴

While Christian nationalism acts as an animating factor for America's right-wing politics, it also directly correlates to negative attitudes toward Jews. According to a 2023 study by PRRI, while 14% of Americans believe that "Jewish people hold too many positions of power," that number rose to 19% among sympathizers of Christian nationalism and 23% among adherents. Every subsequent metric of antisemitism rose in direct correlation to respondents' affiliation with Christian nationalism: they were more likely to believe that Jews are more loyal to Israel than the United States and that Jews "stick together more than other Americans."⁵ More importantly, the Republican base is motivated by increasingly powerful Christian nationalist movements, many of which have disproportionately supported Donald Trump and the MAGA coalition, and antisemitism is implicated in the conspiracism of both.⁶

Considering that Christian nationalists are drawing on not just a distinctly American political teleology, but a larger Western history emerging from Christian Europe, we must analyze these trends as part of the larger social reproduction of antisemitism. To do this, Moishe Postone and his theory of "structural antisemitism" remains a critical vantage to see how antisemitism remains implicit to modern capitalist society. Starting in 1987, Postone looked at antisemitism as emerging within the "commodity fetish," utilizing a latent Marxist category and applying a heterodox re-interpretation that sees antisemitism as a populist reaction to the bifurcation of capital and production.⁷ Because of Europe's unique history of antisemitism, which was then secularized and embedded into continent's economic history⁸ because some Jews were compelled into "middleman" positions⁹ like tax collecting, money lending, or court counsel, and because of how those Jewish figures were then used as a target to divert class rage, an association developed in Western culture.¹⁰ That which was seen as exploitive, artificial, abstract, or distinctly modern, and thusly "unproductive," was assigned a covert and ontological category of "Jewishness." This underlying intellectual scaffolding remains innate present, now not just in Western culture but globally as European systems of belief and political economy were exported. Today, we see latent antisemitism existing, particularly on the Right, in situations when populist anger is looking for a target, such as through persistent trends toward conspiracy theories or to single out figures who either are Jewish or coded as Jewish.

So in considering the massive growth of White Christian nationalism and the antisemitism that is a repeated feature not just of its religiously inflected far-right politics, but of National Populism and right-wing politics more generally, there are three particular innovations emerging that may redefine how antisemitism is expressed in Christian nationalism: neo-supersessionism, post-antisemitism, and reconstructed traditional Christian anti-Judaism.

Neo-Supersessionism

“You don’t seem very Jewish,” she said, taking a step forward.

This wasn’t the first time we had met. She began approaching me years earlier at rallies hosted by Patriot Prayer and the Proud Boys, but this time she was angry I was “lying on Twitter.”

“Why’s that,” I asked, visibly annoyed. We had already spoken after I tweeted that the speakers at the “Jesus March” rally had said that they were there to defend women because the “very idea of the woman is under attack.” I called it transphobic, and she called me a liar.

“Jews aren’t supposed to lie,” she said. My expression must have hardened as I glanced at the cross around her neck. She responded in kind.

“I’m actually a Jew,” she said defiantly. “My family were Sephardic Jews.”

She was a Southern Baptist with very distant Jewish ancestry, yet she demanded recognition.

“Are you a believing Jew? Do you practice the religion,” she persisted. “We Jews are called to a higher standard.”

Her friend asked if I knew Christ early in the day. When I responded that I was Jewish, she had a ready retort: she has Jewish Christian friends, who remain Jewish even as they come to know “Yeshua,” the Hebrew name for Jesus. She was referring to Messianic Judaism, a form of evangelical Christianity that claims Jews can follow Jesus while remaining in their ethnic community, and that Gentiles can join them in this process. Across the rally there were Christians blowing the shofar, a ram’s horn that is used as an instrument only in very particular Jewish ritual situations, and others brandishing Hebrew on T-shirts and other Jewish symbols taken out of their context. The behavior was not one of reverence, but of entitlement: they were not borrowing these items – they believed they were theirs by right.

Messianic Judaism, particularly the organization “Jews for Jesus,” is a contentious issue in Jewish communities because it claims to honor Jewish particularity while demanding Jews cease to do the very thing that makes them Jewish by subverting their own Messianic tradition of world healing in favor of accepting Jesus as their lord and personal savior. Instead, the growth of Messianic Judaism creates two dynamics that many Jewish communities identify as deeply troubling. The first is that it escalates the claim at the heart of the concept of Christian “supersessionism,” the idea that Christians are the new Israel. By creating a Christian community entirely based around Jewish ritual life, they not

only attempt to take the very imagery, tools, and spiritual practices that were once used by Christians to marginalize Jews, but they now claim that those items and practices belong to them.

The second is it normalizes proselytization and attempts to convert Jews to their own brand of Christianity, thus eradicating Jewishness. The Catholic Church, once a centerpiece of Christian anti-Judaism, has made tremendous strides since the Second Vatican Council in 1962–1965, and its prominent theologians, including Pope Benedict XVI, now offer that Jews can remain Jews and receive salvation.¹¹ On the other side, Messianic congregations and allied evangelical churches persist in holding that Jews can and should convert to Christianity, which they believe is the true inheritor to the Israelite religion.

As extensive academic literature shows, supersessionism is the centerpiece of what became ideological antisemitism.¹² Because Jews rejected the “true” path for redemption, this was the origin for communal distrust.¹³ This sat directly alongside suspicion directed at Jewish particularism (as established by the boundaries of *kashrut*) and charges of deicide that the Jews killed Jesus. The claim that runs from early Christianity up until the present day is that Jews are willfully rejecting the true pathway of chosenness, which was once theirs before Jesus came and now offered it to the true elect: the church. This theology sees Jews necessarily as antagonists since it depends on defining them out of this role, thus rendering Jewish self-conception a threatening deviation. All later developments in antisemitism, the belief in Jewish malevolence, occultism, and conspiracy, all begin with the earlier establishment of supersessionism.

After the Holocaust, there were incredible strides in Western Christianity as many churches tried to reckon with the significant history of Christian antisemitism. They produced a framework of “Judeo-Christianity” in American politics, often roping Jews into a tacit alliance with Christians in this new framework bent to pose them as partners in the fight against Communism.¹⁴ Christian Zionism played a major role since it fetishizes Jewishness in their eschatology, which became more pronounced with the growth of the Christian Right. But this model included its own dialectic, and as Jewishness became more of a centerpiece of Christian discourse, so did the appropriation of Jewish symbols and, ultimately, Jewishness itself.

It is now commonplace to see Jewish iconography around Christian megachurches alongside an escalated discourse of Jewishness, the claim not just that they care for Jews, or even that they have replaced Jews, but that they *are* Jews. The clearest example of this actually emerges apart from Christian nationalism and found among Hebrew Israelites, a loose assortment of Black nationalist religious movements who built a theology that claims many Black people are direct descendants of the ancient Israelites and, thus, are the true Jews. This ranges from softer claims that Black Africans are descendants of Jewish people and therefore should take up Jewish rituals and customs, all the way to the claim that they are the *only* true Jews and that practicing Jews, White Ashkenazim in particular, are imposters. When visiting some Hasidic Jews in Crown Heights in early 2023, I found that Hebrew

Israelites had been demonstrating outside Chabad-Lubavitch Shabbat services, shouting at parishioners that they were fakes and frauds. As scholars like Merrill Singer show, Hebrew Israelites were motivated not by inherent antisemitism, but a desire to counter dominant narratives that Americans of African descent face, rebuild an ancestral memory, critique White supremacy, and construct a communal structure.¹⁵ To create a narrative to explain why Black Americans have lost their identity as Israelites, some have turned toward conspiratorial views that see Jews as necessarily imposters, thus lodging an antisemitic worldview within their claim of Israelite identity (though antisemitism remains only in a minority of Hebrew Israelite communities, and some share communities with more traditionally observant Jews). Some Hebrew Israelites have been involved in antisemitic violence, but, overall, both they and other people expressing philosemitism, including of the antisemitic variety, are non-violent.

When compared to the lethal antisemitism on display in incidents like the 2018 Pittsburgh synagogue shooting, it is easy to dismiss these displays of philosemitic antisemitism at evangelical megachurches as insignificant. It is true that philosemitic antisemitism has inspired less direct violence, but when we broaden our look at what antisemitism means, what effect it has on Jews, and how systemic it can become in Christianity, the appropriation of Jewishness by Christian nationalists is part and parcel of a system that erases Jewishness in ways aligned with our definition and the actualization of antisemitism. Jewish claims to religious sovereignty are erased, Jewish concepts like chosenness and continuity with the Israelite traditions are intentionally severed, and barriers to Jewish protection are eroded. And regardless of their philosemitic veneer, these types of Christians have been among the most active in pushing a Christian nationalist political agenda that necessarily marginalizes Jews and enthusiastically calls for Jewish conversion, often under the guise that those who convert are, in fact, reclaiming the authentic Jewish tradition by including Jesus into their theology. Messianic Christian communities are active partners in Christian Zionist networks and, because of their relationship to some ethnic Jews, have a greater connection to Israel itself.¹⁶ With the language and argumentation Messianic Judaism provides Christians, Jews are now expected to give up cultural boundaries to Christians who re-enact the same ideas that have both historically and contemporarily disenfranchised Jews. Scholars like Magda Teter trace back this form of “Christian supremacy” to the earliest days of Christianity, seeing a lineage from early antisemitism to later structural White supremacy.¹⁷ The erasure of non-Christianity has always been implicit to our society, yet new trends in Christian nationalism only accelerate this process despite the liberalizing veneer of “Judeo-Christian civilization.” By creating an acceptable moral pathway to turn Jews into Christians, which in this case is by Christians characterizing themselves as Jews, Christian nationalists found a way around the prohibition on Jewish erasure and, therefore, no longer need the cover of “Judeo-Christian civilization.”

But this model only represents one popular segment of the appropriation of Jewishness by Christian nationalists, without considering the consistent, and

growing, presence of radical movements whose identification with Jewishness is more directly connected with more lethal violence against American Jews. A significant portion of the American White nationalist movement has been mobilized around a Christian denomination known as “Christian Identity,” a more radical schism from what was called “British Israelism.” A trend emerged in the late 1800s using Biblical scholarship and apologetics to suggest that White Anglo-Saxons, and sometimes White Europeans broadly, are at least one of the historically lost “Tribes of Israel.” This could take the form of the “Two-Houses theology,” the notion that Jews are the descendants of the “Tribe of Judah” and the British from another line. Many of these earlier incarnations of British Israelism assumed these tribal Israelites were simply brothers with existing Ashkenazi Jews, but increasingly a new rendition of this ideology saw Anglo-Saxons not as sharing this affiliation with Jews but possessing a sole claim to the Israelite lineage. Instead, Jews were said to be an alien people who had manufactured their own religious confederation, sometimes building on the claims of what is sometimes called the “Khazar hypothesis,” first introduced around the turn of the 19th century and suggesting that Jews are actually descendants of a lost Khazarian empire in Eastern Europe rather than descendants of the ancient Israelites, as is the normative Jewish self-explanation. This ultimately denies Jewish self-conception, alternately asserting that Ashkenazim are largely later converts or they are disingenuously claiming connection to the Israelites. These debates remained lively off and on but only became much more significant with the creation of political Zionism in 1897 and, especially, after the foundation of Israel in 1948, where the claim of Jewish ancestry in historic Palestine was a centerpiece to the Zionist narrative of an indigenous Jewish homeland. These ideas traced through British Israelism, but as time went on several figures escalated these beliefs to focus on what they believed was the despotic strangeness of the Jewish people. Introduced most prominently by Pastor Wesley Swift, Christian Identity took a more explicitly racial interpretation. “Dual seedline theory,” now commonly found in Christian Identity, believed that Abel and Cain had different fathers, with Cain descended from the devil and creating a bloodline that was explicitly malevolent and leading directly to the Jews of today. In this framework, White Christians are the true “people of Israel” and Jews are an imposter people who have a retrofitted demonic religion, all of which is contained in an apocalyptic eschatology that puts White Christians against non-White people and Jews in a cosmic, End Times battle.¹⁸ Christian Identity has led to some of the most egregious neo-Nazi and White nationalist violence in American history, including particularly high-profile murders, synagogue shootings, and bomb plots throughout the 1980s and 1990s.¹⁹

For our conversation, the primary feature that Christian Identity shares with the larger Messianic appropriation of Jewishness is the claim that White Christians are not simply the inheritors of Jewish chosenness, but they are Israelites themselves. Aryans, the only truly Godly people, are part of a direct lineage that traces back through the Torah, and their syncretic religion mixes in elements of *kashrut*,

Jewish ritual, and neo-Nazi racialism. In doing so, they challenge every element of Jewish self-conception and refashion Jews to become the primary enemy of White Christians, who they believe are God's chosen people. The conditions of economic deprivation and paramilitary styled White nationalist organizing led to a massive surge in Christian Identity organizing across the 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s, where Christian Identity was a main driver of the early militia movement, the Fourth Era Klan, and remains present in the insurrectionary White nationalist movement.²⁰

Another manifestation of neo-supersessionism is in the growth of long-existing denominations that locate their believers as Israelites/Jews. The traditional self-narrative about Mormons is that modern believers take the role of ancient Israel. This extends to referring to non-Mormons, including Jews, as Gentiles, furthering the tradition of Jewish erasure, a point that many find particularly relevant given the history of racialism in the Latter-Day Saints movement.²¹ Right now, Mormonism remains the second fastest growing religion in the United States, and among the most rapidly adopted globally, far outpacing most Christian denominations. As many scholars note, an increasingly far-right interpretation of Mormonism is gaining traction in online, alt-right, and post-alt-right circles, particularly centered on the anti-feminist "Trad Wife" phenomenon, which uses female activists to romanticize pre-modern familial life. An example is the popular vlogger Ayla Stewart, known as "Wife with a Purpose," a Mormon convert who extols the virtues of hierarchical families, Christian traditionalism, and, in proximity to the White nationalist politics she also participates in, antisemitism in her relationship with people like alt-right leaders like Richard Spencer and Red Ice Media's Lana Lokteff. (Stewart denies many of these allegations.) After the Anne Frank Center for Mutual Respect voiced support for adding sexual orientation and gender identity to the 1964 Civil Rights Act, Stewart tweeted, "What if someone's pronouns are Nazi, Fuhrer, and Sieg Heil."²² More attention was drawn toward the Mormon far-right with the sequence of land occupations led by Ammon Bundy and his family, where a rather extreme libertarian and anti-government interpretation of Mormonism fueled the standoffs with federal authorities over grazing rights in Arizona and the takeover of the Malheur Nature Reserve in Southeastern Oregon. Each was driven not only by fundamentalist Mormon theologies but laced with antisemitic conspiracy theories (both implicit and explicit) that proposed an impending New World Order controlled by a shadowy cabal of elites.²³ None of this implies a distinctly antisemitic worldview held by the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints but instead highlights a particular relationship to the concept of chosenness that takes further steps toward theological Jewish erasure. This movement is dramatically growing and has a growing White nationalist contingent.²⁴

What binds these ideas together is the degree to which supersessionism has turned in on itself in ways so profound that it erases the distinction it once made between Jews and those who replaced Jews. Jewishness is now to be claimed by Christians as a right, and therefore not only are religious arguments about Christianity's apparent ubiquity to be made, but attempts are also subsequently

made to erase even the existence of Jewish peoplehood or the coherence of Jewish tradition existing apart from Christianity. If we are talking about the ways in which intrinsic antisemitic ideas in Christian theology led to more macro-antisemitic movements, then this trend creates fertile soil for a revival of open antisemitism by radicalizing the source claim. If Jewish identity is wholly erased from our narratives about ancient Israel and religious custom, then the church reclaims its nearly 2000-year history of antisemitic argumentation directed at Jews. This could undercut interfaith efforts that many religious institutions, from liberal Protestant denominations to the Holy See, have taken over the past 50 years, replacing that pathway with a different form of ecumenicism intended on appropriating and reshaping Judaism rather than establishing cohabitation. Therefore, it is easy to understand why this theology may lend itself more thoroughly to antisemitic strains even while the mainline denominations may publicly reject this doctrine. As is true of all religious communities, the most important figures in fighting back remain inside of the church, not outside of it. It is those people who subscribe to Christian theologies that will necessarily lead the reform work internally and marginalize antisemitic voices, just as has happened with Catholic reformers who worked to dislodge the categorically harmful role the church had played against Jewish communities. This will be done largely by making respectful distinctions between Jewish and Christian theologies, acknowledging historic legacies of Christian supremacy, and creating respectful and supportive boundaries to ensure Jewish particularity is respected.

Post-Antisemitism

I was a little baffled when I first saw it, assuming I was confused about what I was reading. An openly antisemitic image was shared, en masse, on Twitter (now X), which is, itself, not particularly shocking. Twitter (now X) had become a leading digital space in the spread of antisemitic invective in recent years, and this only increased as Elon Musk took over and himself engaged in numerous antisemitic incidents²⁵ such as retweeting White nationalists, showing support for the antisemitic Alternative für Deutschland party,²⁶ saying an antisemitic tweet was “the actual truth,”²⁷ or endorsing the #BantheADL campaign created by alt-right figures.²⁸

But it was the account tweeting this particular antisemitic image that raised my eyebrows: Yair Netanyahu, Israeli President Benjamin Netanyahu’s son, sharing an antisemitic caricature of Jewish philanthropist George Soros, a frequent target of antisemitic conspiracy theorists.²⁹ How do we explain a Jewish person, acting ostensibly from their place as a celebrity derived from their relationship with the supposed Jewish state, engaging in blatant antisemitism?

This was, unfortunately, not a one-off. Conservative Jewish magazine *Tablet* published an article using a well-worn antisemitic conspiracy theory suggesting the Jewish Pritzker family was conspiring to push “synthetic sex identities” on

the public, grooming kids to become transgender.³⁰ In this case the publisher was Jewish, and so was the victim – a Jewish magazine was using a coded antisemitic conspiracy theory to indict a Jewish figure in a way that categorically matches antisemitic conspiracism. Whether it was the idea that a billionaire is manipulating society or that a Jew is pushing transgender “ideology,” a centerpiece of Nazi antisemitism,³¹ this matched the picture of the same antisemitic conspiracism now common in American politics.

If we look even further, we see some Orthodox Jews pushing conspiracy theories, including “blood libel” QAnon theory,³² right-wing Jewish politicians promoting certain versions of the “great replacement theory” that suggests a small crew of elites are trying to replace American Whites with non-White immigrants, or Jewish commentators complaining about “Cultural Marxism,” a restatement of the theory that Jewish Marxist intellectuals are re-engineering our society’s values.³³ When it comes to Christian nationalists, every one of these innovations only becomes more prevalent as studies show that Christian nationalists are more likely to hold a distinctly conspiratorial view of the world,³⁴ particularly the types of conspiracy theories, such as QAnon (which almost six in ten Christian nationalists hold some belief in), which tries to hide their antisemitism behind coded verbiage and “dog whistles.”³⁵

To understand these contradictions we must look at how antisemitic conspiracy theories have evolved; we notice how antisemitic ideas can be hidden within what Volkov called “cultural codes,” thus creating a mirage that conceals the Jewishness of the object.³⁶ Considering the point that scholar Dan Berger made in 2016 that Trumpism and the MAGA movement were built on conspiracy theories, and that those conspiracy theories were foundationally antisemitic, we have to understand that antisemitic conspiracy thinking is a foundational part of the Right’s arsenal of meaning-making. But Berger’s 2016 essay points out one additional feature: Jews are not always the primary victim of these theories.³⁷ Instead, as people like Eric Ward elucidate, it can be other communities, such as Black Americans, who are the targets of antisemitic ideas.³⁸ Because racist ideas require a conspiratorial framework to allow for them to make sense, antisemitism often becomes the necessary piece of the puzzle. This can be seen particularly clearly in the 2022 shooting at a Tops Market in Buffalo, New York, where a White nationalist killed ten Black residents all while blaming Black crime on White Jews in his manifesto.³⁹

Most Jews find open antisemitism horrifying, but this misses the evolution that has happened in antisemitic conspiracy theories over the past 70 years. Instead of “naming the Jew,” as White nationalists call it, most conspiracy theories hide behind coded phrases, such as “globalists” or “elites,” while maintaining the same ideological structure for their beliefs. In doing so, they choose to not violate the post-World War II taboo on open antisemitism while both signaling to the latent ideas of their base and relying on the conspiratorial scaffolding that their worldview depends on. As we entered a highly symbolic age of digital communication, the sophistication of this coding process only became more complex, creating several

steps of removal between the explicit antisemitism of earlier incarnations of these same conspiracy theories and the “dog whistle”-laden versions most common today. The most obvious example of these is the QAnon theory, which takes the concept of the medieval blood libel and Satanic, global conspiracies and strips explicit mentions of Jews completely out of it. Even just a few decades ago, a theory like this would have been relegated to the fringes of the Right and would have included more explicit references to Jews. But as we moved away from this earlier incarnation of antisemitism, a new model developed that no longer depends on acknowledging the Jewishness of the figures mentioned. It is also worth noting that while earlier instances of QAnon mostly did not “name the Jew,” it became more common over time as the QAnon theory became normalized, people connected it with earlier theories, and those involved radicalized toward open racialism.⁴⁰

This process presents an evolution in Postone’s theory of “structural antisemitism,” which depends mostly on the cultural modalities we use to both define the identity and to structure angst directed at modern society. Since the conspiratorial thinking remains intact and largely identical to the conspiracy theories of earlier generations, those receiving antisemitic messages can implicitly understand their meaning without needing direct translation. Conspiratorial populism is an American tradition (what Richard Hofstadter called the “paranoid style in American politics”⁴¹) and so the structure continues to reproduce itself since right-wing politics depends on it. And since our ideas about Jewishness remain embedded in the global imagination, people can conform those ideas to newer generations of populist conspiracy theories, thus allowing the specter of the Jew to continue as the frightful hobgoblin that haunts the halls of political strife.

“Post-antisemitism” is then a framework to identify an antisemitic conspiracy theory that, while maintaining every ideological structure of traditional antisemitism, refuses to name Jews. In doing so, it invites Jewish people to participate in this antisemitic worldview since it severs the primary barrier to doing so, which is the consensus belief a particular theory is harmful to Jews. Because the coding of antisemitism breaks down potential barriers to the transmission of the theories, post-antisemitism has become the most common way that antisemitic ideas multiply in modern politics and, subsequently, the most central way for them to shift public consciousness toward an antisemitic worldview.

Three addendums are important to note relative to post-antisemitism. First, there are some criticisms of this framework for understanding antisemitism, particularly the claim that imagery understood to be heavily coded antisemitic dog whistles are necessarily, in all cases, actually representative of antisemitism. An example of this is a 2021 “responsa” from the Jewish magazine *Jewish Currents* offering criticism of the Jews Against White Nationalism research project that listed use of terms like “globalist” or “urban elites” as potential antisemitic dog whistles, rather than simply part of the Right’s emerging populism.⁴² This claim, however, is disconnected from most scholarship on the question of antisemitism, as well as disputed by activists, Jewish organizations, and antifascists who see a direct line

between rhetoric that implies Jewish stereotypes and the increase of consequential antisemitism.⁴³ Since 2016, the beginning of the escalation of post-antisemitism, there have been skyrocketing rates of antisemitic incidents and the normalization of antisemitic rhetoric on the mainstream Right.⁴⁴ Even when Jews are not explicitly named, it provides a pathway to normalize antisemitism in the “Overton Window.” An example of this has been the overwhelming presence of antisemitism in the “flat earth” conspiracy movement, which, like White nationalism, requires an underlying theory of power to explain why the “truth” remains hidden.⁴⁵ To do this the believers must turn to a conspiratorial canon, which always reduce, at some point, to open antisemitism, thus reproducing antisemitism.

We should observe the absolute depth of post-antisemitism in American conservatism, where Christian nationalists are a key and motivating demographic of the movement’s base. According to a 2021 national survey of GOP voters, there are five political “tribes” in the GOP: Die-hard Trumpers (27%), Trump Boosters (28%), Never Trumpers (15%), post-Trump GOP (20%), and Infowars GOP (10%) who are defined by supportive opinions of QAnon. Considering that conspiracism was a key feature of Trump’s political model, from migrant caravans to George Soros allegations, “birther” conspiracies and stolen elections, then a full 65% are openly in support of a conspiratorial model of conservatism. A full 10%, however, are openly committed to a post-antisemitic worldview (some of which likely take their conspiracism into an open antisemitism direction, as well), while a larger percentage may move in and out, according to this data.⁴⁶ Alex Jones, the host of Infowars, is open in discussing his belief in Jewish control of the institutions of power, particularly well-known figures like George Soros and the Rothschild families, and uses antisemitic conspiracy theories, including coded post-antisemitism, as the bedrock of all other political observations.⁴⁷

The Pittsburgh synagogue shooting in 2018, which killed 11 Jews in the most lethal antisemitic attack in American history, was motivated by Donald Trump’s claims that George Soros was using a “migrant caravan” to cross over the border. This played on classic antisemitic beliefs about anti-White Jews, and so when White nationalist Robert Bowers saw an event honoring the Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society (HIAS), he decided he needed to open fire.⁴⁸ Even when Jews are not the primary target, these ideas helped to ramp up racist violence. The 2022 mass shooting at a Tops Grocery in Buffalo, New York, was primarily motivated by anti-Black racism, but when you look through the shooter’s manifesto, it was clear that what gave his beliefs their coherence were antisemitic conspiracy theories based around the “great replacement theory.”⁴⁹

The synthesis from which the concept of post-antisemitism emerges is based on the ancestral lineage modern conspiracy theories has to historic antisemitic beliefs. Movements going back decades have shown a clear antisemitic lineage, including “9/11 Truth,”⁵⁰ David Icke⁵¹ and “reptilian humanoids,”⁵² flat earth,⁵³ and most involving finance or foreign policy. More recent surges of conspiracy theories have shown an extensive correlation between conspiracy theories and antisemitism,

even when Jews are not featured in all incarnations or messaging. An example of these is with COVID-19 conspiracy theories, which scholars Hendrik Gunz and Isa Schaller note clearly show evidence of “structural antisemitism” in that they hold “[an] antisemitic conspiracist thinking without naming ‘the Jew’ by installing a more or less subtle placeholder.”⁵⁴

The defining feature of post-antisemitism, other than the systematically coded nature by which it refers to Jewish proxies, is that Jews are invited to participate. This has happened most thoroughly in the growing Jewish presence in the conservative coalition, among the Jewish far-right, and inside of the further edges of American reactionary thought. As mentioned, conspiracism is perhaps the defining feature of the new direction of both mainstream conservatism and the far-right, understanding, as John S. Huntington has shown that those two demographics remain correlative.⁵⁵ Because of escalating economic, ecological, and social conditions, the Right is moving past the standardized “fusionism” that defined the post-Buckleyite conservative movement and into one built around what Matthew Goodwin and Roger Eatwell define as National Populism: a form of anti-elitist populism constructed around the reification of the nation as a transhistorical phenomenon.⁵⁶ This version of the nation is fundamentally different from the ethnic nationalism of Europe because of the cross-ethnic nature of the American project as well as the unique synthesis of American Whiteness, forged in its proximity to systems of oppression that were built on the categorical boundary between those racialized as White and those not. Because our modern political institutions were forged through settler colonialism and our economic and policing structures built on the slavery of African-descended people, the notion of a “nation” in the United States context is built largely along a de-ethnicized and abstract Whiteness, itself coded using “civic nationalist” proxy symbols that can be easily read by the White conservative majority and yet offer enough plausible deniability to avoid being associated with explicit White nationalism.⁵⁷

As scholars like Eric Goldstein show, White American Jews spent the early 20th century, through many collective advocacy organizations, largely allying themselves with the institutions of American Whiteness, hoping to shed the foreignness that was ascribed to them.⁵⁸ This was challenged by the raucous 20th-century Eastern European immigrants, many of whom brought Orthodoxy, Hasidism, Zionism, Bundism, and anarchism to stand against American ideological hegemony.⁵⁹

The process of Jewish Whiteness was never totalizing, and Jews remain to the left of the average American White constituency,⁶⁰ often because of Jewish history of oppression and the liberatory elements of Jewish tradition. But a shift has still occurred, what Marxist scholar Enzo Traverso called the “end of Jewish modernity,” the radical Jewish political era that marked the 1800s and first half of the 20th century.⁶¹ Part of this resulted in an increasing presence of the Jewish Right, often anchored in suspicion of social uplift programs that they believe exclude (Ashkenazi) Jews because of their Whiteness, questioning of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) programs in places like American universities, support

for Israel and related foreign policy objectives, and standard vectors of American conservatism.

But as the American conservative project turned more fully into a model of National Populism and conspiracism, so went its conservative supporters. The Zionist Organization of America (ZOA), a long-standing institution of the Zionist movement that has moved further to the Right over its lifetime, has now supported numerous antisemitic candidates, including honoring Donald Trump,⁶² as well as targeting figures like George Soros.⁶³ Dennis Prager, a Jewish conservative commentator who once co-wrote a popular book on antisemitism and who defended Trump against accusations of antisemitism at the *National Review*,⁶⁴ has helped to institutionalize these conspiratorial ideas through his online educational institution PragerU and has become such a profound vessel for conspiracism⁶⁵ that the Southern Poverty Law Center had to chronicle its vast impact on the conservative mind.⁶⁶ Laura Loomer, who is also Jewish, became an insurgent candidate in Florida's 11th Congressional District in 2023, winning 44.2% of the vote before losing to the incumbent, Daniel Webster, in the primary. People often forget that she turned in the direction of incredibly wild conspiracy theories, spoke at a White nationalist conference, was supported by White supremacists like Kevin DeAnna, and even voiced her open support for White nationalism.⁶⁷ As these ideas further took over the Republican Party, the National Conservatives were poised to build on many of these conspiratorial notions as a way of appealing to working-class White voters while maintaining the same economic structures that benefit the upper classes. Republicans did this by conforming to many of the propositions offered by Yoram Hazony, a person who brought in his own ultra-Zionist politics from his upbringing in the Israeli Settlement Movement and who is helping to normalize a political vocabulary friendly to populist conspiracism.⁶⁸

The fact that Jewish conservatives can offer antisemitic dog whistles while remaining in Jewish communities is a testament to their coded nature. For many, the dedication to Israel and the Zionist movement by these figures is their support for Jewish safety and continuity, and thus a foil to claims that they are engaging in antisemitism. The reality, however, is that antisemitism and Zionism are not mutually exclusive, and there is extensive documentation of some figures in the Zionist movement holding antisemitic ideas and participating in antisemitic political formations. Notable Zionist leaders like Theodor Herzl, Ze'ev Jabotinsky, Arthur Koestler, Yehezkel Kaufmann, and H. N. Bialik have been quoted as holding a certain disgust for diasporic Jewry, often believing that they needed a rooted type of ethnic nationalism to cure them of the diseased mindset they picked up from their centuries of wandering. This was at the heart of *shlilat hagalat*, the negation of the diaspora, which posed a certain contempt for centuries of Jewish life and culture by suggesting it should be replaced by a strong Hebrew statism.⁶⁹ For the American pro-Israel movement, it is not intercommunal Jewish politics but actually Christian Zionism setting the agenda, whereby a belief in the Jewish role in Christian eschatology has instigated the overwhelming evangelical support for

Israel. In this vision of End Times prophecy, the majority of Jews are exterminated in an historic genocide, and those remaining are forced to convert to Christianity and eradicate their Jewishness. Since there are more Christian Zionists in the United States than Jews in the entire world (and the largest Zionist organization in the United States is Christians United for Israel), it is easy to understand why the Zionist politics of the Republican Party, and subsequently most of the Jewish Right, are largely shaped by non-Jewish forces who are subsequently motivated by an antisemitic worldview.⁷⁰

As Berger suggests, antisemitism can also be a tool used to manufacture bigoted ideologies that do not primarily victimize Jews.⁷¹ In the case of the Jewish Right, we see a strange mobilization of antisemitic styles of ideology construction being used not only to target a different marginalized group, such as using post-antisemitic conspiracy theories to attack trans healthcare, but even to mobilize post-antisemitism ostensibly in support of Jewish safety. Figures like David Horowitz and what has been called the “counter-Jihad” movement mobilize an Islamophobic conspiracy theory that, as scholars like Enzo Traverso have outlined, bears a shocking resemblance to historic antisemitic conspiracy theories.⁷² This is especially true for the “Eurabia” conspiracy theory popularized by figures like far-right Zionist activist Bat Ye’or, who believes that elite Arab and European leaders have collaborated to shift the demographics of Europe (and, in some versions, the United States and Canada) to replace indigenous Whites with Muslim, Arab immigrants, and thus turn Europe into a new Caliphate. This theory tracks neatly onto the concept of post-antisemitism in that it uses the intellectual scaffolding and key nodes in the creation of the antisemitic theory, yet it swaps out those key actors and then turns the attention toward a new marginalized identity. Jewish safety is then invoked to build out the coalition in support of the Islamophobic policies these movements ultimately propose, suggesting that Muslim immigrants offer the greatest communal threat to European Jewry. However, the more conspiracy theories are introduced to communal politics, the more that other conspiracy theories, including those that escalate the antisemitic imagery or consequence, are adopted by the same constituency.

Because post-antisemitism largely shares the core structure of all conspiracy theories in the West, the generalized growth in conspiracism tracks directly alongside the growth in post-antisemitism more specifically. While there has been some scholarship that intends to show that conspiracy theory beliefs are not more common today than they had been in the past,⁷³ this analysis holds a couple of key problems. First, the centrality of conspiracy theories to modern political analysis has become more pronounced, endemic, and central. The Right today relies on a particular framing of populist anti-elitism that depends on conspiracism as a way of dislodging class anger. But additionally, as we discuss above and is suggested by adaptations of Postone’s theory of “structural antisemitism,” this process is not new and a conspiracism has sat at the core of the Right’s politics for decades. As John S. Huntington’s recent scholarship shows, the far-right has

always been a primary ideological innovator for the conservative movement, which does not have a separate ontology from the far-right. What defines that far-right is, to a degree, not just the intensity of its political convictions but the mistruths and conspiratorial connections needed to validate the intensity. This would put conspiracism in the driver's seat of the entire history of the Right's ascendance, particularly as we get into the 1980s.⁷⁴ As Nicole Hemmer has shown, a particularly virulent style of conservative politics began to take over, one that focused on rampant accusations against ideological enemies, monstrous claims, and shadowy allegations. Whether or not this indicates an increase in conspiracy beliefs in the public is unclear, but it does show a direct pattern of increased conspiracism in the political sphere.⁷⁵

This pattern of conspiracism is even clearer in Christian nationalism. In a 2022 study, sociologists Philip Gorski and Samuel L. Perry created a "Christian nationalism scale" to assess respondents' affinity to Christian nationalist ideas. For those in the top 25 percentile of that scale, a full 75% ascribed to QAnon ideas, which use coded references to historical anti-Jewish beliefs. Gorski and Perry note that QAnon tracks with much of the evangelical Christian eschatology, which primes them, in the same way that supersessionism does, to adapt to complex additions that take their ideological presumptions into more advanced directions. If you then multiply these predilections by the radicalization of current strife, it is easy to understand why most White Christian nationalists move toward post-antisemitism. Gorski and Perry suggest that the new identity for the conservative movement is based around nationalism as opposed to internationalism, centering a vocabulary of nativism, civilizationism, and isolationism.⁷⁶ This tracks with the secondary characteristics of antisemitic beliefs, such as in the nationalism of interwar Europe, whereby Jews were assigned characteristics of foreignness, internationalism, and cosmopolitanism, which shows a linkage between the potential of antisemitism among White Christian nationalists and the antisemitism of earlier fascist movements. These elements of White Christian nationalism, when associated with affinities for political violence, are likewise connected to support for the January 6, 2021 "Capitol insurrection," particularly involving QAnon.⁷⁷ This means, largely, that these ideas matter, that they draw people into action, and that there is a relationship between post-antisemitic conspiracy beliefs and the real-world violence.

Reconstructed Traditional Christian Anti-Judaism

"There is an occult element among the high levels of society, and especially among the Jews," said White nationalist Nick Fuentes on his regular livestream, hosted on Entropy and mirrored across the far-right's universe of interlocking video and podcast channels. Fuentes had been on a kick lately: he had only ramped up blatant antisemitic rhetoric as the war commenced in Israel–Palestine, acting as one of the loudest voices on the Right coming out as critical of Israel's assault on Gaza. This

is fundamentally different from the Left's anti-Zionism or critical discourse, which opposes Israel's behavior in the conflict under the belief that Israel is engaged in settler colonialism, imperialism, and the ethnic cleansing of the indigenous people of historic Palestine. Instead, his criticism comes specifically because of Israel's Jewish nature, framing Israel not simply as a vessel of the West's imperial interests but as an outsider entity that has taken control of U.S. policy because of what he believes is the heavy presence of Jews in elite American institutions. This places Fuentes' criticism as far from the Left's since it emerges in a classically antisemitic, conspiratorial vision of Jewish power.

But Fuentes' association with White nationalism often seems intentionally obscured by the language he uses, which focuses much more on a vague American nationalism (which he often agrees is tied to the allegedly White character of America's founders) and a Christian nationalism that targets non-Christians who he might otherwise agree with (such as pagan White nationalists). When Fuentes turns to his criticism of the Jews, he digs right into Judaism itself, not simply Jews as a supposedly coherent ethnic entity or race.

In a March 4, 2023 "Fuentes Rally," held before dozens of Groypers, large far-right section of the Dissident Right who are largely followers of White nationalist Nick Fuentes, at the same time as the Conservative Political Action Conference (CPAC) was taking place (and where he was not welcome), Fuentes railed against what he saw as "Talmudic Jews" who were creating a sick society in the United States. Alongside reminding the crowd that he "loves Hitler," he set out a vision for the country built on Christian nationalist principles, one where Jews would be just as much outsiders as they had been in Christian Europe.⁷⁸ He celebrated the overthrow of Roe and wants to fight to ban gay marriage, sodomy, and birth control, instead establishing a kind of "Catholic Taliban rule."⁷⁹

At the same time as Fuentes' own brand of White Christian nationalism gained steam, a newer splinter movement from the Independent Fundamentalist Baptists, itself one of the further Right movements in the larger constellations of American evangelism, began to make a name for itself. This movement is largely the creation of Pastor Steven Anderson of Faithful Word Baptist Church in Tempe, Arizona, who has no formal seminary training (his movement does not require formal training for clergy and instead they simply "ordain" each other). His preaching became popular with those who felt that evangelical Christianity had become too welcoming of diversity as he railed against homosexuality, which he believed should bring death, as well as against feminists, liberals, and others whom he joyfully declared would soon be suffering in hell for all eternity. The movement gained steam as Anderson began ordaining others, and now there are nearly three dozen affiliated churches and a team of pastors who believe largely the same thing. Since Anderson was able to continue creating slick social media and video content, including bringing a professional documentary filmmaker into his fold, his reach became outsized. His movement began appearing at many of the anti-LGBTQ events that marked Pride Month in 2022 and 2023, including at aggressive protests against youth-oriented

events, Drag Queen Story Hour, and vocally opposed all medical support for trans youth.

But what strayed even further from his fundamentalist roots was his aggressive antisemitism. Anderson believes that the Jews were the killers of Christ and are engaged in a demonic, false religion that does not believe in the word of God,⁸⁰ that they will partner with the anti-Christ in the “End Times,”⁸¹ and that they are leading the way in the attacks on the true voice of God. Anderson’s antisemitism, though leading him to believe that Jews were rightfully persecuted for usury⁸² and that the Holocaust is a hoax,⁸³ is religious in orientation. In his documentary film *Marching to Zion*, where he “exposes” Judaism as a false religion and Zionism as an attempt to manipulate Christians, he does a DNA test to reveal his own bits of Jewish ancestry: it is a matter of belief and not a matter of genetics.⁸⁴

Fuentes’ groyper movement and Anderson’s New Independent Fundamentalist Baptists represent two overlapping forms of a radically familiar type of antisemitism: that emerging explicitly in the Gospels. Traditionally, Christianity holds itself as the singular model of salvation and holiness, thus indicting all non-Christian faiths as not only possessing inherent falsehoods, but perhaps even malevolent for their deviations from the correct path. For anti-Jewish attitudes, a distinction is drawn by scholar Jonathan Elukin as “religiously” observed objection to Judaism as a belief system, and Jewish communities as dictated by that belief system, rather than “racially” as an ethnic outgroup, as was the case in Nazi Germany.⁸⁵ The relationship between Judaism and Christianity is even more specific than that because of the historic relationship between the two communities and the methods by which Christianity differentiated itself from Judaism. This has created what we will call a “structural anti-Judaism,” a counterpart to Postone’s “structural antisemitism,” in Christianity based both on the arguments of its key texts and the context that developed out of early church antagonisms.

As we have mentioned, David Nirenberg’s scholarship lends profound insight into the role that Jews rhetorically played in non-Jewish societies. This was particularly true in the early centuries of Christianity, as Christians sought to theologically separate themselves from their early Jewish roots. To do this, Christians focused on what they saw as the true and elevated “spiritual” nature of their salvational path as opposed to the needless carnality and physicality of the Jewish tradition. Judaism is based around *halakha*, Jewish law, which establishes the very tactile and physical role of exoteric ritual in the spiritual process of Jewish religious life. Jesus, early Christians such as the Apostle Paul argued, ended such anachronisms: now your salvation happened in your heart with the cleansing power of Jesus’ sacrifice. This necessarily made Judaism a lesser religion at best and a false Gospel at worst, and this played out not just between Jews and Christians but between Christians and Christians as they cast challenges at each other to avoid such “Judaizing” influences.⁸⁶

As the centuries wore on, several ideas about Jews were parsed out in analysis of what became known as the New Testament. Jewish leaders were now understood

as having been responsible for the death of Jesus, not just the Roman authorities, and this emerged specifically from the allegedly problematic Pharisees, who were the origins of the Rabbinic Judaism that has reigned since the destruction of the Second Israelite Temple in 70 C.E. Jewish apartness, dictated in part by *halakha* and *kashrut*, was beginning to be seen as conniving and conspiratorial, part of their inherent rejection of Jesus' truth, and this even allowed for the resurrection of some pre-Christian stereotypes and allegations that others had leveled against historic Jewish communities.⁸⁷ The economic conditions of Christian Europe forced many Jews into particular economic and political roles, which Christian leaders utilized to reinforce their increasingly conspiratorial and malevolent understanding of Jews, which escalated severely in the second Millennium.⁸⁸ The blood libel, accusations of host desecration, the pogroms responding to economic strife, and modern antisemitism all emerge from this process, a structural element inlaid in the creation of Christian society.

This remains relevant for several reasons. First, these ideas remain embedded in Christian text and theology. The Gospels and the Book of Acts have been described as holding 450 antisemitic passages (an average of more than twice each page), including blaming the Jewish people as a whole for killing Jesus, that God curses the Jews for such a killing, that Jews abandoned their covenant and Gentiles have claimed it, that Jews are blind to Jesus as Moshiache, and that the Jewish God is the God of wrath compared to the Christian God of love.⁸⁹ The way enemies are described in Christian literature passively demonizes Jews, whether calling them Pharisees or lionizing a Jesus who attacked the perfidy of Jewish leaders. Early church leaders like Paul or, later, Augustine wrote of the problems of Jewish religion, an antiquated, confused belief system that strayed from God's plan. Martin Luther was celebrated for breaking the hold the Catholic Church had, but he also believed that the Jews were liars who should have their synagogues burned. Antisemitism remains an intact part of the Christian canon, and if we take many of their basic theological commitments seriously, they directly indict the Jewish people, such as the demands that Jews cease their religious traditions if they want to gain entry into the afterlife.

Second, "structural Christian anti-Judaism" exists inside the institutions we have today that continue the belief systems. All three major branches of American Christianity, Catholicism, Protestantism, and Orthodoxy, have extensive histories of antisemitic pogroms, preaching, and politics, so much so that there is scarcely an institution that has escaped this legacy. This is on display anytime you walk through many historic churches, adorned with images sacralizing the alleged Jewish attack on Christian children or portraying Jewish children as suckling on a pig's nipples (called *Judensau*).⁹⁰ Because we live in a world of religious continuity, these are baked into the antecedents we experience in subsequent institutions today and, thus, are ready for any attempt to draw from the past to explain issues and feelings in the present. Just as "structural antisemitism" describes a process by which someone looks to a romanticized past as a way of dealing with the very real struggles of

modern capitalism, “structural Christian anti-Judaism” is the process whereby a radical Christian of today looks to the church’s past to find answers for the failure of the modern church to deliver on the promises of salvation and happiness.

Today we have a number of trends in American Christianity, which follow trends of Christianity globally, whereby radically anti-modern theologies are being resurrected as a foil to what many reactionaries see as rampant liberalism in institutions like the Catholic Church, Presbyterian Church, United States, the United Methodist Church, or the Southern Baptist Convention. These dissident Christian movements are often defining themselves by taking positions mainstream Christian institutions publicly reject, and the most definitive of these can often be a traditional position on Judaism. An example of this was when 25% of United Methodist Church congregations (itself the third-largest American denomination) left the church in 2020 over the shifts in favor of LGBTQ inclusion and, in 2022, formed the more conservative Global Methodist Church.⁹¹ More specifically, however, further right trends that outpace even the Global Methodist Church are introducing a more explicit form of Christian anti-Judaism, often presenting themselves not as a more conservative alternative to mainstream Christianity but as dissident radicals reviving the true teachings of Christ. This includes more reactionary positions on issues like gender roles, LGBTQ rights, and, of course, Jews. As New Independent Fundamentalist Baptist Pastor Steven Anderson says, Jews are required to relinquish their earlier theological commitments and follow the one true faith: cease to be Jews and become Christians or burn for eternity.⁹²

We see this trend best represented by the return of popularity of Catholic propagandist and former professor E. Michael Jones, an antisemitic author who has written dozens of volumes outlining what he sees as the theological failures of Judaism and its poisonous effect on the Jewish mind. Jones believes that the Jewish tradition has pushed Jews to become a modern scourge, pushing radical ideologies like Marxism to destroy civilization. The problem for Jones is in their ideas, not their blood, or as he puts it, the disease is not fatal. But Jones’ ideas require something for the modern audience that simply was not necessary for earlier generations of anti-Jewish polemicists: he has to paint a complex worldview.⁹³

To do this, Jones, just like Steven Anderson, relies on the broader world of antisemitic conspiracy theories and para-White nationalist politics to argue that Jews are not simply of a false religion, but actively trying to destroy the West. Jones implicates Jewish behavior as likely the cause of the Holocaust, a logical reaction to the dangerous threat of Jewish Communism. Jones relies on other far-right figures for citations, such as White nationalist Kevin MacDonald, a person who expressly believes in racial antisemitism rather than the theologically centered Christian incarnation. Jones has become an inspiration for people like Fuentes and the Groyppers, or far-right “TradWife” influencers like former alt-right affiliate, Ayla Stewart.⁹⁴

This requires antisemitic slippage: it starts by arguing Jews failure standards of Christian salvation but extends into a broader antisemitic worldview and activism.

Steven Anderson takes similar positions to Jones, going so far as to show that he has some Jewish ancestry as a way of proving his antisemitism is non-racial. (He notably has a multi-racial church.) But despite this, he reproduces most modern antisemitic ideas best found in the White nationalist world, such as producing an entire documentary to dispute the basic facts of the Holocaust and to suggest that Zionists invented this narrative to destroy the West.⁹⁵ In his church's 2022 documentary *Marching to Zion* (which as of this writing is still freely available on YouTube), he interviews rabbis and Jewish theologians before trying to dispute basic facts of the Jewish religious narrative, suggesting that modern Judaism evolved from a pagan cult built around the Semitic God Moloch. This is like the common claim found in White nationalist circles that Jews worship a "Volcano God," suggesting that modern Judaism is actually a perversion of the Israelite religion found in the Tanakh. Anderson claims that Jews faced persecution because of their scandalous business practices and that modern Jews do not meet the standards established in scripture. Anderson publicly suggests that Jewish critics of his political and social views (or those similar to his) should be killed and sent to hell, something he extends regularly to the LGBTQ community as what he believes is the correct application of Biblical law.⁹⁶

While Anderson's movement is fringe, it is growing. Since the pastors are simply ordained by one another and no one is expected to attend seminary, they have been able to spread their ideas aggressively with low financial risk or institutional demands. Anderson's movement has also cleverly used social media and video hosting websites, including alternatives like Rumble.

While Christian anti-Judaism often runs in direct contrast to White nationalist racial antisemitism, particularly those who reject Christianity itself as a Jewish construct, modern Christian anti-Jewish polemics have become a favorite among the most recent class of neo-Nazis. For example, Anderson is a favorite on the website GoyimTV, which hosts videos already taken off YouTube for their aggressive antisemitism and is run by the neo-Nazi Goyim Defense League. Anderson's audio is frequently clipped for White nationalist podcasts, such as The Daily Shoah, who often plays a clip from Anderson's Holocaust Denial documentary where he says he "want[s] to talk about cremation."⁹⁷ Just as has always happened in the White nationalist movement, they will find rhetorical allies wherever they can, even when their underlying ideology runs in direct contrast with the racist perspective on offer.

The growth in Christian anti-Judaism is difficult to track, as are all forms of antisemitism, particularly since many trends exist outside of mainstream churches. This means that we have fewer numbers of who believes what and where, other than looking to the numbers of those who are adherents of implicated movements. *The Anti-Defamation League (ADL)* put Anderson's church at 300 participants in 2017 with a growing number of affiliates, as well as other signals of potential growth like high viewer counts for videos and the popularity of King James Version exclusivity.⁹⁸ What is more important than the numbers of participants is its effect

on larger political movements, and with NIFB activists participating in larger anti-LGBTQ and anti-abortion protests around the country, they are poised to become a significant force.

For the Groypers, a form of traditionalist Catholicism is popular, one that was influential in an earlier generation of the alt-right, the entire paleoconservative movement, and even open White nationalism. As has been documented extensively, traditionalist Catholicism is defined by its rejection of the Second Vatican Council in 1962–1965 that, among other things, liberalized Church doctrine toward Jews. This created major schisms in the Church, with the Society of Pope Pius the X (SPPX) acting as the most significant. There exist hundreds of church formations with various levels of relationships with the Holy See, many of which express open antisemitism. An example was the controversy in the early 2000s with Bishop Richard Williamson, who served with the SPPX and was asked to resign after openly anti-Jewish comments and Holocaust Denial.⁹⁹ These issues remain rampant in these sectors of the church while young people are turning more heavily toward traditional Catholicism, and we are seeing traditional Catholic themes reach billions of views on platforms like TikTok,¹⁰⁰ a factor showing up in far-right media personalities such as Dasha Nekrasova from the Red Scare podcast,¹⁰¹ or various people associated with the Manhattan “Dimes Square” art scene.¹⁰² In a 2018 study, Jeffrey E. Cohen showed that while attitudes toward Jews in America have largely gotten “warmer” between 1964 and 2016, they have started to “cool” off for Catholics.¹⁰³ Catholic conversion has become a major piece of the emerging right flank of the Republican Party and National Conservatives, with Vice Presidential candidate JD Vance as the best known example.

Conclusion: Problems in Assessing Christian Nationalist Antisemitism

Defenses and Complications

Because Christianity is the most significant site of the enactment of antisemitic violence and policy, the politicized Christian community is often the most active in fighting accusations. This is especially true considering the coalition that Christian activists have created since the 1950s whereby they attempted to actively recruit Jews into a narrative of “Judeo-Christian civilization” that could be an effective vessel for emerging anti-communism. Christian nationalists likewise must answer for the fact that their vision of a Christian nation necessarily erases Judaism and other minorities, something that is implicit to their entire self-stated model of politics.

Typically, a few defenses have been used to defend against these accusations and, while effective rhetorically, they have fit alongside these emerging trends in antisemitism. Zionism has been the most sustained example of this, something that has helped the Right to formulate their own theory of antisemitism by reconfiguring

the focus on antisemitism away from populism and conspiracy theories and onto an aggressive defense of pro-Israel policy, particularly when it comes to the Israel–Palestinian conflict.

This primary answer for Christian nationalists is the same as for much of the antisemitic far-right in the first half of the 20th century: send them away. Christian Zionism sees Israel as a site for Jewish migration, the “ingathering” that is required to trigger the sequence of events they believe is prophesied in the Book of Revelation. This, ultimately, provides evangelicals with two benefits by first arranging geopolitics to fit with their prophetic vision and, second, eliminating a non-Christian constituency from the country they wish to cleanse. Rhetorically, their support for Israel is used as evidence of their support for Jews, which has been accepted by many mainstream Jewish organizations whose political sensibilities center more on defending Israel than on the long-term sustainability of the diaspora.

Additionally, White Christian nationalists have continued to build alliances with the American Jewish Right, particularly with groups like AIPAC and the ZOA, which are shifting even further to the Right. In this case, Jewish issues move from a complex of interlocking political priorities into an entirely Israel-focused dichotomy where Christian Zionists appear as more dependable for meeting their goals than the largely liberal Jewish electorate.

While trends in Christian nationalism do largely indicate the increased prevalence of antisemitism, the correlation between religiosity and antisemitism should never be assumed. According to one 2021 study of the World Index of Religious Belief, the higher presence of religious motivations in a particular country showed correlation to lower levels of antisemitism. The researchers theorized this came actually from the belief in some Christian circles that they had natural allies in Jews, a claim that many on the Christian Right make today.¹⁰⁴ It is secondly important to acknowledge the secular, pagan, and even anti-Christian discourse in much of White nationalism, including the alt-right, radical traditionalists, ethnic-pagans, identitarians, and other movements that see Christianity largely as a Jewish invention to confuse Aryans from worshiping their own indigenous Gods.¹⁰⁵

Another counterargument that many on the Christian Right make to accusations of the implicit antisemitism of many Christian nationalist political and theological positions is to point to Muslim antisemitism and suggest it is a greater threat. This has a two-fold effect: it denies responsibility for their propagation of antisemitism and it tries to recruit Jewish allies into their project of American Islamophobia. Some Jewish organizations have aided them in this, such as the ZOA’s direct coordination with Islamophobic areas of the GOP, and ADL research has tried to prove that antisemitism is almost twice as prevalent among Muslims (49%) as it is among Christians (27%).¹⁰⁶ This argument hides two very clear problems. The first is that Christians are both overwhelmingly numerous in the United States (about 63% of the U.S. population is some type of Christian) versus Muslims and are among the most powerful single demographic in American politics. Secondly, antisemitism is a foundationally Christian phenomenon, emerging from the conditions of

Christian Europe and the Christian notion of supersessionism. As scholars like Matthias Kuntzel have argued, Muslim countries received antisemitism as a type of ideological export, particularly from intentional seeding by Nazi political operatives, thus adapting a European Christian idea into Middle Eastern Muslim contexts.¹⁰⁷ No matter how prevalent anti-Jewish ideas have become in some Muslim circles, they lack the same structural foundations and have a long history of Jewish–Muslim coexistence to look back on, and Muslims hold far less political power in Western superpowers.

Additionally, there could be an argument that Christian nationalist antisemitism is itself not exactly antisemitism, which preferences dislike of Jews, but actually a broader xenophobia against non-Christians. A 2023 study by Jacob Dennen and Paul A. Djupe for the *Social Science Quarterly* found “strong evidence that Christian nationalism is linked to a variety of boundary-enforcing mechanisms that together promote antisemitism.” This came from the favoring of Christianity to other religions, and Judaism was not an exception. It is important to note, however, that they found that “Christian nationalists are prejudiced against all non-Christian groups, and their prejudice against Jews is not special.”¹⁰⁸ That said, in a recent comparative study on the prevalence of antisemitism across the political spectrum, it was found clearly that antisemitism is more implicit, frequent, and severe in right-wing politics, like those held by White Christian nationalists. Eitan Hersh and Laura Royden, in their paper on “Antisemitic Attitudes Across the Ideological Spectrum,” write,

Beliefs such as that Jews are responsible for the death of Jesus can spill into secular hostility. Given that strongly identified Christians (particularly White Christians) are overwhelmingly Republican, it may be that antisemitism on the right actually derives from this type of Christian religious antisemitism.¹⁰⁹

This lends to the idea that an exchange of antisemitic ideas occurs between elements on the Right, with Christian antisemitism moving to the secular Right, which then may re-introduce these specifically anti-Jewish ideas to Christian nationalists already theologically and ideologically primed to accept them.

Unanswered Questions

While we have analyzed three antisemitic formations, there are others whose growth is clearly observable. In the 2023 Antisemitism Audit data, even when re-analyzed independently to get a clearer view of what that data meant, there was a dramatic growth in organized White nationalism. The scale, compared to the peak of the Trump years and the high point for the alt-right in 2017, the numbers of incidents featured by groups like Patriot Front, the Goyim Defense League, the various “Active Clubs,” Blood Tribe, and others is unprecedented. When we consider this alongside the growth of White Christian nationalism, it is hard to not assume potential correlation.¹¹⁰

One manifestation of this emerging antisemitism could be called the “racialization of Christian antisemitism,” which means the injection of antisemitic ideas specifically from White nationalism that is then re-interpreted through a Christian nationalist framework. There appears to be an increasing presence of racially oriented antisemitism in White Christian nationalist communities, but we need more research about the rate and pipeline of those moving from a more religiously oriented Christian antisemitism to integrating a racial antisemitism. While this seems to be a clear trend, we do not have sufficient data to say the rate of increase with statistical confidence. This is one of many trends that increase as the prevalence of antisemitic ideas increases more broadly, and so additional research is necessary to understand this process of integration of other antisemitic ideas.

We also have seen the systematization of certain conspiratorial frameworks beyond even the mass adoption of “post-antisemitism,” such as the large plurality of Republicans who now believe that the 2020 election was “stolen” by Democrats. According to a 2019 article in *Scientific American*, conspiracy theories come in clusters, whereby the introduction of one likely leads to others in the same believer, community, or, perhaps, even society.¹¹¹ Given that the majority of the history of American conspiracy theories is rooted in the history of antisemitism,¹¹² there are very real concerns about the effect political systematization of conspiracy theories will have on the prevalence of antisemitism at large.

We also do not know the long-term effects that the 2023–2024 Israel–Gaza war will have, which has seemed to accelerate antisemitism from Christian nationalists. This is also happening at a time when many Christian nationalists are now using this opportunity to offer up an explicitly antisemitic re-interpretation of anti-Zionism. This is happening at a time when anti-Zionism itself is being codified into law as antisemitism, despite what many Jewish groups have said in contest of this conflation. Whether or not this will lead to an accelerated form of antisemitic Christian Zionism, a kind of “America First” anti-Israel antisemitism, or something else entirely is unclear. What further complicates this is that many mainstream “anti-antisemitism” institutions, as critics have pointed out, are conflating anti-Zionism with antisemitism at levels that can undermine the viability of their statistical information.

Last Thoughts

As has been shown across the chapter, White Christian nationalism remains the largest politicized force having the ability to perpetuate antisemitic ideas. It also builds on ideologies and systems, particularly fundamentalist Christianity and a colonial model of “whiteness,” which are themselves directly connected to the creation, proliferation, and systematization of antisemitism. This means that as antisemitism increases, as all recent studies have gained consensus on, there are many reasons to look to this political community as being a primary locus of it.

The three trends in antisemitism we have discussed are all expressions of the changing political conditions in which antisemitic ideas can be expressed, and their particularities are tied to the receptivity from their audiences, the methods for which ideas can be reproduced, and where the electorate is positioning their sense of identity and outrage. All of these, however, as has been true historically, are built on a sense of political, social, and economic crisis. As income inequality accelerates, climate change becomes more entrenched and forces massive changes in the quality of life in the Global North and sparks mass migration from the Global South, and political stability continues to falter as we leave an era of American hegemony and move into a multipolar world, the conditions to further reproduce antisemitism are ripe. This means that we can expect this question to have a renewed relevance and to see these three new manifestations to even grow beyond their appearance today.

Since these are the conditions that also grow other forms of bigoted or oppressive ideologies and systems, such as anti-immigrant xenophobia, anti-Blackness, trans- and queerphobia, and misogyny, it is hard to miss that this creates a certain communal overlap between communities targeted by those reactionary projects and those threatening Jews. This creates a certain window in potential solutions in the coming year, which must rely on the commonalities between communities facing danger, knowing that when one of these groups face victimization, all others with similar structural problems are likely to face this as well. This means that solutions we develop in the coming years should focus on ecumenicism and communal collaboration, noting that all of these communities are stronger when they are working in collaboration to undermine common adversaries.

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