Orthodox Religious Beliefs and Anti-Semitism: A Replication of Glock and Stark in the Netherlands*

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The Glock and Stark theoretical framework on Christian beliefs and anti-Semitism implies that orthodox religious beliefs perpetuate secular anti-Semitism via particularism and religious anti-Semitism. Several critics have argued that the major weakness of this study is its failure to examine explanatory variables other than religious beliefs. This paper addresses these issues using data from a 1990-91 national Dutch survey. Although the results tend to support the assumption that nonreligious variables are far more important to the explanation of anti-Semitism and, too, that they attenuate the impact of Christian orthodoxy, the effects of the latter are by no means spurious. The most important conclusion of this paper is therefore that there still is, in Holland at least, a religious factor at work, albeit a modest one, generating anti-Semitic beliefs.

Numerous studies have documented that people who consider themselves to be Christians are more likely to be anti-Semitic than those who are not religious. Despite the large amount of data that has been collected on this issue, however, the problem of whether and, if so, how and to what extent Christian religion per se engenders less compassion for Jews has never really been solved. Ambiguity remains because most studies have not been theory-guided, and consequently their findings were purely ad hoc. Further, in studying religion and its role in supporting anti-Semitism, one must always consider the possibility that nonreligious variables may create spurious patterns of relationships. Relatively little research has yet been done, however, to determine their confounding influences in order to support or challenge the assumption — held by many but made explicit by a few — that the Christian churches are conducive to anti-Jewish sentiments in their members.

This paper examines the role orthodox Christian beliefs play in religious and secular anti-Semitism in the Netherlands, using data from a 1990-91 national Dutch survey. The study was triggered by the recent revival of hostility towards Jews across much of western Europe. Many of those who try to understand this upsurge emphasize anti-Semitic prejudice deeply entrenched within European Christian culture and history as the core of the problem. We therefore decided to examine whether vestiges of this legacy remain in Holland to-

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day. It is our intent in this paper, first, to review previous studies, notably the seminal works of Glock and Stark, to highlight their accomplishments and failures and, second, to investigate empirically the effect orthodox Christianity has on anti-Semitic prejudice, with and without controlling for nonreligious variables.

GLOCK AND STARK AND THEIR CRITICS

The study that has argued most forcefully that a large percentage of anti-Semitic people have a religious basis for their prejudice — according to the authors, at that time in the United States at least one-quarter — and that certain theological beliefs still play a causal role in anti-Semitism today is Glock's and Stark's (1966) "Christian Beliefs and Anti-Semitism." In this research, which became the subject of heated controversy, the process that makes people vulnerable to a religiously based hostility toward Jews is postulated as a multilinked causal chain, with each link tied to the next, beginning with a rigidly held orthodox faith.

Glock and Stark argued that a religious doctrine that claims an absoluteness for Christ and postulates the universal applicability of the Christian message predisposes believers toward an exclusionist stance and encourages them to see the Christian truth as the only religious truth. This commitment to a particularistic version of Christian faith induces hostile feelings toward all those not accepting the traditional Christian teachings. However, because of the Jews' visibility as a group in the United States and their special link with Christianity, Glock and Stark argued, it is likely that if hostility flows from religious particularism it will most often be directed against Jews. These hostile feelings toward Jews lead Christians to hold negative religious images of the historic Jews of the biblical period. The theme that dominates this religious hostility — as distinct from secular hostility — is the charge that Jews are collectively responsible for the death of Christ and that they thereby have provoked God's eternal wrath and punishment. This judgment of Jews as "Christ-killers" is considered to have bearing on the evaluation of modern-day Jews: Jews today continue to bear the stigma of their rejection of Jesus Christ. Finally, hostile religious conceptions of modern Jews are considered to perpetuate more general stereotypes and to spill over into secular anti-Semitism. For those who believe that Jews are damned on religious grounds, it is only a small step also to believe that they are clannish, dishonest, unpatriotic, and subversive.

This chain of beliefs leading from literal orthodoxy to secular anti-Semitism via the intermediate stages of religious particularism, religious hostility toward historical, and then toward modern Jews provided the theoretical framework Glock and Stark used to investigate secular anti-Semitism. To this they added that if an individual accepts norms of religious libertarianism — defined by the authors (1966: 86) as "an unwillingness to take action toward persons who are perceived to violate one's own religious standards" — the causal sequence may be partly broken at any of the steps leading from orthodoxy to religious hostility toward modern Jews. Moreover, they speculated that orthodoxy, religious particularism, religious hostility toward historic Jews, and religious libertarianism do not have a direct effect on secular anti-Semitism. These effects are expressed indirectly through religious hostility toward modern Jews. This point they regard as crucial to their main thesis.

Glock and Stark believed that they had established this thesis by demonstrating that each link in the sequence is correlated with an index intended to represent the preceding links. Thus they found, for example, that "religious dogmatism" — a composite index of orthodoxy, particularism, negative religious image of the historic Jew, and religious anti-libertarianism — is positively associated with both religious hostility toward modern Jews and secular anti-Semitism. They demonstrated also that religious hostility toward modern Jews is positively associated with secular anti-Semitism, even when religious dogmatism was
controlled for. Religious dogmatism, however, was not associated with secular anti-Semitism when the effects of religious hostility toward modern Jews were partialed out. Hence religious hostility interprets the relationship between religious dogmatism and secular anti-Semitism. The author’s climactic chapters interpret at length the positive correlation between secular anti-Semitism and “religious bigotry” — an omnibus index that combines the measures for all preceding stages in the postulated chain. On the basis of this finding, the authors concluded that there is indeed a religious factor at work in the United States generating anti-Semitic attitudes.

Glock and Stark’s research has received much appreciative attention in various periodicals and it has stimulated at least two replications in which it gained support: Mauss’s (1968) study of Mormons and Kersten’s (1970) survey of Lutherans. However, the study has also started a flurry of debate. Several commentators put a “coup de grace” (Glock and Stark 1973:58) on their agenda and criticized it on both theoretical and methodological grounds. Two issues deserve brief comment.

Several reviewers (Furfey 1966; Allport 1967; Dittes 1967, 1969, 1971; Levinson [in Williams et al. 1967]; Vanecko 1967; Moberg 1972:62) have argued that Glock and Stark constructed their theoretical edifice on tautologous associations by using as indicators of the intervening variables measures that critics consider to be indicators of the dependent variables. The decisive step in the book is the authors’ attempt to demonstrate the effect of religious bigotry on the evaluation of Jews in everyday life. Now the claim is made that Glock and Stark had stacked the deck in favor of finding a positive correlation between religious bigotry and secular anti-Semitism by including the following statements in their religious bigotry index: “The Jews can never be forgiven for what they did to Jesus until they accept Him as the True Savior” and “Among themselves, Jews think Christians are ignorant for believing Christ was the Son of God.” The strange point about the inclusion of these items — which many would consider anti-Jewish statements, albeit in a religious context — is that they create an artificial correlation between anti-Semitic beliefs and religious bigotry. The index does not capture religious bigotry per se but “Christian opposed-to-Jews bigotry” (Johnstone, in Mayer et al. 1966:601). Given the nature of the scale, there is also no theoretical reason to expect religious bigotry to produce anti-Semitism. It may also be regarded as a consequence of a general anti-Semitic attitude (Dittes 1967, 1969). In sum, Glock and Stark have not shown that Christian beliefs are correlated with anti-Semitism because the former were not measured by religious items but, instead, contaminated by items already representing anti-Jewish beliefs.

Equally important is the opponents’ comment that the Glock and Stark model reflects little acceptance of previous research and that their arguments postulate too simplistic a view of the relationship between Christian beliefs and anti-Semitism.


2. Several reviewers complained that Glock and Stark failed to report measures of association between their key concepts orthodoxy and secular anti-Semitism. Middleton (1973) analyzed the Stark, Foster, Glock, and Quinley (1971:127) data and found the Pearson correlation to be a mere .075. Lotz (1977), who reexamined the Glock and Stark (1966) data, found a coefficient of .185. He also argued that the exclusion of the secular anti-Semitism items in which Jews are compared with Christians would strongly attenuate the relationship.

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(1966:187) claimed that their interpretation is "the only theory at present that adequately accounts for the powerful relationship between religion and anti-Semitism," and hardly even alluded to the work which has been done in the tradition established by Adorno and his associates, Allport, Rokeach, and Srole, to mention a few. A related charge is that they neglect psychological explanations of anti-Semitism that could have exonerated the influence of religiosity. As several opponents suggested, the major weakness of the study is its failure to examine explanatory factors other than religious orthodoxy, which prevents resolution of the problem of spuriousness. Although the authors point out that theirs is not a general theory of religion and prejudice and that their explanation would not likely hold for anti-black prejudice, they fail to consider the possibility that Christian beliefs and anti-Semitism may both be caused by a particular cognitive style, psychological orientation, or social characteristics. By not introducing control variables of this kind, they leave the question of spuriousness unsettled and leave open the possibility that both religious orthodoxy and anti-Semitic prejudice may be common consequences of some third set of factors. To prevent misunderstandings, Glock and Stark have, to some extent, taken the role of devil's advocate and searched for several possible common causes of religion and anti-Semitism that might explain away their findings: education, occupation, size of community of upbringing, region of upbringing, political allegiance, sex, age, and Protestant-Catholic affiliation. But these controls were introduced one at a time, not simultaneously. Moreover, they did not examine whether their results hold up controlling for other attitudes that are important predictors of anti-Semitic prejudice, such as anomie (Srole 1956) and authoritarianism (Adorno et al. 1950).

In reexamining the Glock and Stark data, Ploch (1974) showed that on a crucial point their causal model was not confirmed by the findings, and concluded that "the data do not demonstrate a causal connection between Christian beliefs and anti-Semitism. Further, any correlation between them may be spurious rather than developmental" (1974: 190). Middleton (1973), too, demonstrated that secular anti-Semitism is not caused by Christian orthodoxy. The strongest effects of orthodoxy on anti-Semitism in this study were not expressed indirectly through intervening variables, as in the Glock and Stark model, but directly. And this direct effect was negative, instead of positive. Furthermore, although the religious belief variables together accounted for 15% of the variance in anti-Semitism, when background characteristics (family income and education) and important intervening variables (authoritarianism and anomie) were held constant, the 15% reduced to 2%. Hence, despite their apparent importance, upon closer examination it be comes clear that religious beliefs are not as predictive as Glock and Stark had thought. The most important determinants of anti-Semitism in Middleton's study were authoritarianism and anomie. Similarly, the findings of Hoge and Carroll (1975) failed to provide confirmatory evidence for the theoretical model formulated by Glock and Stark. When background (age and education) and social variables (dogmatism and anomie) were controlled, the effect of the religious factors on anti-Semitism diminished to a more or less inconsequential point, demonstrating that the relationships were largely spurious. Rokeach's dogmatism and Srole's anomie overshadowed the impact of Christian beliefs as predictors of anti-Semitism. Roof (1974, 1978) also challenged the Glock and Stark theory. He argued that education and, most notably, localism reduce the influence of orthodoxy on anti-Semitism. These reexaminations urge caution. They make clear that Glock and Stark may have overestimated the role Christian beliefs play in anti-Semitism and, too, that the beliefs themselves may be anchored within a larger constellation of cognitive and culturally based responses.

Glock and Stark examined their theory using data from the San Francisco Bay Area (Glock and Stark 1966) and a U.S. nationwide sample (Stark et al. 1971) and found it, by and large, to be sustained. Our interest is to determine the generalizability of their findings by using cross-sectional data from a national Dutch survey. We first examine the influence of Christian orthodoxy on anti-Semitism as conceived by Glock and Stark, and, second, control the findings by introducing the background variables and social attitudes discussed above. Note that our interest focuses upon the general propensity of the outcomes, rather than their dynamic characteristics. Like all cross-sectional analyses, this study is unable to resolve the ambiguity in the direction of causality. Inferences about causal processes are therefore tentative and partial at best.

DATA AND MEASUREMENTS

Subjects

Data were taken from the national survey "Social and cultural developments in the Netherlands," conducted in the winter of 1990-91. Following a stratified probability sampling technique designed to represent the adult population aged 18 to 70, we selected 1180 respondents from the general Dutch population. The cross-sectional sample is representative of the Dutch population, at least as far as the background characteristics sex, age, marital status, and their combinations are concerned. Subjects were excluded from further analysis if they had missing data on any of the variables employed in the study at hand. This list-wise deletion of incomplete data reduced the sample used for analysis to 728 respondents, or 62% of the effective base sample. Readers who require further information on the survey design are encouraged to consult the guide, including codebook and technical reports, of Religion in Dutch society 1990, by Eisinga et al. (1992).

Attitude Scales

The measurement of the items is also reported in the guide referred to above and thus will be only briefly described here. The seven-item religious orthodoxy scale (Mokken's (1970) reliability coefficient rho = .87) analyzed the acceptance of traditional beliefs about God, eternal life, the Bible, heaven, hell, the purgatory, and the devil. Religious particularism (two items with an alpha of .56) measured an exclusionistic interpretation of Christian faith, claiming that the Christian truth is the only religious truth and that all those of other persuasions are misguided. The reliability of this scale may seem rather low, but it included only two items. If the scale hypothetically had had six items, for example, alpha would have been .79. Religious anti-Semitism was measured by three items (alpha = .84) indicating a hostile attitude toward modern-day Jews on religious grounds. They include the charge that the Jewish people, both contemporary Jews and their ancient forebears, are responsible for

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4 One reviewer suggested that this study does not investigate Christian orthodoxy's contribution to anti-Semitism but fundamentalist ideas and their link to the latter. Indeed, our orthodoxy scale contains items — e.g., "belief in the devil" — that are unorthodox in the official theologies of several mainline Protestant groups in Holland. We nevertheless labelled the scale religious orthodoxy because this replication used essentially the same items as Glock and Stark did in their measure of Christian orthodoxy. Moreover, fundamentalism has typically been characterized, by Glock and Stark and many others, in terms of something external to belief content, e.g., ethnocentric mind-set or closed belief system (see McFarland 1989; Kirkpatrick 1993). Hence to use the term fundamentalism would be at least equally confusing.

5 This coefficient was calculated using the Spearman-Brown formula: \( r_{kk} = k \times r_{xx} / (1 + (k-1) \times r_{xx}) \), where \( r_{kk} \) is the reliability of the scale that has \( k \) times as much items as the original scale, \( r_{xx} \) is the reliability of the original scale, and \( k \) is the multiplier.
the death of Jesus Christ and that they thereby have provoked God’s eternal wrath and punishment. Anti-Jewish statements of a secular nature were expressed in the seven-item secular anti-Semitism scale (alpha = .92). They include notorious stereotypes of Jews being pushy, clannish, avaricious, and conniving (Quinley and Glock 1979). To cover authoritarianism, a six-item version of the F-scale (alpha = .77) was derived from Adorno et al. (1950) and incorporated into the survey. Srole’s (1956) personal anomie scale — six items with an alpha of .77 — was used to measure social malintegration and (political) powerlessness. Four localism statements (alpha = .64), based on Roof (1978), assessed the extent to which the respondent was oriented to the immediate social locale.

The scale scores for religious orthodoxy were obtained by counting the number of positive responses to the items and religious particularism was also constructed as an unweighted additive scale. Each item of the remaining scales were scored on a 5-point continuum ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree. They were subjected to the principal axis extraction technique with a threshold of 1.0 for the eigenvalues. After items with a low intercorrelation (< .20) or a low communality (< .25) had been removed refactoring were made and factor scores were obtained.

Social Background Characteristics

Next to sex, age, and region, we included five background variables in the analyses. The variable religious denomination divided the respondents into Catholics, Calvinists, Dutch Reformed, members of other Christian churches, and nonmembers. Education was indicated by the highest educational attainment: the seven-point scale ranged from elementary school to university. A single item referring to political allegiance asked the respondents to give a self-description of their political orientation on a ten-point left-right continuum. Urbanization, a rural-urban continuum, was indexed by several measures drawn from census material of the Netherlands’ Central Bureau of Statistics, including population size, density, and heterogeneity (percentage rural farm population). Social class was measured by the EGP-index developed by Erikson, Goldthorpe, and Portocarero (1983). Sex, region, denomination, and social class were included as dummy variables in the analyses below. The omitted categories were females, nonmembers, west, and people who have never had a paid job, respectively.

ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

Replication of Glock and Stark. To examine the influence of orthodox Christian beliefs on religious and secular anti-Semitism, metric variables were transformed into standard scores and thereafter multiple regression analyses were applied to the data. The analysis was conducted in a two-step process. The first step was to reexamine the theoretical framework of Glock and Stark — that is, the chain of beliefs leading from religious orthodoxy to secular anti-Semitism via religious particularism and religious anti-Semitism. The results are reported in Table 1.

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6. Although the correlations between the independent variables were not strong enough to anticipate problems of multicollinearity, tolerance values and variance inflation factors (VIF) were obtained to examine linear relationships among the predictor variables. The tolerance values were all greater than .31 and the VIFs were all smaller than 3.27 indicating low levels of multicollinearity. The zero-order correlations for all the variables used in this study may be obtained from the first author upon request.
As can be seen, religious orthodoxy has a moderately strong positive influence on religious particularism. Both particularism and, albeit more weakly so, religious orthodoxy have a positive effect on religious anti-Semitism, which, in turn, has a strong effect on secular anti-Semitism. The direct effects of orthodoxy and particularism on secular anti-Semitism, on the other hand, lack significance. This observation is inconsistent with Middleton's (1973) finding that religious orthodoxy has a direct negative effect on secular anti-Semitism. Instead, the results support the Glock and Stark argument that the effects of orthodoxy and religious particularism on secular anti-Semitism are expressed indirectly through the intervening variable expressing religious hostility toward Jews.

*Extension of Glock and Stark.* These patterns of relationship may be spurious, however, due to the lack of control for other predictor variables of anti-Semitism. Therefore, the second step in the analysis was to introduce additional explanatory variables to determine whether the findings presented in Table 1 overestimate the role of orthodox beliefs and religious particularism. A summary table of the results is presented in Table 2.

According to Glock and Stark, a rigidly held orthodox faith induces believers to adopt a particularistic religious view and adds to the ingroup a sense of "God's chosen people" superiority. The Dutch findings presented in Table 2 support this argument. Religious orthodoxy and a Calvinist religious affiliation are positively related to religious particularism. In addition, one of the most striking findings apparent in Table 2 is that with the exception of education and political allegiance, nonreligious variables have no relevance to the explanation of a particularistic religious view. Accordingly, no evidence emerges here for the critics' argument that nonreligious variables are more important than Christian religious beliefs, at least insofar as religious particularism is concerned.

If we look at the results for religious anti-Semitism, however, it is clear that the introduction of nonreligious variables substantially increases the proportion of explained variance. Moreover, they attenuate the effect of particularism and reduce the direct effect of orthodoxy on religious anti-Semitism to a more or less inconsequential point. It does not follow, however, that particularism and orthodoxy have no relevance to the explanation of religious hostility toward Jews. Religious particularism has a substantial direct effect, and, because of its positive influence on particularism, orthodoxy indirectly affects religious anti-Semitism. It follows only that the influence of a rigidly held orthodox faith should not be overemphasized. Authoritarianism, anomie, political allegiance, sex, and localism all appear to be more important in this regard.
### TABLE 2
REGRESSION OF ANTI-SEMITISM ON RELIGIOUS AND NONRELIGIOUS VARIABLES:
REGRESSION COEFFICIENTS AND R-SQUARE (N = 728)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Predictor variables</th>
<th>Religious Particularism</th>
<th>Religious anti-Semitism</th>
<th>Secular anti-Semitism</th>
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<tr>
<td>Religious orthodoxy</td>
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<td>-.02</td>
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<tr>
<td>Religious particularism</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>.11*</td>
<td>-.02</td>
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<tr>
<td>Religious anti-Semitism</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>.41*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Localism</td>
<td>.06</td>
<td>.12*</td>
<td>.14*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Authoritarianism</td>
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<td>.18*</td>
<td>.18*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anomie</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>.15*</td>
<td>.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
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<td>-.09*</td>
<td>.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
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<td>-.07</td>
<td>.15*</td>
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<tr>
<td>Political allegiance</td>
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<td>.15*</td>
<td>.07*</td>
</tr>
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<tr>
<td>other denomination</td>
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</tr>
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<td>.15*</td>
<td>.09</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>R²</td>
<td>.19</td>
<td>.27</td>
<td>.47</td>
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</table>

* Coefficients significant at the .05 level.
— Variables not included in the analysis.

It is important to note that all variables except the dummies have been standardized before the analysis. Therefore, b-coefficients for the interval variables are equivalent to the standardized estimates listed above. Dummy variables for females (sex), nonmembers (denomination), west (region), and people who have never had a paid job (social class) have been surpressed.

Similar conclusions hold for secular anti-Semitism. Neither orthodoxy nor religious particularism has a direct effect on secular anti-Semitism. Yet the data do not warrant the conclusion that these variables have no relevance to the explanation of secular anti-Semitism. Religious particularism has an indirect effect on secular anti-Semitism through its impact on religious anti-Semitism. In addition, religious orthodoxy affects secular anti-Semitism indirectly through its influence on particularism and, thereby, on religious anti-Semitism. However, these indirect effects are not as strong as we would have expected given Glock’s and Stark’s theoretical model. Religious anti-Semitism — which is by far the most important predictor variable of secular anti-Semitism — and authoritarianism, age, localism, region, political allegiance, and social class, all overshadow the impact of orthodoxy and of particularism.
SUMMARY AND DISCUSSION

This study empirically explored the relationship between Christian beliefs and anti-Semitism in the Netherlands using the Glock and Stark theoretical framework. In closing, three conclusions might be formulated.

The first is that our empirical findings provide confirmation for the model formulated by Glock and Stark. Before controlling for background variables and nonreligious attitudes, religious orthodoxy in Holland has a positive effect on secular anti-Semitism via its influence on, first, religious particularism and then on religious anti-Semitism. However, another conclusion is that the introduction of the nonreligious variables substantially diminishes the effects of orthodox religious beliefs. More important to the explanation of religious anti-Semitism are authoritarianism, anomic, political allegiance, sex, and localism, and more important to the prediction of secular anti-Semitism are, next to religious anti-Semitism, authoritarianism, age, localism, region, political allegiance, and social class position. Although the nonreligious variables overshadow the impact of orthodox religious beliefs as predictors of anti-Jewish sentiments, the notion that they create spurious patterns of relationship is not confirmed by the findings. Orthodoxy and particularism have a positive, though weak, indirect effect on religious and secular anti-Semitism. Hence, the third conclusion is that despite the reconciliation and rapprochement between Jews and Christians today there still seems to be, in the Netherlands, an orthodox religious soil nourishing anti-Jewish prejudice.

Finally, weaknesses in the Glock and Stark research model should not lead us to discount the major contribution of their work. Despite the fact that there are shortcomings in both the conception and the execution of the study, it was nonetheless one of the most significant developments in the field. The fact remains that Glock and Stark, much to their credit, set out to measure the impact of Christian beliefs on anti-Semitism much more closely than any other religious researchers before. Moreover, while harboring a good deal of skepticism about their line of thinking, we cannot dismiss their theory out of hand. It would be difficult to find a sociologist of religion who would argue that the content and nature of the beliefs to which the person is committed has no influence upon his or her attitudes toward adherents of other religious faiths. And in the case of Christian-Jewish relations, there are probably very few students of religion who would deny that historically Christianity has played a substantial part in the development of anti-Jewish sentiments. In short, Glock and Stark overlooked nonreligious variables that reduce religion’s influence on anti-Semitic prejudice, but their opponents saw little else. And this remark is no less applicable today than it was some 25 years ago.

REFERENCES


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