more striking when we consider that Islamic jurists discussed the option. Muhammad's expulsion of two Jewish tribes from Medina, and Caliph 'Umar's reported banishment of those Jews still living in the Hijaz (the region encompassing the holy cities of Mecca and Medina) gave rise to the *ḥadīth*, under which "two religions shall not exist together in Arabia." The precedent provided an opportunity for jurists to consider the issue under the rubric, "On Exiling the Jews from Arabia [or the Hijaz]." Legists debated the boundaries of the Hijaz for purposes of applying 'Umar's precedent. Some maintained that the borders extended to the northern edge of the Arabian peninsula. The tenth-century historian al-Ṭabarī, followed by a few jurists of the Mamluk period, was of the opinion that Muslims could cancel the Pact of 'Umar and expel Jews or Christians from *any* predominantly Muslim area once Muslims no longer needed them. The majority view of the jurists over time, however, is that the *dhimmīs* had a presumptive right to reside in Islamic lands—without residential segregation—and that their property had to be protected.[29]

Disregard of expulsion as an expedient can perhaps be explained in part by reference to Baron's thesis concerning the role of "medieval nationalism in the fate of the Jews."[30] Expulsion of the Jews from England, France, and Spain, between 1290 and 1492, was the result of religious, economic, and social factors that came into play when other efforts—principally, conversion to Christianity—failed to achieve the same exclusionary end. Baron contends that expulsion occurred where there was ethnic amalgamation, or when rulers strove for "national unity."[31] In England this "nationalism" grew steadily from the time of the Norman conquest in 1066. In France from the twelfth century on, it took the form of royal centralization at the expense of English and baronial sovereignty. In Spain, it was not to occur until the aggressive national unification policy of King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella at the end of the fifteenth century. In Germany, where any striving for national unity was canceled by universalist (imperial) aspirations or by tribal, regional, or municipal solidarity, no general expulsion of Jews occurred—only wholesale banishment from cities and some principalities during the fifteenth century. Similarly, in Italy, political atomization and ecumenical pretensions in the Papal states prevented large-scale expulsion. The role of nationalism in the exclusion of minorities from society has been pointed out by social scientists working on ethnicity.[32]

Baron's theory has met with resistance in Jewish historiography.[33] The very existence of nationalism in the Middle Ages is questionable.[34] For my purposes, the hypothesis has heuristic value; comparison with the Islamic world might even refine and substantiate Baron's insight into the Christian West. The Islamic world, where expulsion did not occur, lacked even primitive nationalistic tendencies during the Middle Ages. Rather, Islamic

civilization retained its deep-rooted ethnically pluralistic character far longer than did most of Christian Europe. Thus there would have been no impulse to expel Jews or Christians on those grounds. Something akin to expulsion-as-an-expedient occurred in later Islamic times but was unrelated to the forces of nationalism. After the conquest of Constantinople in 1453, the Ottomans forcibly relocated large numbers of Jews to the new capital (renamed Istanbul). Called *sürgün* (exile or deportation) in Turkish, this policy of compulsory migration in the interests of the state was applied to numerous peoples in the Ottoman empire, although the Byzantine Jews—the so-called Romaniotes—felt it to be an "expulsion."[35] Similar deportations of Christians—and, probably, of Jews—to a newly conquered region occurred under the Safavid Shah 'Abbās I of Iran at the beginning of the seventeenth century.[36] In a genuinely anti-Jewish persecution, the Jews of Yemen were temporarily banished to the desert of Mawza', on the shore of the Red Sea, from 1678 to 1681, and the Jewish quarter of Ṣan'ā' was destroyed and its synagogue converted to a mosque. The "Mawza' Exile" (*galut mawza'*), in which many lives were lost and much destruction of property was wrought, entered the literary collective memory of the Jews of Yemen as a great tragedy.[37]

"Persecuting Society"

Whether their persecution is measured in terms of expulsion, murder, assault on property, or forced conversion, the Jews of Islam did not experience physical violence on a scale remotely approaching Jewish suffering in Western Christendom. By and large, even when *dhimmīs* as a group experienced growing oppression and persecution in the postclassical period, the grim conditions found in Europe were not matched. The Black Death, which raged through Europe between 1348 and 1350, witnessed massive pogroms against the Jews, who were believed to have poisoned wells in an attempt to destroy Christian civilization.[38] The Black Death ravaged the Islamic world as well, but nowhere did people there blame the Jews, let alone try to eliminate them. In his study of the Black Death in the Middle East, Michael Dols discusses the contrasting responses of Christian and Muslim societies to their respective infidels during the pandemic. The Christian concepts of "millennialism, militancy toward alien communities, [and] punishment and guilt" that contributed to persecution of the Jews during the plague were not operative in Muslim society.[39] "Compared with the contemporary massacres in Christian Europe," Baron writes of the Mamluk empire in the period 1250–1517, "anti-Jewish riots were both less frequent and less bloody. As a rule they were limited to certain localities and did not assume the epidemic proportions of the assaults by Crusaders or by the frenzied European mobs of 1348–1349 or

1391." He is pinpointing a distinction that applies even more sharply to earlier centuries, the period that is the focus of my book.[40]

How can one explain this difference? The historian R. I. Moore has called medieval Christianity, especially as of the twelfth century, a "persecuting society." The characteristics and historical circumstances that this scholar evidences in support of his conclusion help explain the relatively better condition of the Jews of Islam. According to Moore, beginning in the twelfth century, European Christendom showed increasing hostility to three groups—Jews, heretics, and lepers. The assumed connection between the Devil and both Jews and heretics (linkage between Jews and heretics, of course, went back to early Christian times), and the ascription to Jews and lepers alike of filth, stench, and putrefaction and of menace to Christian wives and children numbered among the factors that led to the deadly interchangeability of the three groups, particularly in popular thinking. "The assimilation of Jews, heretics and lepers into a single rhetoric . . . depicted them as a single though many-headed threat to the security of the Christian order."[41] Perhaps the most devastating consequence of the Jew-leper nexus occurred during the ferocious persecution in France in 1321, which was aimed at lepers accused of plotting to poison the entire population, but calamitously targeted the Jews as well.[42]

The Jew and Heresy

These criteria—linkage among Jews, heretics, and lepers—for designating Christendom a persecuting society cannot easily be applied to Islam. For one thing, heresy in Islam is quite a different matter from its counterpart in Christianity. Islam, like Judaism, places heavy emphasis on practice and allows great latitude in belief. "Heresy was persecuted only when it was seen to offer a substantial threat to the social or political order," writes Bernard Lewis. This, he says, parallels the attitude toward non-Muslims, who were oppressed when they breached the law [of the *dhimma*] or violated the "maintenance of the social or political order."[43] The "recurrent tendency" in Islam—to attribute subversive doctrines such as Shiism to the malevolent designs of a Jewish convert—was not accompanied by a generalized suspicion of Jewry's ambition to undermine the regnant religion, as happened in the West.[44]

The contrast can be carried further. The Christian definition of heresy included "Judaizing"—imitation of Judaism—which was viewed as a repudiation of the Christian dispensation. For this reason, the stigma of heresy frequently extended to professing Jews themselves because they were suspected of abetting Christians to Judaize, including Jews—"rejudaizers"—who had converted to Christianity, whether voluntarily or by coercion. The Inquisition, established at the beginning of the thirteenth century to ferret out and prosecute heretics, often extended its scrutiny and coercive power over individual Jews and Jewish writings.[45]

Unlike their counterparts in Christian Europe, Jews living under Islam did not bear the burden of suspicion of heresy or of encouraging Muslims to follow Jewish custom. As explained in Chapter 2, "Judaizing" among Muslims was expressed mainly in terms of a cleavage to popular Jewish (or Christian) practices—for example, worship of saints. This constituted a violation of the rule, *khālifūhum,* "be different from them," rather than a heretical deviation. For religious thinkers like Ibn Taymiyyà, it was a blow to the prestige of Islam as well as an "innovation" in practice more than a theological affront. Thus, in his vigorous campaign to suppress Muslim indulgence in cults involving the tombs of saints, Ibn Taymiyya did not hold non-Muslims responsible for Muslim infraction of the *khālifūhum* principle.

The Devil and the Jew

The theme of the Jew-heretic, foreign to Islam, blended in Christianity with the motif of the Jew as intimate of the Devil, the arch-seducer of men to heresy. Satan, the enemy of Jesus and embodiment of all dark forces arrayed against God, appears in his inimical role in the New Testament. Further, the Devil had a continuous and pervasive presence in medieval Christendom, nourished by popular beliefs about demons rooted in the pagan past and reinforced by the exorcistic skills of local Catholic clerics.[46] The widespread belief during the High and late Middle Ages, that the Jews were intimately allied with the Devil, was inspired by New Testament passages linking the Jew with Satan.[47] This belief drew additional support from numerous Christian writers. Thus, for example, the fourth-century father Gregory of Nyssa said of the Jews: "They are confederates of the devil, offspring of vipers, scandal-mongers, slanderers, darkened in mind, leaven of the Pharisees, Sanhedrin of demons, accursed, utterly vile, quick to abuse, enemies of all that is good."[48] Eusebius of Alexandria, in the "Sermon on the Resurrection" attributed to him, addresses the Jews as follows: "Woe to you wretches, for you follow evil counsels, for you were called sons and became dogs. . . . And Hell shall revenge itself upon you for the defeat it received from the Lord, and it shall imprison you with your father the Devil."[49] The contemporary Merovingian authors of the *Life of Caesarius of Arles* depict the Jews of Arles as "perfidiously" allied with the heretical Arian Goths against the city and its Bishop Caesarius, with "the Devil rejoicing" at their evildoing.[50] When Archbishop Agobard wrote to inform the Carolingian king Louis the Pious how much damage his favoritism toward the Jews had done to the faithful of Christianity, he underscored their venality by calling them *vasa diaboli,* "vessels of the

Devil," and also, in keeping with the Gospel of John (8:44), *filii diaboli*, "sons of the Devil."[51]

Eventually the stereotyped identification of the Jew with the Devil blossomed in legend, art, drama, and sermons; and the old idea that the Devil was bent on the destruction of all of Christendom carried over to the Devil's malevolent companion—the Jew. Many irrational convictions about Jews in the High and late Middle Ages found an "explanation" in the partnership of the Jew and the Devil.[52]

In *The Devil and the Jews,* Joshua Trachtenberg argues that, while the official church adhered to its original conviction that Jews were infidels whose rejection of Christianity might someday be reversed with the removal of the veil of blindness that kept them from seeing the truth, the Christian masses, deeply fearful of both Satan and the Jew, merged the two. As Satan was the father of heresy, Jews came to be thought of as heretics, more evil even than infidels because, despite their knowledge of Christian truth, they perversely rejected and battled against it.[53] The Jews' "deliberate unbelief," as Cecil Roth called this widespread Christian conviction about the Jews in an essay published more than five decades ago, made them seem "less than human . . . [and] . . . capable of any crime imaginable or unimaginable."[54]

Medieval Antisemitism—Applying Langmuir's Theory

It is this "irrational thinking about the Jews" that Langmuir, a historian of Jew-hatred in Christendom, isolates as the fundamental cause of antisemitism from the Middle Ages to modern times.[55] Anti-Judaism, the predecessor of antisemitism, emerged when early Christians began to engage in "nonrational thinking" about the Jews after the death of Jesus—namely, that Jewish understanding was deficient, that the Jews had killed Christ, that God was punishing the Jews for deicide. Antisemitism proper emerged in Christendom beginning in the twelfth century, when Christians adopted "irrational" fantasies "that Jews ritually crucified Christian children, used human blood and flesh in their rituals, tortured the wafers of the Eucharist, and sought to destroy Christendom by sowing the Black Death." These, Langmuir says, are the "clearest examples of irrational efforts by Christians to use Jews to repress doubts about their beliefs and strengthen their faith in their Christian identity."[56] This doubt—a new, rational-empirical skepticism about such fundamental Catholic beliefs as the incarnation and the eucharist—had arisen in the eleventh century, progressing in the twelfth with the rise of scholasticism. It was all the more vexing in the face of "that incarnation of disbelief, the dispersed minority of Jews." Projection on the Jews of irrational fantasies of evil, inhumanity, and murderous intent served as a mechanism for dispelling Christian doubt while at the same time justifying physical persecution.[57]

Classical Islam did not display such irrational thinking about the Jews. Like Christians, Muslims during the Middle Ages feared Satan.[58] The Devil has an evil, rebellious, deceiving, even inimical role to play in the Qur'an and in later Arabic literature. But he is not the quintessential enemy of the founder of the Islamic religion. Nor, by extension, is he a dark force working to destroy all of society. Thus, when Jews and Satan are occasionally associated with one another in Islamic writings, as in the phrase "party of Satan," the connection does not carry the same weight.[59] As is usual with negative statements about Jews or Christians in Islam, the Devil relationship appears generically in connection with both non-Muslim peoples in discussions of the *dhimma*. Thus, the calumny, "party of Satan," is applied in a market inspection (*ḥisba*) treatise from eleventh-century Spain to both Jews and Christians, as well as in a statement of Caliph 'Umar II to *dhimmī* (the source says *polytheist*) government clerks.[60] A source describing how non-Muslims should wear their turbans admonishes them to avoid letting the turban drape below the shoulders, as Muslims do; rather, they should follow the custom of the "turban of the Devil."[61]

Medieval Islam did not portray the Jew or the Christian irrationally, as collaborating with Satan to undermine society.[62] The increase in Islamic hostility toward Christians and Jews during the period of the Crusades and the Mongol conquest, which Lewis and others explain as stemming from a fear of fifth-columnist collaboration with the enemy, provides a striking contrast with the situation in Christendom. The suspicion that *dhimmīs* collaborated with the external enemy is decidedly not "irrational thinking about the Jews." It relied, instead, on the empirical knowledge that many non-Muslims favored Christian or pagan Mongol rule in the hope of escaping the humiliating aspects of the *dhimma*. Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya exemplifies the believable charge of *dhimmī* treachery in this regard with a story about a Christian clerk in Mamluk Egypt who was discovered writing letters to the European Christians (*firanj*) conveying intelligence (*akhbār*) about the Muslims.[63]

The absence of the irrational element of diabolical Jewish enmity in Islamic thinking must be considered a salient reason for the dearth of anti-Jewish persecution in Islam. Applying the contrast reciprocally, one could point out that beliefs about Jewish betrayal could only be irrational in Christendom, since Jews could not readily—hence, empirically—be identified with a militant external enemy threatening Christian territory.[64]

Langmuir's theory about the relationship between doubt and irrational antisemitism in medieval Christendom, applied to Islamic-Jewish relations, deepens our understanding of the difference between the two societies. Because doubt played a substantial role in the intellectual life of medieval Muslims and their Jewish neighbors, the philosophical movement in Arabic culture, which began much earlier in Islam than in Christianity, concerned itself with dispelling skepticism. The numerous Arabic

book titles beginning with, for example, the words "Guide of the Perplexed" are testimony to the potential corrosiveness of doubt in Islamic society. The Islamic religion, however, was relatively free of nonrational, nonempirical credos such as incarnation, the trinity, and transubstantiation—the very doubt-engendering beliefs that, according to Langmuir, Christians sought to repress with their irrational thoughts about the Jews.

The Response to Persecution

In Northern Christendom

The Jewish response to persecution differed markedly in Christian and Islamic lands. In northern Europe, Jews faced with the alternative of death or forced conversion (a choice often encountered during eruptions of anti-Jewish feeling), frequently chose a noble death—martyrdom, even by suicide.[65] A typical passage from one of the medieval Hebrew accounts of the massacre of the Jews during the First Crusade paints a moving picture of the typical Ashkenazic martyrdom:

> The women girded their loins . . . and slew their own sons and daughters, and then themselves. Many men also . . . slaughtered their wives and children and infants. The most gentle and tender of women slaughtered the child of her delight. They all arose . . . and slew one another. The young maidens, the brides, and the bridegrooms looked out through the windows and cried out in a great voice: "Look and behold, O Lord, what we are doing to sanctify Thy Great Name, in order not to exchange You for a crucified scion who was despised, abominated, and held in contempt in his own generation, a bastard son conceived by a menstruating and wanton mother."[66]

Martyrdom, rather than surrender to forced conversion, seems to have been a response to persecution introduced by Ashkenazic Jewry during the Middle Ages. It represents a substantial, generalized elaboration of the classic Jewish martyrdoms portrayed in the midrash.[67] Mass self-immolation by European Jews complemented a self-perception of standing up to a trial of faith imposed by God on an essentially holy and sinless generation and of reenacting on a human plane the sacrificial cult of the ancient Jerusalem Temple.[68]

Jacob Katz explains the northern European Jewish preference for martyrdom when faced with forced conversion. The Jews of Ashkenaz considered Christians theologically idolatrous and themselves obliged by the mishnaic ruling that a Jew must die rather than succumb to idolatry. Related to this was the Jews' revulsion at the sight of certain Christian symbols, notably the cross, which represented to Jews the inconceivable claim that Jesus had been both the Messiah and the son of God, crucified at

the behest of the Jews.[69] In addition, the age-old Christian readiness to suffer martyrdom, to avoid apostasy and bear witness with one's life to the truth of Christianity, encouraged Jewish imitation. Jews held up *their* martyrdom to Christians as proof of the superiority of their faith and their God.[70] Gerson Cohen argues that the "messianic posture" of Ashkenazim, including an unquestioned belief in the dogma of resurrection, reinforced their willingness to suffer martyrdom.[71] Conversion to escape death occurred, and probably with greater frequency than the occasional allusions in the Hebrew accounts of persecution suggest. Approaching the late Middle Ages, especially the disastrous fourteenth century, one finds a significant increase in Jewish apostasy to Christianity, whether voluntary (to escape misery and antisemitism) or coaxed by the compulsory conversionary sermons of the newly invigorated Christian mission to the Jews.[72] Nonetheless, martyrdom remained the Ashkenazic ideal.

In Islamic Lands

By contrast, Jews in Islamic lands, when threatened with extinction unless they converted, typically accepted the religion of Islam rather than a martyr's death. Many factors contributed to determining this characteristically "Sephardic" response to violent persecution (which carried over to Christian Spain in the form of "marranism" beginning with the pogroms of 1391). In considering the "messianic posture" of Sephardim, Gerson Cohen pointed to the role of rationalism in undermining their faith, creating doubt about miracles such as the resurrection, and hence, discouraging the choice of death.[73]

In an essay on the forced converts in the Maghreb during the Almohad persecution, Menahem Ben-Sasson aptly observes that the Jews of the Arab world met the characteristic criteria for cultural Arabization, criteria that contemporary scholars believe made non-Muslims ripe candidates for Islamization.[74] Moreover, the Jews of Islam were not nearly as repelled by symbols of the dominant religion as were the Ashkenazic subjects of Katz's research. Nothing comparable to the invective and hatred characteristic of the Ashkenazic literary treatment of Christianity exists in the writings of the Jews of Islam, including the private letters of the Geniza, in which derogatory remarks about Muslims as a group might occasionally be expected but are not to be found.[75]

Then, too, martyrdom in the surrounding Muslim society was not as salient a concept as it was in Christianity. Muslims—particularly, Sunni Muslims—unlike the early Christians, did not have to suffer for their faith in the face of persecution by another dominant power such as Rome. In Islamic definition, the martyr was a warrior who died fighting in a holy war. Confronted by religious persecution, Muslims favored outward ac-

commodation or dissimulation, in Arabic *taqiyya,* while inwardly maintaining belief in Islam. Rather than having a gentile model of martyrdom to emulate and even surpass, the Jews of Islam seem to have been influenced by the Islamic response to forced conversion in their own pattern of accommodation. Later on, this became the standard for persecuted Jews of Christian Spain, which was heavily influenced by the Islamic presence on Iberian soil for so many centuries.[76]

Another element is critical: Jews in Islamic countries followed the opinion of contemporary rabbinic teachers, who excluded Islam from the category of idolatry. They doubtless considered themselves exempt from the halakhic requirement to die rather than renounce Judaism for an idolatrous faith. Maimonides put the stamp of approval on this theological judgment. According to David Novak, Maimonides "not only regarded Islam as an unambiguously monotheistic religion, but he also saw certain Islamic practices as actually being mandated by Judaism"—for instance, circumcision.[77] He even allowed Jews to drink wine touched by Muslims, something forbidden in the case of idolaters because of the association with pagan libation.[78] Conversion to Islam could be accomplished by recitation of the inoffensive formula, called the *shahāda,* or "testimony," that "there is no God but God and Muhammad is his messenger." Jews could accept Islam outwardly, demonstrating their conversion by attending Friday prayer and avoiding acts disapproved of in Islam, while secretly adhering to Judaism in the privacy of their homes.

Equally important, while Islam, like Christianity, prohibits apostasy—that is, conversion from Islam to any other religion, on pain of death—in all three great persecutions of the classical period (al-Ḥākim's, the Almohads', and that in Yemen), Jews and Christians forced to accept Islam were allowed to revert to their original faith after the persecution had subsided. In the first of these persecutions, al-Ḥākim's son and successor, al-Ẓāhir, issued a reassuring decree in which he repeated the opposition of Islam to forced conversion and restated the Muslim obligation to protect the *dhimmī* population. The authorities required the *dhimmīs* to remit *jizya* retroactively.[79]

A tenth-century Muslim formulary from Spain includes model documents outlining the requirements for conversion, requirements that are more stringent than a simple recitation of the *shahāda*. Nonetheless, the manual stipulates that the person converted through compulsion be "permitted to return . . . his conversion to Islam is not binding, unless it becomes known for certain that he had gotten over the fear and compulsion and then converted to Islam, praying one *ṣalāt* and no more, in which case his conversion to Islam is binding."[80]

Jews knew the position of Islamic law on forced conversion. They were aware that it had been upheld in the past. They would have remembered from al-Ḥākim's persecution in Egypt that, with the relaxation of fanaticism, Jewish converts had been allowed to return to Judaism.[81] In addition to the reasons discussed above, it is likely that when North African and Andalusian Jews opted for life as nominal Muslims rather than for death as martyrs, they expected that their dissembling would be temporary, lasting only until the Islamic Holy Law opposing forced conversion was restored.[82]

Jewish History and Jewish Collective Memory

Collective memory—the memory preserved by a group of people—mirrors the perception of what was meaningful from that people's past, and, in turn, what is salient in the present.[83] Yosef Hayim Yerushalmi traces the Jewish tradition of writing history back to the Bible. Men examined the acts of individuals, Israel, and the nations in order to explicate God's covenant with Israel and his plan for their eternal existence as his holy people. Side by side with written history, biblical Israel preserved *memory*—with its inherent selectivity—in the form of ritual observance and recitation of past events, as in the Song of Deborah. The rabbis of the Talmud focused all their attention on the biblical account of the Jewish past. Indeed, they evidenced little interest in the history of postbiblical times.[84] Similarly, Bernard Lewis concludes that rabbinic preoccupation with legitimizing the oral law and their own authority to expound it contributed to the neglect of history.[85]

Yerushalmi and Lewis concur, too, that the store of Jewish historiographical works from the Middle Ages is paltry.[86] The popular medieval *Book of Yossipon* deals exclusively with Jewish history in antiquity. The most important vehicles for transmitting historical memory, they argue, were commemorative acts of ritual and liturgy.[87] In addition, Jews of the Middle Ages took inspiration from the biblical Book of Esther, the first and archetypal Jewish literary response to antisemitism, which relates the triumph of the Jews of Persia over their enemy, Haman, who had sought to destroy them. The book served as a model for medieval *megillot,* "scrolls" of deliverance—even "Second Purims," commemorating narrow escapes from catastrophic persecutions of local Jewish communities.[88] Only in the sixteenth century, Yerushalmi asserts, following the traumatic expulsion of the Jews from Christian Spain (1492), did the Jewish people begin to take historiography seriously. There appeared at that time a cluster of chronicles recounting the Jewish persecutions of the preceding centuries.[89]

Medieval Jewish Historiography and Collective Memory

What little there is that resembles genuine history writing in the Middle Ages comes mainly from the Ashkenazic world.[90] Attention has focused