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“ILS EN ONT PARLÉ”

by
Mary Elizabeth Roe

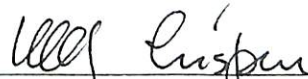
A thesis submitted to the faculty of The University of Mississippi in partial fulfillment of
the requirements of the Sally McDonnell Barksdale Honors College.

Oxford
May 2006

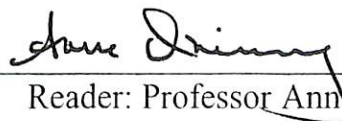
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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

First and foremost I would like to thank my advisor, Professor Susan Grayzel, for her dedication and assistance throughout this process. I would also like to thank the Croft Institute and the Sally McDonnell Barksdale Honors College for providing me with the necessary resources to complete this project. I would like to say a special thanks to my parents for their continued encouragement over the last four years, and especially during my senior year. To my friends and John, I will never forget the support you all have shown me while writing my thesis and I really appreciate it.

ABSTRACT
MARY ELIZABETH ROE: "ILS EN ONT PARLÉ"
(Under the direction of Susan Grayzel)

The Dreyfus Affair, which began in 1894, was not only a political clash. It also engulfed the social and cultural worlds of France during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. From the highest politician to the average French citizen, people from every background were aware of the Dreyfus Affair and its implications for France. This Affair divided the people of France in every way possible and impressed itself upon every walk of French life for over a decade. With the aid of modern mass media, the Affair spread to every corner of France. By causing divisions in its cultural, social, and political spheres, the Dreyfus Affair clearly shaped France as a country. This paper explores the origins of French anti-Semitism, the social divisions in France due to the Affair, the use of propaganda and the press during the Affair, and the Affair's cultural effects. It argues that one must investigate every angle of the Affair in order to understand its legacy. For among other things, the Dreyfus Affair also furthered the efforts to divide religious and state affairs. As a result of the Affair and the international publicity it generated, France formally recognized a division between religion and the State with the Separation of Church and State Law of 1905. Accordingly, France became one of the most secularized countries in Europe and thus the impact of the Affair continues to this day.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF FIGURES.....	vi
PREFACE.....	1
CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION.....	4
CHAPTER II: SOCIAL DIVISIONS.....	22
CHAPTER III: PROPAGANDA AND THE POWER OF PRESS.....	39
CHAPTER IV: CULTURAL DIVISIONS.....	52
CONCLUSION.....	63
APPENDIX.....	66
WORKS CITED PAGE.....	67

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1	Le Bordereau.....	10
Figure 2	<i>Le Figaro</i> on February 13, 1898.....	23
Figure 3	Newspaper Totals.....	41
Figure 4	Absinthe cartoon.....	44
Figure 5	<i>Le Petit Journal</i> , January 13,1895.....	46
Figure 6	L'Agitation Antisémite à Paris.....	48
Figure 7	Degas Painting.....	55
Figure 8	Pissarro Sketch.....	57
Figure 9	Anti-Semitic Songs.....	61
Figure 10	Translated version of le bordereau.....	66

In 1894, France found itself facing a shattering event—an accusation of treason had turned into a national crisis. This crisis, which came to be known as the Dreyfus Affair, raised many important questions about religion and society in France during the Affair itself and in the years following. For many French citizens, the Dreyfus Affair re-defined the concept of nationalism. This Affair also influenced the renewal of French anti-Semitism. Although this sentiment was not new in France, the Dreyfus Affair proved to be a catalyst for the re-emergence of anti-Semitism in France. To this day, the Dreyfus Affair remains a central event in the history of France's Third Republic.¹

The Dreyfus Affair was not only a political clash, but it also engulfed the social and cultural worlds of France during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The Dreyfus Affair became a part of French history starting in 1894. From the highest politician to the average French citizen, people from every background were aware of the Dreyfus Affair and the implications it held for France. This Affair divided the people of France in every way possible. It impressed itself upon every walk of French life for over a decade. With the aid of propaganda, the Affair spread to every corner of France. The Dreyfus Affair clearly shaped France as a country by causing divisions in its cultural, social, and political spheres.

In order to understand the Dreyfus Affair, it is important to investigate the then-existing reasons for French anti-Semitism, the life of Alfred Dreyfus, and the facts of the Affair itself. This paper is broken down into four main sections with smaller subsections. The first section explores the nature of French anti-Semitism. It then delves into the life

¹ Michael Burns, *France and the Dreyfus Affair* (Boston: Bedford St. Martin's, 1999), viii.

of Alfred Dreyfus and how the Affair affected French society. The social divisions experienced in France as a result of the Affair occupy the second section of this paper, especially the differences between the two main factions, Dreyfusards and anti-Dreyfusards. It also investigates prominent figures in France during the Dreyfus Affair and the parties with which they sided. The third section of the paper discusses the use of propaganda and the press during the Affair, from the yellow press to the general press coverage. The paper's fourth and final section addresses how the Affair provided a cultural split among the French population. Not only did the Affair affect the press, but it also affected the arts in France. All of the above-stated elements are necessary to understand the full effects that the Dreyfus Affair had on France.

Many historians who study this Affair choose only to focus separately on politics, society, or culture, but not on all three elements combined. This paper argues that in order to grasp the full effect of the Dreyfus Affair and its implications for France, it is necessary to focus on all three areas of study. By looking at one division in isolation, it leaves out the important aspects of the other two. Saturated in journalism, the Dreyfus Affair became a part of everyday French life.

While this paper offers the details needed to understand the Dreyfus Affair, it is important to not forget what the Dreyfus Affair meant for France. The Dreyfus Affair will perhaps be forever remembered as the event that caused public divisions in every sect of France, but, most importantly, the event that furthered the division between religion and society in France. The desire to secularize existed before the Dreyfus Affair, but because of this Affair, the push for separation gained even more support. Due to the amount of international publicity France gained as a result of the Dreyfus Affair,

something had to be done in order to avoid another political embarrassment. The origins of this Affair violated the same principles France founded itself on: liberté, égalité, et fraternité. The Dreyfus Affair was a miscarriage of justice and, therefore, the people of France were much more willing to criticize the State and its presence in religion. As a result mainly of this Affair, France became one of the most secularized countries in Europe and continues to remain secular to this day. For a country that placed tremendous amounts of faith in the state for all of its funding, this Affair forced different organizations in France to search elsewhere for their needed funds.

Chapter I: Introduction

Background of anti-Semitism

The Dreyfus Affair awakened the sleeping giant of anti-Semitism and revealed disturbing divisions that already existed in France. Understanding French anti-Semitism and the reasons for this will help understand the importance of the Dreyfus Affair. The European Jewish population felt that France was the cornerstone to their survival and integration into the European society. It was during the French Revolution in 1791 that France promulgated the Bill of Rights of Man and Citizen by which the Jews, for the first time in Europe, were granted emancipation and able to become equal citizens with their non-Jewish brethren.² This law caused the Jewish community to enter French society and embrace its willingness for assimilation.

Because the French were among the first to welcome their newest addition, France found itself at the center of global attention. The theory among the Jews echoed that if they could not be accepted in France, how could they expect to live in peace as a minority among Gentiles anywhere?³ Other countries lagged behind France's emancipation of their Jewish population. After gaining citizenship rights in France, the number of professional Jews also increased because of the Jewish emphasis on the importance of education. Individual French Jews, such as Leon Blum, excelled in their

²James F. Breenan. *The Reflection of the Dreyfus Affair in the European Press, 1897-1899* (New York: Peter Lang Publishing, 1998) 3.

³Robert L. Hoffman. *More Than A Trial: The Struggle over Captain Dreyfus* (New York: The Free Press, 1980) 201.

professional fields, without denying their Jewishness.⁴ Blum later became the first socialist and first Jewish prime minister of France.⁵ With the increase in professional employment of Jews, feelings of anti-Semitism also increased.

In France, the spike in anti-Semitism arose from a nationalist movement that intensified after the French defeat in the Franco-Prussian War of 1870. The French did not want to blame their loss on the limitations of its army, and this paved the way for the blame to be placed somewhere else or on someone else. France began searching for scapegoats and found four main suspects: Free Masons, Protestants, the English, and the Jews. The French could fight the first three, but, for various reasons, the Jews became the main target. The French stayed away from the Free Masons because their organization was too secret and the gains of fighting it would be minimal. The Protestants were well defended and protected by both their allies abroad and those present in France. Lastly, the English were well protected because they were separated from France by the English Channel. With these reasons, the French decided to place the blame on the Jews for their loss in the Franco-Prussian War. With all of the attention shifted toward the Jewish community in France, the Jews soon felt renewed distrust from their fellow citizens.⁶

Anti-Semitism was not a novel concept in France, but it took an event such as the Dreyfus Affair to rally anti-Jewish sentiment among French citizens. This Affair was seen not only as a shock to the French Jewish population, but also to a wider faction of

⁴ Paul Hyman, *From Dreyfus to Vichy: The Remaking of French Jewry, 1906-1939* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1979) 1.

⁵ Burns, *France and the Dreyfus Affair*, 184.

⁶Breenan, *Reflection of the Dreyfus Affair*, 19.

French public opinion.⁷ The Dreyfus Affair produced ideas of distrust of the Jews and also produced questions of their right to belong to French society as a whole. The loyalty of Jews born and raised in France their entire lives was even now questioned. Although Alfred Dreyfus was pardoned, the Affair did not end there. The public debate continued to linger among the different factions, the politicians, the artists, the musicians, and the citizens of France in general. The press continued its coverage of the verdict of the Affair, and it became evident that further actions must be taken to avoid another international embarrassment. The need to separate the French state from religion was vital. While there existed previous altercations between religion and state affairs, the Dreyfus Affair fostered the official move for separation of Church and State in 1905. Along with this push for separation, the Dreyfus Affair also acted as a factor in dividing the social and cultural spheres of France.

Early Life of Alfred Dreyfus

The early details of the life of Alfred Dreyfus are important for understanding the Dreyfus Affair because they reveal his devotion to the French nation and demonstrate that he wanted to uphold the values of French society. Alfred Dreyfus was born in Mulhouse on October 9, 1859, to a family of Jewish origin. This fact is significant because Mulhouse was part of Alsace. Alsace is a small region of eastern France that shares its border with Germany and its citizens speak a German dialect. Yet, Dreyfus and his family had a particular loyalty to France during his childhood. Alfred was the youngest of seven children in his family. His father supported the family by participating

⁷ Michael R. Marrus. *The Politics of Assimilation* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1971) 197.

in the spinning industry, which later made him a prominent figure in the Mulhouse community.

Instead of carrying on the family business, Dreyfus concentrated his efforts elsewhere. He attributed his desire for a military career to the War of 1870. After seeing the outbreak of this war and how the German invasion of France mutilated his border town, Dreyfus decided to seek a position in the military by which he could defend France against any such future attack.⁸ After Germany won the War of 1870, Alsace became a German territory. The secession of this territory enraged Dreyfus and pushed him even further to a military career. To further prove the family loyalty to France, Alfred's father decided to move his family from Alsace in order to remain part of France after the Treaty of Frankfurt was signed in 1871, which officially ceded Alsace to German control.

Ignoring the wishes of his brothers that he help carry on the family business, Dreyfus insisted on a career in the military. He studied for the examinations and was accepted in 1879 to the French *École Polytechnique*, one of the best engineering schools in France. He graduated ninth in his class from *École Polytechnique* and then entered into the army shortly after as second lieutenant; he was later promoted to lieutenant in 1885. In 1889 at age 34, Alfred Dreyfus became one of the captains of the French forces.⁹ Because Dreyfus excelled in all of his duties, he was accepted into *École Supérieure de Guerre* of France in 1890.¹⁰ Acceptance into the *École Supérieure de Guerre* was an esteemed honor, for those who graduated at the top of their class could expect an assignment to the General Staff.¹¹ Established during the beginning of the

⁸ Alfred Dreyfus and Pierre Dreyfus. *The Dreyfus Case* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1937), 28.

⁹ Dreyfus and Dreyfus. *Dreyfus Case*, 29.

¹⁰ Burns, *France and the Dreyfus Affair*, 18.

¹¹ Leslie Derfler, *The Dreyfus Affair* (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 2002), 77.

Franco-Prussian War, this school used lessons learned from the German system in an attempt to attract France's most gifted officers and train them to protect their country.¹² Until 1890, no Jew had ever served on the General Staff, but this did not deter Dreyfus. Other officers on the General Staff often summoned Dreyfus because of his knowledge in the fields of artillery and maneuvers. Because of his excellent military education, which most Jews were either excluded from or chose not to seek, and his determination to stand with France against Germany, he excelled rapidly in the École Supérieure de Guerre. After marrying his wife Lucie Hadamard in 1890 and having two children, Dreyfus thought his life was perfect, but this perfection soon shattered in 1894.

Le Bordereau

On October 15, 1894, the French Army accused Alfred Dreyfus of treason and arrested him. To be more precise, the French military accused Dreyfus, an artillery captain on the French General Staff, of betraying his country and secretly passing French military secrets to the German army. Due to the history of disputes between France and Germany over ceded territories, in addition to the French defeat in 1870, the suspicion of German involvement remained highly likely according to French authorities.¹³

A few weeks prior to Dreyfus' arrest, on September 26, the French had seized a letter from the office of the German military attaché in Paris. The letter listed documents, which included a brief description of the latest French artillery weapons as well as a French field manual. After reviewing the letter, the French then sent it to the Statistical Section of the French War Office, which often employed spies to undertake

¹² Burns, *France and the Dreyfus Affair*, 17.

¹³ Breenan, *Reflection of the Dreyfus Affair*, 6.

counterespionage missions. The Statistical Section then sent the letter, now known as the *bordereau*, to the chiefs of all of the War Office departments. In the *bordereau*, three of the five documents referred to involve matters of artillery. As a result, the French War Department narrowed its search to the artillery officers assigned to the General Staff.¹⁴ This is important because Dreyfus's ten years of training as an artillery officer placed him at the top of the General Staff's list. After acquiring this information, a handwriting comparison revealed by a process of elimination that the traitor was Captain Alfred Dreyfus.¹⁵ The following page contains the handwriting comparison made by the French War Office between *le bordereau* and a letter previously written by Alfred Dreyfus.

¹⁴ Derfler, *The Dreyfus Affair*, 118.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 1.

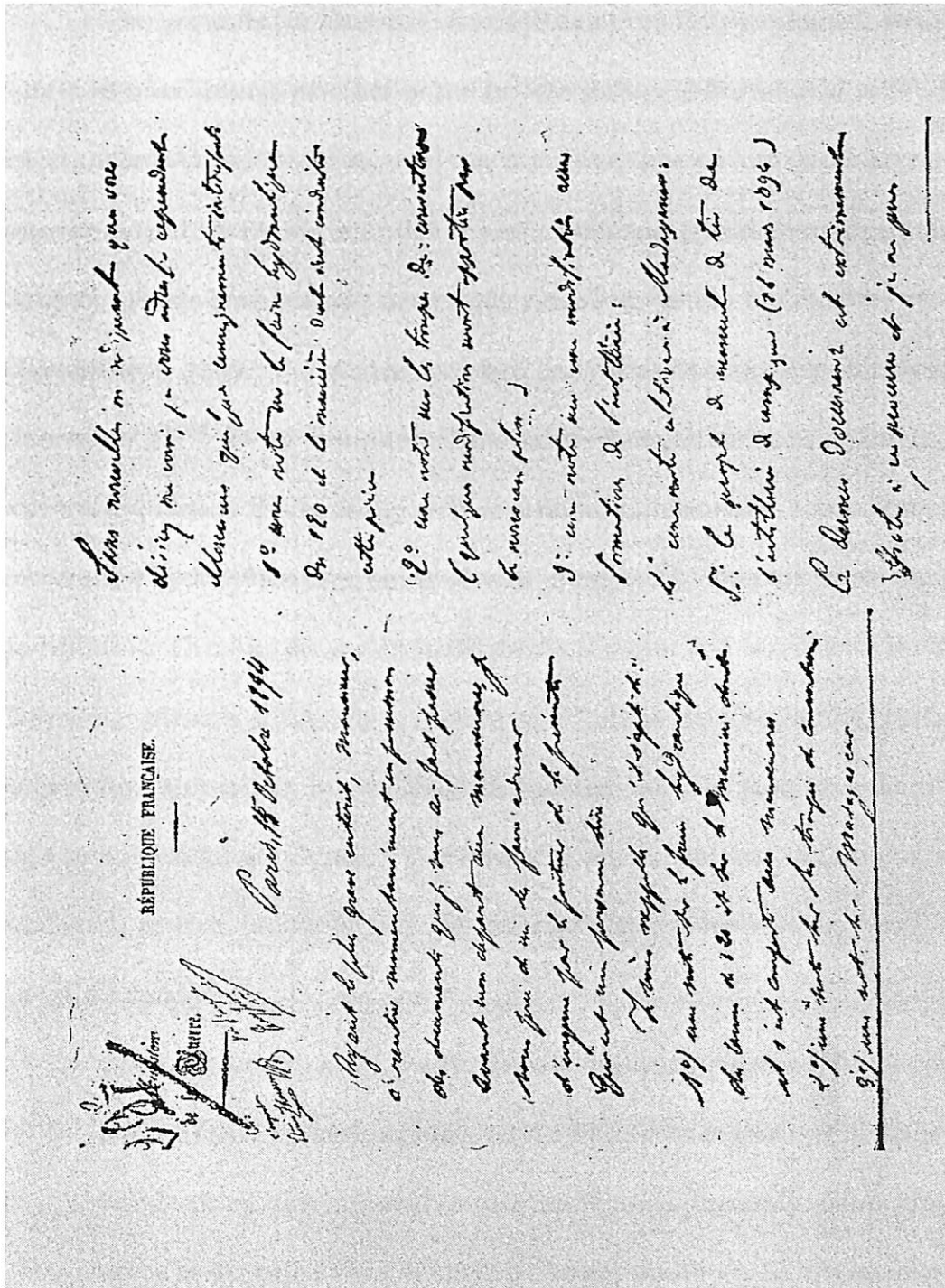


Figure 1

The document on the right is *le bordereau* and the handwriting on the left is the note that Dreyfus wrote at a dictation.¹⁶ A translated version of *le bordereau* can be found in the appendix.

¹⁶ Derfler, *The Dreyfus Affair*, 64.

The grounds for Dreyfus' arrest were never fully explained, which would lead the public to questioning whether or not he was guilty. After several staff officers interrogated Alfred Dreyfus, the French military placed him under arrest. However, it was not until two weeks later that his arrest became public through an article by Edouard Drumont in his anti-Semitic newspaper *La Libre Parole*, or *The Free Press*, on November 1, 1894.¹⁷ Dreyfus was then convicted of treason by a closed court-martial on December 22.¹⁸ Even though the handwriting comparison was trying to prove Dreyfus was guilty, Nancy Fitch, along with several other historians, argues that the only "crime" committed by Dreyfus was being Jewish in origin.¹⁹ After his arrest and public humiliation, Dreyfus protested to his prison director and new friend Ferdinand Forzinetti, "My only crime is to have been born a Jew!" That same night Dreyfus begged Forzinetti to give him a revolver, but the director insisted that if he took his own life, it would be a sign of a confession of guilt.²⁰ To further show the mindset of Dreyfus and the honor he wished to restore, below is part of a letter he wrote to his wife on April 14, 1895 in his Devil's Island diary.

I had decided to kill myself after my unjust conviction. To be condemned for the most infamous crime, on the basis of a suspicious document with handwriting that imitated or resembled mine, certainly that is enough to drive to despair a man who places honor above all...I, being innocent, did not have the right to abandon her (his wife), or to willfully desert my post.

¹⁷ Andre E. Elbaz, *Correspondance D'Edmond Fleg pendant L'Affair Dreyfus* (Paris: Librairie A.-G. Nizet, 1976), 35.

¹⁸ Derfler, *The Dreyfus Affair*, 1.

¹⁹ Nancy Fitch, "Mass Culture, Mass Parliamentary Politics, and Modern Anti-Semitism: The Dreyfus Affair in Rural France," *The American Historical Review*, Vol. 97, No.1. (Feb., 1992): 55-95. JSTOR.

²⁰ Michael Burns, *Dreyfus: A Family Affair 1789-1945* (New York: Harper Collins Publishers, 1991) 141.

I knew that she was right, that my duty was there...For a man who places honor above everything else in the world, how horrible it is to be under constant watch and continual suspicion!²¹

Perhaps one of the gravest mistakes made by the French during this investigation was not suspecting *le bordereau* to be a false document. The government/Army ignored the one piece of solid evidence they held in their possession. The actual paper it was written on was produced for only a short period of time at a small French paper company. Discovered only after the trial, the French found that Marie Charles Ferdinand Walsin Esterhazy bought large quantities of this paper whereas Dreyfus never bought any. Esterhazy belonged to the French General Staff as an infantry officer. He sold the military secrets to the Germans, not Alfred Dreyfus.²² Had this evidence been presented earlier in the case, the verdict could have been different. The main point, however, is that Dreyfus was convicted of a serious crime on the basis of flimsy evidence because of political and ideological reasons such as the push for nationalism and the anti-Semitic fervor in France.²³

The Affair

The actual Affair itself is rather complicated, but it is necessary that it be understood. After the accusation became public, the Jewish community wanted Dreyfus to confess and commit suicide because of the negative attention he brought to their

²¹ Burns, *France and the Dreyfus Affair*, 59-60.

²² Derfler, *The Dreyfus Affair*, 85.

²³ Brennan, *Reflection of the Dreyfus Affair*, 7.

community. Instead, Dreyfus refused and protested his innocence. Because of his declaration of innocence, the French government sentenced him to exile on Devil's Island, which is off the coast of Guiana. Devil's Island was a former leper colony, and Alfred Dreyfus was the only prisoner on this island.²⁴ Not only was he by himself on the island, but to make his situation even more unbearable, the French Army constructed a high wall in order to deter his view of the sea. Due to the lack of nutrients and the infected water, Dreyfus suffered from bouts of dysentery and malaria. For seven weeks, he was unable to communicate with his family or receive any news whatsoever from the outside world. It was only on December 5, 1894, that he finally received permission to correspond with his wife. His wife could only send him letters twice a month and these letters were highly censored, depriving Dreyfus of any details of the world outside Devil's Island.²⁵ There are many documented letters from Dreyfus to his wife, but the following letter, in particular, showed his willingness and desire to secure his honor and fight for justice. On December 6, 1894, Dreyfus wrote to his wife:

My life has henceforth one aim: to find the wretch who betrayed his country, to find the traitor for whom there is no punishment too severe...Never has a man gone through the torture that I endure...Were it not for my honor—honor I must defend—I swear to you I had rather be dead—death at least would be oblivion.²⁶

From this excerpt, Dreyfus shows the love he maintained for his country was clearly still present. Throughout the entirety of the Dreyfus Affair, it would have been easy for

²⁴ Burns, *France and the Dreyfus Affair*, 59.

²⁵ Derfler, *The Dreyfus Affair*, 78-79.

²⁶ Dreyfus and Dreyfus, *The Dreyfus Case*, 31.

Dreyfus to give up and accept his punishment, yet instead he decided to keep fighting. Alfred Dreyfus believed in his innocence and wanted to regain his honor as a French officer. In almost every letter written by Dreyfus to his wife or to his supporters, he mentioned the desire to have his honor back, clearly one of the driving forces behind his efforts. By giving up, Dreyfus would have allowed France and every other doubting nation to believe that their Jewish citizens were traitors and did not belong to their respective countries. Dreyfus challenged the system, the verdict, and, in the end, received a full pardon for his supposed crime.

Meanwhile in France

While Dreyfus remained imprisoned on Devil's Island, new developments took place in France. Military secrets continued to leak while Dreyfus remained captive on Devil's Island. Because of his separation from society and lack of communication, it was evident that Dreyfus could not be the source of these disclosures. In March of 1896, Colonel Picquart, a lieutenant colonel in the French Statistical Section and an earlier instructor of Alfred Dreyfus, intercepted a telegraph with the same handwriting as the previous telegrams assumed to have been written by Dreyfus. This telegraph later became known as the *petit-bleu* because it was written on thin blue paper and meant for delivery purposes only in Paris.²⁷ Since Dreyfus could not communicate with the world, Colonel Picquart decided to investigate further. Although privately an anti-Semite, Picquart maintained a public position of indifference toward the Jews.²⁸ Because of his intelligence and notable politeness, he avoided showing any prejudice behavior toward

²⁷ Derfler, *The Dreyfus Affair*, 2.

²⁸ Ibid.

Dreyfus. Picquart, himself, believed the guilty verdict when it first became public.

However, after noting the similar handwriting of the *petit bleu* and *le bordereau*, Picquart recognized the handwriting as that of Commander Esterhazy. After conducting a further investigation of Commander Esterhazy, Picquart discovered that Esterhazy was a corrupt officer struggling with gambling debts, numerous mistresses, and bad business deals.²⁹ After realizing that Dreyfus had been unjustly accused, Picquart pushed for another trial for Dreyfus, during which he would try and convince the jury of Dreyfus's innocence.

Picquart took a great risk with his superiors by supporting Dreyfus and his innocence. When addressed by his superior Deputy Chief of Staff General Charles Gonse in September of 1896, Picquart replied, "I will not carry this secret to my grave."³⁰ Thus the French military knew he would not stay quiet and dismissed Picquart, sending him on inspection tours throughout the country and then eventually to Tunisia.³¹

However, before Picquart was exiled, he became aware of his superiors' wish to keep him silent. Knowing this, he wrote a statement that would be given to the president of the Republic if he were to die.³² With Picquart exiled in Tunisia and the amount of propaganda increasing, the Dreyfus Affair became such a public feature in France and around the European continent that it was necessary for the French government to call a trial for Esterhazy. The trial was summoned, but with no immediate success or improvement for Dreyfus or Picquart; the jury acquitted Esterhazy and the blame still fell with Dreyfus. Unfortunately for Dreyfus, Picquart was arrested on January 12, 1898, for

²⁹Albert S. Lindemann, *The Jew Accused* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991) 110.

³⁰G. W. Steevens, *The Tragedy of Dreyfus* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1899) 286.

³¹Elbaz, *Correspondance D'Edmond Fleg*, 35.

³²Derfler, *The Dreyfus Affair*, 102.

passing secrets to his lawyer friend, Louis Leblois, and immediately dismissed from the French army.³³ On September 21, 1898, Picquart wrote the following:

Tonight I will probably go to the Cherche-Midi Prison. This is probably the last time, in front of this secret investigation, that I can say a word in public. I want it known that if the noose of Lemerrier-Picard [a freelance forger believed to have been in the pay of the Statistical Section and found hanged] or the razor of Henry is discovered in my cell, it will be murder, because a man like me could never for an instant think of committing suicide. I will face this prosecution with my head held high and with the same serenity that I have brought before my accusers. There you are: I have had my say.³⁴

The ‘razor of Henry’ refers to the tool Lieutenant Joseph Henry used to commit suicide after announcing his guilt. After confined for a year and a half, the French Army released Picquart, and the civil court eventually dismissed charges against him for manufacturing the *petit bleu*.³⁵

It was after this particular 1898 trial followed by another consecutive guilty verdict, those in favor of Dreyfus and his innocence began to lose their fervor. It became obvious to his supporters that the Army and the anti-Dreyfusards sought to make an example out of Dreyfus. The French government wanted to show its citizens that even a Jew with the best education and the best military training was still a Jew, and, in its eyes,

³³ Derfler, *The Dreyfus Affair*, 102.

³⁴ Burns, *France and the Dreyfus Affair*, 128.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 103.

a traitor. Again, the Army had to form a clear distinction that no one in their institution could have betrayed his country. The French used Dreyfus's Jewish heritage as leverage for their argument. Yet, even with the accusations and mounting disgust toward Dreyfus, he still had supporters, some people were willing to fight for Dreyfus and his innocence. One of the most important public figures supporting Dreyfus was the great French novelist Emile Zola. Initially wanting nothing to do with the case and thinking very little of the guilty verdict, Zola eventually changed his mind due to the attacks on Dreyfus by French anti-Semites and nationalists.

Emile Zola's *J'Accuse*

To combat the anti-Semitic efforts of Drumont, Emile Zola began publishing articles in *Le Figaro* that condemned Drumont's claims.³⁶ However after Leblois showed Zola the evidence acquired by Picquart on November 13, 1897, Zola decided to join publicly the Dreyfusards. He then began to write a series of articles that appeared in *Le Figaro* that openly berated nationalists. In mid-December of 1897, Zola published an article that spoke directly to the younger generation of France entitled, "Letter to the Young," in which he begged the youth to be "generous and humane." He also wrote that "We go to combat for humanity, for justice, and for truth!"³⁷ However, these articles were soon omitted from *Le Figaro*. The nationalist and anti-Semitic presence in France would not buy this paper because it openly supported Alfred Dreyfus, a man they considered to be a traitor to their country. Due to this fact and the drop in sales of the paper, especially among the military, *Le Figaro* decided not to adopt a pro-Dreyfus

³⁶ Burns, *France and the Dreyfus Affair*, 113.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, 91.

stance, and Zola lost his platform in mid-December of 1898. This did not slow Zola down: he began expressing his opinions in the form of pamphlets “warning the French of the threat posed by the anti-Dreyfusards, anti-Semites, and elements within the Church.”³⁸

On January 13 1898, Emile Zola wrote the most famous manifesto about this Affair, *J'Accuse*.³⁹ He wrote this in order to publicize the debate and to argue for Dreyfus's innocence. In his open letter, he accused the generals of “conspiring to commit an injustice” against the Jewish community.⁴⁰ Emile Zola became enraged at the amount of anti-Semitism espoused in a press campaign headed mainly by Eduoard Drumont and disgusted by the fact that many French citizens were willing to accept Dreyfus as a scapegoat for the internal problems of the Army. Zola pushed even harder for a fair trial.

Seeing no immediate results, Zola decided that he would bring a lawsuit against himself by which the entire truth could be revealed in a public courtroom. After completing his letter, *J'Accuse*, to the President of the Republic, Zola published it in a newspaper, *L'Aurore*, on the morning of June 13, 1898.⁴¹ Zola put himself under speculation and severe criticism with this act because he openly named names of those who were corrupt within the government. Also in *J'Accuse*, Zola recounted the different stages of the Affair naming the numerous conspiracies and cover-ups. Enraged at Zola's letter, many French nationalists and anti-Semites participated in protests that turned into all-out riots in the streets. They went as far as burning streets in Jewish communities.

³⁸ Derfler, *The Dreyfus Affair*, 113.

³⁹ Lindemann, *The Jew Accused*, 114.

⁴⁰ Derfler, *The Dreyfus Affair*, 112.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*

Those in support for Dreyfus were joyful because with Zola's letter the push for Dreyfus and his innocence was re-ignited.⁴² As a part of *J'Accuse* Zola writes:

Where, oh where is a strong and wisely patriotic ministry that will be bold enough to overhaul the whole system and make a fresh start? I know many people who tremble with alarm at the thought of a possible war, knowing what hands our national defense is in! and what a den of sneaking intrigue, rumor-mongering and back-biting that scared chapel has become—yet that is where the fate of our country is decided! People take fright as the appalling light that has just been shed on it all by the Dreyfus Affair, that tale of human sacrifice! Yes, an unfortunate, a stupidity, unbridled imagination, low police tactics, inquisitorial and tyrannical methods this handful of officers have got away with! They have crushed the nation under their boots, stuffing it calls for truth and justice down its throat on the fallacious and sacrilegious pretext that they are acting for the good of the country!⁴³

In this quote, Zola points out that the problem exposed by the Dreyfus Affair is not that Jews are a threat to the national security and honor of France, but rather that French society is not as just and fair as it claims to be if this society is willing to accept a scapegoat for a national crime. Zola argues that the French Republic is the institution that will suffer because of the elements in society that allowed the Dreyfus Affair to take place. All of the things held dear by France such as honor, strength, and security were threatened because of these elements. In *J'Accuse*, Zola points to the many flaws that he

⁴² Derfler, *The Dreyfus Affair*, 112..

⁴³ Emile Zola, *J'Accuse*, in Burns, *France and the Dreyfus Affair*, 100.

sees within the French system of government. Because of this, the French government felt it had reason to silence him.

The audacity of his letter and the accusations made within led to Zola's being put on trial for libel. Due to the lack of evidence provided by Zola in accordance to his accusations, he was found guilty of harming the reputation of France and fled to England.⁴⁴ The Dreyfusards argued that the guilty verdict was a result of the military intimidation on the jury.⁴⁵ Even so, Emile Zola is a hero of the Dreyfus Affair because of his unwillingness to accept the falsities portrayed by the French government in the case of Alfred Dreyfus.

The Final Verdict

Although Zola was silenced, Zola's manifesto proved to be the turning point in the Dreyfus Affair. Referred to as "the greatest revolutionary act of the century" by Socialist Jules Guesde, his letter gained worldwide attention.⁴⁶ Then the *faux Henry*, a letter forged by a member of the French Statistical Service named Hubert Joseph Henry surfaced on August 30, 1898. After announcing his own guilt, Henry slit his throat the very next day.⁴⁷ Although the public now considered Henry guilty of traitorous activity, Dreyfus endured yet another trial in 1899, was found guilty once again, and sent back to Devil's Island. Finally at a third trial, the French High Court granted Dreyfus a pardon for several reasons. They feared the results from another clash between the army and the Dreyfusards, who were largely supported by the international public opinion, if a third

⁴⁴ Derfler, *The Dreyfus Affair*, 114.

⁴⁵ Brennan, *Reflection of the Dreyfus Affair*, 51.

⁴⁶ Derfler, *The Dreyfus Affair*, 113.

⁴⁷ Maurice Larkin, *Church and State after the Dreyfus Affair* (New York: Barnes and Noble, 1973), 71.

guilty verdict took place. The French prime minister also wished to restore public order. The following specific reasons for a pardon were included in the report to French President Loubet: "Dreyfus's renunciation of his right to appeal (which on technical grounds might have led to yet another, third, guilty verdict), his poor state of health, and the country's need for reconciliation and pacification."⁴⁸ Although officially pardoned by President Loubet on September 19, 1899, it was not until 1906 that Dreyfus was finally found innocent and re-instated into the French army. Presumed guilty for committing an act of treason against the French nation, Dreyfus remained without public honor and personal pride for almost ten years. It was only with the efforts of those who believed in his innocence that he was able to regain his dignity and resume his life as an officer in the French Army.

The Dreyfus Affair reinvigorated those with feelings of anti-Semitism. Prior to the Affair, the Jewish population in France had little notoriety in society. Regarded as outcasts by the French public, the Jews had no self-esteem and no ability to speak out. It was during the Affair that Jews in France demanded a public and political voice.⁴⁹ When the final verdict of innocence was announced for Alfred Dreyfus in 1906, it gave Jews a sense of pride. In addition, Alfred Dreyfus became a public figure for the Jewish community globally, not just for French Jewry, thus creating an even wider gap between the French government and its Jewish population.⁵⁰

⁴⁸ Derfler, *The Dreyfus Affair*, 141.

⁴⁹ Vicki Caron, "Prelude to Vichy: France and the Jewish Refugees in the Era of Appeasement," *Journal of Contemporary History*, Vol. 20, No. 1. (January 1985):157-176. JSTOR.

⁵⁰ Timothy P. Maga, "Closing the Door: The French Government and Refugee Policy, 1933-1939," *French Historical Studies*, Vol. 12, No. 3. (Spring, 1982):424-442. JSTOR.

Chapter II: Social Divisions

Division among the People

To understand the Dreyfus Affair in its entirety, one must not only look to the Affair itself, but also at how the Affair divided the people of France. This next section focuses on the two main groups that emerged from the Dreyfus Affair. Well-known figures appear on both sides, sides that they chose because of ideology and/or politics. The Dreyfus Affair also influenced secularization in France. This concept started with a lesser version known as *laïcité*, which later produced the 1905 Law of the Separation of Church and State.

It is important to understand how the Dreyfusards and the anti-Dreyfusards gained their support and from whom they received it. Each group has its own beliefs about the presence of religion in society and these beliefs helped determine if they supported Dreyfus or not. Because of the debate that would most assuredly follow, the Dreyfus Affair discouraged many families from discussing its details. On the following page is one of the most famous newspaper cartoons published during the Dreyfus Affair. *Le Figaro* published this cartoon on February 13, 1898, right in the middle of the Dreyfus Affair.

UN DÎNER EN FAMILLE



Surtout ! ne parlons pas de l'affaire Dreyfus !



... Ils en ont parlé...

51

Figure 2

⁵¹ *Le Figaro* on February 13, 1898, in Derfler, *The Dreyfus Affair*, insert.

David Lewis writes.

In two frames the artist depicted the state of mind, or rather the mindless state, of the French people over the Affair. Assembled before dinner, a typical family of means hears the host decree sternly, ‘And above all, no talk of the Dreyfus Case!’ his second frame shows a scene of mayhem: table cloth torn, dishes shattered and silverware scattered, the butler and the diners pummeling and throttling each other. The caption reads ‘They talked about it.’⁵²

This simple cartoon provides a great example of the separation among friends, families, and all of France during the Dreyfus Affair.

Not only did the Dreyfus Affair spur divisions among friends and families, but it also and, perhaps more importantly, induced divisions politically. During the Dreyfus Affair, two main factions emerged: the Dreyfusards, who defended democracy and the innocence of Dreyfus, and the anti-Dreyfusards, who defended the Church and the military.⁵³ There was another minor faction called the “Dreyfusians.” These people simply desired to see the trial put to an end and wanted things to return to normal for the sake of political and social order.⁵⁴

All of these groups had their own beliefs and arguments when it came to the innocence or guilt of Alfred Dreyfus. However, the debate between the two main groups, Dreyfusards and anti-Dreyfusards, caused the Dreyfus Affair to gain the amount of political and public attention that it did. One side represented the traditional and

⁵² David L. Lewis, *Prisoners of Honor: The Dreyfus Affair* (New York: William Morrow & Company Inc., 1973), 215.

⁵³ Esther Benbassa, *The Jews of France* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1999), 142.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*

conservative groups within society—such as the nationalists, the Army, the Church and the elites. The opposite side contained mainly intellectuals and Republicans.⁵⁵

Both the Dreyfusards and the anti-Dreyfusards argued that the honor and security of France were in jeopardy because of the Affair. However, the meanings of ‘honor’ and ‘security’ differed within each group. For the traditionalists and anti-Dreyfusards, the Army was responsible for the national security and honor of the nation. Therefore, this affair threatened national security and honor because Dreyfus committed a crime of treason within the Army, whose strength was meant to overshadow everything else in France.⁵⁶ The other group, the Republican government/Dreyfusards, wanted free voting rights, equal opportunity to all, and, most importantly, citizenship for all who obeyed the laws of France.

The French government held the Army to be the last stronghold of reliable social order and authority because of its rigidity and hierarchy.⁵⁷ Thus, when the knowledge became public that an officer had leaked military secrets to the Germans, it came as a serious blow to the conservatives who regarded the military as the last dependable institution under French authority.⁵⁸ The traditionalists, or the anti-Dreyfusards, needed to find an explanation for the events taking place within the Army in order to try and salvage its reputation. They found their scapegoat in the fact that Alfred Dreyfus was the only Jewish French Captain in the Army. From their initial accusation, the anti-Dreyfusards continued to blame Dreyfus for betraying the Army and France. Thus for the anti-Dreyfusards, Dreyfus’s Jewishness explained all. According to the

⁵⁵ Brennan, *Reflection of the Dreyfus Affair*, 26.

⁵⁶ Lewis, *Prisoners of Honor*, 221.

⁵⁷ Michael Drouin, *L’Affaire Dreyfus de A à Z* (France: Flammarion, 1994), 312.

⁵⁸ Hoffman, *More Than a Trial*, 133.

traditionalists, he could not be trusted. It was not the sacred institution of the Army who had failed; it was a Jew.

With the honor of the French Army at stake, several powerful and influential figures sided with either the Dreyfusards or the anti-Dreyfusards during the Affair. Thus the Dreyfus Affair served not only as a religious and social clash, but also as a civil war of political ideologies between the Dreyfusards and the anti-Dreyfusards. The Dreyfus Affair gave an already divided public the ability to voice their concerns with their opponents. The Dreyfus Affair gave people a reason to speak out, a focus for political disagreements. Because of the publicity the Dreyfus Affair gained, people obtained information and were able to choose whether or not Dreyfus was guilty. Prominent figures existed in both factions which also allowed the people to choose sides based on membership.

Dreyfusards

Both the Dreyfusards and the anti-Dreyfusards played crucial roles during the Affair. The Dreyfusards' arguments based their case on solid evidence: the irregularity of the court procedures, the forgeries by Captain Henri, and Esterhazy's confession.⁵⁹ They also denounced the General Staff for its readiness to name Dreyfus as the traitor.⁶⁰ The Dreyfusards were also extremely anti-militaristic and anti-clerical. They wanted to fight for the rights of man. Whereas the anti-Dreyfusards held national interest above the interests of the individual, the Dreyfusards concentrated their efforts on the importance of

⁵⁹ Lindemann, *The Jew Accused*, 121.

⁶⁰ Derfler, *The Dreyfus Affair*, 40.

the individual to the nation.⁶¹ Because the Dreyfusards criticized the General Staff of the Army, they also attacked the honor of the entire French Army and caused the soldiers to find doubt in their leaders. Furthermore, this doubt inhibited the Army from functioning in certain ways. In the eyes of the anti-Dreyfusards and nationalists, the Army was at the heart of France, making it very dangerous to criticize or threaten the Army in any way. Those who criticized the Army were traitors in the eyes of the nationalists.⁶² Because of the Dreyfusard's anti-militarist stance, their belief in the corruption of the military was only fueled by the discrepancies put forth during this Affair. This group made every effort possible to prove the innocence of Alfred Dreyfus and thus the corruption of the French Army.

A key figure in the Dreyfus Affair on the side of the Dreyfusards was Bernard-Lazare, a Jewish literary critic and journalist. Lazare wrote the first pamphlet proclaiming the innocence of Alfred Dreyfus, and he also responded directly to the anti-Semitic reviews of Edouard Drumont. His response followed in 1894 with his book, Anti-Semitism: Its History and Its Causes. When Mathieu Dreyfus, the brother of Alfred, heard how Lazare felt about anti-Semitism, he summoned him to help the Dreyfusard cause. Mathieu encouraged Lazare to keep the story alive in the public eye by enticing newspapers to continue to write about the Affair.⁶³ However, at first Lazare refused because he felt that if Dreyfus were truly innocent, his family, wealthy as they were, would soon be able to get the verdict reversed. It was only when Lazare realized that Dreyfus had been indicted due to ethnic prejudices that he decided to join with the Dreyfusards and defend Alfred Dreyfus. He wrote several pamphlets and revised them as

⁶¹ Hoffman, *More Than a Trial*, 210.

⁶² *Ibid.*, 211.

⁶³ Derfler, *The Dreyfus Affair*, 66.

well in order to achieve the public support. For example, in November of 1896 he wrote a pamphlet titled, "A Judicial Error: The Truth about the Dreyfus Affair," which based its information on what Mathieu Dreyfus had given Lazare and asked him to publish. For Lazare, this Affair was more than just a trial; it was product of the long-brewing feelings of anti-Semitism held by the French public and government. Before the Dreyfus Affair, Bernard Lazare encouraged Jewish assimilation into the French society, but by the end of the Affair he believed it would never work. He understood that Jews would never be fully accepted into society. After the 1899 court-martial, Lazare joined the cause for Jewish nationalism. He became part of the Zionist movement, a political movement in support of finding a homeland for the Jewish people. It was during an 1897 Zionist congress meeting where he went on to say, "Assimilation is not and cannot be a solution."⁶⁴

Another key advocate for the Dreyfusards was Georges Clemenceau, whose career in the French Chamber of Deputies, the lower house of the legislature, spanned nearly the entirety of the Third Republic. Clemenceau followed a very anti-clerical platform and avidly supported the republican agenda.⁶⁵ He was also extremely anti-monarchist, and he occupied a place on the extreme left of French politics.⁶⁶ After losing his seat in the Chamber in 1893, Clemenceau turned his efforts to the world of journalism. Clemenceau became involved with the Dreyfus Affair almost immediately after losing his seat and once convinced of the innocence of Dreyfus, Clemenceau described the Affair as a "struggle of the innocent victim against the forces of tyranny

⁶⁴ Derfler, *The Dreyfus Affair*, 67.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 72.

⁶⁶ Brennan, *Reflection of the Dreyfus Affair*, 22.

and dogma, that is, against the army and the Church.”⁶⁷ As the political editor of the newspaper, *L'Aurore*, Clemenceau published several articles, including the infamous *J'Accuse* by Emile Zola. After the government pardoned Dreyfus, Clemenceau still did not believe justice had been done. Knowing that Clemenceau wanted the case to be reopened, Mathieu Dreyfus and his family insisted on his satisfaction with a presidential pardon due to the declining health of Alfred Dreyfus while interned on Devil's Island. However, this pardon was seen by Clemenceau as equivalent to a guilty verdict. Clemenceau fought militarists and clericals his whole life and only wanted revenge against them. In spite of this and because Mathieu insisted, Clemenceau reluctantly accepted the pardon in saying, “If I were his brother, I would accept.”⁶⁸

Perhaps Dreyfus's most important political ally during the Affair was Joseph Reinach. Reinach acted as a former aide to Leon Gambetta, who was one of the founders of the Third Republic. While holding this position, Reinach transpired as a key figure of the Chamber's Opportunist wing. The political influence missing in the Dreyfus Affair appeared with the addition of Joseph Reinach as a Dreyfusard.⁶⁹ Many historians still refer to the seven volume history Reinach wrote at the conclusion of the Dreyfus Affair. In 1897, after an additional guilty verdict, Reinach pushed for yet another trial. His wanted to stimulate doubts among the political and social elite. Since Reinach was only one of the few candidates to mention the Dreyfus Affair in the 1898 elections, he suffered defeat. Voters were hesitant to vote for him because of his position supporting Alfred Dreyfus. Reluctantly, along with the other Dreyfusards, Reinach accepted the pardon

⁶⁷ Derfler, *The Dreyfus Affair*, 73.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, 74.

⁶⁹ Burns, *France and the Dreyfus Affair*, 78.

agreement, seeing that any more time on Devil's Island would be extremely detrimental to the health of Alfred Dreyfus.⁷⁰

These few Dreyfusards represent only some of the most important of those who supported Dreyfus. Others included Jean Jaurès and Mathieu Dreyfus, both of whom had a tremendous effect on the Dreyfus Affair. Jean Jaures was the Socialist party leader who convinced his party of the need to reopen the case. He was a very important ally for Dreyfus because the Socialists initially wanted to remain neutral and not support Alfred Dreyfus. Desperate to keep the case in the public eye while pushing for a new trial, Mathieu Dreyfus spread the rumor that his brother involved himself in an attempt to escape his cell on Devil's Island.⁷¹ He devoted five years of his life directly to helping Alfred, and in the end Mathieu also agreed with the pardon offered by the government.⁷² Without the support and willingness of the Dreyfusards, Alfred Dreyfus would have had no way to prove his innocence from a cell on Devil's Island. He needed these advocates to plead his case when he was unable to, and, with their undeniable persistence, Alfred Dreyfus finally regained his honor. The Dreyfusards were successful in proving the corruption that lay within the Army. They showed through evidence that members of the Army such as Captain Henri and Officer Esterhazy were capable of treason. The Dreyfusards exposed the inner deficiencies of the Army and allowed the public to see the faults in their 'honorable' organization.

⁷⁰ Derfler, *The Dreyfus Affair*, 106.

⁷¹ Burns, *France and the Dreyfus Affair*, 32.

⁷² Derfler, *The Dreyfus Affair*, 91 & 80.

Anti-Dreyfusards

In opposition to the Dreyfusards, the anti-Dreyfusards were against any reconsideration of the case. This group believed that the French nation was a place designed only for true Frenchmen, for people who possessed the same religion and societal beliefs as did the anti-Dreyfusards, i.e. Catholicism. Anti-Dreyfusards saw Dreyfus as not only a Jew, but also as an alien to the French nation, thus unable to claim the same rights as Frenchmen. One of their main arguments was based on the fact that the State should want to protect its national interest over the rights of any individual.⁷³ The anti-Dreyfusards truly believed that Dreyfus was a traitor to France and that to reopen his case would expose the internal divisions that existed in France, thus jeopardizing its security.⁷⁴ This group gained support from a variety of different sectors of society, which included not only Republicans, but also anti-Semites, Catholics, military supporters, and many nationalists.⁷⁵ With the support of these groups, the anti-Dreyfusards gained momentum and continued to battle against Dreyfus. The movement that initially started as a protest against Alfred Dreyfus soon turned into one to protect the Army, one that combined nationalism with anti-Semitism.

This faction also had very prominent figures representing its ideals. Perhaps the most influential and vocal of the group was Edouard Drumont. He wrote *La France Juive* in 1886, which spurred an initial rise in anti-Semitism. Drumont started the anti-Semitic paper *La Libre Parole* in April, 1892—two years before the onset of the Dreyfus Affair. He desired to rejuvenate anti-Semitism in France. Drumont used the failed attempt to build the Panama Canal as energy for his movement. With this failed attempt,

⁷³ Hoffman, *More Than A Trial*, 210.

⁷⁴ Brennan, *Reflection of the Dreyfus Affair*, 26.

⁷⁵ Benbassa, *Jews of France*, 142.

many Jewish refugees fled persecution and the financial scandals that would assuredly follow. When the names of several Jewish politicians surfaced, Drumont used this to contribute to the already present feelings of anti-Semitism.⁷⁶ Drumont felt that Jews would only be loyal to other Jews and would never be true citizens of France. He also argued that the Jews were responsible for every humiliation suffered by France. He strongly felt that the Jews were out to sabotage and destroy France.⁷⁷ It is thus not surprising that his newspaper first made the Dreyfus Affair public. Drumont took it upon himself and his paper to apply pressure on the French army to find the culprit accused of selling military secrets to the Germans. Drumont actively encouraged the use of violence by the anti-Dreyfusards in order to achieve domination over the Jews. Because of his tendency to appeal to large audiences with his newspaper, Drumont began fueling the fire of anti-Semitic nationalism in many Frenchman.

Primed for an event to spark the political and social scene, the Dreyfus Affair started the commotion. The Dreyfus Affair was the catalyst for the re-emergence of anti-Semitism in France, but Edouard Drumont and his writings in *La Libre Parole* provided a vehicle for the anti-Semitic eruption in the press. The subtitle of his newspaper read, “La France au français,” literally “France for the French.” After receiving confirmation from General Mercier, a war minister to the General Staff, that an officer had been arrested for treason, Drumont published this information in his paper the very next morning. The headline for the paper that morning read as follows, “High Treason: The Jewish Traitor

⁷⁶ Dertler, *The Dreyfus Affair*. 82.

⁷⁷ Ibid., 82-83..

Alfred Dreyfus Arrested.”⁷⁸ Other newspapers soon picked up the pace with this story and the rigorous renewal of anti-Semitism had begun.

General Auguste Mercier was another prominent anti-Dreyfusard, and, as the minister of war, he ordered the arrest of Dreyfus. Mercier also attended the École Polytechnique and began his career by fighting in the Franco-Prussian War. Because of his commitment to the Republic and to the Army, General Mercier fell into frenzy when he found that an officer had committed treason against his country and that the honor of the Army was at stake. Due to previous failures and a possible dismissal by Parliament, Mercier was in need of something to save his career. When *le bordereau* reached his office, he was given the opportunity he needed. Despite his initial belief in the guilt of Dreyfus, General Mercier ordered his staff to investigate the matter further to avoid a career-ending failure. It was only when the handwriting from *le bordereau* was deemed to match to Dreyfus’s that he accepted his initial belief of Dreyfus’s guilt. Without wanting to seem sympathetic to the Jews in any way, Mercier vowed to find the traitor immediately.⁷⁹

Despite having neither any solid evidence nor a confession from Dreyfus, the article published by *La Libre Parole* on November 1, 1894, named Dreyfus as the traitor. When this was made public, General Mercier had to follow procedure even without proper evidence. Mercier only had *le bordereau*, and it had not even been researched properly before it became public knowledge. Knowing that there existed no circumstantial evidence and with hopes of protecting his career, Mercier pushed hard for

⁷⁸ Derfler, *The Dreyfus Affair*, 83.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 96.

a closed trial. He needed a quick trial because of the limited evidence. Despite his efforts, the truth about *le bordereau* exploded and Mercier was discredited in 1903.⁸⁰

While he never claimed to be an anti-Dreyfusard, Alphonse Bertillon, head of the criminal records office at the Paris Prefecture of Police, was known for his anti-Semitism. After the arrest of Dreyfus, the government called in Mr. Gobert, the handwriting expert at the Bank of France. Gobert suggested the letter could have been written by someone else and this quickly led to a search for another handwriting expert. Bertillon was the second handwriting expert. He testified at both of the court-martial trials of Alfred Dreyfus, claiming at each that Dreyfus had written *le bordereau*. At the trial in Rennes in 1894, Bertillon brought in graphs and charts of how his research was infallible only to receive bouts of laughter from university mathematicians and even the President of the Republic.

Both the Dreyfusards and the anti-Dreyfusards sought to influence the French public during the Affair. Each camp contained a powerful group of members with a firm set of beliefs. The Dreyfus Affair caused a split in French society into these two groups. With both the Dreyfusards and the anti-Dreyfusards, there existed one underlying theme—the separation of religion from society. The anti-Dreyfusards focused their attention on Dreyfus being a Jew. The Dreyfusards felt this distinction was unfair. With both groups, it is easy to see how different visions of religion and society came to conflict with one another. Having explained the social divisions experienced in France, it is now important to investigate the effects of religious and societal conflict.

⁸⁰ Derfler, *The Dreyfus Affair*, 100.

Separation of Church and State: 1905

Not only did the Dreyfus Affair have an impact on Jews in France, but it also served as a means of separating Church and State in 1905. This Affair played a crucial role in the eventual secularization of French society. Many factors helped shape the ultimate separation of Church and State in France. Among these factors was the Socialists' desire for more social reform. The Dreyfus Affair also served as a source of disillusionment for the younger generation in France to their previous clerical education.⁸¹ As stated previously, the Dreyfus Affair brought nothing entirely new to the French political scene, but instead it exposed the divisions that existed in France between those who, "accepted the Republican hopes for a humanity emancipated from 'irrational' beliefs and prejudices, and those on the other hand who felt that Republican policies ran counter to all that was great and good in the French tradition."⁸² One result of the Affair was that the Church blamed the dechristianisation of France and its disagreements with the French state on Jews. The French Catholic Church sided with the anti-Semites and anti-Dreyfusards because it believed the honor of France was linked to the leadership provided by the French Army.⁸³ The Church, too, needed a scapegoat and found one in Alfred Dreyfus. The Church believed the accusations against a Jew in order to save the pride of the Army and assure security to the French citizens. Published in *La Libre Parole* on April 16, 1898, this article expresses the views of the anti-Dreyfusards and the Church:

In all the turning points in the history of France, our annals show us
foreigners mixing themselves in our affairs and troubling our country for

⁸¹ Larkin, *Church and State After*, 1.

⁸² *Ibid.*, 63.

⁸³ Brennan, *Reflection of the Dreyfus Affair*, 9.

the profit of their interests... Geneva, London, Berlin, Turin have been the foyers where our misfortune was prepared. A country Latin and traditional, Christian and historical, France has been the aiming point of all these coalitions: Jewish, Lutheran, Protestant, Calvinist.⁸⁴

This quote suggests that all of France's previous problems and humiliations can be attributed to the foreigners residing in its borders. The mentioning of other religions suggests the author considered Catholicism to be the only religion truly supported by God. This quote puts all foreigners at risk, not only the Jews. It is significant because it suggests that supporters of the Church were unwilling to recognize that problems within their country could actually be the result of the French Army and its officers.

Because of the tensions that arose between the Jews and the Church, the French government developed the principle of *laïcité*, a specific feature of secularism. Under this precept, the government does not interfere in the religious sector of society. *Laïcité* applied to all religions, and prohibited religious acts that hindered the work of the government.⁸⁵ Because *laïcité* was an informal concept, it created an illusion of separation. With this false impression of separation, the desire for a complete and formal separation of Church and State still existed. The timing of this regulation came when the divisions between religion and society were too great to handle with existing laws. *Laïcité* is an important step in the separation of Church and State, and therefore needs to be understood fully. After the Affair, France was determined to become a completely secularized country, where religion and society do not merge. This secularization was only accomplished through the various stages of separation, starting with *laïcité*.

⁸⁴ Brennan, *Reflection of the Dreyfus Affair*, 52.

⁸⁵ J.Christopher Soper and Joel S. Fetzer, "Explaining the Accommodation of Muslim Religious Practices in France, Britain, and Germany," *French Politics* (2003): 47.

Laïcité

Laïcité can be translated directly into English as “secularism.” In France, this term signified the free exercise of religion, but it further guaranteed no special privileges for religion. Religious activities were not above the law and were bound to the same conditions and terms as are other organizations in French society. The government only recognized religious organizations that obeyed certain rules. Religious organizations were not allowed to cause public disruption. Most religions in France respected the policy of *laïcité* and only certain groups pushed for the return to an all-powerful Catholic-sponsored nation. *Laïcité* did not mean that the government acted hostilely toward religious sects; it was simply the belief that government and political affairs should be kept separate from religious issues and organizations. “*Laïcité* was a sort of freedom from the Church, from God, or any other authority, and from anything immutable.”⁸⁶ For Jews especially, *laïcité* was an important development. New Jewish institutions were organized in France without fear of intolerance by the French government. Even immigrant Jews could set up their own religious associations and select their own rabbis without permission from the central authority.⁸⁷ Even though the term *laïcité* existed in France throughout the nineteenth Century, the legal separation of Church and State did not happen until 1905. With this law, the French government was forbidden from officially recognizing any specific religion; in effect it removed state support for the Catholic Church in 1905.

The Dreyfus Affair caused many divisions in the French public. Both the Dreyfusards and the anti-Dreyfusards held their own set of beliefs about whether or not

⁸⁶ Albert Autin, *Laïcité et liberté de conscience* (Paris :Felix Alcan, 1930) 214.

⁸⁷ Hyman, *From Dreyfus to Vichy*, 30.

Dreyfus was guilty. Within their arguments, these factions also debated the intrusion of religion in society. The Dreyfusards argued for the separation of Church and State because it would place the individual above the institution, whereas the anti-Dreyfusards were staunch supporters of the Church and agreed with the funding given to it by the French state. This interference acted as the key factor in the separation of Church and State in 1905. The Catholic Church did not support Alfred Dreyfus because it needed an outlet in order to avoid placing blame on the 'honorable' French Army. Separation of Church and State started with the principle of *laïcité* and eventually grew into the law that continues to remain part of French society and its secularization.

Chapter III: Propaganda and the Power of the Press

Importance of Affair in France

The Dreyfus Affair was a battleground of political ideologies. These ideologies became public and powerful through the press. While the Affair was important for those who believed Dreyfus was innocent, it was also very important to the anti-Semites. His conviction allowed the anti-Semites to claim that there “is a Jew who has betrayed his fatherland, so are all the Jews.”⁸⁸ If Dreyfus had been found innocent in the beginning, the anti-Semites would have received a tremendous blow. One of the most public and most accessible ways to learn about the Affair was through the media. The press used cartoons and editorials written by those in power as ways of advocating their position in the Affair.

Throughout the Affair, the press remained an ever-important avenue of information for the public. The Dreyfus Affair was one of the first political issues to be covered by means of mass media. With hindsight, one can argue that the press often manipulated the Affair in attempts to increase their sales. One of the most popular anti-Semitic papers that appeared during the Dreyfus Affair was *La Libre Parole*, also written by Drumont. This paper perhaps gained its audience after publishing the arrest of Alfred Dreyfus only two weeks after it took place.⁸⁹

⁸⁸ Breenan, *Reflection of the Dreyfus Affair*, 8.

⁸⁹ Norman L. Kleeblatt, *The Dreyfus Affair: Art, Truth, and Justice* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987) 7.

Newspapers were not the only source of propaganda during the Affair; there were many other types of media that furthered the efforts of the press to publicize the Affair. Posters and signs were placed on every corner in order to mobilize public sentiment that might have not existed initially. Cartoons were also a way to impress ideas on the public. Published by their respective factions, cartoons appeared in the papers almost daily. Most of the cartoons in this section represent the anti-Dreyfusards because of their constant push to discourage the public on the innocence of Dreyfus. This chapter aims to help the reader better understand the manipulative capabilities of the press and how, with the help of popular individuals, propaganda was able to speak volumes to a wide array of people.

The Yellow Press

Not only did the Dreyfus Affair affect the political culture of France, it also had a direct impact in the press. During the 1890s, newspapers were a main source of information and a way to espouse political ideas without fear of condemnation or reprisal. Another important factor was the numerous pieces of propaganda used in the newspapers. Cartoons and images caught the eyes of the readers and allowed them to question the guilt or innocence of Alfred Dreyfus. Many of the images condemned Dreyfus, but many defended him as well. These cartoons offered visual images to the readers and forced them to create their own opinions about the case. Bombarded with different views and opinions from the newspapers, the public found itself in the middle of the Affair.

During the time of the Affair, all of Europe experienced a dramatic industrialization. In particular, France felt a major technological expansion. The

introduction of new machinery and new ways of application allowed the production of newspapers to increase rapidly. This change allowed many press companies to mass produce their papers for public use. Occurring simultaneously with the rapid industrialization, France experienced a rise in the public literacy rate. This meant that no longer could only the rich and elite buy newspapers, now the majority of the middle class could buy and read them as well.⁹⁰ Because the editors wanted the middle class capable of understanding their articles and opinions, they printed their newspapers with easier and simpler language.

With both the increase in production and in literacy rates, the “yellow” press emerged. Editors found subjects that appealed to the buyer and included those articles in their newspapers hoping to increase the paper’s sales. The following chart shows the estimated distribution numbers and the increase, sometimes decrease, in the number of papers sold in France. Most of the papers in this chart will be discussed below.

Newspaper Name	1880	1899
<i>Le Petit Journal</i>	583,820	995,000
<i>La Croix</i> (1882+)	-----	190,750
<i>L’Intransigeant</i>	71,601	50,000
<i>L’Aurore</i> (1897+)	-----	25,000
<i>La Petite Republique</i>	196,372	110,000
<i>La Libre Parole</i> (1892+)	-----	106,000
<i>Le Figaro</i>	104,924	30,000
<i>Le Siecle</i>	15,082	10,000
<i>Le Temps</i>	27,000	35,000

Figure 3⁹¹

⁹⁰ Brennan. *Reflection of the Dreyfus Affair*, 2.

⁹¹Ibid., 25.

The chart shows the distribution levels of different newspapers from 1880 to 1899. It is interesting to notice that *Le Figaro* dropped dramatically in its sales. Perhaps this was because of the position it adopted for the Dreyfusards and then later abandoned after a series of articles written by Zola. *La Libre Parole* did not even exist until two years before the Dreyfus Affair, therefore its sales had nowhere to go but up. Another anti-Semitic newspaper, *Le Petit Journal*, also prospered during the years of the Dreyfus Affair. From this chart, one is able to see how, for the most part, the papers supporting Dreyfus suffered a decline in their sales, whereas those that condemned him and the Jews experienced an increase.

The French press had the most freedom next to the English press. This lack of censorship allowed the Dreyfus Affair to become of worldwide interest. Based on a Third Republic law of July 29, 1881, editors were granted permission for free discussion in their newspapers as long as the matters of the state and the principles it was founded on were not criticized or threatened.⁹² The yellow press succeeded in furthering the cause for nationalism because it focused on articles that would rally the French public against its enemies.⁹³ With this amount of freedom and the ability to criticize individuals, the French press developed the means to take a small “case of injustice” and turn it into a major story.⁹⁴

The French press often ran into serious financial problems because the control of advertising was managed by an agency with little credibility of providing sufficient funds. Therefore, notorious for accepting bribes in order to handle their financial crisis,

⁹² Brennan, *Reflection of the Dreyfus Affair*, 24.

⁹³ *Ibid.*, 2.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, 25.

the French Press published articles to appease the public and their contributors.⁹⁵ At times, newspapers and their editors even provided false information in hopes of increasing their sales and the fervor for nationalism. *La Libre Parole*, the anti-Semitic newspaper edited by Edouard Drumont, was perhaps the most well-known for false, or exaggerated reports. For instance, in 1900 the French Jewish population totaled around 60,000. However, to create a more dramatic appeal to anti-Semites, Drumont published a figure of 200,000 Jews, still only about .5% of the population.⁹⁶ Drumont's paper printed everything from articles and opinion pieces to degrading cartoons of Dreyfus and the Jewish population at large. Drumont and the entire French press was an integral part of the entire Dreyfus Affair, from start to finish. With the help of the press and the propaganda, the Affair infiltrated all of Europe.

By early January of 1898, the French press had deeply involved itself in the outward and public drama of the Dreyfus Affair. By the end of 1898, much or all of the evidence previously built against Dreyfus had either been disproved or simply found unreliable. However, the efforts of Drumont as leader of the anti-Dreyfusards, led to a continued push for a guilty verdict against Dreyfus. Drumont tried to expose the weaknesses of Jews and Dreyfus as French citizens. Drumont also flaunted his hatred of the Jews by continuing to publish his yellow press.⁹⁷ Drumont printed the following cartoon which compares Jews to the infamous liquor absinthe. In 1907, Henri Robert, one of France's leading criminal barristers said, "Alcoholism is the chief cause of the increase in criminality. Absinthe is the enemy." Robert compares Jews to absinthe because he sees them as the chief problem and enemy of France.

⁹⁵ Brennan, *Reflection of the Dreyfus Affair*, 19.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, 5.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, 12.



98

Figure 4

⁹⁸ "Absinthe Books VII—The Dreyfus Affair and anti-Semitism." Extracted from <http://www.oxygenee.com>. 1 March 2006

Another popular anti-Semitic newspaper was *La Croix*, a paper designed to represent the Catholic supporters of France. This paper was widely read among the lower clergy because of their ability to understand the simplistic slogans and subject matters. Although it never received government authorization to exist, the paper continued to release new editions. *La Croix* adopted the theory that there existed, “an international plot against France, and all the Catholic countries” led by the “Jewry and the Masons.” Both of these groups were seen as external expressions against the ruling class.⁹⁹

Jewish by origin, Ernest Judet was, ironically, the main editor of the daily anti-Semitic *Le Petit Journal*. In trying to prove his loyalty to France and his nationalism, Judet took a strong stance against Alfred Dreyfus and the Dreyfusards, but avoided overt anti-Semitism.¹⁰⁰ The image on the following page shows the public degradation ceremony of Captain Alfred Dreyfus published by *Le Petit Journal* on January 13, 1895,. In the image, Dreyfus is stripped of his rank by his sergeant-major. His superior officer also breaks the sword of Alfred Dreyfus over his knee. This event did not take place in private, but instead in the center of the public eye. A crowd is gathered to see the incident and Dreyfus, after being stripped not only of his rank and sword, but also of his honor, must march before the crowd and face public humiliation.¹⁰¹ This particular illustration evoked the anti-Semitic sentiment from various groups such as the Catholics and the nationalists because of the presence of the Army. The Army was the honor of France, and because Dreyfus showed no outer remorse in his composure, this angered the nationalists. The title itself, “*Le Traître*,” reveals the opinion held by Judet and *Le Petit*

⁹⁹ Brennan, *Reflection of the Dreyfus Affair*, 54.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, 21.

¹⁰¹ Derfler, *The Dreyfus Affair*, insert.

Journal. The trust and faith placed in the Army seemed to override the falsities provided by the French government in support of their accusation against Dreyfus.



102

Figure 5

¹⁰² *Le Petit Journal*, January 13, 1895, in Derfler, *The Dreyfus Affair*, insert

The previous image dealt with Dreyfus himself. However, propaganda pieces were not only centered on Alfred Dreyfus, but also on his family. The next image is a very powerful representation of a demonstration against Mathieu Dreyfus, the brother and close ally of Alfred Dreyfus. This image is titled, "L'AGITATION ANTISEMITE À PARIS," ("The anti-Semitic agitation in Paris.") The scene is Montmartre where many of the young public has come to watch the burning of Mathieu Dreyfus in effigy. The people in the red are the representatives of the Church. By participating in such an event, members of the Church demonstrate their hatred for Alfred Dreyfus and Jews in general. It is very interesting to notice that the only other red object in the image is the windmill of the Moulin Rouge, a place of sin and shame. Also in the text underneath the image, it claims that Mathieu was burned by young people, something of great significance to the Affair. This image shows how the Affair reached every generation and that everyone was capable of participation.

Flying next to the demonstration is the sign that reads, "Vive la France," also suggesting that the nationalists had a presence at this public display of hatred against the Jews. Because these images originate from anti-Semitic sources, the messages they portray promote feelings of anti-Semitism and nationalism. The following illustration comes from Drumont's anti-Semitic *La Libre Parole*.



L'AGITATION ANTISÉMITTE A PARIS
A Montmartre, Mathieu Dreyfus est brûlé en effigie par des jeunes gens.

103

Figure 6

¹⁰³ "Absinthe Books VII—The Dreyfus Affair and anti-Semitism." Extracted from : <http://www.oxygenee.com>. 1 March 2006.

Opposing the anti-Dreyfusards and in support of a retrial for Alfred Dreyfus, there were also many key figures that sided with Dreyfus in the press. In addition to Georges Clemenceau, the editorial writer for *L'Aurore*, another important liberal writer and politician was Yves Guyot. With a strong background in journalism, Guyot became the editor of *Le Siècle* and defended Dreyfus after his initial conviction in 1894. Jean Jaurès, the socialist leader in France also became an important spokesperson for Dreyfus. Due to a political defeat in 1898, Jaurès was able to devote much more time to the Dreyfus Affair. He started writing for the socialist paper *La Petite République*, which eventually became a sounding board for the Dreyfusard camp.¹⁰⁴ In August of 1898, Jean Jaurès began a series of articles in his paper that questioned the evidence used in the Dreyfus Case. For instance, Jaures published an article on August 28, 1898, which claimed the *faux henry* was manufactured falsely.

No, truly, the forgery is too visible; the procedure of falsification is too gross. It is known that the War Office, exasperated by the formidable revelations of Colonel Picquart, had need of a decisive document...where they have the name of Dreyfus in full letters; and the forger has fabricated it, without thinking through the impossibilities and absurdities which I have indicated, exactly the paper which the General Staff needs.¹⁰⁵

¹⁰⁴ Brennan, *Reflection of the Dreyfus Affair*, 22.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, 58-59.

Ironically enough, the day this article appeared in the paper was the same day on which the news of the arrest of Henry also surfaced in the papers. It was after the release of this information that *La Croix* unexpectedly pulled its support from the anti-Dreyfusards and issued an attack on the racist anti-Semites.¹⁰⁶

Many facts about the case easily spilled out into the public sphere through the press. Another piece of interesting evidence can be found in a letter which Madam Boulancy, the ex-wife of Esterhazy, released to the Dreyfusard press camp. It appeared in *Le Figaro*. This letter articulated the extreme hatred felt by Esterhazy, the real traitor, toward the French:

There is only for me [Esterhazy] one human quality and it is completely lacking in the people of this country. If this evening someone were to come to me and say that tomorrow, as Captain of the Uhlans, I will be cutting down the French, I would certainly be perfectly happy...I am absolutely convinced that these people are not worth the cartridge for killing them, and all these little despicable self-indulging [French] women...confirms me basically in my opinion.¹⁰⁷

The Dreyfusards immediately used this as incriminatory evidence against Esterhazy. With many of the revelations appearing in the press, several of the anti-Dreyfusard

¹⁰⁶ Brennan, *Reflection of the Dreyfus Affair*, 59.

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, 37.

followers withdrew their support, including Ernest Judet. Judet wrote in *Le Petit Journal* that France had lost all hope and that the government “loses all authority and dignity.”¹⁰⁸

The French use of propaganda and their freedom of the press allowed the Dreyfus Affair to become a central issue among the public in the 1890s. The increase in literacy rate made it possible for more people to follow the proceedings of the Affair. Some of the press emphasized anti-Semitism and focused their attacks on Alfred Dreyfus. While the anti-Dreyfusards were able to publicize their views of the case, the Dreyfusards were also able to defend their stance in public. Each paper contained a different set of views and opinions. Both the Dreyfusards and the anti-Dreyfusards depended on the press as an outlet for their ideas and beliefs. Through editorials, images, and published letters, the Dreyfus Affair was well-covered. With the increase in production and French literacy rate, the propaganda and power of the press became two of the most crucial aspects in relation to the Dreyfus Affair. By way of the press, the details of the Dreyfus Affair reached the masses.

¹⁰⁸ Brennan, *Reflection of the Dreyfus Affair*, 61.

Chapter IV: Cultural Divisions

The Dreyfus Affair led to many divisions within France not only during the 1890s, but also in the decades that followed. It divided the French people socially and politically and much of this was made possible by the lack of censorship in the French press. One of the more visible ways in which the Dreyfus Affair affected France is through its impact on culture. This chapter discusses several pieces of art that either condemned Dreyfus and the Jews, or applauded his quest for innocence. Visual art was only one way to express feelings about the affair. Several different songs appeared afterward that contained anti-Semitic lyrics. This chapter explains the significance and the impact of these cultural works in the French society during and after the Dreyfus Affair.

French Artists

Not only did the Dreyfus Affair become a central issue in the newspapers in the form of propaganda and cartoons, but it also became evident in the work of several notable French artists. When the public chose between Dreyfusard and anti-Dreyfusard, so, too did many members of the avant-garde artistic movement. Many of the popular artists whose works are still admired today were part of this movement. The division that existed among French artists demonstrates further how the Dreyfus Affair infiltrated the French society.

Along with Emile Zola, artists Claude Monet and Camille Pissarro as well as other radical artists such as Maximilien Luce, Paul Signac, and Félix Vallotton supported Dreyfus. Those opposing Dreyfus and supporting anti-Semitism were Paul Cezanne, Auguste Rodin, Pierre-Auguste Renoir, and Edgar Degas. After seeing Zola's *J'Accuse* in the newspaper, Monet agreed to sign the Manifesto of the Intellectuals in support of Dreyfus and his innocence. The Manifesto of the Intellectuals got its name "from the fact that most who signed also included their professions, a strategy whereby Dreyfusards tried to establish their authority to pass judgment on the political world by reference to the fact that they were principally engaged in intellectual rather than manual labor."¹⁰⁹ Also joining after seeing the publication of Zola's letter was Pissarro. This shows how much of an influence Emile Zola had during this Affair among the French community, at least among artists.¹¹⁰

Among those opposed to Dreyfus was Renoir, an extremely vocal anti-Semite and anti-Dreyfusard. Despite his childhood friendship with Dreyfusard Pissarro, Renoir claimed "there was a reason for their [the Jews] being kicked out of every country, and asserted that 'they shouldn't be allowed to become so important in France.'"¹¹¹ The most ardent anti-Dreyfusard of the avant-garde movement was Edgar Degas. When one of his models let it slip that she thought Dreyfus might be innocent, Degas immediately ordered her out of his room claiming, "You are Jewish...you are Jewish..."¹¹² The works of Degas were never overly anti-Semitic, but at the same time there were often signs within his art that suggested his stance. The next image reveals Degas's devout feelings of

¹⁰⁹ Christopher E. Forth, *The Dreyfus Affair and the Crisis of French Manhood* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2004) 71.

¹¹⁰ Maurice Berger, *Modern Art and Society* (New York: Harper Collins Publishers, 1994), 25.

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*

¹¹² Berger, *Modern Art and Society*, 26.

nationalism in 1879. The two men represent his childhood friend and another close companion and the setting is the Boulanger-Cave. Everything in the piece of art is dimly colored in shades of black, gray, and white. Although it is difficult to decipher, the only shot of color in this picture is the ribbon of the Legion of Honor each man wears on his lapel signifying their loyalty to the French nation. This image uses subtle pieces of evidence to expose Degas's feelings about French nationalism.



113

Figure 7

¹¹³ Berger, *Modern Art and Society*, 27.

The anti-Semitic attitudes of Degas contradict his childhood because while growing up, he surrounded himself with a group of friends who were mainly Jewish. For example Ludovic Halevy, a Jew, had been his best friend growing up, but this relationship dramatically changed at the onset of the Dreyfus Affair. By 1895, Degas began to make public his support for the army and his position as an anti-Semite. Contributing to his anti-Dreyfusard feelings was Drumont's *La Libre Parole*, which he began to read everyday.

Camille Pissarro also began as an avid anti-Dreyfusard, but by the end of the trial had become a convinced Dreyfusard. This next drawing is from the series *Turpitudes sociales* (1889-1890) and focuses on the typical description of a Jew. Titled *Capital*, this was only one of the series of twenty-eight drawings "representing both the exploiters and the exploited of his time."¹¹⁴ Pissarro adopted many forms of description for his works from the prototypical narrative of a Jew given by Drumont. In *Capital*, Pissarro sketches the man with a "prominent hooked nose, protruding ears, thick lips, slack potbelly, soft hands, and knock-knees."¹¹⁵ Pissarro provided this statement along with his drawing. "The statue is the golden calf, the God Capital. In a word it represents the divinity of the day in a portrait of a Bischoffheim, of an Oppenheim, of a Rothschild, of a Gould, whatever. It is without distinction, vulgar and ugly."¹¹⁶ The choice of names for this quote was by no means a coincidence. The stereotypical description of Jews coincides with this list of specifically Jewish names with hooked noses. Whereas Zola heavily influenced the Dreyfusard artists, Drumont and his stereotypical Jews also affected the style of many anti-Dreyfusard artists.

¹¹⁴ Berger, *Modern Art and Society*, 28.

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*



117

Figure 8

¹¹⁷ Berger, *Modern Art and Society*, 29.

Although there were many different avant-garde artists who lived during the Dreyfus Affair, only a handful had the opportunities and were willing to voice their opinions. The split among artists was another effect of the Dreyfus Affair on the cultural world of France. Artists were able to advocate their positions by the smallest of details in their works. Degas and Pissarro were only two of the exceptionally influential artists during the Affair whose works allowed the people of France to witness the ideological battle by way of art. Imagery and art is simply another way in which we are able to see how the Dreyfus Affair inspired a cultural split.

Music

In the midst of the Dreyfus Affair, many French nationalists looked to their culture as a way of channeling their political hopes. The Dreyfus Affair permeated through every profession, including the music industry in France. Music became a way for nationalists to express their hatred and distaste for Jews. Along with the artists, musicians were also divided in their support of Dreyfus and decided to join forces with either the Dreyfusards or the anti-Dreyfusards. Those musicians who wanted to fight for tradition, especially the Army and the Church, were predominantly anti-Dreyfusards and, generally speaking, the musicians who were not normally a part of the official system and were not interested in preserving tradition were Dreyfusards.¹¹⁸

Many of the French nationalists turned to culture and music as a way to communicate their feelings of anti-Semitism. During the 1890s, many French musicians began lobbying for French music because they were concerned that their beloved French

¹¹⁸ Jane F. Fulcher, *French Cultural Politics & Music* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 19.

operas were being abandoned for foreign operatic works.¹¹⁹ Along with the artists who signed the Manifest of the Intellectuals, musicians also signed the proposal with hopes of elevating their positions because of their professions. During the time of the Dreyfus Affair, the two leading musical figures were composers Alfred Bruneau and Vincent d'Indy.

With little interest in preserving French tradition, Alfred Bruneau decided to support Alfred Dreyfus and the Dreyfusards. However, the main reason for his support was his friendship and professional relationship with Emile Zola. Before embarking in the world of literature, Zola tried a career in writing for operas. This venture failed, but it led him to working with Bruneau. Starting in 1891, Bruneau and Zola began working on a series of operatic ventures. Within these operas Bruneau mirrored the Dreyfusard style that Zola started in his literary works. Bruneau's operas became symbols of the Dreyfus Affair. After the appearance of *J'Accuse*, Bruneau and his works were criticized by the anti-Dreyfusards. However, these criticisms only led Bruneau to compose even stronger Dreyfusard works in the future.¹²⁰

Another driving force behind Bruneau was the challenge presented by fellow composer and anti-Dreyfusard, Vincent d'Indy. D'Indy believed in the army, the Church, authority—core values of the anti-Dreyfusards. These values were not unimportant for the Dreyfusards, but they tended to place much more emphasis on the individuals within these institutions instead of the institution itself. Raised to adhere to tradition, d'Indy and his works reflect his nationalist style. In opposition to the Manifest of the Intellectuals, d'Indy belonged to the nationalist oriented Ligue de la Patrie Francaise, literally League

¹¹⁹ Fulcher, *French Cultural Politics*, 18.

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*, 20.

of the French Fatherland. The War of 1870 greatly affected d'Indy and his musical/political career. After France suffered defeat at the hands of the Germans, he and many French musicians began emulating the German symphonic music while using French styles. They wanted to be better than the Germans in at least the musical field. D'Indy spared no hatred when referring to Jewish composers. He believed Jewish composers were influenced by the Italian style of music, pushing them even further away from the French style. Because of his fervent nationalism, d'Indy refused this so-called Jewish style of music.¹²¹ Both Bruneau and d'Indy were unable to separate their political views from their style of music. While both men were highly esteemed in their profession, each carried his own opinions of the Dreyfus Affair. With political opinions explicit in their musical works, Bruneau and d'Indy participated in the effort that furthered the cultural divide in France.

Composers were not the only people in France who found ways to publicize their political opinions. When Zola released *J'Accuse* in January of 1898, a rebirth of anti-Semitic disturbances surfaced in the streets of France. Many of these demonstrations started with the young people who vandalized Jewish property and attacked Jewish teachers. One of the worst riots took place in Algeria, a colony belonging to France with a population of almost 320,000 which included over 50,000 Jews. Every Jewish shop received damage and many Jewish houses were set on fire. Along with the material damages, several Jews were stoned and one even beaten to death. In the midst of the anti-Semitic demonstrations in 1898, rioters in the streets sang anti-Semitic songs condemning Jews, and in essence Alfred Dreyfus.¹²² In the first song, the last line alludes

¹²¹ Fulcher, *French Cultural Politics*, 21-23.

¹²² Derfler, *The Dreyfus Affair*, 129.

to a stereotypical physical feature of Jews—the hooked nose. The title of the second song strongly suggests its anti-Semitic nature. The “Marseillaise” is the French national anthem, which means this interpretation of the treasured anthem was very sarcastic and anti-Jewish. The “Anti-Jewish Marseillaise” also mentions that jobs and wages would be better without foreigners, especially the Jews.

Anti-Semitic Songs

“Marche Antisémite”	“Anti-Semitic March”
A mort les Juifs! A mort les Juifs!	Death to the Jews! Death to the Jews!
Il faut les pendre	We must hang them
Sans plus attendre	Without further delay
A mort les Juifs! A mort les Juifs!	Death to the Jews! Death to the Jews!
Il faut les pendre	We must hang them
Par le fil!	By the nose!
“Marseillaise Antijuive”	“Anti-Jewish Marseillaise”
Il y a trop longtemps qu’nous	We have lived in misery too long,
sommes dans la misère,	
Chassons l’étranger,	Let’s chase out the foreigner,
Ca i’ra travailier;	That’ll give us work;
Ce qu’il nous faut, c’est un meilleur	What we need is a better salary,
salaire,	
Chassons de notre pays,	Let’s chase out of our country,
Toute cette sale bande de joudis!	The filthy band of Kikes!

123

Figure 9

¹²³ Jean-Denis Bredin, *The Affair: The Case of Alfred Dreyfus* (New York: George Braziller Inc., 1983), 287-288.

Music and art both show the cultural divide that occurred in France during the Dreyfus Affair. These outward expressions of political ideologies show how intellectuals and artists aligned themselves with different factions, in which they incorporated their notions about the Dreyfus Affair.

CONCLUSION

There are many factors that can divide a nation. In 1894, the Dreyfus Affair separated the French politically, socially, and culturally. While the Dreyfus Affair may not have been the immediate cause for the separation of Church and State, it acted as a catalyst that fostered other movements based on secularization. The Dreyfus Affair provided a focal point for those with hatred toward the Jewish population and allowed protestors to publicly demonstrate their animosity.

It is necessary to understand the origins for French anti-Semitism, the details of the life of Alfred Dreyfus, and the Affair itself, in order to gain the overall perspective of this event. Although the most obvious division spurred by the Affair was in the political realm, one cannot forget how the Affair touched the social and culture spheres of France as well. This paper argues the importance of studying all three of these divisions simultaneously because certain elements of the Affair are left out if one is studied in isolation. It is through these divisions that one can see how the Dreyfus Affair penetrated every aspect of French life.

In the new realm of mass media, the Dreyfus Affair received a different kind of public attention. It was the news and everyone could learn about it in a way that was absent in previous political scandals. Increases in the French literacy rate allowed more people to learn about the Affair through the press and to join in the protests. Given the examples of propaganda used during the Dreyfus Affair, we have seen how they might influence the public. Cartoons, pieces of art, music lyrics, and newspaper propaganda

provided outlets for different opinions, through which the public remained informed of the events pertaining to the Dreyfus Affair. A dedication to nationalism surfaced in France due to the Dreyfus Affair which, in turn, questioned the loyalty of citizens of many different origins, not only the Jews. Casting doubts on all foreigners and their desires to remain in France, the French government wanted a pure French society, a society in which all loyalty belonged to France. A popular slogan “France for the French” resounded in many of the debates and arguments.¹²⁴

By gaining a better understanding of the details of the Dreyfus Affair, one can more easily see the links between the Dreyfus Affair and the separation of Church and State, a republican measure showing victory for the Dreyfusards. Throughout the Affair, the presence of religion in society found itself subject to questioning. Although the legal separation of Church and State did not occur until 1905, it can be argued that the events of the Dreyfus Affair, prior to the separation, led the government to determine that this law was necessary. It was necessary because the French government could not risk another political disaster. France needed desperately to get the State out of religion. With the Dreyfus Affair and the aid of many other post-separation factors, the secularization between religion and society enacted 100 years ago continues to remain an integral part of French society today.

France has always remained at the heart of European developments, but it was the Dreyfus Affair in 1894 that occupied the heart of France. This Affair consumed French citizens and questioned both Jewish and French loyalty to their mother country. When the possibility of treason arose in the honorable French army, a scapegoat had to be found. Seeing a Jew as the perfect target, Alfred Dreyfus and the Dreyfus Affair became

¹²⁴ Fitch. “Mass Culture, Mass Parliamentary Politics,” 55-95.

the center of French politics, culture, and society for the next ten years. Even though the small details of the Dreyfus Affair are normally forgotten, the legacy of this Affair will resound in France forever. The Dreyfus Affair displayed how France saw religion in politics. The outcome of the Dreyfus Affair, meaning the formal Separation of Church and State, had its own impact in later events in France such as the Vichy Regime, Algeria, and even the 2005 riots. The beginning of understanding French secularism started with the Dreyfus Affair.

APPENDIX

The Bordereau¹²⁵ Translated by Leslie Derfler

Although I had no word you wished to see me, Monsieur, I am nevertheless sending you some interesting pieces of information:

1. A note on the hydraulic brake of 120 mm. gun and on the way the gun has performed.
2. A note of the covering troops (under the revised plan some changes will be made).
3. A note of a change in artillery formations.
4. A note that concerns Madagascar.
5. The draft Field Artillery Firing Manual. This last document is extremely difficult to get, and I can only have it available for a very few days. The Ministry of War has distributed a fixed number of copies to the relevant corps, and the corps are responsible for them. Each officer having one must return it after maneuvers. So if you want to take what interests you from it and hold on to it for me. I will get one—unless you would like me to copy it all out and send the copy to you.

I am about to leave for maneuvers.

Figure 10

¹²⁵Derfler, *The Dreyfus Affair*, 117.

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