

**GLOBAL ANTISEMITISM:
A CRISIS OF MODERNITY**

**Volume I
Conceptual Approaches**

Charles Asher Small
Editor

INSTITUTE FOR THE STUDY OF GLOBAL ANTISEMITISM AND POLICY

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For Professor William Prusoff

About the Editor

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I am especially grateful to all the scholars who attended the conference. Most of them did so at their own expense and traveled considerable distances to be there. The conference, on which this series is based, was the largest academic gathering ever on the study of antisemitism. More than one hundred speakers from approximately twenty academic fields and more than twenty countries attended the event. It was truly a remarkable gathering at an important historical moment. Due to the high level of scholarship, the conference produced many key insights and has given rise to many important research projects.

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This series is dedicated to the memory of Professor William (Bill) Prusoff. Bill was the founding member of ISGAP and funded much of our activities from 2004 until his passing in 2011. Without his support, ISGAP would not have been able to establish YIISA at Yale University. In many ways, Bill's reputation as a scholar and an exceptional *mensch* paved the way for our work. Rarely in one's life does one have the privilege to meet someone of Bill's stature. He was a medical genius who created the first generation of anti-viral and anti-HIV medications that helped to save or prolong the lives of millions. Yet despite his incredible accomplishments, Bill was the most humble, kind, and amiable person I have ever met. Bill never forgot where he came from. He often recounted how his family had to flee Brooklyn for Miami in the 1930s after "Brown Shirts" thugs attacked the family store or how he was refused entry to Yale's Medical School because of the Jewish quota that was in place at the time. Nevertheless, he eventually managed to become a tenured professor at Yale as well a true giant in his field. In the Jewish tradition there is a belief that, at any given time, there are 36 hidden righteous people (*Tzadikim Nistarim*) in the world whose role in life is to justify the purpose of humankind in the eyes of G-d. For those of us who knew Bill, this idea did not seem beyond the realm of possibilities. He is missed.

Charles Asher Small
December 2013

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Introduction

Charles Asher Small

In August 2010, the largest-ever academic conference on the study of antisemitism took place at Yale University. The conference, entitled “Global Antisemitism: A Crisis of Modernity,” was hosted and organized by the Yale Initiative for the Interdisciplinary Study of Antisemitism (YIISA) and the International Association for the Study of Antisemitism (IASA). The conference featured over 100 speakers from more than 20 countries from around the world. They included recent graduates at the beginning of their academic careers, experienced academics, and leading senior scholars who have dedicated their intellectual pursuits to the study of antisemitism, as well as legal experts, practitioners and others. More than 600 people attended the conference, including undergraduate and graduate students, scholars from many universities, including Yale University, practitioners and members of non-governmental organizations, civil servants and diplomats interested in the policy implications of the subject matter, and members of the general public. This volume presents a selection of the many important and challenging papers presented at the conference. It is one of five volumes reflecting the interdisciplinary nature of the conference as well as the diverse nature of the subject of antisemitism in general.

The Institute for the Study of Global Antisemitism and Policy (ISGAP) was established in 2004, with a network of scholars from around the world and the support of a group of dedicated philanthropists led by the humanitarian and professor of pharmacology William (Bill) Prusoff, in response to a clear and ominous increase in global antisemitism.¹ In 2006, ISGAP approached Yale University with a view to establishing an academic research center within the university. After determining that the center would meet all the necessary administrative, financial, and academic requirements, Yale University inaugurated the Yale Initiative for the Interdisciplinary Study of Antisemitism (YIISA) in 2006. It was the first academic research center focusing on the interdisciplinary study of antisemitism to be based at a North American university.² ISGAP’s Board of Trustees supported and funded all of YIISA’s activities, co-sponsoring

¹ In his opening remarks at the United Nations conference “Confronting anti-Semitism: Education and Tolerance and Understanding,” June 21, 2004, New York, Professor Elie Wiesel examined the rising levels and threat of antisemitism. The rise in contemporary global antisemitism is examined and substantiated in several chapters in this volume.

² The fact that the first interdisciplinary and fully fledged research center on antisemitism at a North American university was only established in 2006 ought itself to be a the focus of a research project, especially given the role antisemitism has played in Western civilization.

its seminar series and various other events and paying the salaries of its 14 employees. It also underwrote the August 2010 conference on which the above-mentioned five volumes are based.³

From 2006 to 2011, YIISA offered a successful graduate and post-doctorate fellowship program. Each year, it welcomed a group of scholars from leading universities in the United States and around the world, including several senior visiting professors. YIISA had a robust programming agenda. It organized over 120 seminars, special events, a series of films, four international conferences, symposiums and other gatherings at Yale University in New Haven, as well in New York, Washington, and Berlin. Its scholars carried out research projects and published important material on the interdisciplinary study of antisemitism. ISGAP and YIISA met the need to examine the changing contemporary state of and processes pertaining to global antisemitism. The fact that over 100 speakers participated in the aforementioned 2010 conference, and that all but ten of them attended at their own expense, is testimony to the extensive interest in the study of contemporary antisemitism.

The conference, "Global Antisemitism: A Crisis of Modernity," offered an environment in which scholars from a wide array of disciplines, intellectual backgrounds, and perspectives would be able to present their research and engage in interdisciplinary debate. The call for papers was inclusive and encouraged scholars from around the world to present their work. Without such a free exchange of ideas, any notion of academic freedom is tantamount to rhetoric. The subject of antisemitism is complex and controversial, as many students and scholars of this subject know. It was therefore important to YIISA to provide a forum in which this important issue could be freely discussed and explored.⁴

³ ISGAP continues as a research center with its head office in New York. It develops academic programming at top universities, including McGill, Fordham (Lincoln Center Campus), Harvard Law School, and the Stanford's Hoover Institution.

⁴ It is not uncommon for scholars of antisemitism, especially those engaged in the study of its contemporary manifestations, to be labeled as right-wing, neo-conservative, or Islamophobic. Likewise, despite their obvious and sometimes extraordinary credentials, their scholarship is often unfairly categorized as "advocacy." Such accusations, which are often made by those who engage in advocacy themselves, actually constitute a form of antisemitism. Others simply embrace the "gatekeeper" role within the academy, which Cohen describes as an attempt to maintain the status quo on behalf of institutional interests. See Robin Cohen, *The New Helots: Migrants in the International Division of Labour* (Gower Publishing, Aldershot 1987) and E. Bonacich, "A Theory of Middleman Minorities," *American Sociological Review* Vol. 38 (1973) pp. 583-594. This is reminiscent of the McCarthy era interference with academic freedom. At that time, a notable scholar, Nathan Glazer, took it upon himself to report on members the Jewish community to the "Committee" in order to silence political views that were deemed unacceptable at the time (Cedric Robinson, *Black Marxism: The Making of the Black Radical Tradition* (Zed Books, London 1983)). The academic activities of YIISA, in particular its work on state-sponsored antisemitism, Iran, and the Muslim Brotherhood, was denounced as "advocacy" by those with an interest in promoting the US administration's general policy of "engagement" with Islamic states. Analogous views also found support within the Yale Corporation and administration, as well as among several tenured faculty, resulting in a *de facto* limitation of academic freedom. These perspectives were conveyed directly to my colleagues and me by leading members of the Yale administration and faculty members. It thus appears that the scholarly analysis of antisemitism in contemporary Middle Eastern societies infringed upon various political and economic priorities. Moreover, the possible investment of Gulf funds in Yale University, and other universities around the world, or fear of the discontinuation of such funding, is a

In June 2004, the United Nations, an institution that emerged from the ashes of World War II and the Holocaust, held its first official conference on antisemitism. This gathering served as a formal acknowledgement of the re-emergence of antisemitism as a contemporary matter of concern in a changing and globalizing world. It was hosted by UN Secretary General Kofi Annan and Nobel peace laureate Professor Elie Wiesel at the UN headquarters in New York.⁵ Wiesel, the keynote speaker in a packed General Assembly Hall, noted that antisemitism is the oldest collective form of hatred in recorded history and that it had even managed to penetrate the United Nations itself. He questioned whether the world body, despite its role as a moral and political global leader, had forgotten the destructive and deadly impact of antisemitism. Some in attendance, Wiesel pointed out, actually endured its consequences: "We were there. We saw our parents, we saw our friends die because of antisemitism." In my view, the 2004 UN conference on antisemitism marked a turning point in the response of academia to the subject of antisemitism. This renewed interest was a contributing factor in the establishment of ISGAP several months later.

The YIISA conference addressed two inter-related and important areas of research that both encompass various disciplines, namely (1) global antisemitism and (2) the crisis of modernity currently affecting the core elements of Western society and civilization. Is it possible that the emergence of the current wave of global antisemitism both reflects and forms part of a wider attack on the core elements of modernity, notions of Enlightenment, and Western civilization more generally by reactionary social forces empowered by the crisis of capitalism? Against this background, the participants in the conference addressed conceptual and empirical questions from a wide array of perspectives and disciplines. The diversity in approach and opinion was itself a sign of academic health.

* * *

Antisemitism is a complex and, at times, perplexing form of hatred. Some observers refer to it as the "longest hatred." It spans centuries of history, infecting different societies, religious, philosophical and political movements, and even civilizations. In the aftermath of the Holocaust, some have even argued that antisemitism illustrates the limitations of the Enlightenment and modernity itself. Manifestations of antisemitism occur in numerous ideologically-based narratives and in constructed identities of belonging and Otherness such as race and ethnicity, as well as nationalist and anti-nationalist movements. In the contemporary context of globalized relations, it appears that antisemitism has taken on new complex and changing forms that need to be decoded, mapped, and exposed. The academic study of antisemitism, like prejudice more generally, has a long and impressive intellectual and research history. It remains a topic

question meriting unfettered research rather than a statement of fact. The question whether this so-called "advocacy," which allegedly affected research on antisemitism, ought to be replaced by kosher "non-advocacy" research that does not disturb governmental or foreign donor sensibilities must now be on the table as an open question for research. Additionally, against this background, the possibility that the term "advocacy" itself has become a euphemism for "research relevant to current affairs and therefore likely to offend some powerful parties" must be subjected to critical scholarly scrutiny.

⁵ Professor Elie Wiesel is the Honorary President of ISGAP.

of ongoing political importance and scholarly engagement. However, especially at this important historical juncture, unlike prejudice and discrimination directed at other social groups, antisemitism—in particular its contemporary forms and processes—is almost always studied outside an organized academic framework.

The purpose of YIISA's 2010 conference was therefore to explore this subject matter in a comprehensive manner and from an array of approaches and perspectives, as well as in its global, national, and regional contexts. The development of an interdisciplinary approach and consciousness, while encouraging analytical studies examining a prejudice that remains widespread and but also appears to be experiencing a resurgence, was a key objective of the conference and YIISA's general mission. The conference aimed to create a vibrant space in which high-caliber scholarship and open and free debate would develop, be nurtured, and have an impact.⁶

The process of globalization has led to an increase in adversarial identity politics. In this environment, Israel, as a central manifestation of contemporary Jewish identity, and Jews more generally have become the focus of scapegoating and hateful rhetoric. At a more structural and socio-historical level, the old ideologies and tendencies of antisemitism have re-emerged and are being fused with anti-Zionism or what in many cases might be more appropriately described as Israel-bashing.⁷ The old theological and racist forms of European antisemitism are being amalgamated with anti-Jewish and anti-Israel pronouncements emanating in particular from the Muslim world, which is located mainly, but not exclusively, in and around the Middle East. Contemporary globalization and the related socio-economic, cultural, and political processes are being fused with these histori-

⁶ The establishment of a research center similar to YIISA is urgently required within the academy. The approach of such an entity should be analogous to the one adopted by the Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies (CCCS) at the University of Birmingham (UK) and the Centre for Research in Ethnic Relations (CRER) at the University of Warwick (UK), yet with a specific critical approach to antisemitism. Both centers adopted an interdisciplinary approach with an emphasis on critical conceptual analysis based on solid empirical research. Currently, there are several small entities that study antisemitism, but they are all led by European historians with little or no background in the contemporary, regional, or interdisciplinary context. In fact, several of these scholars actually blame Israel for contemporary manifestations of antisemitism and underestimate the relevance of Islamism. This perspective is often based on "politically correct" views rather than rational scholarship. There is a need for vibrant analysis, study, discussion, and debate. A new entity for the study of antisemitism ought to combine an understanding of Western antisemitism and notions of "Otherness" with a willingness to tackle the contemporary changes sweeping the Middle East and knowledge of the region and its culture, including Islam and Islamism. The study of terrorism as it relates to contemporary antisemitism is also very much required. All these issues should obviously be examined in the context of processes associated with globalization, as opposed to the more frequently-used and descriptive concept of global antisemitism. Descriptive work without a critical, comprehensive, and conceptual interdisciplinary analytical framework will not be effective in assessing the contemporary condition, nor in creating appropriate policy responses. Policy development is a recognized and respected field of study within academia. This must be stated, since many who analyze antisemitism are "gatekeepers" who dismiss this vital scholarship as advocacy. This is not only problematic but also hinders the finding of solutions to key issues, indirectly undermining the safety of many.

⁷ For an analysis linking classical forms of antisemitism with contemporary Israel-bashing, see Edward H. Kaplan and Charles A. Small, "Anti-Israel Sentiment Predicts Anti-Semitism in Europe," *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, Vol. 50, No. 4, August 2006.

cal tendencies, creating the conditions that pose a threat to Jewish people and Jewish communities in the Diaspora. In addition, new structural realities within the realm of the international relations and the emergence of anti-Israel propensities appear to pose a threat to Israel and the Jewish people in a manner not seen since the end of World War II. Once again, in this age of globalization, the Jewish people seem to be caught between the “aristocracy” or “wealthy establishment” (core) and the marginalized or disenfranchised masses (periphery), as they have been throughout most of history.⁸

With the advent of the “socialism of fools,” a term describing the replacement of the search for real social and political equity with antisemitism that is frequently attributed to August Bebel, Jews continued to be targeted.⁹ In much the same way, the current marginalization of the Jewish people in the Arab world—or, more accurately, the marginalization of the image of the Jew, since most of them were pressured to leave or expelled from Arab countries between 1948 and the early 1970s after a strong continual presence of thousands of years—is staggering. As the social movements in the Middle East have turned to their own version of the “socialism of fools” (i.e., the antisemitism of radical political Islamism), they have incorporated lethal forms of European genocidal antisemitism as their fuel.¹⁰ However, many scholars, policy-makers, and journalists of record still refuse to acknowledge this fact and to critically examine the ideology and mission of this social movement.

Anti-Judaism is one of the most complex and at times perplexing forms of hatred. As evident from the range of papers presented at the conference and in these volumes, antisemitism has many facets that touch upon many subjects and scholarly disciplines. The term “anti-Semitism,” which was coined in the 1870s by Wilhelm Marr,¹¹ is also controversial and at times confusing. Yet despite its etymological limitations and contradictions, it remains valid and useful. The term refers specifically to prejudice and discrimination against the Jewish people. Some incorrectly or for reasons of political expediency use the term to refer to prejudice against all so-called “Semitic” peoples, claiming that Arab peoples cannot be antisemites, as they are Semites themselves. This is

⁸ See the *Arab Human Development Report* (United Nations Development Programme 2005). This report and other subsequent reports examine the impact of globalization on aspects of socioeconomic marginalization stability in the Arab world.

⁹ Steve Cohen, *That’s Funny You Don’t Look Anti-Semitic. An Anti-Racist Analysis of Left Anti-Semitism* (Leeds 1984). The well-known saying “Anti-Semitism is the socialism of fools” (“Der Antisemitismus ist der Sozialismus der dummen Kerle”) is frequently attributed to Bebel, but probably originated with the Austrian democrat Ferdinand Kronawetter; it was in general use among German Social Democrats by the 1890s (Richard J. Evans, *The Coming of the Third Reich* (Penguin Group 2005)). For a discussion of antisemitism, including the notion of the socialism of fools, see David Hirsh, *Anti-Zionism and Antisemitism: Cosmopolitan Reflections*, The Yale Initiative for the Interdisciplinary Study of Antisemitism Working Paper Series, Editor Charles Asher Small, Vol. 1, No. 1 (2007).

¹⁰ In *Islamism and Islam* (Yale University Press 2011), Bassam Tibi makes the important distinction between antisemitism that was European in origin and genocidal, on the one hand, and the kind of anti-Judaism that was discriminatory in nature, which was historically prevalent in the Middle East and Islamic context, on the other. For various reasons why the antisemitism taking hold in Muslim societies in the contemporary condition has much in common with European genocidal antisemitism, see the contributions on this subject in the present volume.

¹¹ Shlomo Avineri, *Karl Marx on Colonialism and Modernization* (New York 1968).

fine in terms of etymological musing but not in terms of the history of language and thought, where terms acquire specific meanings over time that diverge from their etymological origins. In fact, antisemitism refers to a specific form a hatred that is mainly European in origin and focuses upon the Jewish people. Some scholars prefer to use the term antisemitism, without a hyphen and uncapitalized, since it refers to a form of hatred or a phenomenon rather than to a specific race or biologically determined group. Emil Fackenheim, for example, used the unhyphenated form for this reason.¹² These volumes and all of ISGAP's other work also follows this approach.

Some scholars who have examined the complexities of antisemitism claim that it takes several forms, including social, economic, political, cultural, and religious antisemitism. René König, for example, contends that these different forms of antisemitism demonstrate that the origins of antisemitism are rooted in different historical periods and places.¹³

When religion, in particular Christianity, represented the dominant way to perceive reality, the Jews were regarded as followers of the wrong religion. It was also believed that their refusal to accept the Christian messiah disqualified them from any form of redemption and even that Jewish stubbornness hindered world redemption. Finally, it is hardly necessary to recall that the Jews were accused of deicide. When the dominant manner in which Europeans perceived reality was based on the nation state and biological notions of race and ethnicity, the Jews were constructed as belonging to another, inferior race. According to the Nazis and others who subscribed to racist beliefs, for example, they were perceived as polluting the Aryan race and needed to be removed completely in order to save the purity of the "race" and "nation."

At present, some argue for religious reasons that the self-determination of the Jews—the non-Muslim "Other"—on so-called Islamic land is a sin and should not be tolerated. Others, in the West, see Jewish stubbornness as the cause of radical Islam, Jihadism, and the instability in the region. When it comes Israel's policies and existence, they believe that if only the Jews would change the problems in the region and in international relations as a whole could be resolved.¹⁴ If taken to its logical conclusion, this perspective could lead to great destruction, like other historical manifestations of antisemitism, since its aims is the eradication of Israel or any semblance of Jewish self-determination in the region.¹⁵ Despite the complete rejection of the Jewish narrative by the Iranian regime, Hamas, Hezbollah, and other Salafists and Islamists, many observers focus on the "Other" and are content to blame the "victim" of this ideology without properly examining it. In fact, attempts to critically examine these reactionary views are often deemed politically unacceptable. This contemporary form of antisemitism has many layers. New forms are mixed with older ones, such as conspiracy theories about Jewish power and culture, apocalyptic theories concerning the Jews. For example, the *Protocols*

¹² Emil Fackenheim, "Post-Holocaust Anti-Jewishness, Jewish Identity and the Centrality of Israel," in Moshe Davis, ed., *World Jewry and the State of Israel* (Arno Press 1977).

¹³ René König, *Materialien zur Kriminalsoziologie* (VS Verlag 2004).

¹⁴ It is important to note that, in the contemporary US context, some political realists certainly fall into the category of those who blame Israel for all the problems in the region and beyond.

¹⁵ Cf. Norbert Elias, *The Civilizing Process* (2000) (originally published as *Über den Prozess der Zivilisation* in two separate volumes in 1939 by Haus zum Falken, Basel). Refusing to recognize the Other and insisting on changing them fundamentally will inevitably lead to violence and even destruction.

of the *Elders of Zion*, which played a key role in creating the conditions for the Holocaust, as well European antisemitism more generally, has now become part of the political and cultural mainstream in several Arab and Muslim societies.¹⁶

The above-mentioned complexities make it difficult to define the different forms that antisemitism takes. This in turn makes it problematic to address and analyze the subject matter. It is no wonder, then, that contemporary forms of antisemitism have always been difficult if not impossible to acknowledge, study, measure, and oppose. One hopes that it will not only be future historians who come to understand and address today's lethal forms of antisemitism, too late to affect policy, perceptions, and predispositions.

The context of contemporary global antisemitism, on which the conference focused, covers international relations, which are increasingly in a state of flux and turmoil, as well as notions of tolerance, democratic principles and ideals, human rights, and robust citizenship. These values appear to be receding within many institutions and societies, while the international community seems to be less strident in trying to defend them. It would appear that the Jew, or perhaps more importantly the image of the Jew or the "imaginary Jew" as described by Alain Finkielkraut,¹⁷ is at the middle of this global moment. Both historically and today, antisemitism is a social disease that begins with the Jews but does not end with them, making the Jewish people the proverbial canary in the coalmine. This deadly strain of hatred often turns against other groups, such as women, homosexuals, moderate Muslims, and other sectors of the population who are perceived as not being ideologically pure, as well as against key democratic notions such as robust citizenship, equality before the law, and religious pluralism. Antisemitism is consequently a universal human rights issue that should be of importance to all.

In view of its character as the "longest hatred," with a destructive power that is both well known and well documented, the historical lessons of antisemitism ought to reach beyond the Jewish people and concern scholars from a wide range of disciplines, both academic and policy-oriented. In fact, antisemitism should be perceived as a key aspect in the development of Western civilization, yet it is often perceived as a Jewish or parochial issue.¹⁸ This perception forms an impediment to the study of antisemitism in current academic culture, which favors the universal over the particular. In fact, the study of antisemitism is often regarded as unworthy of consideration or even as an enemy of the progressive universalistic worldview that is currently in vogue.

Certain members of the academic community, especially those who claim to espouse progressive and/or postmodernist views, often perceive the study of antisemitism as an

¹⁶ See Bassam Tibi, *Islamism and Islam* (Yale University Press 2011); Neil Kressel, *The Sons of Pigs and Apes: Muslim Antisemitism and the Conspiracy of Silence* (Westview Press 2012). Bassam Tibi was a Visiting Professor and Neil Kressel a Visiting Fellow at YIISA. As Israel becomes the focus of contemporary discourse and manifestations of antisemitism, even in the United States, the notions of "dual loyalty" and the "Jewish lobby," which were previously articulated mostly by extremists, have gained credibility with the publication of a controversial book on the subject by Walt and Mearsheimer in 2007 (*The Israel Lobby and US Foreign Policy*) and the approach of some "realists" who have gained influence in the past several years in the media and policy circles.

¹⁷ Alain Finkielkraut, *The Imaginary Jew* (University of Nebraska Press 1994).

¹⁸ The members of ISGAP specifically established YIISA, the first-ever research center focusing on the interdisciplinary study of antisemitism at a North American university, to create a space to engage in this subject matter freely.

attempt to undermine criticism of the State of Israel and accuse those engaged in this study of being political advocates rather than pursuers of real scholarship.¹⁹ In fact, in this postmodern age, this is a fairly common view in academic and intellectual circles.²⁰ It is therefore important to embark on a systemic critique of the intellectual and political impact of this philosophical movement not only with regard to the safety and security of the Jewish people and their right to self-determination but also with regard to the integrity of the Enlightenment project and perceptions of modernity.

The contemporary canon includes a critique of the traditional “Western” canon, for example by Michel Foucault and Edward Said, that has also helped to demonize Jewish cultural and historical narratives in relation to Israel and beyond. This perspective is now an integral component of many “good” university curriculums throughout the West.²¹ Foucault welcomed the Iranian Revolution of 1979 as a triumph of spiritual values over the profanity of Western capitalist materialism. He perceived this Islamist revolution as a critique of Western culture and a protest against the political rationality of modernity.²² This sympathetic view of the Islamist revolution has been largely ignored, but it undoubtedly influenced the subsequent philosophical discourse and scholarship. Said, who was in Paris in 1979, fondly recalls spending time with Foucault and notes that they both hoped that the Iranian Revolution would develop into what the French Revolution was to Kant two hundred years earlier. Despite its violence, they hoped that the revolution would be a crucial step toward progress and emancipation for the people of Iran and the oppressed peoples of other nations.²³ Their critique of modernity and Western colonial power, combined with the lack of an ethical alternative, prevented these early postmodernists from criticizing the excesses of the Iranian revolution and its failure to recognize the ‘Other’ as an equal and respected member of society. The works of Foucault and Said have thus helped to lay the foundations for the failure of many contemporary intellectuals to condemn the rise of Islamism as a social movement,²⁴ especially in relation to its lack of acceptance of basic notions of “Otherness” within Islamic society, a cornerstone of democratic principles, and its vitriolic prejudice against the Jewish people and Israel. This intellectual development should also be considered in the context of global politics and the prevailing environment in many academic institutions, where the need for funding unfortunately appears to be having a growing impact on the curriculum.

¹⁹ See Judith Butler, “No, it’s not anti-semitic,” *London Review of Books*, August 21, 2003.

²⁰ See Robert Wistrich, *From Ambivalence to Betrayal: The Left, the Jews, and Israel* (University of Nebraska Press 2012).

²¹ Charles Asher Small, “The Gaze of the Colonial and Post-Colonial: Judeophobia, Empire and Islamism,” Conference: Orientalism Revisited: Art and the Politics of Representation, Paul Goodwin, Curator, Tate Britain, London, June 2008.

²² See Janet Afary and Kevin Anderson, *Foucault and the Iranian Revolution: Gender and the Seduction of Islamism* (University of Chicago Press 2005). Afary and Anderson examine Foucault’s 1978 visit to Iran where he met with leaders of the Iranian-Islamist revolution, including Ayatollah Khomeini. The authors document how this period influenced the philosopher’s understanding of issues such as the Enlightenment, homosexuality, and his quest for the notion of political spirituality. As the book demonstrates, this topic, which has been largely overlooked, is worthy of consideration.

²³ Ramin Jahanbegloo, *Iran: Between Tradition and Modernity* (Lexington Books 2004).

²⁴ For an analysis of the notion of social movements, which are transformational, and protest movements, which are reformist, see Manuel Castells, *City, Class, and Power* (MacMillan, London 1978).

Furthermore, Said's attempt to undermine the legitimacy of Jewish self-determination in Israel and the Jewish historical narrative in the Diaspora needs to be critically examined with regard to its role in the re-emergence of antisemitism among intellectuals and within the academy. Such a critique of the critique is especially urgent at this time, as there seems to be little possibility to address antisemitism forcefully within the academy or to express outrage and concern regarding the recent successes of Islamism despite its reactionary agenda and worldview.²⁵ Instead, these ideological and philosophical foundations enable leading and respected scholars such as Judith Butler to argue that Hamas and Hezbollah ought to be viewed as part of the progressive global left. It also encourages some observers, including scholars of antisemitism, to blame Israel for antisemitism throughout the world.²⁶

Even in the aftermath of the Holocaust, and despite the academy's preoccupation with colonialism, racism, sexism, socio-economic, political, and cultural inequality, domination, and critical understandings of "Otherness," antisemitism, especially its contemporary manifestations, does not exist as an area of study in the mainstream academic curriculum.²⁷ Unlike other forms of discrimination, antisemitism is not an issue of significant concern. These developments have had the effect of placing attempts to defend the Jews—and their legitimate connection to Israel and Jerusalem—outside the realms of what is acceptable and proper. This is most troubling, given that the legacy of antisemitism in the academy and in Western civilization more generally has yet to be understood and addressed in the same way as other forms of discrimination and hatred. The contemporary perception in some quarters of the Zionist movement as an unfash-

²⁵ Daniel Sibony, *Freud, Edward Said and Israel* (forthcoming).

²⁶ Id. It is fascinating to note that Jewish scholars who blame Israel for various crimes and even antisemitism itself often enjoy much attention and popularity, more so than scholars doing the serious analysis and research. In fact, this is a common phenomenon with regard to the politics of hatred more generally and historically.

²⁷ It is worth recalling that during the rise of Nazism the German academy as an institution voluntarily cleansed itself of Jews. See Saul Friedlander, *The Years of Persecution: Nazi Germany and the Jews 1933-1939* (Phoenix, London 2007). While I do not wish to compare the German academy of the Nazi era to the present academy, the role of the academy in studying, combating, or promoting contemporary antisemitism ought to be critically examined, regardless of the period. At present, the university campus atmosphere is once again becoming increasingly hostile in terms of the pressures facing Jewish students. In fact, US universities have a history of questionable relations with dubious interests, including the Nazi regime and Islamist interests. See Stephen Norwood, *The Third Reich in the Ivory Tower: Complicity and Conflict on American Campuses* (Cambridge University Press 2009) and Mitchell Bard, *The Arab Lobby: The Invisible Alliance That Undermines America's Interests in the Middle East* (Harper Collins 2010). In fact, in late 2009 and early 2010, YIISA was criticized by the Yale Corporation, the Provost, and faculty members for being critical of the Iranian revolutionary regime. The regime had just placed Yale University on a list of institutions considered hostile to the regime and called for Iranians not to have contact with them. See, for example, "Iran Intelligence Ministry Blacklists Yale and Dozens of Other Western Institutions," *Los Angeles Times*, January 4, 2010. The Provost and several faculty members told me directly that members of the Yale Corporation were angered, as they saw YIISA's work as interfering with the free flow of academic exchanges with Iran and Iranian scholars. During this time, Yale Corporation member Fareed Zakarria (before he resigned over a plagiarism scandal) often supported the policy of "engagement" in his writings, while several YIISA scholars were critical. See <<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gByfHdLCdhA>>.

ionable, intellectually defunct, and morally bankrupt remnant of Western colonial racist culture—a perception that pays no attention to the competing narrative of Jewish national aspirations or the Jewish people’s millennia-spanning history in the region—is therefore a recipe for disaster. At the very least, it creates an uncritical blind spot for the role that antisemitism plays in the contemporary Middle East. To engage in the study of antisemitism is somehow perceived as supportive of the Zionist narrative, while the real threat that antisemitism poses is not understood and no policies are developed to address it, let alone to help thwart it.²⁸

In this environment, it is more acceptable to study the role of the Church or the role of fascism in antisemitism rather than its contemporary manifestations.²⁹ In fact, if one looks at the history of antisemitism, it was never acceptable to study or examine contemporary forms of antisemitism at the time in which they occurred. The true challenge of effective and insightful scholarship is to understand the real threat that antisemitism poses to people and society today and to develop policies to protect ourselves against this threat. However, it is not uncommon to find scholars and institutions that are opposed to the study of contemporary antisemitism yet still blame Israel for its renewed prevalence without research to back up these claims. This response is not based on sound academic analysis but nonetheless finds appreciative academic audiences and in some cases enjoys the blessing of university administrations eager to receive funding from Gulf states and/or to avoid confronting inconvenient truths of the contemporary condition.³⁰ For instance, at a recent gathering at Yale University, a group of historians of French society concluded that Jihadist antisemitism should really be understood as a metaphor used for rhetorical and political impact. None of the scholars in question were students of Arabic, the Middle East, Islam, contemporary political or social movements, or contemporary or post-Holocaust antisemitism. However, this did not stop them from adopting a position that would no doubt be welcomed by their institutions and gatekeepers. One director of a research center on antisemitism admitted to friends that his hands were tied and that he had to keep to this line.³¹

* * *

It is in this institutional and political context that Yale University’s Associate Provost addressed the opening session of the YIISA conference and managed to stun many of those in attendance, including those who were well aware of the various hurdles to the study of contemporary antisemitism within the academy. In her opening remarks, the Associate Provost, explicitly warned the participants not to allow the conference to descend into a promotion of Islamophobia, thereby reinforcing a common stereotype

²⁸ For a clear example of this sort of conflation, see Joseph Massad, “Palestinians, Egyptian Jews and propaganda,” *Aljazeera*, January 7, 2013.

²⁹ A good example of this phenomenon is Paul Gilroy’s book, *Between Camps: Nations, Cultures and the Allure of Race* (2001), which begins with a heavily nostalgic and sympathetic look at the Jewish refugees that fled Nazi Europe and arrived in the London cityscape of Gilroy’s childhood. It seems uncourageous, and is reflective of a general tendency within the academy, to condemn the horrible racist antisemitism of an era past while turning a blind eye to contemporary manifestations.

³⁰ See Alex Joffe, “Follow the Money,” *Jewish Ideas*, March 2, 2011; Ben Cohen, “Scholarship and Antisemitism at Yale,” *Jewish Ledger*, Hartford, Connecticut, March 28, 2012.

³¹ Paula Marantz Cohen, “The New Antisemitism,” *The Smart Set*, Drexel University, October 2012, available at: <<http://thesmartset.com/article/article10181202.aspx>>.

associated with those studying contemporary antisemitism. It seems incongruous that the Associate Provost—and by extension the university administration—deemed it necessary to issue such a warning to a gathering of some of the world's most important and respected scholars on antisemitism and other forms of discrimination. Many of those in attendance viewed this as an example of the power of contemporary antisemitism, on the grounds that no other academic gathering on comparable forms of discrimination would be welcomed in this manner.³² In fact, it appears that Yale University's Jackson Institute was happy to invite Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad to speak to a group of Yale students just a month after the conference, in September 2010, without issuing a similar caveat.³³ Finally, as the conference was entering its last day, without citing any specific evidence, the PLO Ambassador to Washington DC, Maen Rashid Areikat, and a network of Muslim Brotherhood affiliated student activists accused the conference of being Islamophobic.³⁴ Soon afterwards, they began to attack YIISA itself as a platform for Islamophobia, which ultimately led to its demise.³⁵ These events represent a key failure of academia in the face of political pressures, both domestic and foreign.³⁶

³² As Ryan notes, there is a tendency to blame the victim in the politics of discourse. See William Ryan, *Blaming the Victim* (Vintage, New York 1971). Despite the complexities of Middle East politics, there is one particular social movement that clearly does not accept the other, yet some observers still find it difficult to critically assess and condemn its ideology.

³³ See Sam Greenberg, "Relating to Iran, in seminar and in person," *Yale Daily News*, September 27, 2010, available at: <<http://yaledailynews.com/blog/2010/09/27/relating-to-iran-in-seminar-and-in-person>>. In addition, the Jackson Institute hosted scholars with connections to the Iranian Revolutionary Regime, as well as Judge Richard Goldstone, at the invitation of Yale professor Ian Shapiro, an advocate of the Obama Administration's failing policy of "containment" of radical Islamism. See Michael Widlanski, *Battle for Our Minds: Western Elites and the Terror Threat* (Simon and Schuster, New York 2012).

³⁴ See Josh Rogin, "PLO representative accuses Yale of supporting 'hate mongering,'" *Foreign Policy*, August 31, 2010; Abby Wisse Schachter, "Yale's latest gift to antisemitism," *New York Post*, June 7, 2011; "PLO Envoy Slams Yale for Antisemitism Conference," *JTA*, September 3, 2010, available at: <<http://www.jta.org/news/article/2010/09/03/2740789/plo-envoy-slames-yale-for-anti-semitism-conference>>. See also Philip Weiss, "Yale conference on antisemitism targets Palestinian identity, self-hating Jews and anyone who criticizes Israel," *Mondoweiss.net*, August 25, 2010. This is an example of a blog that demonizes the conference without reference to the facts and also quotes people who openly incite to destroying Jews and Israel as expert sources. (See YouTube videos and writings by Charlotte Kates and Yaman Salahi).

³⁵ Significantly, the head of Yale University's Public Relations Department, Charles Robin Hogen, was active in making statements to the media supporting YIISA's closure. Some of these statements were later found to be incorrect. See Abby Wisse Schachter, "Yale's latest gift to antisemitism," *New York Post*, June 7, 2011. Interestingly, Hogen introduced the fact and bragged about his close association with former PLO member Professor Rashid Khalidi at YIISA meetings. Hogen also stated in these meetings that he was at a point in his career where he did not need to promote projects he found distasteful, such as the antisemitism conference. In a fascinating twist, I recently came across materials that show that in the 1990s Hogan was the Vice President of Hybridon Inc. Days after the 9/11 attacks, investigators discovered that the Bin Laden family owned part of Hybridon. Hogan now works for Robert Wood Johnson. See Hogen's professional associations at: <<http://www.prweekus.com/johnson-foundation-names-hogen-vp/article/233952>>; and a Harvard Crimson article pertaining to Hybridon's political and terror connections at: <<http://www.thecrimson.com/article/2001/9/27/local-company-distances-itself-from-bin>>.

³⁶ See Adam Brosky, "Yale's antisemitism whitewash," *New York Post*, July 7, 2011; and Walter Reich, "Saving the Yale Antisemitism Institute," *Washington Post*, June 13, 2011.

The fact that YIISA's detractors could level such accusations in a prestigious Ivy League environment without providing any proof, or even attempting to document any discriminatory speech or providing any critique of the papers or academic presentations by leading scholars,³⁷ is testament to the contemporary state of antisemitism in the academy and beyond.³⁸ It also points to the urgent need for a "critique of the critique" and the need to create an interdisciplinary critical framework for the study of contemporary antisemitism in relation to ideology and power relations. This would be a difficult task for scholars who are concerned about maintaining the institutional and cultural status quo and obtaining professional appointments and acknowledgement. The current intellectual and institutional void, which also encompasses a general disinclination to contemplate Islamist antisemitism and the Islamism in general, enables many to continue speaking of an Arab Spring when there are many indications that it is turning into an Islamic Winter.³⁹ Any assessment of the region that does not address the global implications of radical political Islamism and antisemitism is fatally flawed and serves the reactionary forces by squashing analysis and debate at a key moment in Middle Eastern and global history. The reality is that these reactionary forces are gaining power, and they are doing so with the tacit or, in some cases, vocal support of "useful idiots" in the academy and the media. Paradoxically, the current refusal to explicitly oppose the rise of such forces, which are diametrically opposed to the basic human rights and democratic principles, due to a postmodern and/or post-colonial reluctance to hold them to Western standards is no less paternalistic than previous Western interventions in the region.

* * *

Daniel Sibony, the French philosopher, provides insights into the above-mentioned attitudes, which appear to have taken hold in many elite academic institutions in the West.⁴⁰ In fact, Sibony contends that deep down those who insist on ignoring Islamism and its reactionary agenda are actually anti-Muslim themselves. The silencing of scholars and

³⁷ In fact, this prompted leading scholars from around the world to write to the President of Yale University defending the conference against these unfounded allegations. In particular, many scholars signed a letter comparing the contemporary study of antisemitism by YIISA to the groundbreaking work of Yale's historians on the issue of slavery written in the 1950s. Thousands of letters from concerned parties were sent to Yale protesting the closure of YIISA one year later.

³⁸ See Alan Dershowitz, "Yale's Distressing Decision to Shut Down Its Initiative for the Interdisciplinary Study of Antisemitism," *Huffington Post*, June 11, 2011. Dershowitz contends that a research center at Yale University has never been closed down on the basis of a confidential report, as in the case of YIISA. In "Yale's Jewish Quota: The University's Shameful Decision to Kill Its Anti-Semitism Institute," *Slate Magazine*, July 1, 2011, Ron Rosenbaum examines how the conference formed the beginning of the end for YIISA, due to its insistence that aspects of antisemitism throughout the world, including the Middle East, would be examined at the conference despite warnings from the administration not to do so. According to Rosenbaum, this is essentially a new form of a Jewish quota, namely one that distinguishes between acceptable and unacceptable Jews. Writing in the *New York Post*, Neil Kressel claims that the accusations leveled at YIISA were baseless and never substantiated. See Neil Kressel, "Yale's Cowardice," *New York Post*, June 11, 2011.

³⁹ In *The Unloved Dollar Standard: From Bretton Woods to the Rise of China* (Oxford University Press 2012), economist Ronald McKinnon documents how money-flows from the US cause cyclical bubbles in global commodity prices, including food, "so much so that the so-called Arab Spring of 2011 could be interpreted as just a food riot."

⁴⁰ Daniel Sibony, *Freud, Edward Said and Israel* (forthcoming).

human rights activists who are concerned about antisemitism and human rights in Middle Eastern societies is a manifestation of a deep fear, or phobia, of the Islamic world. This fear, which is combined with guilt over the West's colonial legacy in the Middle East, is powerful.⁴¹ As a result, there is a tendency in certain circles to tolerate and justify reactionary Islamic attitudes, including sexism, homophobia, and antisemitism, despite their own liberal views.⁴² It is thus more convenient to blame the Jews for the stalemate in the Middle East and other related problems. Sibony traces this to the colonial mentality of not expecting the peoples of the Middle East and other parts of the world to adhere to the same criteria of human rights and civility as the "civilized" West. He also points out that those who continue to highlight these contradictions and dangers eventually come to be perceived as the problem and are targeted instead.⁴³

Sibony goes further, stating that there is an emerging fascination in the West with the genocidal antisemitic narrative of radical Islamism as expressed by the Iranian regime, the Muslim Brotherhood, and other Salafists.⁴⁴ In a similar vein, Colin Shindler argues that the growing red-green alliance has come to see the displaced and marginalized members of the Islamic world as the new proletariat, who deserve Western liberal support and admiration. Anyone perceived as being critical of the new Islamic proletariat is immediately branded a reactionary.⁴⁵ In this intellectual climate, voices condemning brutality, anti-democratic practices, sexism, homophobia, opposition to minority rights, and other violations of universal human rights are silenced, while expressions of genocidal antisemitism are dismissed as poor translations and/or hysterical rhetoric fashioned by the Zionist defenders of Israel.⁴⁶ This is what makes the task at hand,

⁴¹ An example of the manifestation of this fear occurred when Yale sociologist Jeffrey Alexander, speaking on National Public Radio (NPR), compared the work of YIISA to that of the Black Panthers. Such an irrational, ahistorical, and reductionist comment pertaining to the African American condition and to the complex issues of both racism and antisemitism provides an insight into the sort of hurdles that are prevalent in the academy with regard to this subject. "Yale Shuts Down Antisemitism Program," National Public Radio, June 17, 2011.

⁴² This may help to explain why, at a meeting called for by the Associate Provost days before the conference, I was told not to invite any scholars or organize events that were critical of Middle Eastern society or Islam. Echoing the policy mantra, she told me that we must "engage" Islam. I informed her that YIISA events were not critical of Islam but that YIISA was examining antisemitism throughout the world and that it was analyzing Islamism as it would any other social movement. It is also worth noting that there seemed to be a certain amount of fear within Yale's administrative ranks in this regard. A year earlier, in 2009, in the face of threats, Yale University Press refused to publish cartoons depicting the Prophet Muhammad in a book by Jytte Klausen discussing the publication of those very cartoons in 2006, which led to global riots in which at least 200 people were killed. See Patricia Cohen, "Yale Press Bans Images of Muhammad in New Book," *New York Times*, August 12, 2009; Jeffrey Herf, "Why Did Yale Close, Then Open, A Center on Antisemitism?" *The New Republic*, July 5, 2011.

⁴³ Daniel Sibony, *L'Enigme antisémite* (Seuil 2004). See also Daniel Sibony, "The Essence of Antisemitism: Is It Too Simple to Be Understood?" ISGAP Seminar Series, McGill University, October 16, 2012.

⁴⁴ Daniel Sibony, "The Essence of Antisemitism: Is It Too Simple to Be Understood?" ISGAP Seminar Series, McGill University, October 16, 2012 and Harvard University, October 17, 2012.

⁴⁵ Colin Shindler, "The Left Sees Islam as the New Proletariat," *New York Times*, October 28, 2012.

⁴⁶ This helps to explain why, at a recent seminar at Clark University's Strassler Center for Holocaust and Genocide Studies, David Feldman of Birbeck College, London, felt able to claim that YIISA was in fact the long arm of Israeli intelligence within the academy. Several of those in

namely to produce high-caliber scholarship and effective policy development and analysis for dealing with contemporary antisemitism—in particular its potentially genocidal variety—all the more challenging but also all the more urgent.

* * *

The crisis of modernity refers to the crisis of capitalism itself. Regardless of one's definition, the crisis is causing problems at local and global level and has become a key aspect of the contemporary condition. Institutions that play a key role in society, especially the state, are under increasing pressure. The crisis is affecting everything from the core to the periphery. Those in the periphery are experiencing high levels of socio-economic, political, and even cultural marginalization. In some areas of the world, the economic and political crisis is so severe that it is causing failing and even failed states. Several states in the Middle East and North Africa, as well as several other Islamic states, are currently in this predicament.⁴⁷ When such states fail, marginalization increases. The resulting power vacuum is increasingly being filled by radical Islamism, whose adherents, like those who follow neo-liberalism, actually detest the state, perceiving it as a vestige of the colonial era and Western imperialism. In many cases, the political actors and interests that are rising to power subscribe to ideological worldviews that are also extremely hostile toward Jews.

In the context of the conference title, the term "modernity" refers to the processes that led to the emergence of the specific and distinctive characteristics of modern society. In this context, the concept of "modernity" does not simply refer to a phenomenon of contemporary origin. It possesses an analytical and conceptual value that embodies the defining characteristics of modern societies. According to Stuart Hall, these characteristics include:

- (1) The dominance of secular forms of political power and authority and conceptions of sovereignty and legitimacy, operating within defined territorial boundaries, which are characteristic of the large, complex structures of the modern nation-state.
- (2) A monetarized exchange economy, based on the large-scale production and consumption of commodities for the market, extensive ownership of private property and the accumulation of capital on a systemic, long-term basis. [...]
- (3) The decline of the traditional social order, with its fixed social hierarchies and overlapping allegiances, and the appearance of a dynamic social and sexual division of labor. In modern capitalist societies, this was characterized by new class formations and distinctive patriarchal relations between men and women.
- (4) The decline of the religious world-view typical of traditional societies and the rise of a secular and materialist culture, exhibiting those individualistic, rationalist, and instrumental impulses now so familiar to us.⁴⁸

attendance demanded that he substantiate his accusation. He could not. The idea that one cannot engage in the scholarly examination of contemporary antisemitism without having a conspiratorial agenda, which is associated with notions of dual loyalty, is a powerful antisemitic canard with a long pedigree, especially in European discourses.

⁴⁷ See "The 2012 Failed States Index," An Eighth Annual Collaboration between Foreign Policy and the Fund for Peace, available at: <http://foreignpolicy.com/failed_states_index_2012_interactive>.

⁴⁸ Stuart Hall, "Introduction," in Stuart Hall et al., eds., *Modernity: An Introduction to Modern Societies* (Blackwell Publishers 1996) p. 8.

The emergence of modern societies was spurred by new intellectual movements that developed during the Reformation, the Renaissance, the Scientific Revolution of the seventeenth century and the Enlightenment of the eighteenth century. The transformation of Europe's intellectual, philosophical, and moral framework was significant and played an important part in the formation of modern societies as encapsulated by capitalism and the rise of the nation state. In addition, Hall contends that the construction of cultural and social identities is an important aspect of the formation process. This then plays a key role in creating "imagined communities" and symbolic boundaries that define who belongs and who is excluded as the "Other."⁴⁹

In the context of the YIISA conference, the "crisis of modernity" refers to the current breakdown of the political and economic system. However, this crisis also operates at a philosophical level, raising issues that are just as important as economic and political uncertainty. In fact, the uncertainty created by the crisis is eroding the moral and ethical rudder of Western institutions by creating a philosophical vacuum that is being filled by the moral relativism of postmodernism.

On one level, modernity offered a different vision of humanity, society, and the universe, but it also required a narrative to establish the legitimacy of its vision. This narrative constructed an image of the "Other," living in darkness and irrational ignorance due to his so-called primitive religious beliefs. In contrast, the so-called Enlightened thinkers and scientists succeeded in liberating man from his material and philosophical poverty and placed him on the path to progress and perfection.⁵⁰ This narrative, which was dominant in seventeenth and eighteenth century Europe, also provided the foundations for modernity's racism, slavery, and — as some argue — even the Holocaust.

The "crisis of modernity," then, is the recognition of the weakness of this narrative and the uncertainty of everything that has emerged from it, including the existing social order, ethical standards, and even our perceptions of ourselves. In this postmodern moment of uncertainty and competing relativist narratives, thinkers are prevented from thoroughly examining and speaking out against the forms of discrimination openly advocated by radical reactionary social movements, including but not limited to anti-semitism, that challenge notions of equality and robust citizenship.⁵¹ Another result of the "crisis of modernity" is the emergence of the aforementioned red-green alliance, which is gaining ground among scholars, practitioners, and activists, as well as within the political establishment.

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Much of the scholarship on antisemitism is descriptive in nature, especially concerning its contemporary manifestations. However, there is also a need to analyze antisemitism

⁴⁹ Id.

⁵⁰ Id.

⁵¹ Leo Strauss, a strong critic of modernity, attributed modernity's intellectual degradation to the influence of several Enlightenment philosophers in the history of political thought who radically broke with classical political thinking. Strauss believed that, in doing so, these thinkers either directly or indirectly contributed to the emergence of historicism and positivism, and he held these movements accountable for modernity's relativism, nihilism, and moral and intellectual demise. See Jens Olesen, "The Crisis of Modernity and Its Interpretive Significance: Leo Strauss on Reading Political Philosophy," paper presented at the 14th International Graduate Conference in Philosophy, University of Essex, May 28, 2011.

in the context of other processes—socio-economic, political, cultural, and ideological—and the impact of globalization. Few scholars contextualize their studies in this manner. There is therefore a need to combine empirical and conceptual analysis of antisemitism within an interdisciplinary framework. The contemporary condition, which is characterized by the crisis of modernity, the processes of globalization, which are governed by a neo-liberal approach, the weakening of the state, the emergence of radical political Islamism as an effective social movement, the reluctance of Western intellectuals to critically engage these processes, and the re-emergence for the first time since the Holocaust of a deadly form of antisemitism, requires the development of a creative, interdisciplinary, critical approach within a cooperative research entity to begin to assess this phenomenon in all its manifestations and implications. This is especially true at a time when—for all sorts of reasons—such an entity has many opponents.

Globalization has a direct bearing on contemporary antisemitism. During the last several decades, nationalism and new forms of identity politics have exacerbated existing social, economic, and political cleavages. The causes of this emerging crisis include the extension of global competitive markets and the effects of structural adjustment, the intensification of socio-economic inequalities, the blurring of international and domestic political conflicts, and the world-wide escalation of adversarial “identity politics.”⁵² The extension of information technologies and travel possibilities has created a new network of “global spaces” within the interstices of metropolitan life across continents, inhabited by a growing coterie of transnational professionals and specialists. From the perspective of this high-rise corporate economy and corporate culture, the city down below appears to be inhabited by immigrant populations competing for low-wage jobs in an increasingly informalized urban economy, as the state retreats from its welfare functions. The combined economic and political imperatives of globalization seem to sweep away particularities of time and place to generate common outcomes everywhere: growing ethnic racial and cultural heterogeneity, coupled with social and spatial polarization.

At the most general level, it is possible to think of globalization in terms of movement and circulation, a complexity of criss-crossing flows: some of it capital and trade, some of it people, and some of it signs, symbols, meanings, and myths. A common thread which runs through the existing body of literature is the idea that such flows and mobility across space have accelerated, speeded up, or gained a new momentum in the contemporary era, captured in such key phrases as “time-space compression,”⁵³ “time-space distantiation,”⁵⁴ and “intersecting scapes.”⁵⁵ Thus the concept of globalization does not imply a shift from one period to another in the form of an historical rupture, as do other encompassing terms most frequently used to describe contemporary metropolitan experience, namely post-Fordism⁵⁶ and postmodernity.⁵⁷ Rather it denotes an

⁵² Charles Small, “Creating National Identity and Otherness: Canada and the First Nations,” in Olufemi Vaughan and Charles Small, eds., *Globalisation and Marginality: Essays on the Paradoxes of Local and Global Forces* (Sefer Academic Press, Ibadan, Nigeria 2007).

⁵³ D. Harvey, *The Condition of Postmodernity* (Basil Blackwell, Oxford 1989).

⁵⁴ A. Giddens, *The Consequences of Modernity* (Polity/Blackwell, Cambridge 1990).

⁵⁵ A. Appadurai, *Globalization* (Duke University Press, Durham, N.C. 2001).

⁵⁶ A. Amin, *Post-Fordism: A Reader* (Blackwells, Oxford 1994).

⁵⁷ E. Soja, *Postmodern Geographies: The Reassertion of Space in Critical Social Theory* (Verso, London 1989); S. Watson and K. Gibson, eds., *Postmodern Cities and Spaces* (Blackwells, Oxford 1995).

intensification and stretching out of movements and flows, as captured for instance in Giddens's definition of globalization as "the intensification of world-wide social relations which link distant localities in such a way that local happenings are shaped by events occurring many miles away and vice versa."⁵⁸

Some social groups initiate flows and movement, while other do not; some are more on the receiving end of it than others; some are effectively imprisoned by it. There is thus a dimension of movement and circulation; there is also a dimension of control and initiation. The ways in which different social groups are re-inserted into, placed within, and seize upon these flows, which are themselves differentiated, can both reflect and reinforce existing power relations; it can also undermine them. What does not follow from the considerations above, and yet continues to inform much of the literature on global flows, is the social imaginary of a borderless world. Inherent to the concept of global flows, differentiated and differentiating, is the capacity to transgress taken for granted boundaries between nation states, between racial, ethnic, and gender groups, and between the public and private spheres. This does mean, however, an increasingly order-less world, one in which boundaries have lost their meaning. On the contrary, borders have become the locus of struggles among a variety of social actors, mobilized to reassert or redefine their boundaries *vis-à-vis* other relevant actors, and translate onto the space of the metropolis.

Globalization divides as much as it unites. Alongside the emerging planetary dimensions of business, finance, trade, and information flows, a localizing, space-fixing process is set in motion. Between them the closely interconnected processes sharply differentiate the existential condition of entire populations and of various segments of each one of the populations. What appears as globalization for some means localization for others; signaling a new freedom for some, upon many others it descends as an uninvited and cruel fate. Some of us become fully and truly global; some are fixed in their locality. Being local in a globalized world is a sign of deprivation and degradation. An integral part of the globalizing process is progressive spatial segregation, separation, and exclusion. Neo-tribal and fundamentalist tendencies, which reflect and articulate the experience of people on the receiving end of globalization, are as much legitimate reactions to globalization as the widely acclaimed hybridization of top-culture—the culture at the globalized top. There is a break down in communication between the globalized elites and the ever-more localized rest.⁵⁹

* * *

It is in this context that contemporary antisemitism emerges. In a real sense, Israel is in the middle of a region in which societies are experiencing critical levels of marginalization, and in some cases collapse, threatening social cohesion and further complicating international relations. As mentioned above, globalization—through migration, trade and business, and advances in technology and telecommunications—is connecting people as never before, but it is also dividing them as much as it unites them. In the

⁵⁸ A. Giddens, *The Consequences of Modernity* (Polity/Blackwell, Cambridge 1990).

⁵⁹ Charles Small, "Creating National Identity and Otherness: Canada and the First Nations," in Olufemi Vaughan and Charles Small, eds., *Globalisation and Marginality: Essays on the Paradoxes of Local and Global Forces* (Sefer Academic Press, Ibadan, Nigeria 2007).

midst of these processes, contradictions, and emerging cleavages, antisemitism is once again flourishing in the form of the demonization of Israel and, by extension, Diaspora Jewry, with its real and supposed associations with the State of Israel.⁶⁰ During five years of interdisciplinary programming and research projects conducted at the highest levels of scholarship, several YIISA scholars examined the emerging socio-economic, political, and cultural vacuum that is being filled by the burgeoning social movement of radical political Islamism. This movement embodies the most pernicious forms of antisemitism, including a consistent call for, and incitement to, genocide against the Jewish state, consistent with its ideological and religious worldview. Many scholars and policy makers do not recognize or acknowledge these developments. It is within this context that Israel is emerging as the “Jew among nations,” finding itself geographically, politically, and metaphorically in the center of this process, as well as on the frontline of a conflict over basic relations of the state and notions of democracy. Like the Jews of Europe during the interwar period, the Israel and—perhaps more so—Jewish people in Diaspora communities around the world will find themselves separated from the elites on one side and the working classes on the other. They will be more separated politically, culturally, and economically in the middle of competing forces as the crisis of modernity continues to evolve and its manifestations deepen. As Bernard-Henri Lévy contends, it is the role of the intellectual to shed light where there is darkness. It is the study of contemporary antisemitism and the struggle to develop social policies that will promote human dignity and respect for all that is once again an urgent calling for scholars.⁶¹ With this in mind, it is important to consider the following three points:

- (1) The failure to recognize antisemitism studies as a valid academic discipline contributes to the ongoing mood of apologetic lethargy concerning this long-lasting prejudice. Now more than ever, there is a need for a vibrant, critical, open interdisciplinary research center to develop research projects and interdisciplinary curriculums. Policy and policy development are respected areas of study that need to be included in the area of contemporary antisemitism studies. Those who dismiss this as advocacy are pushing an regressive political advocacy agenda of their own.
- (2) The failure of academia to assert its independence from funding sources and government influence in the study of human rights and efforts to combat hatred is a failure worthy of research in itself, as it goes to the heart of free debate and democratic principles and practice.
- (3) Antisemitism is a major issue in the study of globalization, modernism, and post-modernism and also needs to be acknowledged as a legitimate issue in Middle Eastern studies. The study of contemporary antisemitism from an interdisciplinary perspective is crucial to scholarship, policy, and the protection of human rights, human dignity, and democratic principles, especially in these times of silence.

⁶⁰ It is important to consider the impact of social media and information technology on the dissemination of its ideas, discourse, and political culture, especially in the Middle East. This impact is like a double-edged sword, since it encompasses an utopian liberating effects but also empowers reactionary forces. In this context, it is interesting to note that certain hateful images of Jews with origins in European antisemitism are being “beamed” into Europe for the first time in many decades from the Middle East.

⁶¹ See Bernard-Henri Lévy, *Left in Dark Times: A Stand Against the New Barbarism* (Random House 2009).

As Ruth Wisse has summarized the issue with insight and power: “Jews in democratic societies are not merely the proverbial canaries sent into the mine shaft to test the quality of the air: they function rather as the kindling used to set the system aflame. Why stop at the Jews?” In other words, the study of antisemitism is not a parochial matter, but a complex and explosive phenomenon that is bound up with matters of human rights, the protection of democratic principles, and citizenship, as well as notions of dignity. In the contemporary context of globalization, combined with the rise of reactionary social movements, we must not only examine and come to understand these complex processes as they relate to antisemitism: it is also incumbent upon us to develop approaches to safeguard and solve these attacks against all humanity.

* * *

This volume presents a selection of the papers presented at the “Global Antisemitism: A Crisis of Modernity” conference organized by YIISA in August 2010. It is one of five volumes reflecting the interdisciplinary nature of the conference as well as the diverse nature of the subject of antisemitism in general.

Volume I includes papers that approach antisemitism from a wide range of conceptual perspectives and scholarly disciplines. Volume II deals with matters of antisemitism and the intellectual environment. The papers in this volume focus on the treatment of Israel in the media and the study of antisemitism in the academy. Volume III examines the manifestations and impacts of antisemitism in various regional contexts. Some of the papers focus on historical cases, while others focus on recent or contemporary matters. Volume IV on Islamism and the Arab world examines a form of antisemitism that has become especially virulent in recent times. It is also a form of antisemitism whose origins and manifestations are perhaps less well-known to academics and policy-makers due to the supposedly controversial nature of this topic. This volume includes papers from some of the leading experts in this area. Volume V, finally, comprises various “reflections” that were presented at the conference by a number of well-respected observers, academics, and practitioners. They provide insightful observations and important analysis but are not presented in the form of classic academic papers.

These volumes will be of interest to students and scholars of antisemitism and discrimination, as well as to scholars and readers from other fields. Rather than treating antisemitism merely as an historical phenomenon, they place it squarely in the contemporary context. As a result, the papers presented in these volumes also provide important insights into the ideologies, processes, and developments that give rise to prejudice in the contemporary global context.

“New Europe,” Holocaust Memory, and Antisemitism

David M. Seymour*

1. INTRODUCTION

This paper is part of a larger research project that examines the ways in which the Holocaust comes to be subsumed within a discursive framework of contemporary forms of antisemitism. Here, I examine this tendency as it plays itself out at the intersection of two interrelated narratives: the construction of the “new Europe” and its self-legitimizing through the transmission of “Holocaust” to “Holocaust memory.”

Drawing on the concept of “Holocaust dissolution” and its connections with the process of commodification that I have developed elsewhere,¹ I argue that the Holocaust memory of the “new Europe” rests ultimately on dissolving its specifically *Jewish* dimensions of genocide into an overarching concept of “modernity” — a modernity now transcended, but thought to capture the essence of the “old” Europe. Two consequences follow from this initial premise. The first is the strict equation made of *genocidal* antisemitism and modernity, and the second, intimately related consequence is the theoretical inability to recognize *non-genocidal* antisemitism not only in the “old” Europe but also in its new incarnation. I argue, finally, that it is this lack of recognition of even the possibility of antisemitism that accounts not only for the denial of claims of contemporary European antisemitism, but also the intensity with which those claims are sometimes met and the accusations of “bad faith” and Jewish “particularism” that accompany them.

2. NEW EUROPE, THE HOLOCAUST, AND HOLOCAUST MEMORY

Writing in his recent essay,² Robert Fine offers a succinct account of the nature of Holocaust memory within the legitimizing practices of the new Europe. It is worth quoting at length,

After 1989, the “Europeanization” of Eastern Europe drew the former satellite countries of the Soviet bloc into the orbit of Holocaust commemoration. The Holocaust and

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¹ See David M. Seymour, *Law, Antisemitism and the Holocaust* (London, Glasshouse-Routledge 2007) ch. 4.

² Robert Fine, “Fighting with Phantoms: A Contribution to the Debate on Antisemitism in Europe,” 43(5) *Patterns of Prejudice* (2009) pp. 459-479.

Auschwitz became *universal references for absolute evil*. In this context, one temptation is to give the story of European antisemitism a happy ending and to pay tribute to the success of the new Europe in transcending its longest hatred. *Antisemitism is tucked safely away in Europe's past, overcome by the defeat of fascism* and the development of the Soviet Union. The rise of *political antisemitism* in the late 19th century and its consolidation as an exterminatory antisemitism in the 20th century, are *associated with the ethnic nationalism* that prevailed in Europe at that time, especially in Germany and Eastern Europe; while the *end of antisemitism* is associated with the universal civil values now embodied in the European Union and European Convention on Human Rights.... This *reassuring narrative* looks back to an era in which *antisemites saw themselves as guardians of the ethnically pure nation-state and forward to a post national Europe in which antisemitism is remembered, but only as a residual trauma or a museum piece*.... Thus, the idea of Europe as the civilized continent is rescued from the wreckage.³

Fine's account of the distinction between the old and new Europe includes a series of strictly demarcated binary oppositions, the nation-state/Europe, nationalism/cosmopolitanism, fascism/human rights, politics/civil society, and genocidal antisemitism/pluralism. The new Europe, in short, defines itself through its overcoming and neutralizing of the first term of each of these couplets and their "safe" consignment to the past. In this context, Holocaust memory and the Holocaust itself become a bridge or hinge between the old and the new Europe.

This last point is articulated by Levy and Sznajder in their project on the connections between the Holocaust, Holocaust memory, and human rights,

The Holocaust constitutes an *epochal break*. It has, therefore, the potential of challenging basic national assumption (like sovereign law in its own territory) and creating a cosmopolitanized public and political space that reinforces moral dependencies.... [W]hat has pushed the Holocaust to such prominence in public thinking has been the indispensable role it has served in the transition from a world of national sovereignty to a new world of interconnectedness and toward a more cosmopolitanized global society, of which the proliferation of human rights regimes is a prominent manifestation.⁴

Here, the Holocaust is cast in the role as "epochal break" between the old and the new and as containing the potential of bringing into existence the "new" (whether in Europe or elsewhere), but we also see a further oppositional couplet, that of Holocaust and Holocaust memory. Again the first term is consigned to the past and the second is seemingly rooted in the present. However, in the content of their representation of the Holocaust both in itself and in the context of the new Europe's Holocaust memory, there is a line of continuity that crosses the assumed demarcation. That strand of continuity is what I refer to as Holocaust dissolution and its associated commodification. More specifically, I argue that the presentation of the Holocaust as Holocaust memory *dissolves* the *praxis* of genocidal antisemitism into a general or universalized account of the "old Europe" in such a way that any recognition of the particularities that may account for the genocide are lost along with the ability to recognize non-exterminatory forms of anti-Jewish hostility.

³ *Ibid.*, at pp. 462-463.

⁴ Daniel Levy and Natan Sznajder, "The Institutionalization of Cosmopolitan Morality: The Holocaust and Human Rights," 3(2) *Journal of Human Rights* (2004) pp. 143-157 at pp. 143 and 155.

3. HOLOCAUST DISSOLUTION: THE COMMODIFICATION OF THE NEW EUROPE'S HOLOCAUST MEMORY

In keeping with the new Europe's post-modern and post-national framework, it is not surprising that its representation of the Holocaust should draw from that critical tradition. This connection is evidenced by Levy and Sznajder's reference to "national sovereignty" and "national assumptions" as the operative causes of genocidal antisemitism. As such, this aspect of their work draws on the writings of Zygmunt Bauman,⁵ Michel Foucault,⁶ and Giorgio Agamben.⁷ Despite the important distinctions that exist between these works, a common unifying theme is the connection this school of thought makes between the Holocaust, the nation-state and an overarching concept of modernity.

For these thinkers, genocidal antisemitism is integral to the modernist "project" that is the defining characteristic of the modern nation-state. In terms of content, this project is characterized as an obsession with the needs of national order and/or the health of the national population. It is in this context that the Jews are cast as the "Other," as the embodiment of the threat to such order and health. This project of order and health is both inaugurated and managed by the state; it is the state that classifies the population under its domain according the criteria of those who contribute to the health of society and those who pose a threat, that is, "those who shall live" and "those who shall die," respectively. Inscribed within the very essence of modernity itself, genocidal antisemitism becomes the expression of this policing of boundaries and the expression of the very nature of modern national sovereignty. For Agamben, in particular, the classifying and its genocidal practice are present within the *praxis* of national law and the juridical rights inherent within it.

Although not fully theorized, Levy and Sznajder's account of the Holocaust draws on accounts of this kind for an understanding of its causes. This point is evident in their belief, noted above, that the compulsive impulse to modern genocide is overcome by and in the post-national and post-modern Europe and its emphasis upon the *praxis* of cosmopolitan human rights that is said to constitute the juridical basis of a new transnational European civil society. Yet, it is precisely in this account that Levy and Sznajder's presentation of the Holocaust exhibits the tendency to Holocaust dissolution and commodification that is also characteristic of the critical thinkers whose work they echo. By dissolving the Holocaust into the concept of modernity itself, it is not so much *antisemitism* that is overcome (since it is robbed of any *autonomous* existence) but, rather, the old (i.e. modern) Europe itself.

⁵ Zygmunt Bauman, *Legislators and Interpreters* (Oxford, Polity Press 1987); Zygmunt Bauman, *Modernity and the Holocaust* (Oxford, Polity Press 1991); Zygmunt Bauman, *Modernity and Ambivalence* (Oxford, Polity Press 1993).

⁶ Michel Foucault, *Society Must Be Defended: Lectures at the Collège de France, 1975-76*, edited by Mauro Bertani and Alessandro Fontana, translated by David Macey (London, Allen Lane 2003).

⁷ Giorgio Agamben, *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life*, translated by Daniel Heller-Roazen (Stanford, CA, Stanford University Press 1998); Giorgio Agamben, *Remnants of Auschwitz: The Witness and the Archive*, translated by Daniel Heller-Roazen (New York, Zone Books 2000); Giorgio Agamben, *State of Exception*, translated by Kevin Attell (Chicago, University of Chicago Press 2005).

This last point comes to the fore in the following ways. First, and most obviously, in a mirror image of the new Europe, the placement of genocidal antisemitism within the overarching concept of modernity, serves to deterritorialize and dehistoricize the historical actuality of the Holocaust. It cannot but overlook any consideration of why the Holocaust occurred at a specific time and specific place (Germany in the mid-20th century). In so doing, it dissolves the Holocaust's specificity into the more abstract and universal framework of the modern European nation-state.

Implicit in this initial tendency of the dissolution of the particularism of genocidal antisemitism into the abstract universals is the positivist presentation of its conceptual schema. As no more than internal expressions of the "modern project" and of the *praxis* of biopolitics and racism, the aims and outcomes are read into modernity from its inception (including genocide). Related concepts, such as law, rights, the nation, Jews, antisemitism, and so forth appear on the scene in an equally ahistorical and static form. These concepts' form and content, seemingly complete in meaning from their origin are, in other words, simply posited—the product of a seemingly omnipotent power. They take on the appearance of "brute facts." This presentation of modernity's (and so too the Holocaust's) operative concepts adopts the positivist mantra that what is, simply is. In so doing, they take on the aura of a force and fate of nature that cannot, nor could be otherwise. It is in this positivism that any notion of internal conceptual development is correspondingly abjured and all external relations are represented as innate and natural properties of the concept itself. To put the matter in slightly different terms, all the concepts relating to the Holocaust are presented as always already containing within them, both jointly and severally, the same inherent propensity of extermination found in the overarching concept of modernity itself.

It is in this context that the historical actuality of the Holocaust comes to be dissolved within the nature of "modernity" itself. However, as the above comments indicate, this does not lead to the position that the new Europe has transcended (modern) antisemitism. The claim that having transcended the *modern Europe*, we have, almost as a by-product, overcome the seemingly natural propensity to genocidal antisemitism says little about antisemitism that is neither nationalist, genocidal, nor political in origin. As the critique above indicates, the possibility of the presence of a non-political, non-nationalist, and non-genocidal antisemitism remains simultaneously invisible and untheorized.

The danger of such an account is that, since antisemitism (now defined only as genocidal antisemitism or the Holocaust) has not only been relegated to the past but has also been overcome by the legitimizing force of the new Europe, any claim of contemporary antisemitism that draws on its memory is deemed illegitimate from the outset. It calls into question the anti-anti, or, rather, post-antisemitic image of the new Europe. It is, I believe, the potentially destabilizing effect of claims of contemporary antisemitism on the new Europe's gilded self-image that goes some way to explaining not only the *denials* of claims of contemporary antisemitism but also the *intensity* of those denials.

4. HOLOCAUST MEMORY, COMMODIFICATION, AND THE MORAL ECONOMY OF THE "NEW EUROPE"

As we have seen, all that remains in post-national and post-modern Europe is the *memory of the Holocaust*. But it is less a memory of the Holocaust itself than a memory of

the modernity into which the Holocaust has been dissolved. Separated from the structural conditions that made it possible, the Holocaust of the new Europe’s memory becomes nothing more than a symbol. It is a symbol, however, not of *antisemitism*, genocidal or otherwise, but of the old Europe itself, a Europe fragmented into nation-states along with its concomitants of national sovereignty, nationalism, and the genocidal impulse that is said to inhere within it.

Expressing its distance from the world that made the Holocaust possible, the new European symbol of the Holocaust is recast in the language of morality. The symbols’ purpose and function is to serve as a warning to be sounded whenever and wherever any of the tendencies of the old Europe threaten to reappear. The moral imperative contained in this symbolism of the Holocaust is contained in the maxim, “Never Again, Auschwitz.” It is to this symbolic value that Dubiel refers in his article *The Remembrance of the Holocaust as a Catalyst for a Transnational Ethics?*,⁸ when he notes that,

For the Holocaust now provides the meta-narrative for sufferings inflicted for political reasons. It has turned into the supra-denominational passion story of late-modernity. Concepts, symbols and images are taken out of their immediate context and are employed to code, in a single term, the collective pain that people inflict on others. The symbolic repertoire has been adopted by political groups all over the world who are subject to extreme pain and distress. It is present in the political defense of human rights, in the re-moralizing of diplomacy, and in the turning away of the morally neutral *Realpolitik*.⁹

We see here an example not only of Holocaust dissolution and its re-surfacing as post-national and post-modern symbol but also of its resurfacing within the register of morality. Symbolic representation within this register forms the context in which claims of contemporary antisemitism are denied and creates the conditions for the particular intensity of those denials.¹⁰

Perhaps the most concise way to explain this aspect of Holocaust dissolution is by analogy with Adorno and Horkheimer’s critique of commodification.¹¹ For them, commodification is the process whereby unique and distinct elements of nature are caught up within the near universal realm of exchange. As a condition of entry, each individual element has to become exchangeable for all others. As a consequence of this demand, any specific or particular quality that inheres within them, and which obstructs that exchange, has to be expunged. It is only when emptied of such content and reformulated in strictly formal and, hence, universal terms that an element becomes a commodity and can take its place within the exchange realm of the economy.

This notion of commodification marks discussions of the new Europe’s adoption and adaptation of genocidal antisemitism as a moral symbol and explains the dissolution of the specificities of the Holocaust into formal universal terms. This point can be detected in Levy and Sznajder’s work on Holocaust memory.

⁸ Helmut Dubiel, “The Remembrance of the Holocaust as a Catalyst for a Transnational Ethics?,” *New German Critique* No. 90: Taboo, Trauma, Holocaust (2003) pp. 59-70.

⁹ *Ibid.*, at p. 61.

¹⁰ See also David M. Seymour, “From Auschwitz to Gaza: Ethics for the Want of Law,” 6(2) *Journal of Global Ethics* (2010) p. 203.

¹¹ Theodor W. Adorno and Max Horkheimer, *Dialectic of Enlightenment* (London, Verso 1997).

Depicting its symbolic value in terms of its “abstract nature of ‘good and evil,’”¹² the Holocaust can only serve its role as universal warning and call to action once it has been abstracted from or, rather, emptied of its particularist elements of its historical occurrence, including, of course, its specifically Jewish dimensions (amongst which is the presence of antisemitism).

It is only in such circumstances that the Holocaust, now presented in abstract, formal, and universal terms is free to play the symbolic role allocated to it. In such a form it takes its place as an ethical commodity within the exchange realm of the new Europe’s moral economy. It is only at this stage, therefore, when the Holocaust becomes freely exchangeable for any other number of situations, that its dissolution—a dissolution inherent in its symbolic value—is complete.

It is as a consequence of such “commodification” and the dissolution of which it is a part that, as Levy and Sznajder note,

The Holocaust is now a concept that has been dislocated from time and space precisely because it can be used to dramatize any injustice, racism or crime perpetrated anywhere on the planet.¹³

However, as Adorno and Horkheimer argue, what cannot be contained within the commodity—that is, those particular aspects of the natural element that resist and obstruct its universalization—reappears in the image of a threatening and unpredictable “untamed nature.” Whilst, on the one hand, the commodity’s formal attributes permit its inclusion in the realm of exchange, on the other hand, its now expunged specificities (that which obstructs such entry) are recast as nothing more than an irrational remnant of the past or as no more than a superstitious myth having no place in the increasingly rationalized (i.e. commodified) world. These specificities are rejected in that world; they become that which cannot be recognized and subject to the status of exclusion and taboo.¹⁴

Let me now make this analogy between Holocaust memory and the twin aspects of Adorno and Horkheimer’s conception of commodification more direct, so as to shed light upon the intense denials by many to claims of contemporary antisemitism. Read into the very fiber of modernity, of the old Europe, genocidal antisemitism takes on the appearance of a natural phenomenon and is raised to the status of a law of nature. From the perspective of the new Europe, whose self-representation turns on the transcendence or overcoming of such antisemitism, any recognition of its existence, whether as a continuation of past manifestations or as a new phenomenon, serves to undermine its defining claim. This factor alone goes some way to understanding the intensity of the denial of contemporary claims. To this initial point, however, a further element can be identified.

In an era in which antisemitism is deemed a thing of the past, claims of its contemporary presence appear to be no more than claims to see an irrational legacy of the past, of less enlightened times. Now that the Holocaust has become commodified, its now expunged content—its specificities and particularities, its potential continued existence

¹² Daniel Levy and Natan Sznajder, “Memory Unbound: The Holocaust and the Formation of Cosmopolitan Memory,” 5(1) *European Journal of Social Theory* (2002) p. 102.

¹³ Levy and Sznajder, *supra* n. 4, at p. 156.

¹⁴ See generally Adorno and Horkheimer, *supra* n. 11, at ch. 1.

as “untamed nature,” its *antisemitism*—takes on the aura of superstition and taboo along with the prohibitions and sanctions that attaches to such abject phenomena.

5. CONCLUSION

In this paper, I have sought to understand why claims of contemporary antisemitism are met with such intense denial. Looking at the problem within the context of the “new Europe,” I have argued that the underpinning cause of the intensity of denial is that the account of the Holocaust as an inherent outcome of “modernity” and its reframing as “Holocaust memory” and universal moral symbol required dissolving the particularities of its Jewish dimensions, including dissolving the phenomenon of antisemitism into more universal and generalized concepts.

First, in the new Europe’s *political* reading of the Holocaust, antisemitism is recast as *genocide*. As a consequence, any consideration of modern antisemitism that does not fit into this genocidal concept remains both unseen and untheorized. In many ways, if such antisemitism does appear in these accounts, it is often presented as no more than a remnant from premodern times and hardly worthy of reflection.

Second, a similar dissolution is present in the new Europe’s moralizing of the Holocaust. Certain of its overcoming of genocidal antisemitism, the new Europe reduces the Holocaust to the symbolic value of an abstract and formal, universal, moral imperative. Again, however, this universalizing is dependent on the expulsion of that aspect of the Holocaust’s specifically Jewish content.

In both these instances, claims of antisemitism, genocidal or otherwise, are seen as no more than remnants of a previous age, an age now safely overcome and all but impossible to credit with any degree of seriousness. However, and more fundamentally, antisemitism as a “autonomous” phenomenon, one whose meaning, direction, and outcome are not determined by what amounts to an omnipotent political will to power, that is, one whose causes and responsibility are not so contained (and containable), is written out, not only of the structure of the new Europe itself but also of the old Europe that it is said to have overcome. In this context, therefore, the abject denial of antisemitism and the claims of bad faith associated with such denial may not be surprising. From the perspective of the new Europe, not only does antisemitism not exist today, but it has, as a phenomenon with specifically Jewish dimensions, never really existed in the past either.

Antisemitism and Anti-Capitalism in the Current Economic Crisis

Nicolas Bechter*

1. INTRODUCTION

In the current crisis of the economic system, many critics of capitalism feel confirmed in their views. They include radical leftists, who have always known that capitalism does not work, mainstream politicians, who do not question capitalism as such but only its neoliberal outbursts, and right-wing groups, who want to strengthen national states against a frenetic global economy.

As important as it is to radically question the structures of our society, it can turn out to be dangerous if it is not done properly. The crucial word is “radically.” With its Latin origin *radix* (meaning “root”), in the field of social sciences it implies digging to the roots of social phenomena and thereby exposing and criticizing their foundations. Inspired by Karl Marx and his *Critique of Political Economy*, Theodor Adorno made this his life’s work in various fields, including philosophy, sociology, and musicology. Adorno was also aware of the dangers of radical critique:

Not everything that tends towards extremes in whatever dimension can be considered radical, but only what attacks the negative situation at the root in an “inconsiderate critique of the status quo.” (Adorno 2003: 92)

This is especially important in the field of economic critique, as a superficial analysis of the structures and processes in an economic system can lead to premature verdicts. Such verdicts are never able to push through the ideological undergrowth and, for reasons that I will discuss later, often produce antisemitic consequences — whether consciously or unconsciously.

The first part of this paper identifies the societal structures and historical tendencies that make it possible to blame “the Jews” for the problems of the capitalist system. This is followed by a case-study of an Austrian right-wing newspaper as proof of the ideas presented.

2. POLITICAL ECONOMY

Two aspects of Marx’s *Critique of Political Economy* are relevant to the various anti-semitism theories discussed in this paper, namely the process of surplus production and abstract domination.

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Marx starts his analysis of modern capitalist societies by analyzing the notion of commodity. This is surprising, as it would seem more obvious to start the examination with money. However, Marx realized that it is the commodity, not money, that is the basic unit of a capitalist economy and society. Money—the general equivalent—can then be deduced. Consequently, Marx’s critique of the bourgeois society is not a critique of money alone but of the whole process of capitalist production. He shows that surplus value, or profit, is not produced in the circulation sphere by selling the commodity at a higher price than the price at which it was bought but that it is produced by the workers in the production sphere and only realized by the capitalist in the circulation sphere.

Another important point of Marx’s critique of the political economy relates to the change in forms of domination. Whereas in the past there used to be a personal form of domination, such as the master-slave or landlord-bondsman relationship, in capitalism this domination has been transformed into an abstract form of domination. The members of modern societies are formally free, but unfortunately

free in the double sense, that as a free man he can dispose of his labour-power as his own commodity, and that on the other hand he has no other commodity for sale, is short of everything necessary for the realization of his labour-power. (Marx 1995: 109)

3. ANTISEMITISM AND ANTI-CAPITALISM

Antisemitism has a strong affinity with anti-capitalism. From Shylock the reckless usurer, via the court Jew and Baron Rothschild, to the East Coast bankers, antisemites have frequently held the Jews responsible for the burdens of the (proto-)capitalistic society.¹ It is crucial for the understanding of antisemitism to be aware of this link and to interpret it correctly. First and foremost, it is important to comprehend that antisemitism has nothing to do with real-life Jews, their behavior, or their habits. As the German author Ulrich Enderwitz puts it:

antisemitic judgements are, because of their own structure, not reactions to real outer experience, but projections of an inner conflict, not the empirical product of a process of perception and cognition, but a symptomatic expression of a discrepancy and resistance within the perceiving and cognizing subject. (Enderwitz 1998: 11)

For Adorno and Horkheimer, this projection is an important point in their antisemitism theory.² In the third thesis of the “Elements of Anti-Semitism” in the *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, they make a connection between antisemitism and capitalism: “Bourgeois antisemitism has a specific economic cause: the concealment of domination in production” (Horkheimer & Adorno 2004: 182). This is the connection to Marx and the transformation of domination. The Jews, because of their historic position within the European economic system, were scapegoats for discontent with capitalism. Since some Jews were involved in the circulation sphere, they were the visible elements of the

¹ For a comprehensive discussion of antisemitism and the Christian interest ban (*Zinsverbot*), see Heil & Wacker (1997).

² This is just one aspect of Adorno’s and Horkheimer’s thoughts on antisemitism. For an extensive summary, see Salzborn (2010: 96ff.). A helpful article on the various transformations of the antisemitism theory of the Frankfurt School is Martin Jay’s *The Jews and the Frankfurt School. Critical Theory’s Analysis of Anti-Semitism* (1980).

economic process. “[The Jewish merchant] is the bailiff for the whole system and shoulders the hatred for all the others” (Horkheimer & Adorno 2004: 183).

So we can see that blaming the Jews for the shortcomings of capitalism is an abbreviated critique of capitalist structures that stops at the sphere of circulation instead of going to the root of the problem, which is located in the sphere of production. It is a “conformist rebellion” (Claussen 2005) in which the antisemites can live out their thwarted ambitions without attacking the system as a whole or challenging the ruling class.

However, this failure to understand capitalist production is not just a subjective problem but is based within the structure of the society itself. “The responsibility of the circulation sphere for the exploitation is a societally necessary pretense.” (Horkheimer & Adorno 2004: 183) These necessities are strongly linked to such terms as fetish-character³ and ideology, which were used by Marx to describe capitalist society and were then employed by Moishe Postone, among others, to analyze antisemitism.

Postone’s understanding of the relationship between antisemitism and capitalism is a development of certain aspects of Adorno’s and Horkheimer’s theory. For him, the identification of the Jews with the circulation sphere was true in the case of traditional antisemitism but is no longer valid in the case of its modern form:

It is not that the Jews merely were considered to be the owners of money, as in traditional anti-Semitism, but that they were held responsible for economic crises and identified with the range of social restructuring and dislocation resulting from rapid industrialization. ... In other words, the abstract domination of capital, which—particularly with rapid industrialization—caught people up in a web of dynamic forces they could not understand, became perceived as the domination of International Jewry. (Postone 1980: 107)

Postone explains antisemitism by referring to Marx’s concept of the *fetish of the commodity*, understood as a

mysterious thing simply because in it the social character of men’s labour appears to them as an objective character stamped upon the product of that labour; because the relation of the producers to the sum total of their own labour is presented to them as a social relation, existing not between themselves, but between the products of their labour. (Marx 1995: 43)

This means that the relation between humans expresses itself in an objectified form, rather than a social form, because of the fetishism and the double character (value and use-value) of the commodity form. Thus, the commodity expresses and veils social relations at the same time. The abstract foundations of capitalist organization are veiled, and what is left are the concrete, sensual forms.

One aspect of the fetish, then, is that capitalist social relations do not appear as such and, moreover, present themselves antinomically, as the opposition of the abstract and concrete. Because, additionally, both sides of the antinomy are objectified, each appears to be quasi-natural. The abstract dimension appears in the form of abstract, universal, “objective,” natural laws; the concrete dimension appears as pure “thingly” nature. (Postone 1980: 107)

³ For a longer discussion, see Grigat (2007) and Postone (1993).

This is the crucial point in Postone's theory. He thinks that modern antisemitism does not identify the Jews with the circulation sphere but rather with its other side: the abstract dimension of value as such.

When one examines the specific characteristics of the power attributed to the Jews by modern anti-Semitism — abstractness, intangibility, universality, mobility — it is striking that they are all characteristics of the value dimension of the social forms analyzed by Marx. Moreover, this dimension, like the supposed power of the Jews, does not appear as such, but always in the form of a material carrier, such as the commodity. (Postone 1980: 108)

The concrete dimension (labor, artisanry) can then be constructed as natural and ontologized as a constant and everlasting pillar of humanity. Antisemitism as an anti-capitalist outburst illegitimately separates the concrete and abstract dimension of capitalist society and focuses on agitating against this abstract dimension, against the money and financial capital personalized in international Jewry. In this fetishized perception, it is possible to pit honest manual labor against the exploitative, parasitic financial capital that biologizes capitalism.

The "anti-capitalist" attack, however, does not remain limited to the attack against abstraction. Even the abstract dimension also appears materially. On the level of the capital fetish, it is not only the concrete side of the antimony which is naturalized and biologized. The manifest abstract dimension is also biologized — as the Jews. ... Modern anti-Semitism involves a biologization of capitalism — which itself is only understood in terms of its manifest abstract dimension — as International Jewry. (Postone 1980: 112)

4. AUSTRIAN NEWSPAPER *DIE AULA*⁴

I have chosen *Die Aula* as a case study of how anti-capitalism and antisemitism are often linked for various reasons. First, it is not just some small publication but the monthly newspaper of an organization with very close ties to the Austrian Freedom Party (FPÖ) (Gärtner 1993: 262ff) and a monthly circulation of 11,000 copies.⁵ The Freedom Party is a right-wing party that was established as the third party in post-war Austria and was more or less openly the party of the (former) Nazis. The Freedom Party became internationally infamous in the late 1980s and 1990s as the party of Jörg Haider (Bailer & Neugebauer 1993). It became part of the federal government in 2000 and five years later split into a pragmatic liberal-right party (BZÖ) and a hard-line right-wing party (FPÖ) (Luther 2006; Stephen Roth Institute 2005). The main topics of the FPÖ are currently immigrants, especially Muslims, and the neoliberal rulers in Brussels. However, anti-

⁴ I would like to thank Willi Lasek, Nedim Mujanović, and Heribert Schiedel of the Documentation Center of the Austrian Resistance (*Dokumentationsarchiv des österreichischen Widerstandes* — DÖW) for providing me with literature and copies of *Die Aula* and for helping me to contextualize this material within the Austrian extreme right scene.

⁵ *Die Aula* do not make official statements on their circulation. However, the ÖZV, the Austrian periodical newspaper association, provides this figure on its website, at: <<http://www.oezv.or.at>>. According to Heribert Schiedel, an expert on the Austrian right-wing and neo-Nazi scene, this figure appears to be accurate, as *Die Aula* claimed to have 9,000 subscribers in the 1990s.

semitism, in the past as well as in the present, is a constant topic of FPÖ politicians (Schiedel & Neugebauer 2002). The proportion of votes received by the Freedom Party varies significantly but seems to be stabilizing between 15 and 20 percent. It is therefore not just a marginalized group on the edge of the democratic spectrum.

The authors of *Die Aula* are sometimes FPÖ party members, like MEP Andreas Mölzer, but mostly people from the political environment of the Freedom Party: Nazi-romantics, neo-Nazis, Holocaust deniers, and German-national student fraternities (Gärtner 1996: 151-227). The main topics of *Die Aula* are the *Verbotsgesetz*, the “death” of the Austrian/German people due to “mass immigration” (*Überfremdung*), the general decline of art, culture, and civilization, the excesses of EU bureaucracy, “Usrael,” and the economic crisis. According to the Documentation Center of the Austrian Resistance (DÖW) *Die Aula* has moved increasingly toward neo-Nazism in recent years.⁶ Even though *Die Aula* sees itself as a newspaper of the political right, it has no problem supporting left-wing or Muslim politicians, as long as they follow a strict anti-Israel foreign policy. *Die Aula* therefore supports Hugo Chavez in his struggle against an alleged “Usrael” conspiracy, backs Iran’s President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad in his support of radical Islamist groups and his pursuit of nuclear weapons, and acknowledges the “courage” of two MPs of the German leftist party *Die Linke* who refused to applaud Israel’s President Simon Peres after he delivered a speech in the German parliament.

For this paper, I have examined all issues of *Die Aula* from 2008, when the economic crisis became manifest with the bankruptcy of Lehman Brothers, to May 2010. Many articles during this period dealt with antisemitic topics, such as the “witch-hunt” against the Holocaust-denying bishop Richard Williamson of the St. Pius Society and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. In this paper, however, I will only deal with antisemitic statements concerning the economic crisis.

Die Aula dedicates a lot of its coverage to the economic crisis. It has published special issues on the crisis and crisis-related topics appear in nearly every issue.

The basis of the critique of capitalism in *Die Aula* is a fetishized understanding of how capitalism works, characterized by an inability to distinguish between the essence and manifestation of capitalist relations. Unable to comprehend the abstract domination of the value and internal antagonisms of capitalism, the newspaper’s contributors project these abstract societal processes onto the visible agents of these processes, namely the Jews. They imagine the Jews as the puppet masters of the modern economy who pull the strings behind the scenes to their own advantage. This picture of the puppet masters takes various forms, from subtle antisemitic codes to very explicit antisemitic phrases:

- “the globalists and their accomplices” (*Die Aula* 02/2008: 20);
- “worldwide oligarchic structures” (*Die Aula* 04/2008: 37);
- “jumping jacks of big money” (*Die Aula* 04/2010: 38);

⁶ The difference between the extreme right and neo-Nazism is that the former is allowed by law, whereas the latter is regarded as a crime against the *Verbotsgesetz*, a law prohibiting the glorification of the National Socialist regime. The boundary between these two terms is often fluid and difficult to determine. Moreover, these terms are controversial within the scientific community. For a discussion, see Schiedel (2007: 23ff.).

- “as is well-known, in the United States, politics is being made behind the scenes: elites, dubious circles, high finance and various lobbies (e.g. AIPAC) are the financial backers and the true rulers” (*Die Aula* 04/2010: 23);
- “a convention of the grand lodges” (*Die Aula* 06/2010: 16); and
- “the architects of the financial-Shoah, who sent Fannie Mae, Freddie Mac, Lehman Brothers, Meryll Lynch, AIG and Washington Mutual into the credit-crematoria” (*Die Aula* 04/2009: 24ff).⁷

All these accusations are opaque and inaccurate. They leave room for interpretation, which is part of the conspirative logic: not naming something exactly only makes it more mysterious, as even experts are unable to see the whole picture. This conspiracy arises from a misunderstanding of the economy and an inability to recognize abstract forms of domination. Postone identifies this way of thinking as crucial to modern antisemitism:

In modern anti-Semitism [the imagined Jewish power] is mysteriously intangible, abstract and universal. This power does not usually appear as such, but must find a concrete vessel, a carrier, a mode of expression. Because this power is not bound concretely, is not “rooted,” it is of staggering immensity and is extremely difficult to check. It stands behind phenomena, but is not identical with them. Its source is therefore hidden—conspiratorial. The Jews represent an immensely powerful, intangible, international conspiracy. (Postone 1980: 106)

Another frequently used metaphor in *Die Aula* consists of biologized descriptions of capitalist structures. This usually takes the form of comparing the old, sane, natural form of capitalism to a despicable, abnormal growth that has to be brought under control:

- “the venom of global neoliberalism” (*Die Aula* 04/2008: 37);
- “financial investors as locusts” (*Die Aula* 11/2008: 26; 02/2009: 22);
- “predator-capitalism,” “Hydra” (*Die Aula* 03/2009: 32, 40; 06/2010: 25); and
- “banks as ravenous wolves” (*Die Aula* 06/2010: 25).⁸

These comparisons fit into the practice of biologizing capitalist structures as mentioned by Postone. A similar line of reasoning can be found when the newspaper’s contributors deal with problems of interest. The concentration on this particular branch of capitalist production is typical of a shortened, superficial analysis of capitalism. Furthermore, the critique of interest provides an excellent example of how the various aspects mentioned above can be combined: the fetishized critique of capitalism, the alleged Jewish influence in the sphere of circulation, and the concept of parasitic and unnatural growth.

5. SILVIO GESELL AND HIS FOLLOWERS

This idea of abnormal outbursts of capitalism leads us to an alternative economic system that some contributors to *Die Aula* have in mind. Starting from the demonization of interest, they end up at the *Natürliche Wirtschaftsordnung* (Natural Economic Order), which is based on theories developed by Silvio Gesell (*Die Aula* 03/2009: 34; 06/2009: 16ff; 11/2009: 10ff). Inspired by the early anarchists (in particular Proudhon), Gesell (1862-

⁷ All quotes have been translated by the author.

⁸ *Ibid.*

1930) argued that money and interest were the main obstacles to the true liberty of humankind. Whereas all workers and farmers have to work for their income, capitalists and landowners do not and live parasitically off unnatural interest. His solution to this problem was to introduce interest-free money, known as *Freigeld* or free money. The main difference between *Freigeld* and regular money is that *Freigeld* has an expiry date. It loses a certain percentage of its value every month. This is meant to prevent money owners from hoarding, thus keeping the money in constant circulation.

In a contemporary context, Gesell's theory forms the basis of so-called exchange circles and regional money initiatives. These exchange circles became known to the wider public in Argentina during the economic crisis that struck the country around 2000. After a couple of months, these circles collapsed spectacularly. At a theoretical level, Gesell's ideas are still discussed in academic circles. Furthermore, Gesell's followers have tried to become an accepted current within (radical) left-wing discourses by committing themselves to the anti-globalization movement. In Germany, for example, at least two such groups are official members of Attac Germany: the *Initiative für eine natürliche Wirtschaftsordnung* (INWO) and the *Christen für eine gerechte Wirtschaftsordnung* (CGW). In addition, Gesell's theory is often used by radical right-wingers as well as esoteric groups.

This paper is not the place to criticize Gesell's theory in detail (for such a critique, see Rakowitz 2003). However, it is a striking example of a fetishized understanding of the economy, and it shows quite clearly why this is so interesting to right-wing authors. The first point is certainly that the whole program has a racist—or at least social-Darwinist—component:

Natural selection in its full, miraculous effectiveness is then restored. ... No matter how great the quantity of abnormal material resulting from the propagation of defective individuals will be, that is brought into nature, natural selection can cope with it. Medical art can then delay, but it cannot stop eugenesis. (Gesell 1922: xi)

Of greater relevance to this paper, however, are the theoretical affiliations between right-wing ideology and Gesell's theory.

(i) The whole idea that there is such a thing as a natural economic order is very tempting to antisemitic agitators. Gesell's followers often use biological metaphors to promote their theory, such as the idea of a natural growth process. Everything in nature grows until it reaches a natural boundary, such as human organs. If they kept on growing forever, we would eventually die. In contrast, interest grows without a natural boundary and keeps on growing forever. Furthermore, it does not grow naturally but in an exponential manner. Gesell's followers claim that nothing in nature grows exponentially, except cancer cells. Therefore, interest equals cancer and must be cut out of the organism.

(ii) The focus on only one aspect of the capitalist economy facilitates the personalization of economic processes and leaves room for conspirative, antisemitic interpretations. I do not claim that all Gesell's followers are antisemites; I just want to show that this theory is structurally antisemitic and therefore dangerous. The whole theory is not a radical critique of capitalist society but just a critique of one aspect of it. There is nothing intrinsically wrong with this, but the problem is that Gesell's theory exudes the aura of a revolutionary movement, of establishing paradise on earth, when all it does is to make a small adjustment to the current system. Marx described this form of critique as being "within the limits of what is permitted by the police and not permitted by logic" (Marx 1989: 29).

6. CONCLUSION

The notion of a radical movement that is actually not radical at all is precisely the kind of conformist rebellion referred to in the introduction that tends to include antisemitic aspects. When Adorno and Horkheimer state at the very end of "Elements of Anti-Semitism" that "it is not just the antisemitic ticket which is antisemitic, but the ticket mentality itself" (Horkheimer & Adorno 2004: 217), this is also true of the critique of capitalism. It is not just the shortened and explicitly antisemitic critique of capitalism that is antisemitic but the shortened critique as such.

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Equations in Contemporary Anti-Zionism: A Conceptual Analysis

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1. INTRODUCTION

This article, which is based on several articles and research projects, aims first and foremost to present the *criminogenic nature of contemporary antisemitism*, which certain people, including people of African descent, have unfortunately adopted—through mimicry or imitation—as a result of ignorance or political calculation.¹ It forms the final part of a larger work entitled “Africa and Antisemitism: From Indifference to Temptation and Antisemitic Speech.” It is resolutely opposed to antisemitism, especially among some Africans who have contributed to diatribes against Jews in France.

2. FALSE EQUATIONS BETWEEN ANTI-ZIONISM AND ANTISEMITISM:

THE ART OF MISREPRESENTING HISTORY AND POLITICS

Many intellectuals who cannot be suspected of antisemitism reject the equation of anti-Zionism with antisemitism. The questions that I wish to raise in this context are as follows. Have they reflected on the contours of Durban I? Have they taken the time to decipher the logic of the anti-Zionist discourse, its critical ambiguities and the silence that it tends to impose on any defense of the Jewish cause? For me, the contemporary anti-Zionist discourse encompasses a dangerous performative contradiction. Combating antisemitism amounts to accepting the need to demonstrate the conceptual limits of the most objective criticisms. When anti-Zionists claim that they are not antisemites, how is one to interpret or gauge their scathing attacks on the legitimacy of the State of Israel? How is one to understand their calls for sanctions against Israel and the very existence of Jews in Israel! And not just in Israel but elsewhere. There are dangerous forms of objectivity. America is not Zion, but anti-Zionists are silent when the American flag and the Israeli flag are burned side by side with the same rage. This demonstrates the primary and basic anti-Americanism of the anti-Zionists, if not a performative contradiction.

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¹ In 2006, during a Paris march in support of Lebanon organized by anti-Zionists, many young Africans among the protesters chanted the slogan: “Zionism is the criminal DNA of mankind.” Marches in support of the Lebanese people also took place in several African countries. In Senegal, for example, the Israeli flag was burned by a mob that included several elected politicians.

Anti-Zionism thus does what it claims not to do, namely to be against the Jewish state but not against the Jews. We must remain lucid. Is it not so that the denial expressed by the prefix “anti” in anti-Zionism and antisemitism nowadays follows the same logic as the hatred of Jews and the desire to wipe them of the face of the earth? Until we have conceptualized and deconstructed the equation of these two terms, we must treat them as identical in the fight against antisemitism. Even a critical and objective anti-Zionist knows very well that, in a conflict, one cannot innocently set oneself up as a critic or judge of the protagonists. In fact, the differentiation between anti-Zionism and antisemitism is formalistic and specious, because, strictly speaking, they involve the same intent, the same hatred of the Jews. In *L’Imprescriptible*,² Jankélévitch explains that anti-Zionism is a form of linguistic trickery to justify antisemitism. An anti-Zionist, he argues, is a person who gives himself the right to be democratically antisemitic and to democratically popularize his hatred. Jankélévitch observes:

Anti-Zionism is in this respect an unexpected windfall, because it gives us permission and even the right—even the duty—to be antisemitic in the name of democracy. Anti-Zionism is justified antisemitism, finally put at the disposal of all. It grants permission to be democratically antisemitic.

In reality, anti-Zionism has the same target as antisemitism, namely the Jews. Otherwise, why plant bombs in synagogues in Paris or murder children and teachers at a Jewish school in Toulouse? Paris is not Jerusalem. Toulouse is not Tel Aviv. The era of globalization would thus appear to be an opportunity for anti-Jewish ideologies to prosper. Africans must understand this anti-Zionist hoax in order not to misunderstand this quagmire of antisemitism, which fraudulently posits the following equations: Zionism = colonialism, Zionism = apartheid and Zionism = racism.³ These equations, which are genuine historical travesties, relate to problems about which all Africans should be deeply concerned. They amount to nothing more than a revisionist form of African history and suffering. After all, have the people who come up with these equations even considered the history of colonialism and the desire of colonizers to civilize the savages? When have the Jews ever wanted to Hebraicize Palestinians so that they become Jews? Those who deceitfully establish these false equations should re-read Aimé Césaire’s *Discourse sur le Colonialisme!*

In order to prove that this so-called objective criticism of Israel’s is actually a refusal to engage with the Jews, I will analyze another anti-Zionist equation, which posits that: economic boycott of Israel = Middle East peace.

3. THE ANTI-ZIONIST ECONOMIC BOYCOTT AND THE REJECTION OF PEACE IN THE MIDDLE EAST

The era of globalization that characterizes the 21st century is a period of homogenization of modern economic, political, and cultural habitus. This bold global desire to transcend

² Vladimir Jankélévitch, *L’Imprescriptible* (1986), pp. 19-20.

³ These equations are an unwholesome form of revisionism. After a visit to the Middle East, Desmond Tutu compared Palestine to a ghetto and Israeli democracy to apartheid. There can be no doubt that this was a misrepresentation of history and a sell-out of African suffering in the name of the Palestinian cause.

borders and achieve economic *rapprochement* between states has been accompanied by many upheavals placing contemporary attitudes between light and darkness, between hope and confusion. Likewise, the ideals of brotherhood and interhuman equality have stumbled over isolationism and communitarianism, religious fanaticism, and the blindness of terrorism, which is also global in nature. It is true that the contradictions and negative consequences of economic globalization are obvious and indisputable. The increasing impoverishment of many newly independent countries gives rise to the clamor of despair and revolt, while the economic crisis weakens the social and political foundations of the richest and most powerful states. But these economic consequences, while tragic, can still be fixed. This is because the essence of economics is exchange. Economic exchange, whether in the form of barter or capitalist speculation, even when forced and unevenly balanced, still constitutes a favorable opportunity for each of the participants. Economic exchange is thus a path to dialogue. Indeed, as men trade and exchange items and goods among themselves, they are bound to and have duties toward one another; as men are driven by quantitative interest, they can gradually correct their mistakes and significantly reduce inequalities born of economic games and challenges. Here, the commercial spirit remains open to other competitors and rivals, without rejecting them. Economically, the face and the existence of others are still significant, despite the usual selfishness that rules the business world. The economic interest requires collaboration and negotiation. Even at the height of apartheid, the boycott of South Africa was never so barbaric or insane, let alone systematic. States that currently support the boycott of Israel never stopped trading with South Africa, African countries included. Why then this harshness and intransigence toward Israel? Do the people who advocate and organize the global boycott against Israel really want peace between Israelis and Palestinians? Why do they not boycott the Palestinians when they set off bombs and launch missiles against unarmed Israeli civilians?

Finally, if economic exchange, as already noted, is not simply a process for circulating goods but also a fundamental means for interacting with each other, as well as a practical method for maintaining fairness, how should we interpret these boycotts of Israel? How can we deconstruct the false equations that the anti-Zionists use to stigmatize Israel? Is there desire for a quick peace in the Middle East? I doubt it! This is no longer a secret to anyone. Sympathy for the Palestinian cause, the pretext for contesting the State of Israel, is no more than a political accessory for the anti-Zionists, whose psyches are filled with anti-Jewish hatred, as well as disapproval and denial of very idea of a Jewish state, a state for the Jews. Clearly, the anti-Zionists/antisemites refuse to acknowledge their rejection of the existence of a free, autonomous, and independent Jewish state in the middle of the Arab world. What is emerging in the globalization of anti-Zionism, even in its objective and critical manifestations, is thus the political relinquishment of the Jews to condemnation and terrorism. I can endure these little unpleasanties. If this form of antisemitism can help Africans understand what it is that is outrageous about the attitudes of anti-Zionists, I believe it is important, as an African who has witnessed European and African antisemitism, to summarize my views on antisemitism in Europe over the past twenty years. It was this approach to antisemitism that enabled us — my colleagues and me — to create an association for dialogue between Jews and Africans (JUAF) in the 1980s, at a time when the far-right parties were demonizing the Jews, although nobody had foreseen intercommunity conflicts, especially between black extremists or Afro-Europeans and European Jews.

4. A BRIEF PHENOMENOLOGY OF CONTEMPORARY ANTISEMITISM

Antisemitism should not only be studied by sociologists and historians or left only to politicians to tackle. Philosophers should be the first to take an interest in it. The foundations of Western antisemitism are certainly theological, but there is a long list of the philosophers who have written about the Jews, from Kant to Sartre, by way of Hegel and many others. Antisemitism must be subjected to a multidisciplinary and multinational or global approach.

A. *Antisemitism is not a disease*

With friends, we spent many nights discussing the question whether antisemitism was a Western disease. A disease that, as a result of colonialism and now globalization, has been inoculated into the victims of colonialism and is now manifesting itself in strange and astonishing ways. But this idea of a disease was and remains unacceptable to me, due to the Levinasian concept of responsibility. Indeed, how can a sick person be held fully responsible for his actions? I objected that, if antisemitism was a disease, it would have been impossible to hold Hitler, his acolytes, and his followers in Europe responsible and culpable. Why did Jaspers take up arms against Nazi Germany while Heidegger was sympathetic to Nazism? There is no inevitability to becoming antisemitic. In other words, one embraces antisemitic theories by choice and out of conviction. Similarly, I rejected the idea that a victim of colonialism could use the evils of colonialism as an excuse to support and participate in antisemitic hatred. Having been a victim of colonialism does not annul our responsibility or the key choices we make in life. Despite these theoretical differences, we agreed that antisemitism was contagious—hence its expansion. It remained for me to find a definition that would encompass the permanence of antisemitism, its re-emergence and its adoption by colonized peoples—victims, as Levinas says, of the “same hatred of the other man,” the same racism “of which antisemitism would be the prototype” for all “policies of internment and social oppression.”⁴ Starting from Levinas’ thinking, I recorded my own perceptions of the surrounding antisemitism. For my part, I came up with three intersecting definitions of antisemitism, which I will discuss below.

B. *Antisemitism is a problem of alterity, a rejection, and a stubborn resistance to the presence and free existence of the other*

Antisemitism is not simply a manifestation of hostility or Judeophobia. As Levinas writes, antisemitism “is the repugnance felt towards the unknown of the other’s psyche, the mystery of his interiority.”⁵ That is to say that, for the antisemite, the Jew must lose his foreignness, at the very least that which makes him a Jew: Judaism, Zionism, Israel, and so forth. It is this entire logic of assimilation and exclusion that Levinas sums up and criticizes in his words. With this definition, we come face to face with a problem that is at once epistemological and existential. At the existential, intersubjective level, we are dealing with the repulsion of the other—the Jew in his capacity as a Jew. At the episte-

⁴ See the dedication by Levinas in *Autrement qu’être ou au-delà de l’essence* (1974) and *Difficile liberté* (1984) p. 201.

⁵ Emmanuel Levinas, *L’Au-delà du verset* (1982), p. 22.

mological level, the repugnance felt toward the mystery of the interiority of the Jew is a product of the classical and modern Western concept of the composition of knowledge. The rapport that the antisemite wishes to establish with the Jew is therefore part of the same paradigm as the relationship between subject and object. The antisemite, being a subject *par excellence*, a traditional or transcendental ego,⁶ wishes to be the master and the owner of the relationship with the object — the Jewish being. From the perspective of the existential dialectic, it is the antisemite who creates the Jew and the Jew's existence. Sartre was not an antisemite but an objective, engaged intellectual, indeed a philosemite. As already noted, objectivities and intellectual prowess can be costly.

In this kind of relational structure, subject and object remain in a state of difference that only the subject is able to manage and control. Nietzsche described this type of differentiation as the *pathos of distance*. The subject, who is master and owner, conserves his interiority, which is impregnable but always sealed to the object, whose alterity he incorporates without ever merging with the object. This constitution of the object by the subject should be understood as a characteristic and a specificity of civilization. To illustrate this proposition, let us consider the issue of translation. For Rémi Brague, an expert on the Middle Ages, every translation simultaneously comprises aspects of transport, imitation, and rivalry. For Western civilization, according to Brague, these three actions, which are inherent to translation, hinge on the method of inclusive digestion, which includes the object while maintaining its alterity or foreignness, while the subject conserves its interiority.⁷ In this regard, Brague notes:

Within the genus "appropriation," we can distinguish two manners of appropriating. I propose to call them "inclusion" and "digestion." ... In the case of an artificial inclusion, the enclosed object is maintained in one particular position, chosen because it facilitates observation. ... This produces a paradoxical relationship between the interior and the exterior, the inherent and the foreign. What becomes the interior does not lose its alterity for all that. It is even, precisely by its internalization that the object is conserved in its alterity. ... European civilization, according to my thesis, is based on the model of inclusion.

These words sum up perfectly the Jewish people's various connections with Europe, and European civilization, from their expulsion from Spain until the Holocaust. In contrast to the full digestive appropriation of the object (e.g., Hitler's final solution), inclusive appropriation (a symbol of the subtlety of post-Nazi antisemitism!) utilizes the denial of the object without a final solution. In this *pathos of distance*, the subject keeps its object under imperial control, where mastery, exclusion, and repulsion are always repeated. This ontological mastery of the self borders on total, totalitarian control. From this perspective, the Jew, in contrast to the Westerner, despite more than 2,000 years of coexistence, will remain other and foreign, like the object before the subject. Whatever his contribution to European society, the Jew — a "foreign" cultural and textual object that has been included and digested theologically and is politically tolerated and assimilated — will always be maintained in his original difference, not of his own volition but

⁶ When faced with Kant or Hegel or, to a different extent, Sartre, we are dealing with the same phenomenology of the Jewish being.

⁷ Rémi Brague, *Au moyen du Moyen-Age: Philosophies médiévales en chrétienté, judaïsme et islam* (2006), pp. 264-284.

purely due to the desire of the subject. He cannot change his status or claim the status of the subject. Finally, it is worth remembering that contemporary antisemitism is the desire to reduce the other to the image and the will of the Subject or the Self. Reduction always reflects the taste of the day. Like the antisemite, the anti-Zionist does not wish to brutally eliminate the Jews. Politically, he wants to determine the place of the Israelis, not only in the Middle East, but everywhere. He wants to control the Jewish destiny. Against this background, the consequences for the Jewish state are more than obvious.... In response to a civilization that insists on affording good treatment to the alien within its gates, another civilization states "become what I want you to be, because you are in my home."

C. Antisemitism is a language and a worldview

Albert Camus said: "My language is my homeland." This definition of a mother tongue is similar to an aphorism in the West African Bambara and Dioula languages, which states: *kouman yé douniale yé* (speech is the world). In other words, the world is language, a language through which people construct the world they have inherited in their image. This implies a performative language, speech taking shape within intersubjectivity and social horizontality. Language does not only create the world, it is a worldview that is constantly rebuilt by speakers. Maternal or paternal, language is inherited from others. Language is the first humanization of our being. Contemporary antisemitism is a language that is transmitted from place to place, from Western civilization to others nations. This language perfects itself but never changes its nature. Despite their evolution and their reciprocal borrowing, French and English will never become the same language, each preserving its morphology and particular worldview. Antisemitism is a language of differentiation that endorses difference to the point of controversy and endless conflict. Put simply, antisemitism is the constantly renewed meta-narrative of a civilization founded on the rejection of peaceful and generous coexistence with the Jews. Combating contemporary antisemitism requires us to collectively rethink all the codes of modernity, along with religious hermeneutics.

D. Contemporary antisemitism is not new: it is simply performed by new people in new places

Antisemitism represents a stagnation in the development of world history. It is an extension of the same logic of Jew-hatred and the same machinery that popularizes Jewish stereotypes: stereotypes of religious and secular antisemitism adopted by other peoples. As a result, what is incorrectly referred to as the new antisemitism is merely a change of signs and signifiers. Through their speech and based on their own historicity, the new antisemites are expressing and updating inherited antisemitic signs. It is clear that the signified "Jew" remains identical, whatever the new signifiers of exclusion and hatred. The expressive and performative differences between contemporary forms of antisemitism do nothing to change the permanence of antisemitic stereotypes, which are scattered and transported around the globe. Antisemitism continues to this day. This is precisely because of the permanence of the Name used by antisemites. Antisemitic signifiers that are transferred elsewhere take on local color. The themes of this language may be changed or recreated indefinitely without any change to the signified "Jew" or its stigmatizing stereotypes. This aggressive permanence confronting the signified "Jew"

is not just political or historical. I believe that it is precisely at the sociological level that one becomes aware of the specific problem of the Name "Jew," through the entanglement of the low antisemitism of the poor and the high antisemitism of the rich and the elites. Moreover, African elites form no exception. Globalization places condemnation of Israel, which is treated as a rogue state, in the mouths of every people and every country.⁸

Contemporary antisemitism is thus not new, or a renewal of past forms of antisemitism, but a simply a globalised intensification of a timeless phenomenon. New political actors and peoples are appropriating the themes of religious and secular antisemitism that have established the Name "Jew" as a problematic signified or an issue to be resolved. Whether one is looking at Sodom, Athens, Rome, Crown Heights, Belleville, Brussels, or Durban, it is always the same antisemitic language that is performed dialectically by local languages. The new antisemites merely fan the thematic flames of persistent antisemitism. This universalization explains—but does not justify—the inanity of the antisemitism of the African Diaspora in Europe and the United States and the temptation of antisemitism for the African continent, where anti-Zionism is following the global trend. In other words, all peoples and communities can freely use antisemitic speech, with or without the addition of only a specific emphasis.

Antisemitism metamorphoses without ever changing its nature. Just like a venomous snake that sheds its skin still remain remains a venomous snake, antisemitism retains its harmfulness and its criminogenic logic. This global proliferation of antisemitism explains—but does not justify—the antisemitism found among Africans and other peoples.

5. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, it is worth noting that contemporary anti-Zionism is etched into Western civilization as it is in other human cultures. It is the typical Western way of approaching the Jewish "being," who has thus been turned into a global scapegoat. Culturally, politically, and theologically, antisemitism is reprehensible and must be combated. Economic globalization, which goes hand in hand with global shrinkage as a result of new information and communication technologies, will give rise not only to a new antisemitism but also to the continuous adaptation and adoption of anti-Zionism by other peoples. This process of delocalization and relocation has already taken place between America, which is home to the antisemitism of the Nation of Islam, and Afro-European radicals and activists such as the *Tribu Ka* group and other expatriate African nationalists, who are known as Ethiopianists. It is also poised to expand to Africa. Due to the criminogenic nature of antisemitism, it is important to spare Africa as much as possible. Because of the tragic history of black Africans, which is often compared to that of the Jews, black antisemitism is incomprehensible and unacceptable, not to mention outrageous. Afro-European extremists have spread their tentacles to Africa. They describe all blacks or Africans who enter into dialogue with Jews as traitors. The *Tribu Ka* website states that that all pro-Zionist Africans should simply move to Israel. Africa has known religious, theological, and political antisemitism for a very long time. Islamic and Christian antisemitism has a long history. What will become of it in future with the rise

⁸ In 2008, in Africa, I was on a committee judging the master's dissertation of a political science student. Without hesitation, he counted Israel among the states that fail to respect international law.

of religious fanaticism? At present, it is clear that anti-Zionism and antisemitism are increasingly converging around the world.

The definitions of antisemitism that I have provided here, which are frequently harsh and unpleasant, are primarily addressed to Africans. Apart from South Africa, where trade unionists and political figures openly demand a boycott of Israel, African anti-Zionism has hardly been the subject of systematic study. This gap must be filled. It is important to determine what can be done to tackle this antisemitism in the future, because the evil—or venom—that it represents could be fatal, first and foremost, to the Africans themselves, especially to African states already weakened by ethnicism. Any involvement or complacency on the part of Africans in the face antisemitism is a negation of their own history, because the arguments used by Third-Worldists and anti-Zionists contain elements of African historicity. This leads me to the following questions.⁹ How can any African be antisemitic in the name of the Palestinian cause or for any other reason? Will the antisemitism of the African Diaspora find similar expression in Africa? How should we judge and evaluate antisemitism in Africa? What analytical tools can be used for this purpose? Which Africa are we talking about?¹⁰ Despite the lack of statistics on antisemitism in black Africa, should African antisemitism be regarded as an important or a very small phenomenon or epiphenomenon. Is anti-Zionism, a modern mask for Jew-hatred, effective among African intellectuals in black Africa? Are there other ways to properly understand and describe antisemitism in Africa and among Africans? Given that America has Americanized European antisemitism and Afro-Europeans have Europeanized African-American antisemitism, is it not likely that black Africa will soon Africanize the antisemitism of its Diaspora? When some African-American nationalists adopted the antisemitic discourse in the 1960s and 1970s, there was talk of an epiphenomenon. When young blacks in France openly confessed, in front of the camera, to being antisemitic and proud of being so, there was also talk of an epiphenomenon, until these young people started prowling the streets of Jewish neighborhoods to beat up Jews. In the African context, it is not true that those who dare to describe antisemitism as an epiphenomenon are indirectly responsible for attacks on the synagogues of African Jewish converts? Is it possible that Africa is seeing the birth of a new antisemitism—the antisemitism of tomorrow?

⁹ These guiding questions are taken from a presentation I gave at Yale University. In this article, I have chosen to focus on anti-Zionism, but a larger work on antisemitism is in progress.

¹⁰ The issues discussed in this article relate to sub-Saharan Africa. There are many different African Diasporas, but they are all defined by their common African roots, hence Afro-American, Afro-Brazilian, Afro-Caribbean, and even Afro-European.

Antisemitic Metaphors and Latent Communication

Bjoern Milbradt*

The National Socialists—in their antisemitic propaganda—made substantial use of metaphors with which they dehumanized their victims, including metaphors of plague, cancer, octopuses that encompass the whole world with their tentacles, and different sorts of insects and parasites. In contemporary anti-imperialist and Islamist caricatures, a lot of similarities with “classic” antisemitic illustrations are quite obvious (ADL, 2010). These similarities are indications of parallels not only in iconography but also at the heart of the underlying ideology.

In recent years, something different happened in Germany. Metaphors of parasites appeared in political discourse *without* being linked to “the Jews” or to antisemitic ideology. What is up for debate is whether those illustrations and metaphors are nonetheless connected to antisemitic ideology or whether—as their advocates assert—they are nowadays completely harmless and in no way problematic.

1. DEVELOPMENTS IN ANTISEMITISM—A “FLEXIBLE PREJUDICE”

Especially—but not only—in Germany, we are confronted with changes in antisemitic resentment. In the country that is responsible for the systematic extermination of the European Jews, contemporary research on antisemitism has developed concepts that take into account that, since 1945, it is no longer possible for antisemites to utter their hatred in an open manner as was common in Nazi Germany. Werner Bergmann and Rainer Erb (1984) have described this phenomenon as a form of latent communication, pointing out that the social taboo triggered changes in the content of the stereotype. Antisemitism did not vanish but could only be uttered in private situations. Alternatively, antisemites had to make a detour in order to clearly express their thoughts and feelings.

The latter is achieved by avoiding “classic” antisemitism in public discourse, for example by switching to more accepted resentments, such as the so-called “critique of Israel,” which in Germany and elsewhere often comes along with and is closely linked to anti-Zionist antisemitism. But this change does not mean for a moment that the classic antisemitism has become insignificant: A lot of researchers stress that some or all elements of it are merely being renewed or put into a new form, which means that they may serve as the basis of a consensus among different groups, as Robert Wistrich points out. This conspiratorial vision of Zionism, he argues,

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assumed the existence of a dangerous, shadowy international conglomerate with its political headquarters in New York and Tel Aviv. The terminology of this post-1945 anti-Jewishness would no longer be predominantly Christian, fascist, or racist but neo-Marxist, Islamic, or anti-globalist. Nonetheless, there were similarities and continuities between the old anti-Semitism and the new anti-Zionism. (Wistrich, 2010: 496)

Research has therefore dealt with the fact that antisemitism is not an invariant stereotype but that it adapts to concrete historical circumstances and could be described as a “flexible prejudice” (Adorno, 1969). The current literature on antisemitism provides a lot of evidence to substantiate this assumption. If we interpret antisemitism as a stereotype that consists of a certain, historically rather invariant *form* that flexibly adopts a different *content* relative to specific historical circumstances (see, e.g., Haury, 2002), we are able to more adequately conceptualize the changes we observe in a theoretically sophisticated framework.

The stereotypical *form* of antisemitism consists of certain elements that have already been described in some detail. Thomas Haury identifies a Manichean world view, the personalization of complex matters, conspiracy theory, ethnification, and the goal of extermination (Haury, 2002). We can find these structural elements, for example, in anti-Zionist antisemitism. This exemplifies the assumption that the form is getting a new content and adapts to new (e.g. geopolitical) circumstances.

With regard to the contemporary economic and financial crisis, this *formal* approach may indicate that the potential for a widespread renewal of antisemitism as a world conspiracy theory is possibly much larger than the focus on the mere *content* is able to reveal. In the case of Germany, the results of an empirical study conducted by the Project on Group Focused Enmity show that a substantial amount of people attribute the cause of the crisis to “the bankers and the stock brokers” (Becker, Wagner & Christ, 2010).¹ An additional alarming finding is that this causal attribution is significantly correlated with overt antisemitism, while the effect is moderated by the perceived impact of the crisis on the individual situation (see *ibid.*).

Theoretically, this phenomenon could be grasped as a prejudiced, false reaction to the development of capitalism and capitalist modernity. Moishe Postone (2005) links this false reaction to the general constitution of capitalist societies. According to Postone, people tend to attack only the abstract, “unproductive” elements of capital (e.g. financial capital) and to personalize them in the form of the alleged evil character of “the Jew”, while uncritically glorifying so-called “productive capital” (e.g. industry and agriculture). Postone states that people tend to personalize what they perceive as threatening developments within modern society, such as rapid urbanization, modern culture, and the general disintegration of traditional social relations and social life. In this regard, the development from religious anti-Judaism to modern antisemitism can be seen as being closely associated with the crisis-laden development of modern capitalist societies.

As for Germany, we are able to prove by means of quantitative data that the hatred against the State of Israel is one of the dominant aspects of antisemitism (Salzborn, 2008; Heyder, Iser & Schmidt, 2005). On the other hand, the above-mentioned perception of the ongoing financial and economic crisis and the frequent causal attribution of blame to

¹ Eighty-nine percent of the participants (n=890) of a representative survey “fully” or “somewhat” agreed.

“bankers and stock brokers” (and the accompanying correlation with antisemitism) point toward the possibility that there may be a large group of people who, while not openly blaming “the Jews” for the economic distortions, show patterns of thought that may be transformed into a renewed image of the “world Jewish conspiracy”. The widespread talk of a “real,” “honest,” and productive economy that is opposed to the “parasitic” and “greedy” financial economy that is said to be controlled by “the Jews” is, as we know (not only) from Postone, one of the elements of antisemitism. What we see today in Germany as well as in other parts of the world are world views that contain those elements without directly linking them to “the Jews” — they make use of the *form* of antisemitic resentment without giving it manifest antisemitic *content*. Thus, we have a stereotypical critique of modern society that consist, in part or in full, of formal elements that could easily be found in manifest antisemitism but are not yet linked to it. Nonetheless, a critical and cautious approach to antisemitism suggests that this connection could easily be established either by right-wing movements, agitators, and politicians or through “associational transition” (Adorno, 2003: 44) in everyday discourse. This implies that a certain stereotypical critique has to be affiliated with an image of “the Jew” or a “world Jewish conspiracy.”

2. METAPHORS AND ANTISEMITISM

In 2005, Franz Muntefering, a member of the German Social Democratic Party who at the time was also the German Secretary of Labor, decried private equity funds as “locusts” that did not care about German workers and German industry. He argued that that were anonymous, that they did not take any responsibility for Germany, that they had swarmed over Germany, exhausting its economy, and that they were greedy and money-crazed.

In recent times, talk of “parasites” has once again taken up a firm place in public discourse and political debate in Germany. The concept of the “locust” is especially prevalent, not only in political parties from the far left to the extreme right but also in labor unions and groups from the anti-globalization spectrum, such as the NGO “Attac”. In its monthly magazine, the biggest German labor union — “IG Metall” — published an article that described US financial investors as “bloodsuckers” that swarm over the country, attacking and exhausting German companies. The caricatures accompanying the article where probably the most striking example of the suspicion that certain iconographic elements of antisemitic, Nazi caricatures are once again being used in contemporary Germany (Ruegemer, 2005). Criticized for this, campaigners usually point out that they definitely not referring to “the Jews,” thereby avoiding further discussion.

In light of this, students of antisemitism should examine the possibility that — despite this emphatic denial of any kind of antisemitism — these metaphors *convey* elements of antisemitic resentment in the sense of latent communication and/or unintentionally.

To tackle this problem, it may be helpful to have a look at some philosophical thoughts on the topic of metaphors. How do metaphors work? According to Max Black (1962: 44), the “metaphor works by applying to the principal subject a system of ‘associated implications’ characteristic of the subsidiary subject.” Transferred to our example, this means that some characteristics of a parasite (the bloodsucker) are applied to another subject (US enterprises). A basic characteristic of a parasite is probably that it lives “at the expense” of other organisms, for example by sucking them dry. Thus, applying

images of vermin or parasites to something that is not *biological* but basically *social* is to draw a distinction between *productive* members of society and those who are *unproductive*. While Germany's economy is depicted as productive, honest and self-consistent, an unproductive and greedy enemy is intruding it in order to exhaust it in a parasitic manner.

This is clearly not a case of antisemitic ethnification. IG Metall did not mean to identify "the Jews" as the "bloodsuckers" who are savaging the German economy. But, on a more formal or structural level, we are now able to identify some of the elements that—according to Thomas Haury—are characteristic of antisemitic resentments. Complex matters of (capitalist) societies are personalized and attributed to the viciousness and greed of the parasitic intruders. In a Manichean world view, everything that is evil attacks from the outside (not from the inside by *German* capitalists!). Finally, the German economy is depicted as basically *productive*, while the invaders are greedy, unproductive, and merely reaping profits.

Such a metaphorical view of society is this not necessarily manifest antisemitism, but it also cannot be regarded as completely harmless. Max Black writes that we must not "neglect the shifts in attitude that regularly result from the use of metaphorical language. A wolf is (conventionally) a hateful and alarming object; so, to call a man a wolf is to imply that he too is hateful and alarming..." (Black, 1962: 42). Additionally, parasites are disgusting, disseminate disease, and suck blood and other fluids. This implies a view of society that distinguishes between good, productive members of society and those who are evil and unproductive (e.g. bankers and stock brokers). So, in a certain sense, metaphors *create* similarities rather than describing pre-existing ones (*ibid.*, at 37).

3. CONCLUSIONS

As a result, we are now able to say that the use of those parasite metaphors is not necessarily antisemitic. Nonetheless, they convey a very problematic view of society that should under no circumstances be regarded as *harmless*. "The metaphor selects, emphasizes, suppresses and organizes features of the principal subject by implying statements about it that normally apply to the subsidiary subject" (Black, 1962: 44-45). Thus, using the term "bloodsucker" to describe social mechanisms or people is to apply metaphorical features that have were previously used in Nazi hate speech to dehumanize its victims.

In this sense, they can form the basis for cross-party consensus. This already appears to have happened to some extent in the case of the term "locust" in Germany. When using this term, right-wing extremists really *mean* "the Jews" without having to say "the Jews" in their propaganda, while left-wing anti-globalization activists, for example, may "only" mean hedge funds.

These metaphors contain some or all *formal* elements of antisemitism without *openly* blaming "the Jews." They constitute a very widespread ideological form of world views that are either latently antisemitic or at least easily adaptable to manifest antisemitism. Finally, they are capable of transferring ideas and ideology from Nazi antisemitism to our own time, by serving as a medium for passing on elements of antisemitic ideology under the conditions of social taboo and the need for antisemites to adapt to latent communication.

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Economic and Behavioral Foundations of Prejudice

Arye L. Hillman*

1. ANTISEMITES AS ADHERENTS OF AN IDEOLOGY

In 1998, Kenneth Arrow, a Nobel Prize winner in economics (1972), published a paper with the title: “What has economics to say about racial discrimination?” The background was racial discrimination in the United States. The topic of this paper is: What has economics, and in particular behavioral economics, to say about antisemitism?¹

Behavioral economics is the interface between economics and psychology and introduces feelings and emotions into the human behavior that economists study.² The behavioral concepts of dissonance, envy, and fear assist in understanding contemporary and also past antisemitism.

Antisemitism is a term invented by a secular European, Wilhelm Marr, in the 19th century to describe antipathy to the Jewish people that is not based on traditional religion-based prejudice. Antisemites do not disparage the Semitic languages, which is the other context in which the term “Semitic” is commonly used. The term “antisemitism” places prejudice against Jews in the category of an ideology—like capitalism and socialism.

It is characteristic of an ideology that defining premises take priority over intellectual discourse and factual information. Given the commitment of antisemites to their ideology, we should not expect to change an antisemite’s views.

The underlying principle of the ideology of antisemitism is that Jews should suffer or disappear. A definition of antisemitic behavior predicated on the principles of the ideology has three elements: (1) “big lies”; (2) demonization; and (3) denial to Jews of the right of self-defense.

Antisemites have used “big lies” in the course of history to accuse Jews of collective crimes, such as killing a god (deicide) or killing non-Jewish children for ceremonial purposes (the blood libels). In a continuation of past accusations, contemporary “big lies” in the new antisemitism accuse Jews collectively of wrongdoing through the Jewish

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¹ Antisemitism has been extensively studied in the social sciences. The literature includes Sartre (1948), Katz (1980), Lewis (1986), Aronson (1990), Fischer (1998), Julius (2010), and Wistrich (2010).

² On behavioral economics, see, for example, Kahneman (2003). Daniel Kahneman received the Nobel Prize for economics in 2002 for research with Amos Tversky that introduced and developed the field of behavioral economics.

state. Political correctness can prevent people from restating the past big lies about the Jewish people. The surrogate is the new antisemitism directed at the Jewish state as the symbol of the Jews.

Contemporary Western antisemitism is for the most part rhetoric. Because of the existence of the Jewish state, that is all it can be, with the exception of isolated instances of personal violence.

Antisemitic rhetoric can reflect guilt. Using the big lies, there are antisemites who accuse the State of Israel of being no better in its treatment of Palestinian Arabs than the government of Adolph Hitler and collaborating regimes were in their treatment of Jews. The accusation alleviates guilt about the past behavior of the accuser's family and people. Jews in general do not accuse contemporary Europeans of complicity in past inhumane actions. However, some Europeans accuse themselves and alleviate their guilt by accusing Jews of doing what their grandparents and others may have done.

Religion is a more general basis for antisemitic ideology. Historically, the Church was concerned that seeds of doubt about Church doctrine could be spread because Jews did not accept deification of a Jew as a savior who, in exchange for belief, offers the afterlife. Jews cannot perceive of a god as descending to the level of a man or woman. Rather, Jews perceive the human objective as being for people to raise themselves up, to improve themselves, and to improve the world. The Jewish view contrasts with the Christian doctrine of the fall from grace and the worthlessness of man and woman in need of salvation. The Church confronted the problem that the Jews could not be controlled through the threat of excommunication. With Jews accepting neither the teachings nor the authority of the Church and not capable of being threatened with excommunication and eternal damnation in the world to come, other means were used against them. Here enters the basic ideological premise that Jews should suffer. The suffering demonstrates the consequences in this world of not accepting the savior and rejecting the authority of the Church. Not all Jews were to be killed. According to this doctrine, some Jews should always be left alive, so that the personification of evil could exist on earth and be contrasted with good.

There were also economic motives for the persecution of the Jews. The taxes that the Church could collect depended on the willingness of the masses to accept Christian doctrine. The Jews, in rejecting the teachings of the Church, set an example for others to follow that would diminish the tax base of the Church. The suffering imposed on the Jews was a lesson for those who might contemplate not accepting the temporal power of the Church and not paying the Church's tithe.

Doctrinally for the Church, the Jews had been superseded. The reappearance of the Jewish state after 1,878 years—there was no Jewish state between 70 CE and 1948 CE—introduced a special problem. The Jewish people, who by doctrine and ideology should wander and be punished eternally, had returned to their homeland. The re-emergence of the State of Israel has thus created an essential *dissonance*. A prosperous secure Jewish state is an affront to the ideology that Jews should suffer and also contradicts the theory of supersession whereby the Jews should have been superseded by the Church.

Antisemites making accusations and seeking to diminish or end the Jewish state are prevalent in European Lutheran societies, although religiosity in these societies may not be high. Scandinavian governments and populations were very sympathetic to the State of Israel when the precarious pre-1967 ceasefire lines prevailed but overall became hostile after the Six-Day War of 1967. One interpretation is that Scandinavians are kind

people who support the underdog, which after 1967 was no longer perceived to be the Jewish state. Another interpretation is based on the Protestant doctrine of predetermination, whereby success in this world presages success in the world to come, and vice versa. As long as the Jewish people in Israel lived precariously and miserably within indefensible borders, sympathy could be offered for the outcomes observed in this world and the outcomes anticipated in the next. The change to Jewish success in this world is inconsistent with the doctrine that Jews are damned. Again there is *dissonance*.

Generally speaking, whether in Scandinavia or elsewhere, in cases where populations have abandoned religious belief, past behavioral premises of ideology can be culturally transmitted between generations and retained in collective memory. If the content of cultural transmission is that Jews are meant to suffer and should be inferior, there is *dissonance* when Jews are successful and capable of self-defense.

Like the antisemitism of the “right,” the antisemitism of the “left” is based on ideology—in the case of the left on universal values. Jews benefited from the “emancipation” of the Enlightenment but were criticized for using the opportunities provided by the new economic freedom to apply their abilities to enrich themselves, while not satisfying the requirement that they adopt the universal values of the enlightenment and cease adhering to their *identity* as Jews. Failure to embrace universal values is correspondingly the basis of the antisemitism of Communist and Socialist ideology.³ Marxist ideology calls for the creation of new men and women who divest themselves of their past identities. Jews, even if professing to be communists and socialists, have in general often not entirely divested themselves of their Jewish identity.

Modern economic analysis recognizes the roles of entrepreneurship and finance (money lending) in facilitating economic activity. Marxist ideology views the activities of merchants, middlemen, and financiers as socially unproductive and therefore regards Jews in traditional occupations of trade, business, and finance as not contributing productively to society.⁴ The left also blames the Jews for being instrumental in the introduction of capitalism by establishing the foundations for market activities.⁵ Because Jewish identity is visibly manifested in the State of Israel, the left is active in the new antisemitism of propagating big lies, demonizing, and delegitimizing the Jewish state and objecting when Jews defend themselves.⁶

There is merit in an example from the many manifestations of the antisemitism of the left. Discrimination against women and girls in Muslim countries is well documented.⁷

³ On the Enlightenment as the origin of the contemporary antisemitism of the left, see Hertzberg (1990).

⁴ Thus, when Jews imbued with socialist ideology began to return to the land of Israel at the end of the 19th century, they divested themselves in various degrees from Jewish identity by removing Jewish traditions from their lives and forming collectives (or *kibbutzim*) and becoming farmers.

⁵ On attribution of capitalism to Jews, see Sombart (1951). Jews have also been criticized for introducing and supporting communism and socialism, although the Jews who were communists and socialists were often seeking to use the new universal values to escape their Jewish identity.

⁶ If not violent themselves, antisemites of the left support the physical violence of others against Jews and the Jewish state through rhetoric and funding. See, for example, reports at: <http://www.ngo-monitor.org/articles.php?type=whatsnew&article_type=reports>.

⁷ See, for example, Norton and Tomal (2009) and Cooray and Potrafke (2011).

Democracy has also been absent from Arab states.⁸ If true to its liberal principles, the left in Western societies would be critical of the gender discrimination and absence of democracy under Islam and supportive of the gender equality and democracy found in Israel. Fred Gottheil (2000), a professor of economics at the University of Illinois at Urbana, asked academics who had signed an anti-Israel petition presented to Barack Obama to sign another petition condemning adverse treatment of women and girls in Arab countries. The original petition had apparently been signed by some 900 academics, of whom Professor Gottheil was able to confirm the existence of 675. To these, he sent his new petition. Only 5 percent were prepared to sign the petition condemning acts against women in Arab countries such as wife beating, honor killings, and female genital mutilation. The signatories of the original petition (those whose existence could be confirmed) reported a disproportionate number of academic affiliations (one quarter) in the field of gender studies. Criticism of ill-treatment of women and girls in Arab countries would have constituted an implicit recognition of Israel as a democratic society with gender equality.

For the Jews who adopt the ideology of the left, the persistence of the State of Israel can hinder their personal shedding of Jewish identity and be an impediment to their hope that all Jews will cease to identify themselves as Jews and will, like themselves, accept the universal values of the left.⁹ Left-wing academics in Israel have been at the forefront of calls to boycott of their own country.¹⁰

2. WHAT DOES ECONOMICS SAY ABOUT PREJUDICE AND DISCRIMINATION?

Against this background of antisemitism as an ideology of the right or the left, let us now consider what economics has to say about prejudice and discrimination. The literature classification system of the academic economics profession is that of the *Journal of Economic Literature* and includes a category of “economics of minorities and races: non-labor discrimination.” The literature describes prejudice and discrimination with reference to people’s “tastes” or preferences.¹¹ The preferences may be with regard to the “types” of employees that employers wish to have. For example, if a Jew is the most qualified person for a job but the employer refuses to hire a Jew, the prejudiced employer incurs a cost in hiring a less qualified employee. In this literature, the preferences underlying prejudice are taken as given and unexplained. The discrimination could also be due to the preferences of other employees rather the employer, in which case, again, costs are increased if the most suitable people are not employed.¹² The relevant inference is that antisemites are prepared to incur personal costs to disadvantage or harm Jews.

A second approach to prejudice in economic analysis describes “statistical discrimination” or “profiling” based on the average attributes of a group.¹³ For example, because

⁸ See Borooh and Paldam (2007), Rowley and Smith (2009), and Potrafke (2011).

⁹ Podhoretz (2009) describes Jews who do not wish to remain traditional Jews as following a new religion based on the universal principles of the ideology of the left. For a review of Podhoretz and interpretation in terms of identity and expressive behavior, see Hillman (2011).

¹⁰ See, for example, <<http://articles.latimes.com/2009/aug/20/opinion/oe-gordon20>>.

¹¹ See Becker (1957).

¹² See Arrow (1998).

¹³ See, for example, Arrow (1972, 1998) and Phelps (1972). The subsequent extensive literature includes Schwab (1986), Altonji and Pierret (2001), and Borooh (2001).

of group norms of behavior, people belonging to a group may have attributes that employers find undesirable, such as arriving late for work or randomly taking days off.¹⁴ Or because women marry and have children, employers may discriminate by not hiring women because of the cost of training women who will not remain with the employer. Statistical discrimination does not explain the prejudice of antisemites: an antisemite would seek to disadvantage or harm Jews even if the attributes of each individual Jew were known.

We can turn to behavioral economics to seek foundations for the behavior of antisemites. We thereby recognize the role of emotions and feelings in explaining human behavior. With the existence of dissonance between observed outcomes and the ideology that Jews should suffer (the right) or disappear (the left), the behavior of antisemites appears to reflect fear and envy.

3. FEAR AND ENVY

Charles de Gaulle has left us with a forthright statement of fear of Jews and fear of the Jewish state. De Gaulle had prepared an epitaph for the Jewish state in anticipation of the demise of Israel in the 1967 Six-Day War. Unexpectedly for de Gaulle, Israel won. Reflecting on the Jewish victory, De Gaulle declared:

Some people even *feared* that the Jews, until then scattered about, but who were still what they had always been, that is, an *elite people, sure of themselves and domineering*, would, once assembled again on the land of their ancient greatness, turn into a *burning and conquering ambition*.¹⁵

The observation was that Jews are elitist, ambitious, and overly successful, and also domineering, that their ambition and abilities are to be *feared*, and that all the characteristics of the Jews that are to be *feared* are manifested in the return of Jews to the land of Israel.

Fear of Jews is an historical phenomenon.¹⁶ Jews in Europe were feared because of their ongoing survival in the face of discrimination, pogroms, and expulsions. The survival of the Jews was explained by their being in league with the devil.¹⁷ Jews were regarded as having the ability to bring on the plague and also magically protect themselves against the plague (in fact, this protection was partly the consequence of the Jews' hygienic standards, which are part of Jewish law). The Hebrew alphabet, in which Yiddish, the language of European Jews, is written, was feared as indecipherable and magical. Jews were also feared because of the retribution that antisemites believed would follow if Jews were ever in a position to take revenge for the suffering that had been imposed upon them.¹⁸ Fear is expressed in contemporary declarations that Jews

¹⁴ On individual attributes and group norms, see, for example, De Bartoleme (1990).

¹⁵ Press conference held at the Elysée Palace on November 27, 1967. From *The Scribe*, autumn 2001, available at: <<http://www.dangoor.com/74049.html>>.

¹⁶ The term Judeophobia has been used to describe fear of the Jews. See Fischer (1998).

¹⁷ Thus, for authenticity, the 2009 film "Sherlock Holmes" showed the words of the devil written in Hebrew.

¹⁸ Retribution is described, for example, in the opera *La Juive* by Fromental Halévy. I thank Manfred Holler for this observation.

control capital markets (although this could also be envy). The *Protocols of the Elders of Zion*, a 19th century Russian imperial forgery that retains contemporary antisemitic appeal, describes Jews as to be feared because of their conspiratorial intent to “control the world.”

As expressed by Charles de Gaulle, there is a link between fear and the State of Israel. There have been no large-scale European pogroms against Jews since the establishment of the modern Jewish state in 1948. The last European pogrom took place in 1946.¹⁹ The availability to Jews of the means of self-defense is a break from tradition that, for antisemites, evokes dissonance but also fear.²⁰

Altruistic people feel better off when others are better off. Envious people feel worse off when others are better off.²¹ People need not envy but, on the contrary, may admire the achievements of others. If they do envy, they may focus their envy on particular individuals. An antisemite is envious of Jews in general. Antisemites may envy Jews who are actually quite poor.

An object of envy may or may not be transferable (see Elster, 1991). In the past, when antisemites have envied Jews’ transferable possessions, because of the Jews’ lack of means of defending their possessions (and defending themselves), antisemites have simply appropriated Jews’ possessions. In response, Jews took measures to make their investments and possessions non-transferable through appropriation. Knowledge (also known as human capital) is not appropriable by transfer to others. Contemporary antisemites confront the problem, combined with dissonance and fear, that much regarding Jews that is envied cannot be transferred through appropriation.

Michael Aronson (1973) described the combination of envy and fear in 19th century Russia:

There are notes of admiration and *envy* as well as *fear* and anger in the anti-emancipation officials’ descriptions of the characteristics of Jewish businessmen. A number of terms recurred repeatedly. Jewish businessmen were characterized as: cunning, dexterous, energetic, enterprising, keen-witted, persistent, and resourceful in the pursuit of profit. (p. 148)

Most of these terms, if not applied to commercial activities, and especially if not applied to Jews, would undoubtedly have had positive connotations for the officials who used them. When applied to the commercially oriented Jews, though, they took on a negative connotation with the implication, “*danger, beware.*” (p. 149)

4. OCCUPATIONAL STRUCTURE, EDUCATION, AND “CLEVERNESS”

Non-appropriation is reflected in the occupational structure of Jews in Europe. Jews were traditionally not engaged in agriculture and were not peasants or serfs. They invested in “human capital” (personal skills and abilities), rather than “physical capital”

¹⁹ The pogrom took place in Kielce, Poland against Jews who had survived the Holocaust. There was state-sponsored repression of Judaism in the Soviet Union and other communist countries.

²⁰ Symbolic of the availability of the means of defense is the over-flight of Auschwitz by planes of Israel’s air force. The symbolism is in that, had the State of Israel been in existence, the atrocities at Auschwitz and other locations would not have been allowed to take place. See: <<http://www.israelnewsagency.com/auschwitzisrael.html>>.

²¹ For an economic analysis of envy, see Mui (1995).

or land, and engaged in activities in which “working capital” turned over quickly. They were also middlemen, not directly producing physical output but facilitating output being produced and facilitating goods reaching final consumers. Jews were also physicians and wealthier Jews were financiers.

In a case study of the town of Pereiaslav in the Ukraine in 1881, Michael Aronson (1978) describes Jews as predominantly tradesmen and merchants, not manual workers. Jews also tended to be active in competitive markets in which individual skills were more important than connections. Yehuda Don (1990) reported that, in pre-Holocaust Central and Eastern Europe, economic activities of Jews were disproportionately in competitive retail markets and in professions and activities that did not require physical capital, and, again, that Jews were not active in agriculture. For example, in Eastern Europe, tailoring was a Jewish profession.

A characteristic of the occupational structure of Jews was therefore that losses from appropriation would be low. Similarly, the costs of having to leave quickly were low.

Jews engaged in commerce and trade because of economic networks based on communal trust (Greif, 1989, 1993).²² The facilitating role of Jews in economic activity is expressed in the economic decline of Spain during and after the Inquisition. The departure of expelled Jews contributed to Spain’s decline, but Spain also declined because of the withdrawal of clandestine Jews from the traditional Jewish activities of commerce and trade, so as to hide their Jewish identity. Continuing to use the network of European Jewish communities to trade and to travel for reasons of commerce would have been evidence that Jews who had professed to convert to Christianity had in fact retained their Jewish traditions and identity (Landes, 1989). Spain and also Portugal declined after the expulsion and forced conversion of Jews. In other locations, the Jews were welcomed by rulers as initiators of commerce. Julius Carlebach (1978, p. 13) observes:

Prussia’s great elector (later Friedrich Wilhelm I) permitted not only Jews, but also some 20,000 Huguenots, to settle in Prussia, and if anything would have regarded the protests of Christian traders — that Jews used innovatory aggressive trading methods as opposed to their own sedate and settled methods — as full vindication of his intentions.

Local governing elites thus had reason to welcome Jews and indeed might support Jews against complaints of “unfair” competition from Christian competitors. For example, when Christians and Jews competed in food processing, the greater efficiency of Jews reduced the wage that Christian industrialists needed to pay Christian manual workers, and demands by Christian food processors for protection against Jewish competitors were denied.²³

The economic activities of Jews were beneficial for the broad non-Jewish population. For example, Jewish middlemen financed agricultural production by buying crops still growing in the fields, so enabling Russian peasants to pay taxes that were due (Aronson, 1990). The Jewish middlemen took a risk because they did not know the eventual market price when they purchased the still-growing crops.

²² On the role of trust or social capital in economic development more generally, see, for example, Bjørnskov (2006) and Balamoune-Lutz (2011).

²³ Reported by Aronson (1978).

Aronson (1978, p. 201) observed that: "The Jews' most vigorous enemies were undoubtedly their petty-bourgeois competitors in the towns." Dennis Carlton (1995) of the University of Chicago has described how economic contact can create a predisposition of dislike. He called such predispositions "hostility externalities" and noted that "throughout the centuries, middlemen who happen to belong to a minority in a country have been singled out for hatred and have had their property destroyed." Hence "when the middlemen comprise an identifiable group, there can be trouble." Carlton therefore proposes that the roles of Jews in economic activity as "middlemen" resulted in "the stereotype of Jews as greedy and fanned the flames of antisemitism."²⁴

Basically, the antisemitism reflected envy. Jews earned incomes from the organization and distribution of production rather than from working the land. From the perspective of antisemites, Jews added value "without working" and were overly successful.

Jews were often excluded from occupations that required university certification. The denial of access to universities and restrictions on occupations of Jews were intended to diminish income-earning opportunities, which was consistent with the ideology that Jews should be inferior and should suffer. Yet, in the course of economic development, the heritage of occupational restrictions became a source of economic advantage for Jews. Had Jews been allowed own land and be peasants, tendencies might have been put in place for them to remain so.²⁵ Although denied admittance to universities, the Jews retained a traditional emphasis on literacy. There was a requirement to be literate to fulfill obligations of study of Jewish law and treatises. Cognitive ability depends on continuation of intellectual activity.²⁶ With Jews being required to educate children beginning from an early age as part of the requirement of being a Jew,²⁷ the transmission of the obligation to educate and to learn was the basis for a comparative advantage in activities requiring reliance on memory, reasoning, and initiative in problem solving. In contemporary times, the high regard for literacy and education has resulted in disproportionate creative contributions by Jews. In general, Jewish populations in cities around the world are also visibly prosperous.²⁸ Despite limited natural

²⁴ Simon Kuznets (1960, 1972) proposed that occupational patterns reflected the desire of Jews as a minority to retain their identity by maintaining specialization in selected "Jewish" occupations. Be this as it may, Jewish life is communal, which affected occupations by requiring Jews to live together in urban or village environments in which the ten men required for a "minyan" or quorum in the synagogue were readily available.

²⁵ Botticini and Eckstein (2005) investigated occupational change of Jews living under Islam in the first millennium of the common era and concluded that the transition of Jews from agriculture to urban occupations is explained by comparative advantage due to the Jewish emphasis on literacy and education. They report that Jews faced few if any occupational restrictions under Islam. Indeed, under Islam rulers would have wished Jews to be productive so that Jews could pay the special tax levied on Jews and Christians. See Borooah (1999) for another study of religion and occupation involving different Christian denominations.

²⁶ In countries in which the retirement age is lower, the decline in cognitive ability of the population is also greater (Rohwedder and Willis, 2010).

²⁷ See Carlton and Weiss (2001) on Jewish education.

²⁸ There are many economic studies of the links between religion and income. For example, for a broad ranging study, see Bettendorf and Dijkgraaf (2010), who find that religious observance is associated with higher incomes in high-income countries and lower incomes in low-income countries.

resources and the need to allocate disproportionate resources to defense, the State of Israel has been economically successful, with high income and high values of human development indicators such as literacy, gender equality in education, and life expectancy.²⁹ Through the kibbutz, Jews also confounded predictions that collective property (socialism) cannot succeed.³⁰

The antisemitic criticism that “Jews are too clever” reveals envy. Colleagues in England have reported that “Jews are too clever by half.” The bounty on the head of Albert Einstein was justified by Einstein being “too clever.”³¹

5. GROUPS AND IDENTITY

People discriminate by favoring others in their group and disfavoring those in other groups.³² Such behavior occurs when people who previously did not know one another are arbitrarily assigned to different groups.³³ People appear to obtain “expressive utility” from confirming their identity as a member of their own group and also by confirming that they are not a member of the other group.³⁴

When people live in small identifiable communities or groups, trust and cooperation allow economic and social outcomes to be achieved that are usually not possible for the broader population. Jews as minorities within larger populations may be envied—and feared—because of their ability to overcome the problems of distrust and disincentives for collective action present in the larger groups.³⁵

The opportunity may be present to join groups. People may, for example, choose to join groups that support a political party, or they may join different types of clubs. If Jews are a successful group, we envisage that people would wish to join the group.

In the case of a country club, people pay a membership fee; however, even if they are willing to pay the membership fee, they may be excluded. Jews as a people cannot and do not exclude. However, in the context of the traditional criteria, non-Jews cannot simply declare themselves to be Jews. Personal investments are required because of the need to learn and demonstrate knowledge of the obligations and responsibilities of being a Jew. There are also restrictions on behavior in being a Jew. In present times, non-Jews do choose to join the Jews notwithstanding the high personal investment. In

²⁹ On the economic success of the State of Israel, see Senor and Singer (2009). In 2010, Israel joined the OECD (the organization of developed high-income countries). Israel also ranks high among countries on human-development indicators. For example, life expectancy in Israel exceeds that of most OECD countries and exceeds that of all but four other countries worldwide (Chernichovsky, 2010).

³⁰ The success of a kibbutz has generally been limited to no more three or four generations, after which private property and personal incentives have been introduced. The kibbutz movement has also required public funds over the course of time for survival.

³¹ See Fischer (1998), noted by Cameron (2005, p. 156). Of course, not all Jews are “clever.” Ability is distributed in the population. Moreover, “cleverness” appears often to decline with generational distance from traditional Jewish values, confirming the role of intergenerational transmission of family values and attitudes to learning and critical enquiry.

³² See, for example, Sherif (1966) and Yan Chen and Sherry Xin Li (2009).

³³ See Tajfel and Turner (1979).

³⁴ See Hillman (2010).

³⁵ On group characteristics and the effectiveness of collective action, see Olson (1965).

previous times, because of antisemitism, it was uncommon for a non-Jew to wish to join the Jewish people. Historically, because Jews were required to live in designated permissible areas (ghettos), separateness was also an enforced consequence of Jews being required to live apart from the rest of the population.³⁶

The differences in identity associated with separation and belonging to different groups can evoke a sense that the groups are engaged in a contest.³⁷ When Jews are successful, antisemites view the contest as having resulted in an inexplicable and undesirable outcome that is the source of dissonance—and envy and fear.

6. POLITICAL LEADERS

Difficulties have arisen for Jews when governments and rulers have been antisemitic. Jews as a defenseless group have then been confronted with the harm that governments can do. Dennis Carlton (1995) observed that political leaders can organize the antisemitic sentiments of individuals in a population into collective hostility. Edward Glaeser (2005) of Harvard University similarly suggested that politicians and leaders use hate to form supportive political coalitions. In the most visible case of a government organizing harm of defenseless Jews, Hitler faced political competition (see Aleskerov, Holler, and Kamalova, 2010) and hence had need of political support from the population. The evidence is that Hitler did not need to convince an impressionable population that they should be antisemitic. Demonization or “satanizing” of Jews was deeply embedded in European culture (Katz, 1980; Carmichael, 1992). Goldhagen (1996) documents Hitler’s willing helpers. In contemporary times, it is uncommon for Western political leaders or parties to define themselves overtly as antisemitic with respect to intentions regarding the Jewish people, but the Jewish state as a collectivity representing the Jews allows expression by political leaders of antisemitic sentiment. The antisemitic rhetoric of

³⁶ In economic analysis, the “theory of clubs” describes inclusion in and exclusion from groups. A “club” in general terminology describes people coming together for a common purpose, which can be to enjoy themselves or to benefit others through charitable acts. Economic theory has formalized the idea of a “club” as a means for people to benefit collectively in ways that they could not do alone. The theory applies to people confirming common identity. Club theory was introduced by Buchanan (1965), with the assumption that people can choose to join any club that they might wish. The possibility of exclusion was introduced by Ng (1973) and Helpman and Hillman (1977), and was further developed in terms of willingness to pay for entry by Hillman and Swan (1983). Cameron (2009) reviews how the theory of clubs can be applied to explain prejudice. Iannaccone (1992) uses the theory of clubs to describe membership of groups defined by adherence to religion. Berman (2000) describes orthodox Jews as belonging to a club for which the price of admission is strict adherence to Jewish traditions and engaging in subsidized full-time Jewish learning. He also notes that a consequence of membership is high fertility. The implication is that orthodox Jews are willing to pay the price of admission, which includes time, but other Jews are not (not all Jews are of course orthodox). An alternative explanation is that orthodox Jews obtain expressive utility from their Jewish learning, from their strict adherence to Jewish traditions, and from their children. In that case, in distinction to Berman’s hypothesis, orthodox Jews do not perceive themselves as making a “sacrifice” in being orthodox. They view adherence to Jewish traditions as a source of personal benefit rather than a personal cost.

³⁷ For elaboration on contests involving groups, see Tan and Zizzo (2008). On divisiveness associated with groups, see Makowsky (2011). Konrad (2009) provides an overview of the economic theory of contests.

politicians is an indication that the rhetoric is favorable for political support. Political leaders can also signal antisemitic sentiment through voting in international bodies.³⁸

7. WHY DOES PREJUDICE DIFFER AMONG POPULATIONS?

Why does prejudice against Jews differ among governments and populations? The rhetoric of antisemitism is prevalent in Europe, and European governments have in general exhibited lack of sympathy for the Jewish state. In the United States, anti-semitism is a marginal phenomenon outside of the ideological (and principally academic) left and some fringe groups on the right. Protestant groups in the United States in particular are principal defenders of the Jewish state against the new antisemitism. In the United Nations, it has been the Security Council veto of the United States that has saved Israel from enmity that in general includes votes of European governments. The popular belief in the United States is that personal success is primarily the consequence of effort. In Europe, the popular belief is that personal success is due primarily to luck. The belief in luck underlies envy of people who, through "luck," have undeserved rewards. The preference for social equality is also greater when people believe that personal outcomes are due to luck rather than effort.³⁹ Egalitarian preferences disfavor success through effort. Europeans work fewer hours and take more vacations, and retirement is on average earlier than in the United States.⁴⁰ Europeans have exhibited greater tolerance in their welfare states for people who have been "unlucky," without enquiring into the reasons for lack of self-reliance. Europeans have also exhibited sympathy for immigrants independently of the productive contributions of the immigrations to the home society, ostensibly on the grounds that the immigrants have been "unlucky" in having been born in the countries from which they came.⁴¹

In the United States and other countries of settlement, such as Australia and Canada, where effort rather than luck is viewed as the primary reason for personal success, old and new antisemitism find less expression than in Europe. People envy less and they fear less the success of others. Indeed they tend to admire rather than envy success. In these societies, where effort rather than luck is viewed as the basis for success, Jews and the Jewish state have been broadly admired for their successes. Among European populations and governments, Israel is more often criticized than admired.⁴²

³⁸ The United Nations is the leading international forum for antisemitic rhetoric and voting (see US Department of State, 2008). Bayefsky (2004) estimated that 25 percent of UN resolutions have had the purpose of criticizing Israel.

³⁹ See Alesina and Angeletos (2005).

⁴⁰ See Alesina, Glaeser, and Sacerdote (2001, 2005) and Blanchard (2004).

⁴¹ See Nannestad (2007).

⁴² The United States has often independently exercised its UN Security Council veto in defense of Israel. However, not all US presidents have been sympathetic to Israel, and the State Department has often been a source of enmity. On the records of US presidents' support for Israel, see Podhoretz (2009); on the State Department and other US government agencies, see Loftus and Aarons (1994). With regard to Europe, traditional indigenous Europe is in demographic decline (see, for example, Berman, Iannaccone, and Ragusa, 2007, and Azarnert, 2010). The demographic change is documented to be accompanied by a change in the proportion of the population for whom work ethic is a primary value (see, for example, Nannestad, 2004). Reference to the demographic change is often silenced by invoking the guilt of past treatment of Europe's Jews. A question that can be asked is whether European elites blame the Jews for the path of demise of indigenous European society.

8. PEOPLE BELIEVE WHAT THEY WANT TO BELIEVE

Professor Bryan Caplan of George Mason University has described how people choose to believe what they want to believe and choose the beliefs that give them the most personal satisfaction (Caplan, 2007). Or they choose an ideology and maintain views and behavior specified by the principles of the ideology that they have chosen. If this is the case, on encountering an antisemite, there is no point in presenting evidence that counters antisemitic beliefs. Antisemites choose what they want to believe about Jews and the Jewish state. They predicate their beliefs on the “big lies” that are used to justify demonization or, depending on the tone, “criticism” and recommend to Jews that they take actions or “make concessions” that compromise the personal safety of Jews.

Referring, for example, to the population exchange between Arabs and Jews from Arab states that took place in the early years of the Jewish state will not move an antisemite to stop condemning Israel “for creating refugees.” Sustaining the 1948 refugees and their families as perpetual refugees is part of antisemitism. As long as the “refugees” continue to exist, the Jewish state is threatened.⁴³

There is also no point, for example, in drawing a comparison with the population exchanges of Hindus and Muslims that took place when the Indian sub-continent was partitioned and the states of India and Pakistan were created around the same time as the creation of the modern State of Israel. Parallel circumstances and information do not matter for antisemitic sentiment and rhetoric.⁴⁴

9. THE MEDIA

The media should in principle inform. However, people often seem to choose to be informed by media whose positions they know beforehand and whose views they know they will find agreeable and appealing and will reinforce their own predispositions.⁴⁵ The rhetoric of antisemitism is profitable for the media in attracting an audience that obtains satisfaction from confirming pre-existing antisemitic sentiments. In a society with sufficient antisemitic sentiment and with people believing what they want to believe, the media may, for reasons of profit, choose to report the “big lies,” demonize Jews, and describe Jewish self-defense as aggression.⁴⁶

⁴³ The United Nations provides intergenerational continuity of refugee status only to Arabs displaced as a consequence of the modern independence of the Jewish state.

⁴⁴ The behavior of people believing what they want to believe can be present at the highest ostensible intellectual levels. Time preference is an economic concept describing willingness to defer gratification. People with a low rate of time preference succeed because they invest for future benefit rather than consuming in the present. Peart and Levy (2005, p. 24) describe the reaction of the statistician Karl Pearson on finding that, contrary to the outcome he wished for, data appeared to show a lower rate of time preference for the Jews than for the British. Jews were therefore “superior” to the British in patience in waiting for future benefits and in not behaving impulsively, but Pearson nonetheless chose to interpret his data as revealing deficiencies of Jews—confirming that people believe what they want to believe.

⁴⁵ See Iyengar and Hahn (2009) and also Mullainathan and Shleifer (2005) on the “market for news.”

⁴⁶ The new antisemitism can be present in media in which left-wing Jews determine content and in which Jews are obliged to follow reporting guidelines.

10. CONCLUSIONS

Jews, like other peoples, do not like to be disliked. Where there is a problem, it is natural to seek a solution. With antisemites believing what they want to believe, and with governments and media in many countries responding to and reinforcing the culturally transmitted prejudice against Jews—and focusing the prejudice on the Jewish state—the “problem” does not have a mutually acceptable solution. Antisemites are therefore left to remain unhappy because of dissonance, as well as envy and fear. There is an incongruity in simultaneously envying and fearing Jews. This incongruity is expressed in the claim, for example, that Albert Einstein belonged to a population of inferior people or “Untermenschen.” The incongruity reflects antisemites’ attempts to resolve their dissonance.

Antisemites are, of course, but a part of the populations in which they are to be found, albeit with different levels of prominence. In any society, antisemitism is viewed as a prejudicial and self-demeaning ideology by people whose nature it is not to envy and who admire rather than fear the success of others.

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Antisemitism and the Victimary Era

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In this paper, I will offer an account of contemporary antisemitism in terms of Eric Gans's "originary hypothesis" regarding the origin of language and culture. The originary hypothesis extends and revises Rene Girard's analysis of mimetic rivalry: according to the originary hypothesis, the first sign emerged in a single event, a mimetic crisis in which the (proto) human group arrested their common and self-destructive convergence upon a common object by putting forward what Gans calls an "aborted gesture of appropriation." Representation, then, is the deferral of violence, as is, therefore, all of culture. History is the ongoing process of preserving and, where necessary and possible, replacing such means of deferral (languages, rituals, beliefs, moralities, art, and so on), which are intrinsically fragile and under constant threat from mimetic desire, rivalry, and violence.

In a series of books, beginning with *The Origin of Language* in 1981, through *The End of Culture, Science and Faith*, and *Signs of Paradox*,¹ to mention a few, and his on-line column, *Chronicles of Love and Resentment* on his *Anthropoetics* website,² Gans's "new way of thinking" has developed an account of history according to which the market system, and now the world market system, best realizes the reciprocity achieved on the originary scene. History is the liberation of humanity from attachment and "enslavement" to the singular object on the originary scene toward the universal exchange of objects within the market system. It is in the context of the market system that Gans first situates antisemitism:

The Jew is not in some undefined sense a scapegoat for the larger society's frustrations. He serves as a *model* of the in-existent and unfigurable center of the market system ... *the Jew*, having rejected the incarnation, incarnates the truly unincarnable—mediation.... In the postritual world of market exchange, *the Jew* is a paradoxical construction who regulates the self-regulating market, who fixes the prices determined by the interaction of supply and demand; we must eliminate him to gain control over this "inhuman" mechanism.³

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¹ See Eric Gans, *The Origin of Language: A Formal Theory of Representation* (University of California Press, 1981); Eric Gans, *The End of Culture: Toward a Generative Anthropology* (University of California Press, 1985); Eric Gans, *Science and Faith: The Anthropology of Revelation* (Roman & Littlefield, 1990); and Eric Gans, *Signs of Paradox: Irony, Resentment, and Other Mimetic Structures* (Stanford University Press, 1997).

² See Eric Gans, *Chronicles of Love & Resentment*, available at: <http://www.anthropoetics.ucla.edu/views/Chronicles_home.cfm>.

³ Eric Gans, "Chronicle No. 74: Gangsters and Jews," *Chronicles of Love & Resentment*, January 4, 1997.

Gans's allusion to the Jews' rejection of the incarnation already suggests that the suitability of the Jews for such a "model" of the unfigurable center of the market has roots that precede modernity. Antisemitism, for Gans, is ultimately predicated upon the paradox of the Jewish discovery of monotheism: the Judaic revelation presented knowledge of a single God beyond the means of control of totemic religions and a single humanity whose knowledge of God is most profoundly revealed in the reciprocal relations between humans; at the same time, this very revelation is granted to a single people, "chosen" to work out before the world the implications of this understanding of the divine. The spread of monotheism, already inscribed in its universalistic origin, could hardly take place other than through resentment toward those who both gave this God to humanity and "selfishly" claimed an exclusive relation to Him.

What Gans calls Jewish "narrative monotheism" lays the groundwork for the eventual emergence of the modern market not only by de-fetishizing local totems but by separating faith in God and the obligation to follow the law from the national power and success of the Jewish people. If the defeats and even destruction of the nation are given meaning by demands and promises that transcend those temporal events, then moral meaning can be found in the contingencies of history, rather than the maintenance of a closed ritual space. But this contribution of Judaism to modernity collides with the more specifically Christian contribution or, rather, the revision of Christianity constitutive of modernity. According to Gans, "[w]here Jews had understood that the real center was inhabited by the Being of the sign, the Christians realized that this Being was generated, and could be generated anew, by an act interpretable as a victimization." In other words, while Jewish victimization was already a sign of Jewish chosenness, this was a burden borne by Jews alone; for Christianity, the persecution of Jesus is imitable and identification with it the source of salvation. But this also meant that Christianity provides the model for antisemitism: "[t]he anti-Semite compels the Jew to enter the infernal circle of rivalry and persecution in order to reenact his own Christian conversion: he is the new Paul, and the Jew is the Saul he used to be."⁴

The consequence of this privileging of victimization and identification with it as a moral model is clarified by Gans's account of the role of Romanticism in the development of the modern market. Gans speaks of the "constitutive hypocrisy of Romanticism," wherein the Romantic individual performs his rejection of the market system and proclaims his persecution by all those situated within that system only in order, ultimately, to create a compelling self capable of circulating effectively within the market. In abiding tension with this individualistic gesture is the formation of nationalism along analogous lines, through the martyrdom of the nation and its heroes at the hands of its oppressors; oppressors that are, of course, simultaneously mimetic models. So, Gans argues,

anti-Semitism intensifies in the bourgeois era because it is at this point in history that persecution, which grants significance, comes to be preferable to indifference.... At this point the Jews' indifference to Jesus is no longer a veil covering his guilt for the Crucifixion; it is itself the ultimate persecution. To opt out of the theater of national life is ipso facto to operate in the hidden realm of conspiracy. The Jew is the ultimate

⁴ Eric Gans, "Chronicle No. 207: The Persistence of Anti-Semitism," *Chronicles of Love & Resentment*, May 13, 2000.

dandy whose detachment from society—in principle, regardless of fact—is the sign of his omnipotence. The anthropological meaning of anti-Semitism may be expressed in terms of the market, but only insofar as the lesson of the modern market is itself understood as a transhistorical revelation concerning human exchange. The Jew is designated the “subject” of the market because, faithful to the empty center revealed by the burning bush, he remains in principle indifferent to the object—whether of persecution or adoration—that he finds there.⁵

The fury of the Nazi’s assault against the Jews gathered together all these threads of the anti-market revolt within a desperate attempt to displace the primacy of the Jews and “falsify” their narrative: “[e]nraged at the Jews’ monotheistic equanimity in defeat and disaster, the Nazis hoped to inflict on them a catastrophe so great that it could not be understood as a message of God to His people.”

The ultimately omniscidal potential for human violence revealed by the Holocaust introduces something new into this equation. The Holocaust marks the beginning of the victimary era, in which we are now living. The virulent hatred of the Nazis toward the Jews drew the world into a cataclysmic struggle, the like of which we will not survive again in the nuclear age. The eschewing of such hatred must be the center of the new system of deferral constructed after the war: whatever “looks like” the Nazi-Jew relation must be uncompromisingly proscribed. This, of course, creates an incentive to make one’s own grievance fit that model: post-colonial, anti-racist, feminist, environmentalist, and so on struggles are all cast in terms of the perpetrator/victim/bystander configuration extracted from the Holocaust.

The Jews are once again placed in a paradoxical position. First of all, the response on the part of the Jews to the consequences of their utter defenselessness in the Holocaust is to create and, with growing unanimity, support a Jewish nation-state. But the nation-state, with its ethnic exclusivity, preparedness for belligerency and narrow self-interest, is one of those things that “looks” very much “like” Nazism. Second, the victimary principle can only be universalized if the Jewish monopoly on Holocaust guilt is broken—the best way to do so is to present the Jews as oppressors, at least just like the rest of us, at worst uniquely so, insofar they have exploited the world’s guilt so as to perpetuate the very conditions that enabled their own victimization, only this time at the expense of others. Finally, then, the emergence of a new victim, the Palestinians, the victim of the Jews, completes the victimary metaphysics first set in motion by the essentially theological response to the Holocaust. The victimary system, then, depends upon this new, expanded antisemitism, in which the Jews are scapegoated for the crimes of the West as well as for the intensifying resentments toward the West, coming now, in particular, from the most bitter if not the oldest of those resentments: that of Islam.

It was the Israeli victory in the 1967 war that made it possible to maneuver the Jews, ideologically, out of the victimized and into the victimizer position. But this maneuvering might have gone no further than the kind standard anti-colonial critique applied to the United States in Vietnam or the European powers without the increasing abandonment of nationality on the part of Western Europeans and the rise of radical Islam. In this context, as Gans says, we are, first of all,

⁵ Ibid.

struck by the *similarity* between medieval and modern Christian antisemitism. In both cases, the Jew is accused of remaining behind in the “old” Israel rather than entering the New Israel of Christianity. It is by this suspicious archaism that he betrays his immoral preference for honoring the historical memory of his monotheistic discovery over its inherent promise of universality. Whether well-poisoner or Protocol-worshiper, the Jew is accused of refusing to “love his [non-Jewish] neighbor” as himself.⁶

Earlier, I suggested that we could attribute to the modern market a “Jewish” and a “Christian” component: the former being the location of meaning in one’s “patient” action within history and the latter in the processes of individual singularization of the player on the market. It would, in that case, be the “Jewish” component that insists upon the regularization of exchange by the rule of law within what would inevitably be a national framework—which is to say the same paradox of universality and exclusivity long associated with the Jewish place in the world. Only the United States has fully embraced this paradox and the burdens it implies, which not only accounts for the alliance between the United States and Israel but also that of antisemitism and anti-Americanism. In that case, the contemporary European attempt to transcend nationality is not so much a rejection of the modern market in the manner of Nazi and Communist totalitarianism as it is a rejection of one of the critical elements of the market, the nation-state under the rule of law, and an evasion of the paradoxes and resentments involved in the articulation of nationality and the world market.

With the most politically influential currents of contemporary Islam, meanwhile, we do most emphatically see a rejection of the market. Gans sees Islam, in its origins and today, as the monotheism of an “excluded majority,” forged out of resentment against the first monotheism and the prevailing, dominant one: “the Hebrews discovered monotheism as the source of communal harmony independent of political power; the Muslims discovered it as a means for mobilizing the margins of the decaying imperial provinces to overpower them.”⁷ Hence the Islamic notion of the “uncreated Koran,” a direct rebuke to the potential for interpretation and supersessionism (“distortion”) built into the Jewish and Christian scriptures. Today, though, this resentment places Muslims at the margins of the global market, which they cannot avoid, and, indeed, through the oil-producing states participate in substantially, but in such a way as to minimize the transformations in the division of labor that would reflect genuine cultural and ethical integration. The identification of Jews with the subject controlling the uncontrollable marketplace inherited from modern Western antisemitism is in a sense radicalized in the Muslim world, which can create a political identity against the market itself from the outside. In the course of an analysis of a 2004 speech by former Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad, Gans contrasts modern European antisemitism, which sees itself as occupying the same world as the Jews, with

Mahathir’s world [where], on the contrary, the Jews occupy a different world from us, and their hidden domination of that world is at the root of that world’s open domination of Islam. By setting up the Jews as the all-powerful enemy, he is encouraging

⁶ Eric Gans, “Chronicle No. 301: Anti-Semitism from a Judeocentric Perspective I,” *Chronicles of Love & Resentment*, June 5, 2004.

⁷ *Ibid.*

Muslims to forget their military and economic inferiority to the West and focus on the infinitesimal number of their “real” masters. The only thing our billions need in order to vanquish these few million Jews is a collective will to power.⁸

Gans focuses more on the global Muslim “umma” in these reflections I am working with, than Muslims living within the Western countries, but following the line of his argument one could suggest that the convergence of this mutated form of Islamic antisemitism and the revival of antisemitism in the West along with the consolidation of White Guilt is creating a particularly intractable new strain. As Gans says, the anti-Israel contingent in the West does not distribute copies of *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion* but they respect the right of Muslims to do so. We might say that the Western Left plays the role of defense attorney to Islamic terrorism: it does not approve, but it is determined to see that the accused receive due process. “International law,” as the latest supersessionist project of the West, thereby becomes a vehicle for this new brand of antisemitism: as reflected in the Goldstone Report in particular, post-colonial, postmodern international law can readily be interpreted in such a way as to render any conceivable form of Israeli self-defense illegitimate; how else can we translate this project than in terms of a simple imperative: die!

The conclusion, I think, is that we cannot effectively address this emergent antisemitism without addressing the pathologies surrounding the global market. On the one hand, the form taken on the marketplace by what Gans calls Jewish “firstness” is that of the centrality of the entrepreneur, who organizes capital, introduces a new division of labor, and creates new desires. Despite claims of consumer supremacy, one source of the mysteriousness of the market’s workings is precisely that new products enter the market before anyone has been asking for or has even thought of them—tales of consumer manipulation take on their plausibility from this fact. Similarly, the solicitation of investment capital, from the outside, inevitably looks conspiratorial, especially when heavily regulated markets require political maneuvering before new projects can get off the ground. We can see exploitatively and deceptive entrepreneurial practices as exceptions to the rule in a fundamentally beneficial market process; or we can see the honest worker and consumer as, a priori, the victims of malevolent and unaccountable market players: which perspective we adopt will determine the way we think about regulating economic institutions, and only a fundamentally benevolent view will make it possible to accept the basic asymmetry between producers and consumers, capital and labor, and resist the search for scapegoats for our disappointments in the market.

Second, though, as I suggested earlier, Jewish firstness is represented by a willingness to endure historical contingency, adhere to the moral law (even if no one else does), and ask for no recognition or “proof” of election. I should make it clear that even if this possible relation between law, morality, and history was invented by the Jews, it can, of course, be adopted by anyone (as, for example, in “American exceptionalism”). At any rate, this form of firstness takes the form of an embrace of normalcy—not at the expense of eccentricity, innovativeness, or otherness in general, but certainly as a rejection of the a priori victimary stance that artificially inflates the value of alterity. The location of cultural exemplars among the upholders of everyday middle-class values and common-

⁸ Eric Gans, “Chronicle No. 302: Anti-Semitism from a Judeocentric Perspective II,” *Chronicles of Love & Resentment*, June 12, 2004.

sense patriotism and the social prioritization of such values might prove even more difficult than rehabilitating the figure of the entrepreneur. Without such a cultural turn in which we come to see entrepreneurialism and normalcy as the modes of deferral they are rather than as exploitation and indifference to the other, though, antisemitism will continue to attract and direct the resentments generated by the world market.

POSTSCRIPT

The term “antisemitism” has a direct competitor on today’s ideological and political “market” for designating hate, one which, if it was not, could very easily have been designed to undermine attempts to identify antisemitism—I am referring to the newly coined concept of “Islamophobia.” I would like to add a brief critique of the concept of Islamophobia to my paper because that concept has become an essential part of contemporary antisemitism. While sitting through panel after panel at the YIISA Conference on the “crisis of modernity” represented by contemporary antisemitism, I considered that it would be easy enough to compose hate speech laws aimed at preventing “Islamophobia” that would have enabled the whole lot of us to be rounded up. If “Islamophobia,” or, more broadly, “hate speech” against Muslims, involved generating fear or hatred of Islam or Muslims, would it not be easy to make a case that directing such sustained, unvarnished, unapologetic attention to the virulent forms of antisemitism at large in Muslim communities today makes one guilty as charged? In other words, we are involved in another asymmetrical conflict here: the more antisemitism spreads and goes unchallenged in the Islamic world, the more those who simply point it out can be presented as purveyors of hatred. There is, ultimately, within the victimary framework that sees the “West/White/Capitalist” as intrinsically oppressive, a perfect identity between accusations of antisemitism and Islamophobia (even if we are accusing Western leftists, we are only doing so because they defend the Islamists, making even that critique indirectly “Islamophobic”).

It may be tempting for those of us who see antisemitism as the primary evil in today’s world to reverse these terms, complete the polarization, and proclaim charges of “Islamophobia” to be intrinsically antisemitic. It is better to pursue the implications of this cannily chosen term, which piggy-backs on the also relatively recently invented “homophobia” (rather ironically, because it is hard to see how the manipulators of these respective charges could avoid ultimately hurling them at one another). Entrance into the modern marketplace and liberal political system involves surrendering the right to avenge oneself upon those who have offended one. Nothing could be more basic than the notion that crimes and violations be addressed to law enforcement rather than “enforcers” within the community itself (with the exception of immediate self-defense, of course). But this condition cannot simply be imposed upon individuals—it must be imposed upon communities, first of all at the beginning of any process of modernization, but subsequently with the entrance of each new group into that process. There are various signs that a community might need substantive reform in its practices, and the individuals in that community protection from its authorities, to make such integration possible: these signs will ultimately point back to some kind of “honor” culture, in which dominant men within the community consider themselves and are considered by others obliged not to let insults, collective or individual, stand, and to police effectively the actions of those who serve as “tokens” of the community’s honor—women in particular.

I am not in a position to argue that Muslims in the West are still primarily organized as honor communities, although it does seem to me that in those parts of the world that are majority Muslim they clearly are. What I can argue, though, because any citizen can thus argue, is that we need to discuss whether or not that is the case. In other words, the assumption by default that each individual is prepared to enter the liberal order is no longer a tenable guide for policies regarding immigration and religious freedom. But we are very ill-equipped to have such discussions. Point out potentially dangerous elements of “honor” in particular immigrant communities (not only Muslim, but only in Muslim communities are such features aggravated by a universalistic religious culture so sensitive to offenses against *its* honor as to evolve totalitarian features) and you simply enter the game of noting equivalent features in every community: what about those Christians who bomb abortion clinics, do orthodox Jewish women really want to go around in wigs, etc. And, indeed, there are enough superficial similarities to stifle the discussion. Our notions of religious freedom and cultural diversity have gotten us to the point where even raising such questions, or making observations that could lead to such questions, is considered invidious. We see the same asymmetry once again: those who have banished honor altogether as “prejudice” are especially feckless in dealing with those for whom it is a daily reality.

The only viable response, I think, is to recall that liberalism does not really banish honor—rather, it redirects it toward the defense of innocent victims, victims of the violation of equal human rights, or the right to enter the market and the political sphere. For us, honor is located in the police officer who will defend a family against predators, but will also defend members of a family from predators within it. In the United States in particular, part of the legacy of slavery and abolitionism is that our openness to the most radical claims to individual freedom is balanced against a suspicion that certain forms of freedom entail a “separatism” that can be used to imprison others. Our negotiation of this boundary leads us to train our vision upon the entanglement of “separatist” forms of freedom with various and novel forms of coercion. A cultural shift that emphasizes, before any other principle, the right of individuals to leave groups and communities would effectively counter charges of “Islamophobia.” In other words, we need a visible, confident cultural consensus that tells the Muslim who wants to convert to Christianity, or to marry whom she wants, or to speak out against the community, that we will protect them without qualification. Such a defense of the “other” (whom we are really just proclaiming to be one of us) would also stiffen our spines in defense of “ourselves”—so that we would be spared the shame of censoring our own books and entertainment in accord with Islamic law.

The Antisemitic Imagination

Catherine Chatterley*

The scholarly study of antisemitism has been a small, specialized enterprise overshadowed and absorbed by the larger field of Holocaust Studies. In fact, many of the classic studies of antisemitism were precipitated by the rise of Hitler and can be seen as attempts to explain the Nazi culmination of this millennial hatred. Scholars such as James Parkes (writing from 1930), Cecil Roth (1938), Joshua Trachtenberg (1943), and Leon Poliakov (1955) were engaged in an investigative process of trying to comprehend how six million Jews could be annihilated in the very heartland of modern civilization. Historically, the field has interpreted antisemitism as a Western phenomenon, a product of Christendom, although one influenced by ancient anti-Jewish attitudes expressed largely by writers of the Roman Empire in the period between Nero and Hadrian (54-138 CE). With our focus shifting today to so-called “new” forms of antisemitism, especially to that of the Islamic world, it is important to re-examine our assumptions and clarify, once again, our definition of this phenomenon.

Jewish tradition explains antisemitism as natural to the structure of human existence. Quite simply, *Esau hates Jacob*. This primal hatred of the Jews exists in all places and in all times, independent of culture or religion or socio-economic circumstances. The rabbis did not contextualize antisemitism, it was not understood as a cause and effect phenomenon, but existed as an eternal aspect of existence bound up with the destiny of the Jewish People. This traditional rabbinic understanding of antisemitism rests upon a conception of Gentiles as an undifferentiated mass, whose inner core—or Esau-ness—remains consistent across time and space despite historical and cultural differences. It is also true that this conflict was perceived as a case of *mutual* hostility, rivalry, and competition rather than a simple one-sided assault against Israel. While there is much to be learned from this traditional reading of antisemitism, and one can certainly understand the perspective of the rabbis given the persistent and irrational nature of Jew-hatred, this kind of ahistorical interpretation is fundamentally inadequate.

Antisemitism is not a seven-headed hydra, popping up in different places at different times, as some kind of constant presence in human history. One of humanity’s most culturally specific and historically determined phenomena, antisemitism is the product of the rancorous separation between Judaism and the Jesus Movement of the first century. During the following four hundred years, Rabbinic Judaism and Christianity were finally and irrevocably divorced with the Church in control of the state and its legal code as the

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new imperial religion. In this period, we know that the Church worked relentlessly to purify itself by rooting out “judaizers” — those individuals still sympathetic to Judaism — and to separate Christians and Jews to prevent them from celebrating holidays, and observing Shabbat, together. The Church’s *Theology of Separation* was seen as necessary to establish its authority over society and became the basis for European legislation regulating Jewish existence under Christendom for centuries. Natural and inevitable, the separation between Jews and Christians was not. Retrospectively, we know that the triumphant and controlling position of Christianity in the empire and eventually throughout Europe led to the systematic exclusion of Jews, as a collectivity, from mainstream Christian society, to their deep and abiding marginalization, eventual demonization, and to their peculiar positioning in Western societies as middlemen associated with the despised money occupations. What we see in the history of antisemitism is a compounding of stigmatization and hatred, which over time results in the production of a composite character that combines extremely negative characteristics associated with, and resulting from, a variety of European anti-Jewish religious and economic accusations.

By approximately 1000 CE, the continent of Europe was Christianized, albeit unevenly and idiosyncratically in many places. The period of the High Middle Ages (1000-1300 CE) was in fact the actual laboratory that created what we know as the *antisemitic imagination*, and it was during these specific centuries that antisemitism first became a popular mass phenomenon. This vivid, image-obsessed imagination was Catholic and was fed not just visually but also aurally. It had a character at its center that appeared to have the power and determination to control the world, to influence events, and to wreak utter havoc in society. That character, that figment of the European Christian imagination, is “the jew.” He is the tormentor and killer of Christ — the Savior of universal humanity, according to Christian theology — who continues until the end of time to work against the Church and its Gospel; he is the ritual murderer and host desecrator who compulsively re-enacts the crucifixion with these homicidal anti-Christian Jewish rituals; the well-poisoner and the magician, both of whom are in league with Satan against Christian society; and of course the usurer who recalled Judas Iscariot, the tax collector and archetypal traitor of the Gospels. It is this character of “the jew” that populates the antisemitic imagination; it is by the appearance of this character that we know we are in the presence of *antisemitism* and not some form of xenophobia or hostility, be they the product of culture, politics, or even personal conflict.

It is important that we acknowledge the paradox at work in the history of antisemitism. The phenomenon itself is *not* transhistorical. It is first created, and determined, by the history of Christianity and its relationship to the Jewish people, and continues to evolve in correspondence with the historical development of specific cultural and economic relationships unique to different regions of Europe. At the same time, however, the *basic characteristics of the caricature* that this history produces and releases into the world from the 12th century on are remarkably consistent across time and place. Regardless of European region, denomination, language, or nationality, the characteristics of “the jew” are consistent. In other words, *we see shifts in the articulation of perception over time in different contexts but not in the basic perception itself*.¹ This continues to be the case today with contemporary forms of antisemitism.

¹ S. Katz and S. Gilman (eds.), *Anti-Semitism in Times of Crisis* (New York: NYU Press 1991) p. 5.

So, while it is true that antisemitism is not a naturally occurring human phenomenon, the worldwide diffusion of Christianity and Western culture through European imperialism brought with it, implicitly, the character of “the jew” and therefore also introduced antisemitism to the world. Nothing else can explain the presence of this character—and the hatred for it—among indigenous peoples on several continents, sub-Saharan Africans, and the Japanese, or account for its absence in parts of the world unaffected by European imperialism or where European missionary efforts failed to have any significant effect like China and India.

Antisemitism is carried inside Western culture in the most complex ways because “the jew” is sewn into the fabric of the Christian imagination. It is crucial that we remember that until the last quarter of the 20th century, the West was a Christian civilization, and however secularized and multicultural Western societies are today, they remain saturated with Christian symbol, metaphor, and imagery. One might argue that one aspect of Christianity that has been retained after the Holocaust, despite the waning of religious belief and practice in Western societies, is a deep ambivalence and unease about the Jewish people and one’s relationship to them. Although we cannot quantify these attitudes, we know there is still suspicion, resentment, contempt, and ongoing hatred for Jews in parts of the population.

The central story of Western civilization is Christ’s Passion—understood until perhaps a generation ago as his suffering and death at the hands of the Jews or at the hands of Rome at the conspiratorial manipulation of the Jews—which is clearly accepted as fact in the four Gospels of the New Testament. For centuries, every generation of Europeans met the Jewish People through this story—through their extremely negative depiction in this text. If Europeans knew no Jews personally (and one has to realize that this *is* the reality for the vast majority of people then and now, regardless of location, due to the reality of human demography) this is the only exposure they were given to the Jewish people. In other words, “the jew” of the New Testament becomes the real existing Jew, with no accompanying awareness that this character is a creation of the Christian imagination. Over centuries of telling and retelling in Europe, the Gospels create a character who is a composite of several extremely negative figures (Caiaphas, Judas, the crowd—particularly as represented in the Book of Matthew) who retain their Jewish identity and therefore actually come to define Jewishness for Christians, while Jesus, his disciples, the Holy Family, Simon, and Veronica are freed of their Jewishness and are perceived as Christians instead. You have generations of Christians who do not know, because they are never taught, that Jesus, his mother, and the disciples are Jewish, or for that matter that his beautiful and humane teachings emanate from Judaism. Rather, the Gospels depict “the jew” as conspiratorial; vengeful; hateful; unrelentingly cruel and unforgiving; arrogant; blind to the truth; corrupted, especially by money; treasonous; criminal; and, at bottom, evil. Every one of these characteristics is recognized as fundamentally antithetical to good Christian behavior; instead, these dark qualities come to define the one tiny group in Europe that remains conspicuously outside the universal religion of humanity. This dialectical relationship between Christians and Jews, rooted in theology and characterized by a psychological splitting between good and evil, is one of the pivots of Western history and is actually the central dynamic at work in Christian identity formation. In other words, Christians are conditioned over millennia to define themselves against, and in specific opposition to, “the Jew.” To be Christian, then, is to *not be Jewish*.

The history of antisemitism is a process of *reconfiguration*, the basic template of which is Christian. The characteristics of “the jew,” of this figment created by Christianity, remain consistent despite their secularization in the West during the 18th and 19th centuries, their Islamization from the middle of the 20th century, and their globalization via the Internet and satellite television since 2001. Ironically, these later reconfigurations of Christian antisemitism have their own bible of sorts: *The Protocols of the Learned Elders of Zion*. Today, again, we have a world that meets the Jewish people through a libelous text, sold around the world in a record number of editions, promoted by certain governments and religious leaders, educators, and academics as an “historical text.” The book is again used today to explain the workings of international economics and politics and now also the ongoing war between Israel and the Palestinians, very much like it was used by Hitler to explain the supposed war between Germany and “the jews” and to illustrate “Jewish machinations” across the planet. This Czarist forgery *reinforces* all the same New Testament characteristics of “the jew” —he is conspiratorial, cruel, powerful, hateful, dishonest, immoral, selfish, arrogant, and most significantly—he is a victimizer—once again *engaged in his own particularistic assault on universal humanity*. In the antisemitic imagination, now as in the past, “the jew” is a nihilistic creature, obsessed only with himself, whose selfish Jewish interests make him an enemy of humanity and of any universal religion or movement for the broader interests of the world’s peoples. This is the classic and consistent dynamic of antisemitism, which is in essence a hatred of Jewish particularity. Historically, Jewish religion and nationalism have both been perceived as dangerously exclusive and hopelessly particularistic, and therefore hostile to humanity. One can see how any movement that sees itself as universal—be it Christianity, Islam, Marxism, or the contemporary international campaign for Human Rights—will have difficulty (to say the least) with Judaism and Zionism as they are (mis)understood by most people.

Whether in the West or the Middle East, be it termed old or new, classic or contemporary, we are dealing with a vicious, dehumanizing, and libelous phenomenon. Post-Christian forms of antisemitism all have at their core a caricature that far too many people believe corresponds to actually existing Jews. We take the word caricature from the Italian verb *caricare*, which means to exaggerate, but also *tellingly* to attack and to rouse. One of the truly frightening and dangerous aspects of antisemitism remains the provocative and threatening nature of the character at its centre—“the jew.” This character, by his very nature, provokes resistance in the form of attack from those who believe he exists. The violence, be it physical or rhetorical, that one perpetrates against “the jew” is always justified because it is conceived by its very nature as a protective act of self-defense. All antisemites, regardless of time and place, see themselves as *victims* of “the jew.”

In general, the world remains ignorant about the religion of Judaism, the modern political movement of Zionism, and the trajectory of Jewish history, and this is part of the problem. If the only information people have about Jews is based upon the caricature produced by the antisemitic imagination then Jews will continue to face real hostility and aggression in the world. One thinks of Ayaan Hirsi Ali’s admission that she thought Jews were demons, as her grandmother had taught her and her siblings in Somalia, until a friend in Amsterdam told her they were sitting in a Jewish neighborhood and she realized that Jews were actually human beings. This, of course, is precisely why the brutal antisemitic lies about Jews peddled by the media today throughout the Islamic

world are so dangerous. These lies have a direct impact on the hearts and minds of their audience—particularly children—just as they did, again, for 12 years under Hitler. Much of the content we see in Middle Eastern media is indistinguishable from Nazi propaganda, except that today's sophisticated technology is that much more manipulative. Ignoring this reality, as so many critics of Israel in the West do, is not only fundamentally irresponsible but also irrational. In a post-Holocaust world, we know where these libelous ideas about Jews can lead. Given this ongoing failure of comprehension, one must reasonably conclude that despite the Holocaust, the West has learned nothing about the nature of antisemitism and our responsibility for it.

I would like to conclude by discussing the possible reasons for the persistent appeal of this character, especially outside its original theological context. One thing we can say with certainty now is that antisemitism is no longer strictly a Western phenomenon. It no longer requires Christian theology or culture, however secularized, to function or to resonate with the masses. This is a new development for the study of the history of antisemitism and it is worrying. As ugly as Christian antisemitism is, we could at least take comfort in the fact that it only made sense in a Christian, or post-Christian, context and could therefore be contained.

Antisemitism, unfortunately, is not only a function of religious theology or of culture, but is a phenomenon that taps into our nature as human beings. As a species, we have a general reluctance to examine ourselves critically and to admit our own faults, limitations, and mistakes. We have great difficulty taking responsibility for our own negative circumstances, our own suffering, and for our own role in, at least, partially creating these conditions. It is far easier and soothing to the ego to conceive of oneself *solely* as a victim, as someone who has been mistreated and exploited, through no fault of one's own. This operates on an individual basis but also collectively, and the dynamic increasingly affects all forms of contemporary political culture. In an increasingly complex global economic environment, in an ever-changing bewildering world, it is simply convenient—and therefore appealing—to blame a very well established and precedential "Jewish Conspiracy" for the fate of the world and for one's misfortune however conceived. This is far easier than engaging in the hard work of investigating the complex social, political, economic, and historical relationships that surround us, and that we ourselves influence.

Nietzsche had a name for this process, where human beings attach blame for their own failures and frustrations onto others: *ressentiment*. While this dynamic has always helped fuel antisemitism, it seems to be ever more central to contemporary reconfigurations of the phenomenon.

The Communication Latency of Antisemitic Attitudes: An Experimental Study

Heiko Beyer* and Ivar Krumpal**

1. INTRODUCTION

There might not be a discourse of more significance for the political culture of Western countries than the one grappling with the crimes of National Socialism against the Jews. The project of “re-education” not only had to fight the strong tradition of antisemitic and authoritarian resentments in Germany, but necessarily became an act of self-definition of liberal societies. Antisemitism research has elaborated its views on modern antisemitism since 1945 and has developed theoretical enhancements of classical approaches.¹ Recent forms of antisemitism like “secondary antisemitism” (Schönbach 1961; Adorno 1997), “anti-Zionism” or “new antisemitism” (Rosenbaum 2004; Rabinovici et al. 2004) and “structural antisemitism” (Haury 2002) can be understood as reactions to the heightened public awareness and ostracism of antisemitic prejudices. The persecution and social sanctioning of antisemitic attitudes and opinions has influenced theoretical concepts and explanations within antisemitism research to some extent. However, it has had only a weak effect on methodological considerations such as how to obtain valid measures of antisemitic attitudes.

Sensitive questions in surveys are often perceived as too intrusive or even threatening, since they potentially require the interviewees to disclose behaviors or attitudes that violate social norms: “A question is sensitive when it asks for a socially undesirable answer, when it asks, in effect, that the respondent admits he or she has violated a social norm” (Tourangeau & Yan 2007: 860). Based on survey research, it is known that direct measurement of behaviors and attitudes that violate social norms yields socially desirable responses (Stocké 2004; Schnell et al. 2005; Diekmann 2008; Krumpal 2009, 2010). Interviewees tend to misreport on sensitive issues such as criminal behavior or unsocial attitudes (Van Koolwijk 1969; Lee 1993).²

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¹ This paper focuses on attitudes and their communication. An attitude is, “... a psychological tendency that is expressed by evaluating a particular entity with some degree of favor or disfavor” (Eagly and Chaiken 1993: 1).

² There are two possible directions of social desirability bias: systematic “underreporting” of socially undesirable characteristics and systematic “overreporting” of socially desirable ones.

The question must therefore be raised how antisemitism, being a “sensitive topic,” can be measured at all if we assume that (at least) a subset of antisemitic interviewees are aware of the public norm of anti-antisemitism, interpret surveys as public situations, and therefore underreport their antisemitic attitudes. Previous research concludes that in the context of population surveys, antisemitic attitudes are reported truthfully on the whole (Bergmann & Erb 1991a, 1991b). This conclusion is based upon empirical findings indicating that interviewees who perceive the topic “Jews” as “sensitive” nevertheless show high levels of agreement with items reflecting antisemitic attitudes (Bergmann & Erb 1991b: 282).

We argue that questions about the perceived sensitivity of the topic “Jews” can be considered as sensitive as the ones asking about actual opinions toward Jews. It is possible that underreporting already occurs when questions about the perceived sensitivity are being asked, i.e. a subset of antisemites might give socially desirable answers to the questions about their actual opinion toward Jews as well as to the questions about the perceived sensitivity of the topic “Jews.” The possible conclusion of the researcher about the existence of antisemitic attitudes drawn from a defensive stance against the topic “Jews” might not be that difficult for the common perception as presupposed by Bergmann and Erb.

Previous methodological and social-psychological studies show that the survey design and the question context may have an impact on socially desirable response behavior (Schwarz & Bayer 1989; Strack 1992; Tourangeau & Yan 2007). Following these findings, we use an experimental design to demonstrate the effect of question context on socially desirable response behavior in a survey on antisemitism. We experimentally manipulate the temporary cognitive accessibility of antisemitic primary group norms by randomly assigning interviewees to complete an antisemitism scale either before or after assessing the attitudes of their friends (peer group networks of friends are assumed to be the respective primary group in our case).³ We demonstrate a significant interaction effect between question order and primary group norms on the propensity to self-report antisemitic attitudes. Our results indicate that the interviewees are more likely to reveal antisemitic attitudes when their friends share an antisemitic norm and when this norm is cognitively activated before self-assessment. Section 2 will outline the theoretical connection between antisemitism theory and survey psychology, and section 3 will present the results of our empirical study in more detail. We will draw some final conclusions in section 4.

2. THEORY AND HYPOTHESES

2.1 *Concept and theory of antisemitism*

Although we can distinguish several theoretical approaches that attempt to explain modern antisemitism before 1945, most of them insisting on its peculiarity both in comparison to the older anti-Judaism and other forms of racism (see Fein 1987; Bergmann 1988; Salzborn 2010), the development of a comprehensive theory dealing with

³ Such variation of question order is assumed to trigger “context effects” (also known as “halo-effects,” see Nisbett & Wilson 1977) of previous questions on the answer process of subsequent questions by cognitively activating information in the previous questions that is relevant for answering the subsequent questions.

antisemitism after the Shoah is still in its infancy. In Germany, the first efforts in this regard were made by the “Critical Theory of Antisemitism” and particularly the empirical studies of the re-emigrated Frankfurt Institute of Social Science, which brought to light not only that antisemitic attitudes have remained present since 1945 on a more private level, although they are seemingly combated on the surface of public decision making (see Böhm 1955), but also argued that guilt and its suppression forms a new reservoir for aggression against Jews within German society (this is what Schönbach in 1961 first called “secondary antisemitism”; see also Adorno 1997). Also, within the “German Left” (Broder 1976; Brumlik 1986), we find the first self-critical discussions about anti-Zionism as a new and more accepted form of antisemitism that emerged from the New Left in the 1960s and has also become popular in radical Islamism. This “new antisemitism” (see Rosenbaum 2004; Chesler 2005; Rabinovici et al. 2004)—the label under which it is mainly discussed in the Anglo-American context—is, just like secondary antisemitism, a reaction to the sanctioning of genuine antisemitism and stems partly from new sources, but remains connected to the old resentment to a certain degree.

Bergmann and Erb (1986) grasp anti-Zionism as a form of “detour communication” for genuine antisemitism. Their concept of “communication latency” tries to accentuate the social latency of antisemitism after 1945 in contrast to a mere psychological latency. “Latency” is explicitly used in regard to social and not psychological functions. The communication latency of antisemitism in the German Federal Republic offers the basis for integration within the Western alliance without actually having to deal with the past. In this regard, the media and the education system are supposed to carry on the new *raison d'état* of anti-antisemitism in making clear what to say in public discourse and what not.

The differentiation between communication latency and psychological latency postulates that antisemitic attitudes remain conscious but are not articulated publicly. Antisemites have the urge to articulate their attitudes, but such communication occurs beyond the public level (Bergmann & Erb 1986: 230). New communication channels need to be found for the expression of antisemitism. The authors discuss two possibilities: “consensus groups” (such as right-wing networks) and “detour communication” (such as anti-Zionism).

If the focus merely rests on genuine antisemitic prejudices expressed publicly, the fact that antisemitism persists latently will be ignored. It is this persistence that is of relevance for the study of new forms of antisemitism and their relation to genuine resentments. The simple replacement of the term “Jew” with the term “Israeli,” for example, is often used to camouflage what can be detected, when examined more closely, as a clear case of antisemitism. Without such a closer examination it might be mistaken as rational critique of Israel’s foreign policy. In regard to standardized measurement instruments, this examination implies that we have to develop a better measurement instrument that is able to reproduce the actual attitude of the interviewees more validly.

2.2 The difference between actual and communicated attitudes

The implicit note of Bergman and Erb (1986) about reference groups (which they refer to as “consensus groups”) and their impact on the willingness to communicate publicly

sanctioned attitudes such as antisemitism may help us to determine the relevant mechanisms of the generation and communication of antisemitic attitudes. Let us start with some assumptions.

First of all, we distinguish analytically between a *public norm* and a *primary group norm*. The *public norm* is the commonly shared expectation that antisemitism shall not be articulated in public situations. Hence, there is only one parameter value that can be taken for granted: we speak of a "public norm against antisemitism." The *primary group norm* is the shared expectation of a small definable private group (in our case the peer group of friends) whether antisemitic attitudes shall be articulated or not. The parameter values of such a norm can be located on a continuum with the endpoints (1) "norm against antisemitism," implying that members of the primary group judge antisemitic expressions as being inappropriate, and (2) "antisemitic norm," representing a position of antisemitism within the group. Ambivalence and indifference toward Jews can be located between these endpoints.

On the level of *attitude generation*, though both the public norm against antisemitism and the specific primary group norm influence the actual attitude, we assume that the primary group norm carries relatively more weight. If individuals hold attitudes that are not in accordance with the primary group norm, cognitive dissonance will occur. According to the theory of cognitive dissonance (see Festinger 1957), this is likely to be reduced by adapting the attitude to the primary group norm. Keeping this in mind, the primary group norm can be seen as better predictor of the actual attitudes of interviewees than the public norm.

On the level of *attitude communication*, however, we assume that the relative influences of the public and primary group norms are shaped by the definition of the situation. In public situations, the public norm of anti-antisemitism suppresses the communication of antisemitic statements, while in private situations the respective primary group norm is of higher relevance. If the primary group norm and the public norm diverge, it can be assumed that a discrepancy between public and private situations will occur. In *public situations*, individuals holding antisemitic attitudes of a relevant degree will not communicate their attitudes in a straightforward manner, but will adjust their communications toward the public norm. In *private situations*, the public norm has a relatively weaker influence and the primary group norm is of greater relevance. Thus, it is assumed that antisemitic individuals with a primary group sharing similar attitudes will communicate their antisemitic attitudes in private situations but will deny their attitudes in the public. We then face the problem of a difference between actual attitudes and communicated attitudes in public situations, which then diminishes in private situations.

If we assume that interviewees interpret surveys as public situations, a significant difference between the actual attitude and the communicated attitude would be the result. This difference could be interpreted as a social desirability bias. To decrease this difference, we could influence the interpretation and framing of the survey situation in such a way that it is in higher accordance with the private situation of the interviewee. For this purpose, we suggest cognitively activating the primary group norms via "context effects," i.e. the influence of previous questions on the answering process of latter questions (see Schwarz & Sudman 1992). In this regard, we expect a "priming effect" (see Sloman et al. 1988) of previous questions to activate relevant information that is used for interpretation and answering of the subsequent questions. "This information is

either contained in the previous question or activated by the respondent in order to generate an answer to the previous question. Merely by having been activated before, the information subsequently becomes more accessible. Moreover, this process can occur without the respondent's awareness..." (Strack 1992: 25ff.).

2.3 The impact of primary group norms on the communication of antisemitic attitudes

The answering of questions concerning one's own antisemitic attitudes can principally be based on different, potentially relevant information and cognitive contents. Following psychological considerations, we can assume that from all possible information, the subset most easily accessible at the time of answering a question will have the strongest impact on the answering process (see Schwarz & Bayer 1989). If we want to increase the validity of our measurement, it is reasonable to embed the sensitive items measuring antisemitism in the private, primary group context of the interviewees. This means we have to increase the cognitive availability of primary group norms by activating respective cognitions before self-assessment. We will not provide this information to interviewees, but ask for it directly. Therefore, a self-generated cognitive anchor will serve the interviewees as the basis for the answering of the following questions: "By making a particular dimension, norm, or standard of comparison salient, context can ... alter how respondents make their judgment. For example, prior items may trigger the application of a norm that is carried over to a later item" (Tourangeau 1992: 38). We predict that interviewees with antisemitic attitudes of sufficient strength might be more willing to give socially undesirable answers because the salience of the primary group norm is supposed to weaken the relative influence of the public norm. If, in contrast, such an anchor is not available, interviewees' response behavior might be more strongly influenced by the public norm, which in turn would result in more socially desirable answers.

From these considerations, two hypotheses can be derived. They will be tested via an experimental design varying the question order. The treatment group will complete an antisemitism scale *after* assessing the attitudes and norms of their primary group. The control group will complete the same antisemitism scale *before* answering questions about their primary group (reversed question order).

Hypothesis 1: The strength of the correlation between primary group norms and communicated antisemitism will increase if the questions regarding the primary group norms are asked *before* those concerning the subjects' own attitudes.

Hypothesis 2: Subjects with an antisemitic primary group will report more antisemitic attitudes if the questions regarding the primary group norms are asked *before* those concerning the subjects' own attitudes.

2.4 Further determinants of the communication of antisemitic attitudes

It has been postulated that the willingness to communicate antisemitic attitudes varies depending on the cognitive availability of respective primary group norms. In addition, further determinants of the communication of antisemitic attitudes can be discussed. The strong and robust correlation between education (within a democratic society) and antisemitic attitudes can be considered a desideratum of the empirical research (see Weil 1985 for an international overview). Political interest could be considered another

determinant, since the public norm of anti-antisemitism is mediated not only through the educational system but also through the medial discourse. Another robust finding of antisemitism research indicates a strong association between right-wing attitudes and antisemitism (see Porat & Stauber 2010 for an international overview). Overall, *education*, *political interest* and *political attitudes* are three variables that, in addition to influencing actual attitudes, might have an impact on the communication of antisemitic attitudes. The following three hypotheses capture these considerations.

Hypothesis 3: The higher a subject's level of education, the less likely it is that he or she will communicate antisemitic attitudes.

Hypothesis 4: The stronger a subject's political interest, the less likely it is that he or she will communicate antisemitic attitudes.

Hypothesis 5: The more right-wing a subject's political attitudes, the more likely it is that he or she will communicate antisemitic attitudes.

The differentiation between communicated attitudes and actual attitudes might seem fussy at this point, since surveys merely display the communicated attitudes (and not the actual ones) in any case. From the vantage point of communication latency, however, the distinction has to be taken into consideration for another reason. If we assume that our determinants mainly impact the communication of antisemitism (and not the actual attitudes), the strong correlation between the mentioned determinants and antisemitic attitudes might have been overestimated in the previous research.

We will illustrate this point via a *gedankenexperiment*. Let us assume that the actual extent of antisemitic attitudes in the group of higher educated interviewees is only slightly smaller compared to the group of lower educated interviewees. Let us further assume that the public norm of anti-antisemitism has a stronger impact on higher educated subjects than on less educated ones because the former are more aware of the public norm. Based on these assumptions, the likelihood of a socially desirable answer is expected to be higher for the group of higher educated interviewees than for the group of less educated ones. In other words, we expect that higher educated subjects are more likely to conceal antisemitic attitudes in an interview situation. The same reasoning can be used for the variable "political interest." Finally, an even more basic finding of previous research on antisemitism can be put into perspective, namely the strong correlation between right-wing attitudes and antisemitic attitudes. In terms of the former *gedankenexperiment*, it could be postulated that the public norm against antisemitism might have a stronger influence on leftist individuals than on right-wing ones who are not afraid of "breaching the anti-antisemitic taboo."

Therefore, we might ask whether the influence of the abovementioned determinants might have been overestimated. The following section will present the empirical tests of our hypotheses.

3. EMPIRICAL STUDY

3.1 *Research design*

In order to test our hypotheses, we conducted a randomized experiment. We experimentally varied the temporary cognitive accessibility of antisemitic primary group norms by

randomly assigning interviewees to complete an antisemitism scale either before or after assessing the attitudes of their friends. Half our sample was first asked about “a friend’s” attitude toward Jews and later asked about his or her own attitudes. The other half of our sample completed a questionnaire with a reversed question order.⁴ The following operationalization was used:

- *Treatment condition*: “The following questions deal with a completely different matter, namely with the standing of Jews in today’s world. But to start with it is not about your own opinion but about that of a friend. If you are not sure what exactly he or she would answer imagine the following situation. The two of you are sitting in front of the TV and a famous actor states one of the following sentences. To what extent do you think your friend would agree with the statement?”
- *Control condition*: “The same statements again, but this time it is about the opinion of a friend. If you are not sure what he or she would answer imagine the following situation. The two of you are sitting in front of the TV and a famous actor states one of the following sentences. To what extent do you think your friend would agree with the statement?”

By using a randomized experimental design, the actual extent of antisemitic attitudes, as well as all known and unknown covariates, are constant between the two groups. The principle of randomization guarantees that there are no systematic differences between the two experimental groups except for the experimental treatment, i.e. the degree of cognitive availability of primary group norms. Differences between groups with regard to the reported *antisemitic attitudes*, our dependent variable, can then be interpreted as being causally influenced by the *cognitive availability of primary group norms*.

The following study was conducted in April 2008 in *Mittelschulen* (secondary schools that do not prepare students for university admission) and *Gymnasien* (secondary schools that prepare students for university admission) in East Germany. A sample of 241 students between the ages of 14 and 18 were interviewed via standardized, paper-and-pencil questionnaires.

3.2 Description of the sample

Let us first consider the distribution of the socio-demographic variables: 3 percent of the interviewees were aged 14, 46 percent were aged 15, 33 percent were aged 16, 16 percent were aged 17, and 2 percent were aged 18. Furthermore, 52 percent were *male* and 48 percent were *female*. The variable *education* was operationalized via the question, “What kind of graduation do you expect to achieve?” The empirical distribution of education in our sample was as follows: 18 percent of interviewees expected to achieve a *Hauptschule* graduation (9 years of school, no university admission), 30 percent expected to achieve a

⁴ The primary group norm was operationalized by asking for the perception of a “friend’s opinion” regarding antisemitic statements. Our interviewees were all juveniles. Our operationalization of primary group norms using “the opinion of a friend” is based on the assumption that mainly “typical friends” are remembered who could be seen as representatives of the opinion within the primary group. We assume that the interviewee will think of a “typical friend” and not of an “extreme friend” from whom he or she would tend to set him or herself apart. In this context, we expect an adjustment of the interviewee’s self-assessment to the preliminarily activated opinion of a “typical friend.”

Realschule graduation (10 years of school, no university admission), 3 percent expected to achieve a *Fachhochschulreife* graduation (11 years of school, with specific university admission), and 48 percent expected to achieve a general *Abitur* graduation (12 years of school, with general university admission).

Antisemitic attitudes were measured via specific items often used in standard antisemitism scales. Statements III and IV (see Table 1) have a reversed polarity to avoid acquiescence (see Schnell et al. 2005). The empirical distributions of the single items are displayed in Table 1. These items are the basis for the construction of an additive index ranging (like the single items) from 1 (no antisemitic attitudes) to 6 (strong antisemitic attitudes) with a mean of 2.6 and a standard deviation of 1.2.

Table 1: Items measuring antisemitic attitudes

	totally disagree	disagree	rather disagree	rather agree	agree	totally agree
I. More than other people, Jews use nasty tricks to achieve what they want (see Decker & Brähler 2006).	39	23	17	11	5	5
II. Jews have too much influence in the world. (see Bergmann & Erb 1991a).	25	24	31	9	6	5
III. I think it is good that more Jews live in Germany again.	10	7	15	31	22	15
IV. The Jewish culture has to be protected against its enemies.	7	8	16	26	27	16
V. Due to their behavior, Jews bear part of the guilt for their persecution (see Heyder et al. 2005).	50	18	11	12	5	4

Note: Values are percentages. The number of cases varies between 237 and 241 due to item non-response. A factor analysis of these items yields one factor with an eigenvalue greater than 1 (exact value: 3.23) and explains 65 percent of overall variance. Factor loadings range between 0.7 and 0.9. Reliability analysis of the index yields a Cronbach's alpha value of 0.86. The index values range from 1 to 6 (like the single items). Higher values indicate stronger antisemitic attitudes.

The additive index regarding the *friend's attitude* is based on the same items with a mean of 2.9 and a standard deviation of 1.1. Based on the two indices, the sample distribution of antisemitic attitudes is as follows: 70 percent of the interviewees (61 percent of friends) can be classified as unprejudiced (index values ≤ 3), 19 percent (24 percent of friends) show latent antisemitic attitudes (values > 3 and ≤ 4) and 11 percent (15 percent of friends) show strong antisemitic attitudes (values > 4).

Beside *education*, we introduced the covariates *political interest* and *political attitudes*. *Political interest* was measured via the following two items: "How often do you discuss politics with your family, friends, and acquaintances?" (mean = 2.8; standard deviation = 1.1) and "How often do you watch the news (television or internet) or read the news in newspapers?" (mean = 3.7; standard deviation = 1.0). The answers were "never" (11 percent for the first question and 1 percent for the second), "rarely" (30 percent and 11

percent), "medium" (30 percent and 27 percent), "often" (21 percent and 40 percent) and "very often" (8 percent and 21 percent). The variable *political attitudes* was operationalized via a 10-point self-rating scale, where the value 1 equals "left" and 10 equals "right." Ten percent of the students can be labeled "extremely left" (values 1 or 2), 27 percent "left" (values 3 or 4), 48 percent are in the centre of the political spectrum (values 5 or 6), 11 percent can be labeled "right-wing" (values 7 or 8) and 4 percent "extremely right-wing" (values 9 or 10).

3.3 Empirical test of the hypotheses

In this section, we will test our hypotheses empirically. Hypothesis 1 states that the correlation between the self-reported attitude and the primary group norm will increase if the latter is cognitively activated. To test this hypothesis let us first look at the correlation coefficients between the own attitude and the friend's supposed attitude in both groups. The control group, the group in which the friend's attitude has not been activated shows a Pearson's correlation coefficient $r = 0.75$ ($p = 0.00$). In contrast, the treatment group displays a stronger correlation of $r = 0.86$ ($p = 0.00$). The between-group difference is statistically significant (Fisher's $z = 2.397$, $p < 0.05$). Thus, hypothesis 1 can be confirmed. As expected, the reported own attitude is more congruent with the primary group norm if we activate the latter before asking about the subjects' own attitudes.

Hypothesis 2 states that subjects with an antisemitic primary group will report more antisemitic attitudes if the questions regarding the primary group norms are asked *before* those concerning the subjects' own attitudes. To test hypothesis 2, we divided our sample into two categories: subjects with unprejudiced friends (61 percent of interviewees) and subjects with slightly or strongly prejudiced friends (39 percent of interviewees). For both categories, we compared the means with respect to the subjects' own antisemitic attitudes (control group v. treatment group). Our results support hypothesis 2. In the first category, interviewees with antisemitic friends, the control group (the group in which the primary group norm had not been activated) had a mean of 3.3 ($N = 49$). In contrast, interviewees with antisemitic friends in the treatment group showed a mean of 4.0 ($N = 40$) indicating a higher level of self-reported antisemitism. This difference is statistically significant ($p = 0.00$). In the second category, interviewees with unprejudiced friends, no significant difference between means can be observed: 1.9 in the control group ($N = 63$) v. 2.0 in the treatment group ($N = 77$). Our results indicate that the interviewees are more likely to reveal antisemitic attitudes when their friends share an antisemitic norm and when this norm is cognitively activated before self-assessment.

The expected negative correlation between education and the willingness to self-report antisemitic attitudes (see hypothesis 3) can also be confirmed ($r = -0.47$; $p = 0.00$). Students with a higher level of education express antisemitic attitudes less frequently. Regarding hypothesis 4, the empirical findings are somewhat ambiguous. In view of the perception of political events ("How often do you watch the news (television or internet) or do you read the news in newspapers?"), no statistically significant correlation ($r = -0.02$; $p = 0.80$) can be observed. However, when looking at the participation in political discussions ("How often do you discuss politics?"), a statistically significant correlation ($r = -0.16$; $p = 0.01$) showing the expected negative sign can be observed. The more students discuss politics, the less antisemitic attitudes they express. Hypothesis 5 can

also be confirmed empirically. The more right-wing the interviewees' political attitudes, the more often they express antisemitic attitudes. In this case, we observed a strong, positive correlation $r = 0.60$ that is statistically significant ($p = 0.00$).

Hypotheses 3-5 are largely supported by the bivariate analyses. However, as we already argued in the context of our *gedankenexperiment*, the strength of the correlations between education, political interest, and political attitudes on the one hand and antisemitic attitudes on the other is possibly overestimated. Taking into account the cognitive activation of (potentially antisemitic) primary group norms, we expect that better-educated, more interested, leftist individuals will reveal more antisemitic attitudes, thus decreasing the strength of the correlations.

To test these considerations empirically, we estimate two multiple OLS-regression models. Model 1 displays coefficients without controlling for the primary group norm. This reduced model confirms the bivariate findings and shows that the effects of our covariates are robust in a multivariate framework. Model 2 displays coefficients controlling for the cognitive accessibility of the primary group norm. Adding the *question order*, the *primary group norm*, and the respective *interaction term*, we find that hypotheses 1 and 2 are again supported. Regression model 2 indicates a strong, positive effect of the primary group norm (0.49 units change on the "antisemitism scale" per one-unit change on the "primary group scale"). The strength of the effect further increases when the primary group norm is cognitively activated before self-assessment (significant interaction effect between *question order* and *primary group norms* yielding an additional 0.31 units change on the "antisemitism scale" per one-unit change on the "primary group scale"). The negative algebraic sign of the coefficient regarding the influence of the question order indicates that the willingness to self-report antisemitic attitudes will only increase in cases where the primary group norm exceeds a certain degree of antisemitism. In other words, a sufficiently strong antisemitic primary group norm is necessary to cause the predicted higher value of self-reported antisemitism. To summarize, the interviewees are more likely to reveal antisemitic attitudes when their friends share an antisemitic norm and when this norm is cognitively activated before self-assessment.

Let us now turn to our determinants of hypotheses 3-5 again. In model 2, the effects of education, political interest, and political attitudes decrease substantially if we take into account the interaction effect between *question order* and *primary group norms*. This means that, if primary group norms are activated in the cognitive frame of the interviewees, the variables *education*, *political interest*, and *political attitudes* lose explanatory power. We suppose that the explanation for this finding is that once interviewees with a higher level of education and so forth frame the survey situation in a more private way, the difference between them and interviewees with a lower level of education and so forth decreases. Although education and political attitudes are of importance too, the primary group norms (and their cognitive activation) have the strongest effect on the willingness to self-report antisemitic attitudes as suggested by regression model 2. These findings confirm our *gedankenexperiment*, stating that the strength of the effects of the other determinants (education, political interest, and political attitudes) are possibly overestimated.

Table 2: Determinants of self-reported antisemitic attitudes (multiple OLS-regressions)

	Model 1	Model 2
Education (0 = no graduation; 4 = higher education qualification)	-0.28* (-5.58)	-0.13* (-3.27)
Discussions about politics (Political Interest I) (1 = never; 5 = very often)	-0.14* (-2.51)	-0.03 (-0.58)
Reception of news (Political Interest II) (1 = never; 5 = very often)	0.03 (0.47)	0.01 (0.06)
Political attitudes (1 = left; 10 = right)	0.30* (8.87)	0.14* (4.79)
Gender (0 = male; 1 = female)	-0.18 (-1.49)	-0.01 (-0.03)
Question order (0 = control condition; 1 = treatment condition)		-0.58* (-2.42)
Primary group norm (1 = no antisemitism; 6 = strong antisemitism)		0.49* (8.00)
Question order x primary group norm (Interaction term)		0.31* (3.89)
Constant	2.49* (6.03)	2.39* (2.21)
Adjusted R ²	0.46	0.70
N	211	211

Note: * significant on 5 percent level; non-standardized coefficients, t-values in parentheses; dependent variable is self-reported antisemitism (1 = no antisemitism; 6 = strong antisemitism).

4. CONCLUSIONS

We can conclude that a better measurement of antisemitic attitudes does not only offer a more valid picture of the extent and the consequences of today's antisemitism but also helps us to investigate the causes of antisemitic attitudes in a more reliable way. In this regard, it might not be very surprising that primary groups have such a strong influence on antisemitic attitudes. Considering the previous research, it seems worth mentioning that antisemitism is not merely a favorite toy of poorly educated neo-Nazis (which it is nonetheless).

The persistence of antisemitism in a private and latent realm has challenged both theoretical and empirical research on antisemitism. If quantitative antisemitism research does not take the sensitive character of antisemitism into account, it will systematically underestimate the extent of it and overestimate the correlations with known "state-of-the-art" determinants. And since these (potentially biased) empirical results are often discussed in the public media, we have to be very careful with our interpretations and conclusions. This is all the more true given that these empirical findings also influence the theoretical study of antisemitism. Only if we have a reliable picture of genuine antisemitism will we be able to analyze its relationship with indirect forms of anti-

Jewish prejudices such as anti-Zionism or secondary antisemitism. Whether anti-Zionists, for example, still hold genuine antisemitic attitudes but hide them in public is of great interest for the sociological and psychological study of this phenomenon.

Our empirical study is based on a relatively small sample and therefore can only be generalized to a limited extent. Future studies are encouraged to investigate larger and more representative samples of the general population and might also experiment with more sophisticated cognitive stimuli. They should also include items measuring anti-Zionism and secondary antisemitism to study the relationship with genuine antisemitism. To summarize, our experimental study has shown the importance of a well-designed measurement instrument that goes hand in hand with the theoretical study of the mechanisms of recent antisemitism.

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The Definition of Antisemitism

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1. INTRODUCTION

Defining antisemitism has always been complicated by the disreputable origins of the term, the discredited sources of its etymology, the diverse manifestations of the concept, and the contested politics of its applications. Nevertheless, the task is an important one, not only because definitional clarity is required for the term to be understood, but also because conceptual sophistication is needed for the associated problem to be resolved. This article will explore various ways in which antisemitism has historically been defined, demonstrate the weaknesses in prior efforts, and develop a new definition of antisemitism.

Building on the work of such thinkers as Jean-Paul Sartre, Theodor Adorno, Helen Fein, and Gavin Langmuir, this article demonstrates that a theoretically sophisticated definition of this term must fully account for antisemitism's ideological, attitudinal, and practical qualities; its persisting latent structure within Western cultures; its continuities and discontinuities with analogous phenomena; its chimerical quality; its potentially self-fulfilling character; and its role in the construction of Jewish identity. Most importantly, the definition must account for the participation of antisemitic discourses and practices in the construction of the individual and collective "Jew," both as false image and as actual being. This process is equally critical to the understanding of antisemitism and to the development of means of counter-acting what might be called antisemitism's chimerical core.

2. ANTISEMITISM AS RACISM

The first and most treacherous intuition of many commentators is to begin with etymology. To this day, some commentators insist that antisemitism cannot mean hatred of Jews, when the term "Semites" refers to speakers of a language family consisting of many historical Middle Eastern languages, including not only Hebrew but also Arabic. From the beginning, however, antisemitism has always meant hatred of Jews, not hatred of Arabs or Semites.¹ Bernard Lewis has debunked the canard, sometimes offered on

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¹ Walter Laqueur, *The Changing Face of Anti-Semitism: From Ancient Times to the Present Day* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006), pp. 21-22; Bernard Lewis, *Semites and Anti-Semites: An Inquiry into Conflict and Prejudice* (1986), p. 117; Robert S. Wistrich, *Antisemitism: The Longest Hatred* (New York: Schocken Books 1991), p. xvi.

behalf of Arabs, that they cannot be antisemitic, since they themselves are Semites. "The logic of this," he responded,

would seem to be that while an edition of Hitler's *Mein Kampf* published in Berlin or in Buenos Aires in German or Spanish is anti-Semitic, an Arab version of the same text published in Cairo or Beirut cannot be anti-Semitic, because Arabic and Hebrew are cognate languages. It is not a compelling argument.²

The etymological approach is more broadly problematic because the term was coined (or at least popularized) by a self-confessed antisemite, Wilhelm Marr, who hoped that it would facilitate greater adoption of the racial hatred of Jews and Judaism which he and his compatriots promoted.³ Early definitions stressed the relationship between Jewish racial distinctness and repugnant moral attributes. For example, one 1882 German dictionary defined an antisemite as "[a]nyone who hates Jews or opposes Judaism in general, and struggles against the character traits and the intentions of the Semites."⁴ The racial dimension is even clearer in a definition offered five years later by one of the architects of modern political antisemitism, who explained the concept as follows: "anti—to oppose, Semitism—the essence of the Jewish race; anti-Semitism is therefore the struggle against Semitism."⁵ In recent years, no reputable authority would embrace a definition, like these, which assumes that Jews actually possess the character traits which their antagonists attribute to them.⁶

Nevertheless, some authorities continue to define the term in a manner that stresses the racial element in some forms of this animus. Those who define antisemitism this way tend to emphasize that racial Jew-hatred has been qualitatively different than other forms of this animus. They may point to the unique horrors of the Holocaust or argue that racist hatreds are more dangerous than other animus, such as religious bias, since racial characteristics cannot be eradicated other than by extermination. This approach has various disadvantages, such as its exclusion of even the most virulent forms of religiously motivated hatred of Jews and Judaism. More profoundly, such definitions have been criticized on the ground that they appear to accept, or at least to assume, the discredited "Aryan myth" that Jews can be meaningfully described in terms of "race."⁷

3. ANTISEMITISM AS ETHNIC PREJUDICE OR XENOPHOBIA

Many modern formulations have defined antisemitism, instead, as a discrete but largely generic form of a more general phenomenon such as ethnic prejudice or xenophobia. For

² Lewis, *Semites and Anti-Semites*, p. 16.

³ Wistrich, *Antisemitism*, p. xv.

⁴ *Brockhaus Enzyklopädie*, Vol. I (Wiesbaden, 1966), pp. 585-86, quoted in Dina Porat, "Historical Perspective," in Dina Porat and Kenneth Stern, *Defining Antisemitism* (2005), available at: <<http://www.tau.ac.il/Anti-Semitism/asw2003-4/porat.htm>>.

⁵ Theodor Fritsch, *Antisemiten Katechismus* (Leipzig, 1887), quoted in Dina Porat, "Historical Perspective."

⁶ Gavin Langmuir, "Toward a Definition of Antisemitism," in *Toward a Definition of Antisemitism* (Berkeley: University of California Press 1990), p. 311.

⁷ *Ibid.* For a discussion of the complexity of this question of Jewish racial distinctness, see Kenneth L. Marcus, *Jewish Identity and Civil Rights in America* (New York: Cambridge University Press 2010).

example, *Webster's Dictionary* has influentially defined antisemitism as consisting of (any) "hostility toward or discrimination against Jews as a religious, ethnic, or racial group."⁸ Indeed, some historians have characterized antisemitism in terms that suggest that it is merely a manifestation of xenophobia, rather than a specific form of hatred. In one strong version of this formulation, antisemitism is defined as being merely "the dislike of the unlike."⁹ Such definitions treat antisemitism as distinguishable only in its objects from other forms of discrimination such as anti-black racism or anti-Hispanic ethnocentricity, rather than identifying a peculiar characteristic of the hatred of Jews.

This tendency to blur the lines among forms of prejudice has certain practical advantages. Analytically, it facilitated research, particularly in the period immediately following World War II, which demonstrated similarities among the divergent forms of hatred directed at different groups.¹⁰ Politically, it provides a basis for coalition-building activities by various minority groups. Legally, it supports the development of parallel regulatory regimes to protect persons who face discrimination under different suspect classifications. In Europe, where Jews are the paradigmatic case of a persecuted minority, other historical outgroups may seek legal protections by comparing their lot to the Jewish condition. In the United States, however, where African Americans are the paradigmatic case, other groups tend to achieve protection by comparing their status to that of American blacks. Understandably, general definitions of antisemitism, i.e., those that stress antisemitism's continuities with analogous phenomena, have proliferated because they serve a number of practical objectives at times and in places where opposition to the persecution of Jews is perceived to be weaker, standing on its own, than if combined with other forms of anti-racism, multiculturalism, or human rights activity.

The problem with such general definitions, however, is that they suggest that antisemitism may be different only in the choice of persecuted outgroup, rather than in the nature or intensity of hatred. Historian Ben-Zion Netanyahu recognized this difference in intensity when he defined antisemitism as an animus that combines "hatred of the other, hatred of the alien and hatred of the weak" but "in a more forceful and consistent form than in any other form of hatred of minorities."¹¹ This recognition of intensity levels is important, but it neglects the difference in character that might explain the difference in virulence. Gavin Langmuir expressed this insight when he admonished that the kind of hatred symbolized by Auschwitz must be distinguished in more than intensity from the hostility represented by a swastika on the Eiffel Tower.¹² The challenge, then, is to expand the definition of antisemitism in a manner that reflects the peculiar virulence to which it has been inclined.

⁸ *Webster's Third New International Dictionary* (Philip Babcock Gove ed., 2002), p. 96. The US Department of State has relied upon this definition. US Department of State, *Contemporary Global Antisemitism: A Report Provided to the United States Congress* (2008), p. 6.

⁹ Quoted in Jerome A. Chanes, *Antisemitism: A Reference Handbook* (ABC-CLIO, 2004).

¹⁰ Clark Freshman, "Whatever Happened to Anti-Semitism? How Social Science Theories Identify Discrimination and Promote Coalitions Between 'Different' Minorities," 85 *Cornell L. Rev.* (2000), pp. 313, 317-319.

¹¹ Ben-Zion Netanyahu, "Antisemitism," in *The Hebrew Encyclopedia*, Vol. IV (Jerusalem/Tel Aviv, 1959; in Hebrew), pp. 493-508 at pp. 496-97, quoted in Porat, "Historical Perspective."

¹² Langmuir, "Toward a Definition of Antisemitism," p. 317.

4. ANTISEMITISM AS IDEOLOGY

One difference between antisemitism and some other forms of animus is that it encompasses not only attitude and practice (i.e., *Webster's* "hostility ... or discrimination") but also ideology. This ideological dimension was well-articulated in Theodor Adorno's mid-century definition: "This ideology [of antisemitism] consists ... of stereotyped negative opinions describing the Jews as threatening, immoral, and categorically different from non-Jews, and of hostile attitudes urging various forms of restriction, exclusion, and suppression as a means of solving 'the Jewish problem.'"¹³ This dimension is important because it illuminates the extent to which antisemitism has become pervasive in some cultures. This pervasiveness may in turn help to understand the ferocity of attitudes and practices that it has generated.

Helen Fein's well-known definition further develops this cultural conception, defining antisemitism

as a persisting latent structure of hostile beliefs towards Jews as a collectivity manifested in *individuals* as attitudes, and in *culture* as myth, ideology, folklore, and imagery, and in *actions*—social or legal discrimination, political mobilization against Jews, and collective or state violence—which results in and/or is designed to distance, displace, or destroy Jews as Jews.¹⁴

Fein's sociologically informed definition reflects the insight that the ideology of antisemitism is not merely a matter of a personal belief system but rather a more complex network of "myth, ideology, folklore, and imagery," which is closely related not only to individual attitudes but also to discriminatory, political, and even violent actions.

5. ANTI-ZIONISM AND ANTISEMITISM

In 1966, *Merriam Webster* provided a secondary definition for antisemitism that has become important to understanding the ideology underlying this animus. According to this definition, antisemitism can also mean "opposition to Zionism: sympathy with opponents of the state of Israel."¹⁵ It is significant that this definition appeared one year before Israel's military victory in the 1967 war, when the Jewish state was still positively perceived in the Western world as a liberal democratic country whose enemies could reasonably be accused of antisemitism.¹⁶ In the current climate, few if any serious commentators would equate all opposition to Zionism with antisemitism.¹⁷ Nevertheless, there is clearly a relationship between the two concepts.¹⁸

¹³ T.W. Adorno et al., *The Authoritarian Personality* (1950), p. 71 (emphasis omitted).

¹⁴ Helen Fein, "Dimensions of Antisemitism: Attitudes, Collective Accusations, and Actions," in *The Persisting Question. Sociological Perspectives and Social Contexts of Modern Antisemitism* (Helen Fein, ed.) (Berlin/New York 1987), p. 67 (emphasis original).

¹⁵ *Webster's Third New International Dictionary* (1966), p. 96, quoted in Porat, "Historical Perspective."

¹⁶ Porat, "Historical Perspective."

¹⁷ The concept thus clearly excludes those who oppose the pre-Messianic establishment of the State of Israel as theologically premature, such as the *Neturei Karta*, those who oppose the State of Israel on general antinationalist grounds, including some anarchists, or those who merely criticize substantive policies of the State of Israel as they would those of any other government.

¹⁸ The remainder of this section and the section that follows draw from Kenneth L. Marcus, *Jewish Identity and Civil Rights in America* (New York: Cambridge University Press 2010), pp. 51-54,

In many cases, age-old antisemitic stereotypes and defamations are recast in contemporary political terms, describing Israel and Zionism in ways historically applied to Jews and Judaism.¹⁹ In this way, Israel (mordantly characterized as the “Jew of the nations”) is represented as demonically powerful, as conspiratorial, and as a malignant force responsible for the world’s evils. Theodor Adorno’s definition, discussed above, provides a useful means of exploring this phenomenon. While the influence of Adorno’s early work on prejudice has suffered from the passage of time, his definition shows disquieting freshness as a characterization of the relationship between antisemitism and anti-Zionism, as long as the word “Israel” is substituted for “Jewish” and “the Jews.”²⁰ Thus, the ideology of antisemitism would include: *stereotyped negative opinions describing the Jewish state and its members, supporters, and coreligionists as threatening, immoral, and categorically different from other peoples, and of hostile attitudes urging various forms of restriction, exclusion, and suppression as a means of solving the “Israel problem.”* The fluidity and resonance of this substituted language illustrates not only that the same “*stereotyped negative opinions*” classically directed against Jews are now directed against Israel but also that these stereotypes are applied for the same purposes of “*restriction, exclusion, and suppression*” as a means of resolving the “*Jewish problem.*” Similarly, Fein’s definition prods us to consider the use of anti-Israel “*myth, ideology, folklore, and imagery*” that mediates between anti-Jewish attitudes and anti-Israel social, legal, political and military action.

6. THE EUMC WORKING DEFINITION

In an important modern reformulation of the definition of antisemitism, the former European Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia (EUMC) established a working definition of antisemitism that is notable for its explicit recognition that “such manifestations could also target the State of Israel, conceived as a Jewish collectivity.”²¹ The US Department of State has announced that “this definition provides an adequate initial guide by which anti-Semitism can eventually both be defined and combated.”²² In particular, the EUMC definition provides several recent examples of antisemitism in public life, the media, schools, the workplace, and religious institutions that relate to this collectivity, including the following:²³

- Making mendacious, dehumanizing, demonizing, or stereotypical allegations about Jews as such or the power of Jews as collective — such as, especially but not

and Kenneth L. Marcus, “Jurisprudence of the New Anti-Semitism,” 44 *Wake Forest University Law Review* (Summer 2009), pp. 371, 375-382.

¹⁹ US Commission on Civil Rights, *Campus Anti-Semitism* (2006), p. 72, available at: <<http://www.usccr.gov/pubs/081506campusantibrief07.pdf>>.

²⁰ For a discussion of the waning influence of *The Authoritarian Personality* and an example of its continuing vitality, see Freshman, “Whatever Happened to Anti-Semitism,” pp. 318-19.

²¹ European Forum on Antisemitism, Working Definition of Antisemitism, available at: <<http://www.european-forum-on-antisemitism.org/working-definition-of-antisemitism/english>> (last visited Mar. 17, 2009).

²² US Dep’t of State, Office to Monitor and Combat Anti-Semitism, Fact Sheet: “Working Definition of Anti-Semitism” (2007), available at: <<http://web.archive.org/web/20070429125033/http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/56589.htm>>.

²³ *Ibid.*

- exclusively, the myth about a world Jewish conspiracy or of Jews controlling the media, economy, government or other societal institutions.²⁴
- Accusing Jews as a people of being responsible for real or imagined wrongdoing committed by a single Jewish person or group, or even for acts committed by non-Jews.²⁵
 - Denying the fact, scope, mechanisms (e.g. gas chambers) or intentionality of the genocide of the Jewish people at the hands of National Socialist Germany and its supporters and accomplices during World War II (the Holocaust).
 - Accusing the Jews as a people, or Israel as a state, of inventing or exaggerating the Holocaust.
 - Accusing Jewish citizens of being more loyal to Israel, or to the alleged priorities of Jews worldwide, than to the interests of their own nations.²⁶

These examples demonstrate the EUMC's insight that the putatively political or anti-Israeli cast of much anti-Israelism shrouds significant continuities with antecedent forms of the "longest hatred." In addition, the EUMC working definition provides the following examples of "the ways in which antisemitism manifests itself with regard to the State of Israel taking into account the overall context":²⁷

- Denying the Jewish people their right to self-determination....
- Applying double standards by requiring of it a behavior not expected or demanded of any other democratic nation.
- Using the symbols and images associated with classic antisemitism (e.g., claims of Jews killing Jesus or blood libel) to characterize Israel or Israelis.
- Drawing comparisons of contemporary Israeli policy to that of the Nazis.
- Holding Jews collectively responsible for actions of the state of Israel.

The EUMC emphasizes, as do virtually all commentators, that criticism of Israel similar to that leveled against other countries does not constitute a form of antisemitism.²⁸ Indeed, virtually all commentators agree that criticism of Israel is not a form of antisemitism per se.

The criteria by which antisemitic criticisms of Israel may be distinguished from other criticisms have now become largely conventional.²⁹ They include the use of classic antisemitic stereotypes, such as the demonization of Jews or the Jewish state; the use of double standards for Israel and all other nations, including denial of national self-determination only to the Jews; and holding Jews collectively responsible for Israeli policy. What these criteria have in common is that they all indicate when facially anti-Israeli expressions are in fact an expression of an underlying anti-Jewish animus.

²⁴ This "classic stereotype" criterion for the new antisemitism has been widely recognized. See, e.g., US Commission on Civil Rights, *Campus Anti-Semitism*, p. 72.

²⁵ The attribution of collective wrongdoing to particular individuals, regardless of fault, is the defining attribute of prejudice under some conceptions. See, e.g., Gordon W. Allport, *The Nature of Prejudice* (New York: Doubleday, 1958), p. 8.

²⁶ Working Definition.

²⁷ *Ibid.*

²⁸ *Ibid.*

²⁹ See Kenneth L. Marcus, "Anti-Zionism as Racism: Campus Anti-Semitism and the Civil Rights Act of 1964," *15 Wm. & Mary Bill Rts. J.* (Feb. 2007), pp. 837, 846-68.

7. JEWS AS JEWS

Whether antisemitism is directed at Jews individually or in collectivity, it consists of more (and in a sense less) than negative attitudes, ideologies, and practices *directed at Jews*. Jews form a diverse group, and they may face disadvantage because they are also gay, communist, old or disabled, and so forth. For this reason, it is sometimes said that antisemitism must be directed against “Jews as Jews,” rather than as individuals or as members of the various other groups to which individual Jews may belong.

However, this caveat may be insufficient to the extent that it does not account for the irrational quality of prejudice. In order to address the possibility that some anti-Jewish attitudes may well be deserved, the definition must exclude “realistic” assumptions. These may be understood roughly as assertions that are based on the same assumptions as those used to describe the ingroup and its members.³⁰ At a minimum, then, the negative attitudes, practices, and ideologies directed toward Jews as Jews must be based upon erroneous assumptions that flow from the application of double standards.

One implication of this principle is that anti-Israelism, to be considered antisemitic, must instantiate negative attitudes, ideologies, and practices directed at the Jewish state as a Jewish state. As with other forms of antisemitism, this form of anti-Israelism is based upon erroneous assumptions that flow from the application of double standards. This definition, then, would exclude anti-Israelism that is not based on the state’s Jewish character, which is not factually erroneous, or which does not entail the use of double standards.

8. JEWS AS NOT JEWS

Based on these insights, we may be tempted to define antisemitism as a set of negative attitudes, ideologies, and practices directed at Jews *as Jews*, individually or collectively (sustained by a persisting latent structure of hostile erroneous beliefs and assumptions that flow from the application of double standards toward Jews as a collectivity, manifested culturally in myth, ideology, folklore, and imagery, and urging various forms of restriction, exclusion, and suppression). The problem with this developing definition, however, is that its elements are in tension with one another. On the one hand, this definition asserts that antisemitism must be directed at “Jews as Jews.” On the other, it insists that this animus is based on erroneous assumptions and beliefs about Jews. The question, then, is whether antisemitism is directed at Jews or whether it is directed at a set of hostile and erroneous assumptions and beliefs about Jews.

While antisemitism is certainly directed at Jews as Jews, it occurs in a context in which Jews are perceived as being something other than what they actually are. In this sense, antisemitism is directed not at Jews as Jews, but rather at Jews as *not* Jews.³¹ The original insight here is Jean-Paul Sartre’s: it “is ... the *idea* of the Jew that one forms for himself which would seem to determine history, not the ‘historical fact’ that produces the idea.”³² Slavoj Žižek elaborated on Sartre’s insight, explaining that what antisemites

³⁰ Langmuir, “Toward a Definition of Antisemitism,” p. 328.

³¹ Brian Klug, “The collective Jew: Israel and the new antisemitism,” 37(2) *Patterns of Prejudice* (2003), pp. 123-124 (emphasis added).

³² Jean-Paul Sartre, *Anti-Semite and Jew* (George C. Becker, trans.) (New York: Schocken Books 1995), p. 16.

find intolerable and rage-provoking, what they react to, is not the immediate reality of Jews, but the image/figure of the "Jew" which circulates and has been constructed in their tradition.... [W]hat the anti-Semite tries to destroy when he attacks the Jew, the true target of his fury, is this fantastic dimension.³³

This insight is reflected in Israel Gutman's entry on antisemitism for the *Encyclopedia of the Holocaust*: "Throughout the generations, concepts, fantasies and accusations have stuck to the term that portrayed a negative cognitive and emotional web, at times independent of Jewish society as it was fashioned and existed in reality."³⁴

While the object of antisemitic attitudes may be imaginary, the object of antisemitic practice is all too real. This is the gist of Jean-François Lyotard's remark that, the "Jews" (or, as he calls this construction, the "jews") are the object of misrepresentations with which actual Jews, in particular, are afflicted in reality.³⁵ In other words, the antisemite may throw a punch at an imaginary "Jew," but it is a real Jew who takes it on the chin. While antisemitic attitudes and ideologies are typically directed at a social construct consisting of images, perceptions, stereotypes, and myths, antisemitic practices fall upon real Jews.

This insight has come slowly to otherwise perceptive students of racism. For example, in his 1995 book on *The Racist Mind*, Harvard racism scholar Raphael S. Ezequiel finds it necessary to inquire whether leaders of the white racist movement in the United States could possibly hate Jews—and insists, rather astonishingly, that the answer "is not obvious."³⁶ After all, Ezequiel reasons, these racists do not know what Jews are really like. Instead, Ezequiel finds that American white racists direct their hatred at a wildly unrealistic notion of what it means to be Jewish.

As I think about it, I see that by "the Jew," the organizer means the construct he carries in his head, a rather medieval figure who lurks behind the scenes and secretly makes conspiracy. That figure he does fear and hate with an extreme intensity. That figure is blurred in his mind with all Establishment figures in general—the heads of corporations, the heads of publishing companies, the heads of political parties, the heads of mainline churches—and he fears and hates the Establishment with passion.³⁷

From this, Ezequiel initially infers "that the leader doesn't really hate Jews, since the figure he has called 'Jews' is an imaginary one."³⁸ He is, it seems, initially unaware that this ignorance is precisely what confirms the racist's antisemitic character. It is only when it dawns on him that the figure that he is calling a "black man" similarly has nothing to do with real black people that Ezequiel is able to conclude that leaders of white racist movements hold "an extreme position as a hater of Jews."³⁹ Reflecting on

³³ Slavoj Žižek, *Violence: Six Sideways Reflections* (New York: Picador, 2008), pp. 66-67.

³⁴ *Encyclopedia of the Holocaust*, Vol. I, editor-in-chief: Israel Gutman (Yad Vashem/Sifriat Poalim, 1990; in Hebrew), pp. 98-116, quoted in Porat, "Historical Perspective."

³⁵ Jean-François Lyotard, "The jews," in *Heidegger and "the jews"* (Andreas Michel and Mark Roberts, trans.) (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press 1990), p. 3.

³⁶ R.S. Ezequiel, *The Racist Mind: Portraits of American Neo-Nazis and Klansmen* (New York: Penguin, 1996), p. 65.

³⁷ *Ibid.*

³⁸ *Ibid.*

³⁹ *Ibid.*

the parallels between anti-black racism and antisemitism, Ezequiel says that the racist “hopes to build on a white base of mass dislike and fear of African Americans; he hopes to build on mass anxiety about economic security and on popular tendencies to see an Establishment as the cause of the economic threat; he hopes to teach people to identify that Establishment as the puppets of a conspiracy of Jews.”⁴⁰

9. RAMIFICATIONS OF CHIMERICAL ANTISEMITISM

Several interesting observations have been derived from this way of thinking about antisemitism. The first is that antisemitism consists of confusing Jews with their false images. “Thinking that Jews are really ‘Jews,’” in this formulation, “is precisely the core of antisemitism.”⁴¹ In a similar formulation, it has been argued that antisemitism consists of the difference between the real Jew and the imagined “Jew” and the political ends to which this delta is applied.⁴² Dina Porat has aptly illustrated this position by contrasting the pitiful state of European Jews at the outset of World War II with the Nazis’ perception of omnipotent Jewish power.⁴³

The second observation is that the “chimerical” basis for antisemitism — i.e., its foundation upon fictional rather than realistic or xenophobic assumptions — is what makes it so virulent. Langmuir distinguishes “chimerical” prejudice from xenophobia on the ground that chimeria “present fantasies, figments of the imagination, monsters that, although dressed syntactically in the clothes of real humans, have never been seen and are projections of mental processes unconnected with the real people of the outgroup.”⁴⁴ In other words, chimeria “have no kernel of truth.” Antisemitism is the best exemplar of this concept, since hostility toward Jews is based not on actual Jews but on what the name of “Jews” has come to mean for non-Jews.⁴⁵ This is a general formulation of Alain Badiou’s observation that Nazism’s construction of “the word Jew as part of a political configuration is what made the extermination possible, and then inevitable.”⁴⁶ This “chimerical” antisemitism is unusually virulent for the same reason ascribed to racist antisemitism, i.e., because there is nothing that can be done with actual Jews that can rid them of these imaginary characteristics short of extermination.

The third observation is that this same principle underlies global antagonism toward Israel.⁴⁷ In other words, chimerical antisemitism consists of hatred aimed at false images of Israel, generally deriving from historical antisemitic stereotypes and defamations, and the extent of its potential virulence can be seen in the difference between image and reality. The latter can be seen in the contrast between Israel’s global image and its true power and status reflects the extent of antisemitic animus.⁴⁸

Anti-Israelists do not harbor animus against the actual State of Israel, nor do they address the actual historical ideology of Zionism. Rather, they direct their ire at complex

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ Brian Klug, “The collective Jew: Israel and the new antisemitism,” pp. 123-124.

⁴² Porat, “Historical Perspective.”

⁴³ Ibid.

⁴⁴ Langmuir, “Toward a Definition of Antisemitism,” p. 334.

⁴⁵ Ibid., p. 315.

⁴⁶ Alain Badiou, *Ethics: An Essay on the Understanding of Evil* (London: Verso, 2001), p. 65.

⁴⁷ Porat, “Historical Perspective.”

⁴⁸ Ibid.

social constructs that stand in for the State of Israel and for the idea of Zionism, just as classical antisemites direct their hostility at false constructs of the Jewish people. Thus, Robert Wistrich argues that

[m]uch of this anti-Semitic world view has infected the body politic of Islam during the past forty years. Its focus has become the “collective Jew” embodied in the State of Israel. Its geographic center of gravity has moved to the Middle East, but the tone and content of the rhetoric, along with the manifest will to exterminate the Jews, are virtually identical to German Nazism.⁴⁹

As with classical antisemitism, however, these ideologies and attitudes do manifest in actions undertaken against actual Jews, both individually and in such collectivities as the State of Israel and those organizations that are perceived to support it.

The fourth observation is that the chimerical definition of outgroups invariably stands side-by-side with an equal and opposing chimerical definition of the ingroup. In this way, Badiou explained that the “Nazi category of the ‘Jew’ served to name the German interior, the space of a being-together, via the (arbitrary yet prescriptive) construction of an exterior that could be monitored from the interior...”⁵⁰ In constructing the “Jew” as a despised other, both Christian and Muslim antisemites and nations have created an “interior space” for the “being-together” of their respective groups. The same function is played, in the development of both regional blocs and a new global politics, by the construction of “Israel” as a “collective Jew” with perceived sinister traits of racism, nationalism, chosenness, elitism, aggression, and criminality. By constructing and excluding a chimerical image of “Israel as a collective Jew,” anti-Israel globalists can create a space of “being-together” that is constructed from an equally chimerical image of global anti-racism, post-nationalism, egalitarianism, pacifism, human rights, and so forth.

Finally, it must be observed that the power of a chimerical animus is often strong enough to bring some outgroup members within its ambit.⁵¹ “The catch, of course,” as Žižek has explained, “is that one single individual cannot distinguish in any simple way between real Jews and their antisemitic image: this image overdetermines the way I experience real Jews themselves, and furthermore it affects the way Jews experience themselves.”⁵² That is to say, some Jews, like their neighboring gentiles, have succumbed to the stereotype that antisemites have developed about them, and they may consciously or unconsciously fear that they will personally resemble the stereotype.⁵³

10. JEWS CONSTRUCTED BY ANTISEMITISM

When we adjust our working definition to reflect Sartre’s insight, we are left with the definition of antisemitism as a set of negative attitudes, ideologies, and practices di-

⁴⁹ Robert S. Wistrich, *A Lethal Obsession: Anti-Semitism from Antiquity to the Global Jihad* (2010), pp. 5-6.

⁵⁰ Badiou, *Ethics*, p. 65.

⁵¹ Mari J. Matsuda, “Public Response to Racist Speech: Considering the Victim’s Story,” in Mari J. Matsuda, Charles R. Lawrence III, Richard Delgado, and Kimberlè Williams Crenshaw, *Words That Wound: Critical Race Theory, Assaultive Speech, and the First Amendment* (Boulder: Westview, 1993), p. 26.

⁵² Žižek, *Violence*, p. 67.

⁵³ Sartre, *Anti-Semite and Jew*, p. 95.

rected at Jews as Jews, individually or collectively, but *based upon* and sustained by a persisting latent structure of hostile erroneous beliefs and assumptions that flow from the application of double standards toward Jews as a collectivity, manifested culturally in myth, ideology, folklore, and imagery, and urging various forms of restriction, exclusion, and suppression. This is a helpful refinement, which reflects the unquestionable principle that antisemitism is based upon stereotypes and defamations rather than true facts about Jews. Unfortunately, however, it is ultimately difficult if not unsustainable to maintain a dichotomy between the truth of Jewish existence and the manner in which it is socially constructed. To the extent that a definition of antisemitism relies upon this dichotomy, it requires further development.

The problem, in simple terms, is that group defamations can become self-fulfilling prophecies. The extent to which even Jewish identity is constructed by antisemitism poses a difficult problem. When antisemites treat Jews as inferior, or demonic, they can influence the development of inferior attributes in their socio-symbolic identity. Ultimately, the “actual” Jew cannot be meaningfully distinguished from the “constructed” Jew. To some immeasurable extent, the Jew unavoidably becomes, in some meaningful sense, the object of social perceptions. Antisemitic ideology is thus said to exert a performative efficiency: it is not merely an interpretation of a pre-existing condition of Jewishness but also an imposition of characteristics onto the social existence of the people who are interpreted.

In American sociology, this follows from W.I. Thomas’s theorem that “if men define situations as real, they are real in their consequences.” Robert K. Merton reformulated this definition to say that the “self-fulfilling prophecy is, in the beginning a false definition of the situation evoking new behavior which makes the originally false conception come true.”⁵⁴ Gavin Langmuir modified Merton’s definition and applied it to antisemitism as follows: “the self-fulfilling prophecy is, in the beginning, a motivated definition of an outgroup as inferior in one fundamental way that is accompanied by treatment that evokes new behavior in members of the outgroup that seems to corroborate and strengthen the original judgment of inferiority.”⁵⁵ That is to say, when ingroups (non-Jews) have sufficient power, outgroups (Jews) may be forced to comply in important ways to the ingroup’s representations.

In European philosophy, the origin of this idea can be found in Sartre. Sartre did, after all, most famously assert that “it is the anti-Semite who *makes* the Jew.”⁵⁶ Moreover, Sartre expounded that the antisemite “makes the Jew” not only as a figment of the imagination but also in the sense of shaping the actual reality of the Jewish people. In Sartre’s materialist analysis, the antisemite shaped Jewish identity by creating economic conditions in which Jews are forced to comply with the representations that antisemites create of them. For example, when Russian Czars treated Jews as inassimilable—*butchering them in Moscow and Kiev to prevent dangers to Russia while favoring them in Warsaw to stir up dissension among the Poles*—Sartre asks, “Is it any wonder that [the Jews] behaved in accordance with the representation made of them?”⁵⁷

⁵⁴ Robert K. Merton, *Social Theory and Social Structure*, 2d ed. (Glencoe, Ill., 1957), p. 423.

⁵⁵ Langmuir, “Toward a Definition of Antisemitism,” p. 342.

⁵⁶ Sartre, *Anti-Semite and Jew*, p. 69.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 15.

More recent thinking would suggest that the self-fulfilling quality of outgroup misrepresentations arises from the use of language itself and not only from economic conditions. Some, following Heidegger, have argued that the being of the despised object cannot be distinguished from the image that we make of it. Rather, as Martin Heidegger taught, the being of things is disclosed only in the "house of being" that language makes for them.⁵⁸ In this sense, the animus that antisemites harbor toward the Jew is baked into the very name of the "Jew," as Jewish people are symbolized in the house that others' language makes for them. In one version of this argument, certain harmful linguistic practices "constitute their addressees at the moment of utterance; they do not describe an injury or produce one as a consequence; it is, in the very speaking of such speech, the performance of the injury itself, where the injury is understood as social subordination."⁵⁹ Language has this peculiar power both to create and to destroy because human beings are to some significant extent creatures of language, beings who require language in order to be. Human vulnerability to language is in this sense seen as a consequence of the human condition in which people and groups are beings defined within its terms.⁶⁰

Both Christian and Muslim antisemitism construct an ideological vision of Jews that distorts Jewish reality, just as Western and Eastern countries distort one another's reality. Violence is directed at the web of symbols, icons, values, and attitudes that have become part of the perception of Jews. Powerful emotional currents, sometimes merging with waves of frustration and despair, are condensed into images such as the supposed murder of Palestinian children. This condensation, some have argued, is a basic characteristic of language, which follows from the construction and imposition of specific symbolic fields.⁶¹

These insights on the social construction of Jewish identity require a further refinement of our definition. Under this refinement, antisemitism may now be viewed as a set of negative attitudes, ideologies, and practices directed at Jews as Jews, individually or collectively, but based upon and sustained by a persisting *and potentially self-fulfilling* latent structure of hostile erroneous beliefs and assumptions that flow from the application of double standards toward Jews as a collectivity, manifested culturally in myth, ideology, folklore, and imagery, and urging various forms of restriction, exclusion, and suppression.

11. ANTISEMITISM AND RESISTANCE

There are significant dangers, however, in this emphasis on antisemitism's potentially self-fulfilling character. In the first place, some versions of this argument overstate the extent to which antisemites shape the image and reality of what it means to be a Jew. This is because other actors play a role in this process. Second, even when antisemitism shapes the reality of Jewishness, it sometimes does so in a manner opposite to what one

⁵⁸ Martin Heidegger, "Letter on Humanism," in *Basic Writings* (David Farrell Krell, ed.) (New York: HarperCollins, 1993), p. 262.

⁵⁹ Žižek, *Violence*, p. 60; Judith Butler, *Excitable Speech: A Politics of the Performative* (New York: Routledge, 1997), p. 18 (characterizing the views of Patricia Williams, *The Alchemy of Race and Rights* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1991), p. 236, and others).

⁶⁰ Butler, *Excitable Speech*, pp. 1, 2.

⁶¹ Žižek, *Violence*, p. 60.

might expect. In some cases, in fact, antisemitism can be self-defeating rather than self-fulfilling. Finally, the process of Jewish identity-formation remains open-ended. This creates opportunities not only for defeating antisemitism but also reversing the effects that it has had on constructing Jewish individuals and collectivities.

Sartre was correct in one sense to assert that it is the antisemite who makes the "Jew." The problem with this analysis, however, is that the meaning and being of Jewishness are determined not only by antisemitic constructions but also by the constructions imposed by Jews themselves and by others who may be philo-Semiticly disposed. Hannah Arendt provided the strongest rejoinder that Jewish identity is not *exclusively* shaped by antisemitism:

[E]ven a cursory knowledge of Jewish history, whose central concern since the Babylonian exile has always been the survival of the people against the overwhelming odds of dispersion, should be enough to dispel this latest myth in these matters, a myth that has become somewhat fashionable in intellectual circles after Sartre's "existentialist" interpretation of *the Jew* as someone who is regarded and defined as a Jew by others.⁶²

Indeed, there is no reason to suppose that of all of the positive, negative, and neutral myths, ideologies, folklore, and imagery surrounding any population group that it should only be the negative—and indeed the chimerically hostile—ones that shape the identity or self-identity of even the most despised of people (other than in extreme circumstances such as Nazi Germany at the height of the Holocaust). In the Jewish case, some significant account must be made for the extent to which Jews developed and retained a distinctive and independent culture and heritage throughout Christian Europe and in the other places where Jews have lived throughout the diaspora.⁶³

Moreover, Sartre himself was careful to emphasize that antisemitism has not only self-fulfilling but also self-negating capacities. In other words, many Jews are deliberately reinforced in their inclination to be "generous, disinterested, and even magnificent" by their desire to resist the stereotype of the Jew as avaricious, venal, and rapacious.⁶⁴ In the same way, many non-Jews react negatively to antisemitic stereotypes, taking pains to counteract the effects of bigotry. In this way, antisemitism can also be self-defeating.

12. CONCLUSION

Antisemitism is a set of negative attitudes, ideologies, and practices directed at Jews as Jews, individually or collectively, but based upon and sustained by a persisting and potentially self-fulfilling latent structure of hostile erroneous beliefs and assumptions that flow from the application of double standards toward Jews as a collectivity, manifested culturally in myth, ideology, folklore, and imagery, and urging various forms of restriction, exclusion, and suppression.

⁶² Hannah Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism* (New York: Schocken Books, 2004), pp. 8-9.

⁶³ Steven Beller, *Antisemitism: A Very Short Introduction* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), p. 7.

⁶⁴ Sartre, *Anti-Semite and Jew*, p. 95.

Embracing the Nation: Jewish Assimilationist and Anti-Zionist Responses to Modernity

C.R. Power* and Sharon Power**

1. JEWS AND THE “MODERN QUESTION”

With the idealization and proliferation of the secular Christian nation-state in Europe in the modern era, power and legitimacy were for the first time seen to flow up from the people, rather than down from G-d through his sovereign. Enlightenment and post-Enlightenment thinkers adapted Hellenic democratic theory to re-imagine the *polis* as a nation whose citizens were organic members of a *body politic* with its own, presumably unique, democratic will. The normative idea that a “people” should be self-governing, that in fact any other form of political arrangement was inherently unenlightened and oppressive, informed the new delineation of states, borders and sovereignty. Membership in a people, one’s personal sense of collective identity, became of crucial political importance. One people, one nation became the rule. Thus arose “The Jewish Question,” a consideration of what the presence of the Jews meant for the modern conception of nationhood.

The idea of the Israelites representing a distinct “people” became a key problem of modernity. As the universalism of Enlightenment thinking was transformed by 19th century socialist thinkers, Jewish difference, as collective difference, remained a central problem, deemed anathema to the socialist project, this time preventing the realization of the international socialist collective rather than of the liberal democratic nation. Socialists see the coming post-capitalist era as, by definition, a post-Jewish era. Thus Jewish and non-Jewish post-Enlightenment thinkers alike, from Voltaire to Hegel to Marx, realized that the new modern forms of political organization could be – and perhaps needed to be – articulated through resolution of the “Jewish Question.”

Inverting our perspective from the majority to the minority group, we can see how the Enlightenment brought with it for the Jews what we might call the “Modern Question.” The implicit question of modernity was an existential ultimatum: are you one of “us,” a legitimate member of the “people” of a given nation-state or international collective – which is by definition non-Jewish – or are you a separate “people,” an alien presence on the body of the nation? Jews have responded to this ultimatum in various ways, but two strong and conflicting answers were to emerge.

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The first response is the reaffirmation and reframing of Jewish difference that came to be expressed as Zionism. In an era when all rights flow from “peoplehood” and citizenship in a “nation,” one way for Jews to access those rights is by asserting their difference, breaking off from the nations in which they live and demanding equal rights as a separate “people.” This response eventually led to the founding of a modern Jewish nation-state, Israel.

The second response, which is the primary focus of this paper, is the negation of Jewish difference, which we classify as an assimilationist response. The new nation-state model held out the inherent promise of equality to Jews, since citizenship rights were granted to all simply by virtue of one’s belonging to the “people.” The secularizing impulse of modernity also meant that religious difference became privatized and ostensibly depoliticized. Under these conditions, Judaism could be tolerated as long as it was exclusively a personal faith. Thus, as a logical part of their assimilationist strategy to obtain equal civil rights, Jewish Reformers and *maskilim* worked to reformulate Jewishness exclusively into an expression of personal faith, with absolutely no national or political affiliation. Our proposal in this paper is that the major Jewish assimilationist responses to modernity, from the Enlightenment’s liberal and Reformist responses through 20th-century socialism, universalism and anti-Zionism, are driven by this impulse to deny Jewish difference and Jewish collectivity.

It is crucial here to define our use of the term assimilationist as a central element of our analytical framework. Some scholars use “assimilationism” in a way that might more accurately be termed “adaptationism”: the impulse of Jews to divest themselves of particular signs of difference in order to adapt to mainstream society. For our purposes, assimilationism is not merely a passive adoption by Jews of non-Jewish cultural, linguistic or national identity markers, but rather an active ideological compulsion towards the eradication of Jewish difference. Thus, one might be a highly assimilated Jew, but not necessarily an assimilationist. The unending need to identify, vilify and ultimately negate threatening Jewish difference is the key distinguishing marker of assimilationism as an active, politically salient ideology.

These two primary orientations, the one Zionist, the other assimilationist, characterize the ongoing Jewish response to the “Modern Question.” They are also perceived, particularly by assimilationists, as existentially threatening to one another. If Jews do indeed share some sort of national, and therefore political, association, how can they rightly demand access to belonging, and its attendant civic rights, in another nation or international collective? The question of Jewish “dual loyalties” persists to this day, although the language may have shifted from conflicting “Jewish loyalty” to conflicting “Zionist loyalty.” The assimilationist response, in its purest expression, has remained profoundly hostile to Zionism as an expression of Jewish difference, as it must indeed be hostile to any expression of Jewish difference. By tracing the major strategies that Jewish post-Enlightenment thinkers have utilized in their quest for political emancipation, we can gain a broader understanding of the connections between early assimilationist responses to the “Modern Question” and contemporary Jewish anti-Zionist thought.

2. ASSIMILATIONIST STRATEGIES

The rest of our paper outlines the major types of Jewish assimilationist strategies, which we have divided into three categories: the first is political apostasy, the personal renun-

ciation and emphatic negation of Jewish “peoplehood”; the second is the “modernization” of religious Judaism so as to make it represent Enlightenment values; and the third is the strategy of positioning oneself as the “good Jew” in a “good Jew/bad Jew” dichotomy.

A. *Political apostasy*

Political apostasy eventually came to replace religious apostasy as a means for Jewish assimilation and emancipation. In the secularized modern world, a world where religious affiliation had ostensibly been subordinated to the political, the source of Jewish difference was re-centred onto the political as well. Whereas, in the Medieval era, conversion to Christianity theoretically allowed Jews to neutralize Jewish difference, promising an end to religious persecution, political apostasy carries with it a promise to end Jewish political persecution. All one has to do is reject one’s political difference through the emphatic negation of Jewish “peoplehood.” This can be clearly seen, for example, in the Statement to Napoleon made by the Assembly of Jewish Notables in late 18th century France, in which the Assembly stated:

France is our country; all Frenchmen are our brethren.... At the present time, when the Jews no longer form a separate people, but enjoy the advantage of being incorporated with the Great Nation (which privilege they consider as a kind of political redemption), it is impossible that a Jew should treat a Frenchman, not of his religion, in any other manner than he would treat one of his Israelite brethren.¹

Similar statements of political apostasy can be found throughout the Western European debates on “The Jewish Question,” in which many Enlightened Jews hastened to claim their rights as emancipated citizens of the states in which they lived by denying any separate national or political claims as Jews.

Another aspect of political apostasy is the defence of Judaism as exclusively religious in nature to renounce all threatening political difference. This became a core tenet of the radical Reform Judaism movement of 19th century Germany and America. At the Second Reform Rabbinical Conference at Frankfurt in 1845, where the president charged speakers to “beware of creating any doubt concerning their allegiance to the state,” one speaker, Rabbi Samuel Holdheim, saw Zionism as contradicting German Jews’ patriotic “feeling for the fatherland.”² He asserted, “Our nationality is now only expressed in religious concepts and institutions...,” cautioning that, with respect to Judaism in Germany, “One must not mistake a national for a religious phenomenon, otherwise many abuses could be justified.”³ The same strain carried through the radical Reform movement in America into the late 19th and 20th centuries. The Platform of the Reform Rabbinical Conference in Pittsburgh, the basic statement of Reform Judaism from 1889 until 1937, included a principle rejecting Zionism and any restoration of laws formerly pertaining to the Jewish state based on the premise, “We consider ourselves no longer a

¹ The Assembly of Jewish Notables, “Answers to Napoleon” (1806), in *The Jew in the Modern World: A Documentary History*, edited by Paul R. Mendes-Flohr and Jehuda Reinharz (New York, Oxford University Press 1980) p. 116.

² The Reform Rabbinical Conference at Frankfurt, “The Question of Messianism” (1845), in *The Jew in the Modern World*, *supra* note 1, at p. 163.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 164.

nation but a religious community...."⁴ Even after the Second World War, by which time the mainstream Reform movement had rejected many of its earlier assimilationist and anti-Zionist positions, the earlier radical Reform version of political apostasy continued in a small segment of American Reform organizations, such as the staunchly patriotic and anti-Zionist American Council for Judaism.

For socialist and universalist Jewish thinkers, who reject nationalism on the basis of Enlightenment universalist values, the same impulse has led them to advocate political assimilation into an implicitly non-Jewish international proletariat. The important impulse to note here is not the type of collective into which the Jew is "assimilating," but rather the *Jewish* collective that is being negated in the process. Marx, being one of the earliest "post-Jewish" internationalists, and certainly the most influential, adapted the assimilationist strategy to international socialism. When religious conversion proved insufficient to convince his fellow thinkers that he was not a Jew, Marx seemed compelled to negate his own Jewishness by promoting an end to all Jews, as Jews, everywhere. His famous statement, "The *emancipation* of the Jews is the emancipation of mankind from *Judaism*,"⁵ can be read as a personal secular declaration of apostasy from political Jewishness, as well as a statement of orthodox international socialist dogma.

Universalist Jewish thinkers throughout the 20th century have echoed Marx's political apostasy, asserting, as did Marx, that the disavowal of Jewish difference is the first necessary step in the eradication of all political difference. Isaac Deutscher, who coined the term "non-Jewish Jew" in a lecture given to the World Jewish Congress in 1958, deeply admired those Jews who had, in his view, risen above Jewishness to approach the greatness of universal human values. For Deutscher, Jews such as Spinoza, Heine, Marx, Rosa Luxemburg, Trotsky, Freud and himself belonged to a Jewish tradition of dissent against Jewish separatism. Deutscher said that these "non-Jewish Jews" "went beyond the boundaries of Jewry. They all found Jewry too narrow, too archaic, and too constricting. They all looked for ideals and fulfilment beyond it, and they represent the sum and substance of much that is greatest in modern thought...."⁶

B. "Modernization" of Judaism

A second, related, assimilationist strategy is to reformulate and represent Judaism as a thoroughly modern faith, an expression of the political, cultural and ethical ideals of the Enlightenment. For early radical Reformist Jews and for secular universalist Jewish thinkers, Judaism needed to be expunged of any threatening non-Enlightenment aspects, particularly tribalism, separatism and exceptionalism. Some 19th century Jewish thinkers, such as Martin Buber, while remaining committed to some form of Jewish spiritual and even national collectivity, nonetheless set about modernizing Jewishness by arguing that Judaism itself, properly realized, was actually the truest expression of universal Enlightenment values of rationality, justice and individual freedom. Isaac Deutscher uses this strategy in the abovementioned quote about "non-Jewish Jews."

⁴ Conference of Reform Rabbis, "The Pittsburgh Platform" (1885), in *The Jew in the Modern World*, *supra* note 1, at p. 371.

⁵ Karl Marx, "On the Jewish Question," in *The Marx Engels Reader*, 2nd edition, edited by Robert C. Tucker (New York, W.W. Norton & Company 1978) p. 49 (original emphasis).

⁶ Isaac Deutscher, "The Non-Jewish Jew" (1958), in Isaac Deutscher, *The Non-Jewish Jew and Other Essays*, edited by Tamara Deutscher (London, Merlin Press 1981) p. 26.

Deutscher believed that Jews' unique positioning on the borderlines of nations and cultures grants them special access to universalist values that reject as oppressive the very existence of different nations, cultures and religions.

Building on the work of earlier Enlightenment Jewish thinkers who modernized Judaism in this way, contemporary Jewish anti-Zionist "post-identity" thinkers have thoroughly modernized Judaism and stripped it of all notion of separate collectivity. Judith Butler's "Jewishness" conforms to this model. When she asks the question, "But what if one criticises Israel in the name of one's Jewishness, in the name of justice...?"⁷ "Jewishness" in this quote becomes synonymous with Justice and, for Butler, whose body of work has been dedicated to self-proclaimed subversive activist politics, "Jewishness" becomes synonymous with "dissent." She writes that it is wrong "to suppose that criticism is not a Jewish value, which clearly flies in the face not only of long traditions of Talmudic disputation, but of all the religious and cultural sources that have been part of Jewish life for centuries."⁸ In so doing, she decontextualizes the Jewish tradition of oral dispute such that the entirety of Judaism itself becomes, in practice, this "disputation" [read dissent]. It is this decontextualized practice of Jewish dissent, emblematic of certain Enlightenment values, that becomes for universalist Jews the *true* Judaism in which they clearly sees themselves, but not Zionists Jews, reflected.

C. Being a "Good Jew"

The third major strategy used by assimilationists seeks to allow a certain sub-set of Jews to gain access to non-Jewish national or international belonging by insisting on a differentiation between the "good Jew" and the "bad Jew." When used as an assimilationist strategy, the "good Jew" is that Jew who has been stripped of any and all threatening signs of Jewish difference, which are then displaced onto the "bad Jews." The "good Jews" can point to those "bad Jews" who insist on Jewish separateness, using them as a foil to prove their own successful assimilation into the non-Jewish collective.

This strategy is necessary because of the "double bind" identified by Sander Gilman. The Enlightenment held out the promise of emancipation if only Jews would disavow their difference, and yet at the same time this promise proved to be false.⁹ A Jew always somehow remains a Jew, different, foreign, no matter how strenuously they may protest otherwise. The next logical move is to claim: I may be Jewish, but I am not like "those Jews." Unable to de-Judaize themselves through political apostasy and secularization, these "non-Jewish Jews," to use Isaac Deutscher's terminology, have typically fallen back on the strategy of loudly and even violently distancing themselves from other Jews, whom they represent as "those Jewish-allied Jews," the "bad Jews."

Since the Enlightenment in Western Europe as well as in America, it has often been the Eastern Jew, stereotyped as religious, poor and backward, who served as the "bad Jew" in this dichotomy. In 18th and 19th century Germany, the *maskilim* sought to differentiate themselves from the religious and backward Eastern European Jews, while in France and

⁷ Judith Butler, "No, it's not anti-semitic," *London Review of Books* 25(16) (August 2003) p. 19.

⁸ *Ibid.*

⁹ For a detailed discussion, see the first chapter of Sander Gilman, *Jewish Self-Hatred: Anti-Semitism and the Hidden Language of the Jews* (Baltimore, MD, The John Hopkins University Press 1986).

Holland Sephardim fought for emancipation on the grounds that in dress, refinement, morality and intellect they were completely unlike and superior to the German and Polish Ashkenazim, who were largely viewed as unmodern and external to the nation.

In the latter half of the 20th century, Jewish anti-Zionist thought has also emerged to rely heavily on the good Jew/bad Jew strategy. In this case, the bad Jews are the backward, tribally oriented Zionists, while the good Jews are those enlightened few who have moved beyond Judaism to join in the universal movement against Israeli state power. All contemporary Jewish anti-Zionist thinkers emphasize that the Jewish community can be divided into two groups: the Zionist majority and the oppressed anti-Zionist minority. They stress that the main strategy of the Jewish anti-Zionist movement must be, in Butler's words, to "widen the rift between the State of Israel and the Jewish people in order to produce an alternate vision of the future."¹⁰

Much like how some of those assimilationist Jews who used this strategy in centuries past tacitly, or even overtly, justified discrimination and hatred of certain "bad Jews," so too do contemporary anti-Zionists justify and even advocate antisemitism against Zionist Jews. Indeed, one of the primary arguments of Jewish anti-Zionist thought is that Zionism is the main cause of antisemitism in the world today, due to its conflation of Jews with Israel and its commission of evil acts in the name of all Jews. As in centuries past, the assimilationist assertion is that Jews who want to get rid of antisemitism need to disavow Jewish difference and eschew those Jews who refuse to do so. Thus, Jews who refuse to reject Zionism should expect, and deserve, antisemitism directed towards them. Zack Furness, editor of the online journal *Bad Subjects* published out of the University of California at Berkeley, complains that the brunt of the resentment against Israeli policies will "most likely be shouldered by American Jews." He laments, "We are the ones who will be forced to deal with the backlash of Zionist policies that we are encouraged to support."¹¹ Referring to this antisemitic backlash, he says, "If Jews are willing to uncritically take that chance, then they have no right to complain when they themselves have collapsed the distinction between Zionism and Judaism."¹²

Then there is Michael Neumann's disconcerting essay "What Is Anti-Semitism?" in which we are informed that, due to the Zionist conflation of Jews and Zionism, since anti-Zionism is just and good, antisemitism should also be seen as just and good. He argues that if Zionists insist on labelling as antisemitic any opposition against Israel and against any Jew who is complicit in Israeli war crimes by refusing to denounce Israel, then both anti-Zionism and antisemitism must be, as he puts it, a "moral obligation."¹³ Besides, Neumann continues, antisemitism is not that bad, "simple hostility" towards Jews and Jewish culture is "harmless,"¹⁴ and, anyway, those Jews who refuse to renounce Zionism and Jewish tribalism – which he characterizes as "racism, pure and simple; the valuing of one's blood over all others"¹⁵ – deserve whatever they get. His final sentences are especially revealing in their callousness. He says:

¹⁰ Butler, *supra* note 7.

¹¹ Zack Furness, "Anti-Zionism is NOT Anti-Semitism," *Bad Subjects* 77 (2000).

¹² *Ibid.*

¹³ Michael Neumann, "What is Anti-Semitism?" in *The Politics of Anti-Semitism*, edited by Alexander Cockburn and Jeffrey St. Clair (Petrolia, CA, CounterPunch 2003) p. 3.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 6.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 10.

The scandal today is not anti-Semitism but the importance it is given. Israel has committed war crimes. It has implicated Jews generally in these crimes, and Jews generally have hastened to implicate themselves. This has provoked hatred against Jews. Why not? Some of this hatred is racist, some isn't, but who cares? Why should we pay any attention to this issue at all?¹⁶

In Neumann's essay, we can see how the Jewish assimilationist strategy, which seeks to deny Jewish difference and allegiance, can and does lead in a reasonable and not unexpected way to the phenomenon of some Jews actively promoting antisemitism against their fellow Jews.

3. CONCLUSIONS

Political apostasy, modernization of religious Judaism, and being on the right side of the good Jew/bad Jew dichotomy: this is the internal logic and modus operandi of Jewish assimilationism. The pertinent question at this point, particularly given the context of these proceedings (a conference on antisemitism) is, of course, is Jewish assimilationism antisemitic? This is a complex question, but it would seem that the impulse to eradicate Jewish difference, be it from a national or international collective, is qualitatively anti-Jewish both in intent and effect. If a Jew feels the need to neutralize Jewish difference, he or she has already internalized the antisemitic belief that Jewish difference is inherently threatening. While universalists like Butler or Deutscher may claim that their location as "non-Jewish Jews" is somehow positive and progressively working towards the subversion of hegemonic nationalisms, their logic is inconsistent, since the neutralization or eradication of "Jewish Jews" can only serve to reinforce nationalism's at times genocidal, xenophobic tendencies. Of course, there is an important space for dissent and negotiation within the global Jewish community, but if one values Judaism and Jews, one must also guard against impulses that are ultimately anti-Jewish. It is crucially important to distinguish between those Jewish voices who argue for an expansion of the theoretical and practical boundaries of belonging by insisting on their belonging in more than one nation – those Jews, for example, who assert their identity as both American and Jewish – and those who are working from a point of view which views Jewish difference as a problem that can only be overcome with its own erasure.

¹⁶ Ibid., p. 12.

Nationalism and Antisemitism in the Postnational Constellation: Thoughts on Horkheimer, Adorno, and Habermas

Karin Stoenner* and Johannes Hoepoltseder**

1. INTRODUCTION

Since the works of critical theory on antisemitism and the authoritarian personality in the 1940s, the close connection of nationalism to antisemitism has been broadly recognized not only by critical theorists but also by other philosophers, such as Hannah Arendt. This close connection has been analyzed in detail with regard to the development of the European nation-states in the 19th century (e.g., Massing 1959; Arendt 1951; Claussen 1994) as well as the history of the 20th century, where it found its culmination in the Shoah (cf. Horkheimer & Adorno 2002; Lepsius 1990). Yet, the end of the Shoah and the National Socialist regime marked the end of neither nationalism nor antisemitism. The close intertwining of the two phenomena also persisted, for example in the manifold strategies of denial of memory and responsibility for the Nazi crimes.¹ But also today, in times of economic crisis, patterns of antisemitism and nationalism are (re)activated and interwoven in simplistic explanations of the world that personalize social structures and attribute guilt and responsibility for socially induced problems to precast figures. It seems that, especially in post-Holocaust societies, exclusionary nationalist identification cannot do without antisemitism, in whatever latent form, as this combination seems to meet the need for certainty, stability, and unambiguous belonging in crisis-ridden periods (cf. Stoenner, Bischof & Rajal 2011).

In this paper we would like to highlight how the intertwining of nationalism and antisemitism is theorized, especially in critical theory. In doing so, we will briefly refer to Habermas' concept of constitutional patriotism and interpret it as a normative foil for what he calls a postnational identity. Against this concept we will contrast Horkheimer's and Adorno's analysis of nationalism as a founding moment of modern society. The aim is to tackle the question why nationalism persists in spite of the nation-state's partial loss of its objective function at the political level (e.g., in the European Union) and also in the context of an increasingly globalized economy (cf. Sassen 2009; Sklair 2006). However, we view contemporary nationalism not simply as a reaction to internationalization

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¹ This can be observed, for example, in the debates on nationalism and revisionism concerning the public exposure to the Nazi past carried out in the German media in the mid 1980s between Habermas and Ernst Nolte (Habermas et al. 1987), among others.

and the fragmented modes of contemporary identification, that is to say, not as a mere antimodernist and reactionary strain. Instead, this paper focuses on the dialectics of social structures, with the aim of showing that they intrinsically provoke nationalism and antisemitism. Thus, nationalism belongs to the very form in which society is organized. With this we come to the related question of antisemitism and how the close intertwining of both phenomena depends upon the same basic social structures. Thus, neither antisemitism nor nationalism are viewed as a unitary or static phenomenon, but rather as being conceived in their continuities and discontinuities.

2. HABERMAS' CONCEPT OF CONSTITUTIONAL PATRIOTISM

Let us start with Habermas' concept of constitutional patriotism, which he began to develop in the course of the Historians' Debate (Habermas et al. 1987) as a critical and cosmopolitical alternative to nationalism (see also Habermas 1987, 1992). With the term constitutional patriotism, Habermas tried to theorize the dissolution of the traditional close link of republicanism and nationalism (Habermas 1998: 116). The central statement suggests that the unquestioned need of belonging on the part of the individuals would be met by identifying with universal values rather than a country of origin. The love of one's nation would then be based on the love of freedom and human rights for which this nation stood and would no longer recur onto essentialized and ethnicized moments (cf. Habermas 1998: 36ff., 1992: 642).

What is important to note is that constitutional patriotism does not replace national identification of the citizens, but rather gives it a reconciled notion (cf. Fine & Smith 2003: 470). Habermas somehow wants to rescue the possibility and legitimacy of national identity for post-Holocaust Germany. Constitutional patriotism means a decoupling of national identification and nationalism on the cognitive and emotional level; it stands for a national feeling that is ripped of pathological nationalism and instead is founded on a form of civic solidarity and citizenship (Habermas 1998: 116). This concept has been widely accepted (cf. Delanty 2005; Beck 2003) but also criticized (Fine & Smith 2003; Claussen 2004). According to Detlev Claussen, Habermas' argumentation in the course of the Historians' Debate shows that he did not critically supersede the terms and categories of the revitalized nation-state with which his revisionist adversaries confronted him. Instead, he adopted them himself, though in a different manner. Thus Claussen criticizes that the national would also have displaced the social in Habermas. Instead of overcoming the principle of national identification in its consequent critique, Habermas would have tried to alter national identification and make something republican—a sound patriotic feeling—of it (Claussen 1994: 25ff.). This critique is in line with Adorno's analysis of nationalism, which starts from the assumption that, due to a relentless dynamic between the two aspects, a clear demarcation of a "sound national feeling" from pathological nationalism is impossible. For Adorno the problem in any national feeling is that it is still founded on the (often blind) identification with the nation or group, in which the individuals find themselves by chance (Adorno 1997b: 589).² Thus, the very form of identification and collectiv-

² In *Meinung Wahn Gesellschaft*, Adorno writes: "Gesundes Nationalgefühl vom pathischen Nationalismus zu scheiden, ist so ideologisch wie der Glaube an die normale Meinung gegenüber der pathogenen; unaufhaltsam ist die Dynamik des angeblich gesunden Nationalgefühls zum überwertigen, weil die Unwahrheit in der Identifikation der Person mit dem irrationalen Zusammenhang von Natur und Gesellschaft wurzelt, in dem die Person zufällig sich findet." (Adorno 1997b: 589)

ity formation that is also the basis of a so-called sound national feeling, or patriotism, *per se* bears exclusion of those considered as others.

While for Habermas the term nationalism seems to be reserved for ethnic nationalism, his concept of constitutional patriotism very much resembles civic nationalism (cf. Fine & Smith 2003: 470). Meanwhile, Rogers Brubaker—like Anthony Smith (1995: 101) and Ulrich Beck (2003: 462)—points to the exclusionary force not only of ethnic nationalism but also of its civic variant. The civic model of nationalism, Brubaker writes (1999: 64), shows an extraordinary power of exclusion on the global level. While it is undoubtedly inclusive in that it includes all citizens regardless of gender, ethnic background, religion, class, and the like, all which is not part of the nation is potentially excluded.

On a global scale, citizenship is an immensely powerful instrument of social closure.... Access to citizenship is everywhere limited; and even if it is open, in principle, to persons regardless of ethnicity, this is small consolation to those excluded from citizenship, and even from the possibility of applying for citizenship, by being excluded from the territory of the state. (Brubaker 1999: 64)

But even within the nation-state's borders, concerning those who are included as citizens, the civic model of nationalism implies the assertion of an internal homogeneity and thus the exclusion of the "other," as Ulrich Beck argues with regard to the contradiction of citizen equality and social inequality in Western welfare states.

Within the national paradigm, what does this equality rest on in western welfare states? It rests on the formal equality of the citizens: income differences between men and women, places of residence, etc. do not endorse differentiated citizen status. All the individuals of a nation have the same rights and duties; differentiated citizenship status is unacceptable. This legally-sanctioned citizen equality corresponds to the guiding nation-state principle of cultural homogeneity (language, history, cultural traditions). The national principles of inclusion and exclusion thus determine and stabilize the perceptual boundaries of social inequalities. (Beck 2003: 462)

These methodological and epistemological reflections imply that the concept of constitutional patriotism still relies on the national principle of inclusion and exclusion that it simultaneously criticizes. For Beck, this is the result of a conceptual narrowing that he calls "methodological nationalism." He demonstrates how such discourse extrverts those exclusionary mechanisms that are only seemingly overcome inwardly.

Already in the early history of the nation-state, this kind of inward homogeneity was demanded. All those who did not conform completely to the given norms were likely to be regarded as a "nation within the nation," and thus as endangering the community. In 18th century revolutionary France, when Jewish emancipation became popular, Jews faced this dialectic of the civic nation, since they were confronted with an unequivocal choice between the Jewish community and the national community of the *citoyens*. It was seen as an insurmountable contradiction to belong to both.³ Jews should be included as

³ We find this stance toward Jews as citizens of the modern nation clearly expressed by Stanislas Marie Adelaide, Comte de Clermont-Tonnerre, a liberal aristocrat and speaker at the French National Assembly, who made a statement in 1789 which—as Natan Sznajder (2010) puts it—became constitutive of Jewish modernity after the French Revolution: "We must refuse everything to the Jews as a nation and accord everything to Jews as individuals. We must withdraw

individuals and not as a community with equal rights. This implies a non-recognition of the dialectics of equality and difference, and its abolition in repressive unambiguousness. Later, in 19th century, after assimilation and acculturation had widely diminished Jewish difference, the compulsion of unity and unambiguousness resulted in the re-fabrication of Jewish difference in racist antisemitism. Other than in the period of the Enlightenment, when Jews had been deemed capable of being integrated into the nation as individuals, they were now seen as mere representatives of a newly constructed notion of race, as a biologized total other. This construction was needed as a clear-cut opposition to the construct of the nation that had become increasingly *völkisch* (Braun 1990; Gilman 1993). Jews were viewed as a non-nation, or even as an anti-nation and a rootless anti-people (Postone 1988; Rensmann 2004: 74), and thus served as a projection screen for the fears concerning the antisemites' own fragile identity and unity. What seems to flee from and contradict a national description of the world and its constraint of unambiguous identification becomes manifest in the image of the Jew as rootless, mediating, inorganic, and abstract, viz. the non-nation or non-identity (Horkheimer & Adorno 2002: 164ff.; Holz 2001: 108; Rensmann 2004).

The image of the Jew as the non-identical that contradicts national unity, itself a result of collective canalization and projection, served as a basis for the murderous project of National Socialism, as Horkheimer and Adorno note:

No matter what the makeup of the Jews may be in reality, their image, that of the defeated, has characteristics which must make totalitarian rule their mortal enemy: happiness without power, reward without work, a homeland without frontiers, religion without myth. These features are outlawed by the ruling powers because they are secretly coveted by the ruled. (2002: 164ff.)

This expresses the dialectic of the nation, for which the ethnic notion of the nation is an ideal type, but which, to a certain degree, also concerns the civic notion of the nation. The equality of all citizens that the civic model guarantees is maintained only on an abstract level. It stands in open contradiction to the concrete inequalities in terms of political participation and distribution of the nation's wealth. In this very gap between abstract equality and concrete inequality, Horkheimer and Adorno locate the reason for the rage that is discharged on the Jews as a minority.

Coming back to Habermas, it is important to note that he situates nationalism in the framework of economic and social processes of modernization: nationalism therefore would be a specifically modern manifestation of collective identity (Habermas 1987: 165), a modern phenomenon of cultural integration (Habermas 1992: 634). But (and this reflection is a prerequisite for his concept of constitutional patriotism) the exaltation of pathological nationalism in National Socialist Germany and the associated "shock" thereafter would have led to a disruption of the narratively constructed continuity of

recognition from their judges; they should only have our judges. We must refuse legal protection to the maintenance of the so-called laws of their Judaic organization; they should not be allowed to form in the state either a political body or an order. They must be citizens individually. But, some will say to me, they do not want to be citizens. Well then! If they do not want to be citizens, they should say so, and then, we should banish them. It is repugnant to have in the state an association of non-citizens, and a nation within the nation. ... In short, Sirs, the presumed status of every man resident in a country is to be a citizen." (Quoted in Sznajder 2010: 429)

Germany's national history (Habermas 1987: 167); and this disruption would preclude recourse to nationalism as means for collective identity formation in Western societies today. From this perspective, nationalism today appears as an anachronistic, irrational, outdated tradition.

3. HORKHEIMER'S AND ADORNO'S VIEWS ON NATIONALISM

However, the crucial question—why nationalism constantly reappears as an ideological pattern of cultural integration and the problem of its persistence and current effectiveness—is thereby not tackled. Max Horkheimer devoted his attention to exactly this problem after returning from American exile. His thoughts on nationalism were guided by the assumption—based on insights gained in the *Studies on the Authoritarian Personality*—that various ideologies such as nationalism and antisemitism (and also ethnocentrism and sexism) belonged to *one*—antidemocratic—attitudinal syndrome. In this broader ideological system, they are not only interrelated but can also avow for and intensify each other. Thus, if antisemitism and open racism are tabooed to a certain degree, like in Germany and Austria after the collapse of the Nazi regime, a functionally equivalent ideology can come to the fore, underneath which the dynamics of the other nonetheless still operate. In this specificity, Horkheimer located the topicality of nationalism as a catalyst of antisemitism after 1945, concluding: “Der neue Götze ist das nationale *Wir*.” (Horkheimer 1985: 139). This new idol, the “national us,” met the need for collective and exclusionary identification that had previously been characteristic of Nazi antisemitism.

Horkheimer's and Adorno's analysis encodes the dialectics of nationalism and shows that its undoubted discontinuity after 1945 served to enhance exactly those social structures that incite (nationalist) exclusive identification. Horkheimer's and Adorno's point is that nationalism and the need for it is not to be viewed as a shortcoming of the individuals who cannot cope with modernity. Instead, the very predisposition of modern individuals to identify in a nationalist way is intrinsically modern and not an antimodernist strain. The more individualization is emphasized in a society that actually denigrates the individual, the more the need for collectivity is pronounced on the part of the individuals. Thus, modernity itself leads to collectivization.

Accordingly, Horkheimer's theory of nationalism is centered on considerations concerning the relationship of the particular and the general, the antagonism of the individual and the collective. This contradictory relationship that he recognized as a basis of nationalism can already be observed in the ambiguous concept of the classic liberal individual, which contains aspects of the *bourgeois* and the *citoyen*. While “as bourgeois the individual needs to think and act selfishly,” as a citizen or “citizen, the individual has to care for society and the nation” (Jikeli 2010: 7). Still, in the progressive phase of bourgeois society, particular and general interests were—in spite of the antagonism—mediated to a certain degree by the ideas of the Enlightenment, whose aims, while not entirely fulfilled in material life, nevertheless also transcended the actual mode of sociation. The aim of a new social order, reflecting the principles of freedom, equality, and solidarity, and the corresponding activity of the collective gave sense and purport to the individual's struggle for self-preservation, and in the form of universal rights they served the good of society as a whole. In this development, the legitimacy of the bourgeois individual as well as of the collectivity can be found. However, this legitimacy intrinsically belonged to liberal capitalism. Its abolition in the course of the constitutional centration and centralization of capital,

the monopolization of the means of production, and the disappearance of the mediating sphere of circulation—in late capitalism circulation is increasingly taken over by monopoly—had a deep impact on the bourgeois subject: under late capitalist conditions it lost its economic basis. In psychoanalytical terms, the autonomy of the bourgeois subject and its conscience, manifest in the conflict of superego and id, have fallen out of use due to the changed circumstances. The result was an increasing outer-directedness of the individual (Riesman 1989), whose behavior, in contrast to progressive activity in the liberal era, was reduced to mere conformism, as noted by Alex Demirovic (1992: 25). The individuals are lost in the compulsion of their careers, or they become “national comrades” who enthusiastically swear off senseless individuality (Horkheimer 1988a: 171).⁴ With the decline of its objective conditions, the bourgeois subject loses its function, and reason, formerly the organ of self-preservation, vanishes. Mere adjustment to blind progress then seems to be reasonable, rather than the establishment of the right society. Conformism is the unquestioned subordination under the status quo, the assimilation to reality without contradiction.

Like the bourgeois subject, nationalism might also have had legitimacy in the early days of the newly-founded nation-states in the 19th century. It expressed an overall progressive orientation, overthrowing the old feudal order. But the antagonism that had its basis in the unreconciled contradiction between an abstract demand for liberty, equality, and solidarity, on the one hand, and the real competition between the individuals, on the other, also manifested in nationalism from the very beginning. Furthermore, nationalism was not only a progressive means of social development but to a great extent also a reaction to modern secularization processes that performed together with the development of the modern nation-state. Nationalism thus served the compensatory function of filling the gap that the loss of religion had left. Identity is not formed out of itself but via mediation with something else, be it religion or Marxism as its “secular form” (Horkheimer 1988a: 428). The irrefutable need to belong to a superordinate concept is explained by the increasing weakening of individuality. And as the demand for self-determination and the conscious design of history, as expressed in Marxism, are blocked like religion, the individuals seek sanctuary in nationalism. This is one reason for the considerable mythologizing tendency in nationalism (Klinger 2008), such as the whole idea of the nation resembling an “imagined community” (Anderson 1991). The idea that the nation’s origins were located in immemorial times of humankind, as *völkisch* nationalism suggested, corresponded to the need to give the new bourgeois order the veneer of eternity (Benjamin 2003). This already implied a standstill in social development. If the bourgeois subject, characterized by autonomy and free will, already was in need of reassuring ideologies such as nationalism, then this was even more the case after the liberal individual, the *bourgeois*, had lost its foundation through the transition of capitalism from liberalism to monopoly.

This structurally mediated socio-psychological development is a major basis of the manipulative and authoritarian character that Horkheimer already described as the mental and spiritual glue of society, the “geistiger Kitt der Gesellschaft,” in his studies

⁴ “Mit dem Zerfall der Einheit des gesellschaftlichen und des partikularen Interesses ... werden die Individuen in der bürgerlichen Epoche zu Getriebenen ihrer Laufbahn, oder zu Volksgenossen, die der sinnlosen Individualität in heller Begeisterung entsagen....” (Horkheimer 1988a: 171)

on authority and the family in 1936 (Horkheimer 1988b: 345). This character formation, specific to the years before the Second World War, was marked by an ambivalence between subjection and rebellion, as well as by an extreme narcissism that came together with a lack of affects. As a result, loyalty to the nation is perverted into “complete and unconditional identification of a person with the group to which he happens to belong. He is expected to surrender completely to the ‘unit’ and to give up all individual particularities for the sake of the ‘whole.’” (Adorno 1997a: 491) The reason for this blindness and lack of self-inspection with regard to identification is that the antagonism between the particular and the general has not been reconciled. The structural antagonism corresponds to the two contradictory demands within the individual—to serve a common goal as well as individual self-preservation. The modern individual is not capable of mediating this contradiction. Instead, it has been repressively removed at the structural level of society, where the general directly usurps the individual (Adorno 1997d: 380). But here the crucial point is that the general does not serve the “whole” but the particular interests of the ruling elites. The general is in fact the particular, while the real general interest—in freedom, equality, and solidarity—is eroded. Thus, for Horkheimer, nationalism is a tool of manipulation in the interest of the “rackets” (Horkheimer 1988a: 381), functioning as an integrating ideology, and the nation is the form of organization these rackets use to push through their own interests to the disadvantage of society as a whole. “That the whole would be the nation is pure ideology,” he writes elsewhere.⁵ Due to its own dialectics, the principles of the Enlightenment have been ideologically perverted and thus resulted in persisting inequality and oppression (Horkheimer & Adorno 2002). In reality, the imagined unitary community is fragmented and the collective not nearly as homogeneous as imagined in nationalism.

Still, this society pretends to be purely individualistic, thus confronting the modern individual with demands he cannot cope with since he has lost the characteristics of an autonomous subject. The fact that the vain individual is hypostatized as an autonomous subject in a period when the conditions for autonomy are not sufficient forces individuals to stick to forms of collectivization. But collectivization in turn reaffirms their very helplessness and powerlessness. Still, collective identification has its specific logic, as the individual (unconsciously) experiences that his particular needs are constantly neglected in the triumph of the collective. According to Adorno, late capitalist society creates circumstances that frustrate individuals’ narcissism so constantly that they seek refuge in collective narcissism. By identifying with the collective, the individuals are given back a little bit of self-esteem, only to be dispossessed of that self-esteem by the same collective (cf. Adorno 1997b: 589; cf. Adorno 1997c: 681).⁶

⁵ “Daß das Ganze die Nation sei, ist reine Ideologie. Der Nationalismus steht im Gegensatz zum Wohl der Gesellschaft, obwohl er das Wohl des Ganzen als seine Parole ausgibt.” (Horkheimer 1988a: 334)

⁶ “Man müsste nur die Normen des bürgerlichen Privatlebens ernst nehmen und zu gesellschaftlichen erheben. Aber eine derart gutmütige Empfehlung verkennt die Unmöglichkeit, daß es dazu komme unter Bedingungen, die den Einzelnen solche Versagungen auferlegen, ihren individuellen Narzißmus so konstant enttäuschen, sie real so sehr zur Ohnmacht verdammen, daß sie zu kollektivem Narzißmus verurteilt sind. Ersatzweise zahlt er ihnen dann gleichsam als Individuen etwas von jener Selbstachtung zurück, die ihnen dasselbe Kollektiv entzieht, von dem sie die Rückerstattung erhoffen, indem sie wahnhaft mit ihm sich identifizieren.” (Adorno 1997b: 589)

4. THE CONNECTION BETWEEN NATIONALISM AND ANTISEMITISM

Unambiguousness, authenticity, rootedness, unity – these are issues that characterize nationalism as well as antisemitism. They are effective devices to cover the actual antagonisms along which society is organized. In order to establish unity amidst antagonistic circumstances, a negative foil against which the self can be drawn as unambiguous and homogeneous is needed. The predetermined enemy confirms the triumph of repressive equality that the concept of the nation stands for. In the history of the European nation-state, the role of the negative foil, the non-identical, was traditionally attributed to Jews – they were regarded as a nation within the nation, as not belonging to the nation, or even as an anti-nation (Rensmann 2004: 74). This is worked out in detail by Paul Massing (1949), but also by Horkheimer and Adorno in the *Dialectic of Enlightenment*. Jean-Paul Sartre (1962) analyzes the history of the European Jewry and the development of antisemitism in Europe as processes independent of each other. In this view, the antisemitic personality invents the “Jew” according to his psychic economy, which, in turn, reflects the specific constellations of society. In contrast Sartre, Horkheimer, and Adorno advance a dialectical approach in which they stress the relationship between antisemitic imaginary and Jewishness. Still, the relationship is not perceived as direct or causal, but as mediated. In 1944, when they wrote the *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, Horkheimer and Adorno described two opposing points of view concerning Jews and antisemitism:

For the fascists the Jews are not a minority but the antirace, the negative principle as such; on their extermination the world’s happiness depends. Diametrically opposed to this is the thesis that the Jews, free of national or racial features, form a group through religious belief and tradition and nothing else. Jewish traits relate to Eastern Jews, and only to those not yet assimilated. Both doctrines are true and false at the same time. The first is true in the sense that fascism has made it true. The Jews are today the group which, in practice and in theory, draws to itself the destructive urge which the wrong social order spontaneously produces. ... The other, liberal thesis is true as an idea. It contains an image of the society in which rage would no longer reproduce itself or seek qualities on which to be discharged. (Horkheimer & Adorno 2002: 137ff.)

This is reflected in nationalist antisemitism that views the Jews as the anti-nation endangering national unity and identity. In today’s crisis-ridden society, there are also considerable insecurities concerning one’s own national identity and rootedness. The individual can barely absorb these insecurities psychically, which is why the feelings of discomfort are discharged and projected onto the Jews as an imagined homogeneous community. As Klaus Holz (2004: 55) points out, the figure of the anti-national Jew contains the fear and – it should be added – the wish that the world could possibly not be organized along the national principle anyway. But, in fact, the world is only superficially organized along the national principle, with the nation leading the individuals to believe in a homogeneity and unity that does not exist in reality. If we refer to the nation as an imagined community, this means that the world is actually organized according to another category – class and its antagonism – that is forcefully blocked out in nationalist ideology, where the contradiction between the particular and the general is abolished only in order to be confirmed in particularistic unity.

Thus, we have to understand both nationalism and antisemitism as intertwining ideological patterns based on structural specificities of modern society and not as mere prejudices on the part of individuals. This implies that they cannot be opposed by alluding to the fact that antisemitic representations do not mirror reality but stem from universal delusion. They are furthermore not to be viewed as an outdated attitude of some of modernization's losers but as emanations and expressions of a deeper problem that must be the real object of critical analysis: the antagonistic, though forcefully tranquilized, relationship of the individual and society, of the particular and the general. This antagonism, already evident in the division of the individual into *bourgeois* or *citoyen* in the liberalist era of capitalist society, is a major source of the need for national hold in a purportedly postnational era and the need for collectivization in an era of alleged individualization. A critical theory of society has to analyze these needs not simply as pathological but as situated within the real living conditions and the form of sociation and collectivization. From this perspective, we can find logic in nationalism even today. Hence, Horkheimer wrote that, if there were not a portion of truth to nationalism, it would not be so easy to manipulate people against their own interests (Horkheimer 1988a: 337).⁷ Criticizing this ideology means recognizing the "truth" in it and changing society in such a way that the need underlying the ideology is satisfied without the pathological deformations of nationalism and antisemitism (Horkheimer & Adorno 2002: 180).

So, while Habermas seems to put forward a rather narrow understanding of nationalism, reducing it to the ethnic variant, the older critical theory of Adorno and Horkheimer develops a broader understanding of nationalism and nationalist exclusion that is also useful for an analysis of the continued existence of nationalism and antisemitism, namely that it is situated at the very centre of modern identification and the constraint on unambiguously identifying with a group one happens to belong to. This includes not only the ethnic variant of nationalism but also the civic variant, and thus what Habermas calls the "postnational constellation." As exclusionary identification is regarded as an aspect of modern sociation, the persisting need for nationalist identification despite European integration can be explained from a structural point of view without reducing it to a mere individual matter. Instead, the European integration process that undoubtedly calls nationalist identification into question at the same time dialectically reproduces the need for exactly this exclusionary form of identification in that it hypostatizes individuality without really providing the conditions for living it.

What in Habermas' concept of constitutional patriotism marks the impossibility and illegitimacy of ethnic nationalism today—the Shoah—has in reality been taken as a starting point for massive nationalist (and also antisemitic) resurrections since 1945. This can be plainly observed in the manifestations of secondary antisemitism, as well as in the process of the restoration of collectivity that began immediately after the collapse of the Nazi regime. The national collective had to be restored, and one major means for this was the invention of collective guilt. In this process of collectivizing and thus neutralizing guilt—because when all Germans are equally guilty nobody is actually responsible—Horkheimer (1996: 814ff.) located the continuity of the national collective in Germany,

⁷ "[W]enn im Nationalismus nicht ein Stück Wahrheit steckte, wären die Menschen auch nicht durch ihn zu manipulieren." (Horkheimer 1988a: 337)

the satisfaction of the need for national and collective hold. The discontinuity in the national narrative that the Shoah has brought about and which Habermas sees as the starting point for a new, postnational form of identification, has been bridged successfully, and a new national *we* was created on the very ruins of National Socialism. Like secondary antisemitism, nationalism also persisted not only in spite of the Shoah and National Socialism but *because* of it. It is a means to establish continuity by bridging the disruption of civilization. It is a means of getting rid of the Nazi past without working through it.

5. CONCLUSION: ANTISEMITISM AND POSTNATIONALISM

The intersection of antisemitism and nationalism is thus still at work today. What has changed is the level at which antisemitic stereotypes are produced in Europe. This no longer occurs at a purely national level but increasingly at a supranational, allegedly postnational level (cf. Wistrich 2005; Taguieff 2002; Finkielkraut 2004). This goes hand in hand with a certain change in antisemitic stereotypes. While in 19th century's political antisemitism the "Jew" was feared within the nation, as an anti-national figure that questioned the national principle (cf. Massing 1949; Holz 2001), this is no longer exclusively the case. Since the inauguration of the Israeli nation-state, and more obviously since 1967, antisemitic discourses, particularly those of the Left, no longer paint the "Jew" as representative of the anti-national. Today the "Jew" functions as a personification of the very principle of the national that the postnationalists themselves pretend to have overcome. Jewishness is at least as commonly associated with aggressive nationalism as with cosmopolitanism. This is part of a "new antisemitism" in Europe, "manifested *inter alia* in the depiction of Israel as a uniquely illegitimate state or people, Zionism as a uniquely noxious ideology, supporters of Israel as a uniquely powerful lobby and memory of the Holocaust as a uniquely self-serving reference to the past." (Fine 2010: 416) This form of antisemitism (cf. Rabinovici, Speck & Sznajder 2004) singles out the Jewish nation-state as anachronistic in an otherwise postnational era. Thus, it operates with similar, if not the same, anti-Jewish stereotypes as the nationalist variant. In the disguise of anti-Zionism, nationalism and antisemitism can thus be acted out without arousing suspicion. The agents of these single-edged discourses can still represent themselves as anti-nationalists. But negatively it manifests the widespread need for national hold in an allegedly postnational era.

A major problem with the concept of postnational identity is that, even if it is advanced as part of an emancipatory movement, it still sticks to the principle of identification that is at the very heart of nationalism. After the disruption brought about by the Shoah, modernity did not reflect upon its intrinsic pathologies as sufficiently as Habermas' concept seems to suggest. Modernity did not overcome nationalist identification. Habermas is undoubtedly looking for a political community that does not incite antisemitism and nationalism. Given his vehement opposition to revisionism in the course of the Historians' Debate, we cannot say that for him the problem of antisemitism is a problem of the past, as highlighted by Robert Fine:

What to my mind rescues Habermas from this mode of "historicising" antisemitism, that is, locating it in the past, is the active and practical engagement with memory of the Holocaust he demands of the new Europe. He was one of those protagonists of

the new Europe who in the words of Tony Judt saw it as “bound together by the signs and symbols of its terrible past” and as “forever mortgaged to the past.” The commitment Habermas expresses is to teach afresh to each passing generation the story of Europe’s murder of its Jews in order to “furnish Europe’s present with admonitory meaning and moral purpose” (Judt 2007: 831). (Fine 2010: 413)

A reductionist view of Habermas’ concept of postnationalism overlooks how much the past continues to weigh upon the present and converts it “from a demand for European self-reflection on its own murderous past into an uncritical resource by means of which we Europeans can again label the Other barbaric and defend ourselves as the civilised continent” (Fine 2010: 415). Meanwhile, Habermas’ own concept unwillingly seems to invite this reductionist view.

Habermas insists on the necessity of a postnational society today: anything else would be out of date, an anachronism hindering social development. But this perspective ignores the system-enhancing function of nationalism in an era that is not oriented toward real progress in the sense of an emancipated society but is characterized by a static if not backward orientation, by what Walter Benjamin (2003), with reference to Nietzsche, called the eternal return of the same.

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Modern Capitalist Society, Competing Nation States, Antisemitism and Hatred of the Jewish State

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1. INTRODUCTION

The fear of losing national identity and the power of nation states has once again become popular in Europe in the context of the discourse against so-called globalisation, the “unification” process in the European Union and, most recently, the financial crisis. In the context of the European Union, some observers have argued that the concept of the nation state based on ethnic or religious definitions has transformed into a transnational identity. The idea of a post-national era with a common identity and collective memory was promoted during the reforms.¹ Furthermore, scholars such as Bunzl have argued that, in the age of the formation of a European identity, antisemitism would decline and Muslims would serve as the new scapegoats in the construction of a common European identity.² But in fact the opposite is true. Rather than disappearing, the nation state as a regulator and the concept of the nation as an identity have remained, and the Jews are once again serving as scapegoats. Antisemitic statements and attacks have become more frequent and aggressive since the Al-Aqsa Intifada of 2000, the anti-American attacks on 9/11 and well over a hundred terrorist suicide bombings targeting and killing as many Jews as possible—mostly in Israel. In Europe, the mass killing of Jews in Israel and antisemitic attacks in Europe were partly rejected as antisemitic, but often (at least partly) rationalised as a form of resistance against the “Israeli occupation”. Hating the Jews has once again become popular in Europe and is partly authorised in the mainstream media—especially in the guise of Israel bashing.

Different studies show that classic modern antisemitic perceptions of national and international socio-economic processes have once again become prevalent. Over 40 per cent of Europeans agree that Jews have too much power in the business world and in

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¹ See, for example, the debate among European intellectuals started by Jürgen Habermas and Jacques Derrida. Habermas and Derrida urged a common post-national European identity and foreign policy against the US during the Iraq War. “Nach dem Krieg: Die Wiedergeburt Europas”, *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, May 31, 2003.

² See, for example, M. Bunzl, “Zwischen Antisemitismus und Islamophobie. Überlegungen zum neuen Europa”, in J. Bunzl and A. Senfft (eds.), *Zwischen Antisemitismus und Islamophobie. Vorurteile und Projektionen in Europa und Nahost* (2008) pp. 53-74, esp. pp. 61-74.

international financial markets.³ Over 30 per cent blame Jews in the financial industry (at least partly) for the economic crisis.⁴ Almost half of interviewees agree that Jews are more loyal to Israel than to the country where they live.⁵ In a country like Spain, 58 per cent of Spaniards agree with statements such as “Jews are very powerful because they control the economy and the media”.⁶ The European unconscious knows about the Jews: they are “not true citizens”, they “stick together”, they have built an “artificial state” on others peoples’ land and they dishonestly exploit and dominate nations as an alien power through the financial markets and the media. What kind of perception of the world do these people have and how is it related to the functioning of current society?

To understand some of these dynamics, this paper analyses some of the connections between the system of competing nation states, capitalist society, modern antisemitism and hatred of the Jewish state. In order to do so, I will focus on two elements of thought in our societies and their connections to antisemitism and anti-Zionism.

First, I will focus on the role of the *system of competing nation states*, with their hegemonic ideological rationales: the republican and the primordial or ethnic nation model. Both hegemonic ideological concepts have a specific impact on the perception of “the Jews” and Israel. Inclusion and exclusion, citizenship, rights of the individual guaranteed by the state and the right of a “nation” to its “own” state depend on the ideological rationalisation of these rationales.

Second, I will touch upon the relation between the largely *impersonal processes and functioning of modern capitalist societies* and modern antisemitism. How do individuals perceive structures, processes and exploitation in our society? What kind of connections exists between these perceptions and antisemitism?

Finally, I will argue that a specific connection between both these elements (the nation state concept and the perception of the functioning of society) forms the basis for conspiracy theories, which are projected onto Jews. One central problem in attempts to combat antisemitism is not only that there are Jewish stereotypes but also that the above-mentioned elements, which form the basis of conspiracy theories and eliminatory antisemitism, cannot be easily deconstructed in the society we are living in.

2. ANTISEMITISM AND THE PERCEPTION OF THE WORLD

In his essay “Portrait de l’antisémite”, Jean Paul Sartre commented that antisemitism is not just a matter of taste, a question of whether or not you like “the Jews”.⁷ Rather, he emphasised that antisemitism is a world view that is not limited to being against the Jews. He noticed that one cannot be an antisemite without further intellectual principles

³ The poll by the Anti-Defamation League was conducted between December 1, 2008 and January 13, 2009 in Austria, France, Hungary, Poland, Germany, Spain and the United Kingdom. See Anti-Defamation League, *Attitudes Toward Jews in Seven European Countries* (February 2009) pp. 6-7, available at: <http://www.adl.org/Public%20ADL%20Anti-Semitism%20Presentation%20February%202009%20_3_.pdf>.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 16.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 5.

⁶ Casa Sefarad Israel. *Estudio Sobre Antisemitismo en España — Informe de Resultados*. Estudio realizado por Instituto DYM (July 2010) p. 86, available at: <http://sefarad-israel.es/otros/10550125_inf_rev%207-9.pdf>.

⁷ J.-P. Sartre, *Anti-Semite and Jew* (Paris: Schocken Books 1948).

and described elements of this specific way of interpreting social processes and structures in modern capitalist societies. In particular, he mentioned specific perceptions not only of the nation but also of ownership structures, exploitation, money and so forth.

Adorno and Horkheimer,⁸ and later Postone,⁹ in particular, have examined the relationship between a specific *fetishised* perception of modern capitalist society and antisemitism. They state that, based on a fetishisation of capitalist structures, antisemites relate a negatively perceived, “artificial”, “abstract sphere” (banks, stock markets, individuals, intellect, money, etc.) to the Jews, as opposed to a “concrete sphere” (concrete work, production, factories, etc.), which is perceived as good and organic and related to the nation/people/Volk, that is to say, as being not Jewish.

In these antisemitic projections, Jews are non-workers, exploiters, intellectuals, bankers and stockbrokers, in contrast to the national community, which consists of “real workers” and honest, productive industries. In the Nazi ideology, this culminated in the odious sign over the gates of the forced labour, concentration and extermination camp Auschwitz, “Arbeit macht frei” (literally “Work will make you free” or “Work liberates”).

3. COMPETING NATION STATES AND ANTISEMITISM

I want to highlight that the concept of the nation plays a significant role in modern antisemitism. Even if traditional and religious elements take part in a transformed form, modern antisemitism is related to modernity and the current form of social organisation, namely modern capitalist society. We live in a society in which the political regulation of the economy¹⁰ and the construction of identity¹¹ are built up, *inter alia*, by competing states, namely nation states. Even if there are transnational dimensions of political regulation of economic processes, the main players are still nation states competing with each other. Furthermore, the nation state is the only institution to be addressed by political actors and movements, especially in times of crisis. What kind of relation exists between the state and the population?

There are two predominant rationales for the inclusion of individuals in and the exclusion of individuals from nation states. They are those ideological rationales that legitimate the rights of citizens, the existence of the state and the extension of state territory. First, there is the republican concept based on the rationale that all the individuals living in a territory are members of the nation and therefore receive citizens’ rights. Secondly, there is the primordial concept based on genealogies: either “völkisch”, ethnic, cultural or religious.¹² It is important to note that under the hegemonic interpre-

⁸ See M. Horkheimer and T. Adorno, “Elements of Anti-Semitism: Limits of Enlightenment”, in *Dialectic of Enlightenment: Philosophical Fragments* (Stanford University Press 2002) pp. 137-172.

⁹ M. Postone, “Anti-Semitism and National Socialism”, in Anson Rabinbach and Jack Zipes (eds.), *Germans and Jews since the Holocaust. The Changing Situation in West Germany* (New York/London 1986).

¹⁰ B. Jessop, *State Power: A Strategic-Relational Approach* (Cambridge: Polity 2006).

¹¹ See B. Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London, Verso 1991).

¹² These two models are the hegemonic forms in Western societies, but there are also other models. Unfortunately, I cannot focus here on other societies, such as Arab societies, the complex situation of colonial and post-colonial nation-building or the competing ideologies of nationalism: pan-Arabism and Islamism.

tation you can only be part of one nation: one person—one nation.¹³ And, in the face of competing nation states, you have to serve the interest of “your own” nation only.¹⁴ Both concepts, the republican and the primordial one, have a specific impact on the perception of Jews and Israel.

4. JEWS, CITIZENSHIP AND LOYALTY TO THE NATION

Consider the republican perspective towards the Jews in the 19th century. Those who supported the political emancipation of Jews regardless of their religion and culture often did not like the fact that religious Jews still believed in the Jewish religion. Religious Jews were perceived as “obstinate”. Secularised Jews who held on to Jewish heritage and rejected assimilation into secularised Christian culture were perceived as “others”. The price or expectation for the right of political emancipation was assimilation into Christian secularised culture, often without naming it as such. If Jews assimilated but still claimed to be Jewish, this contradicted the loyalty of the nation concept: one nation for each citizen.

In the case of the primordial nation concept, three rationales can be distinguished: religion, culture and “Volk”. If the rationale of the nation was based on religion, it was Christian. If the concept was based on culture, it often (implicitly) signified a secularised Christianity, which did not include any explicit Jewish heritage. If the concept was based on “Volk” (a German concept), it included a genealogy of blood, and the Jews could therefore not be part of the nation. Within the framework of these concepts, assimilated Jews, in particular, were suspected of destroying the nation from within. A different situation arises when we touch upon the perception of the Jewish state of Israel.

5. THE JEWISH STATE OF ISRAEL, NATION AND TERRITORY

When one looks at Israel and its perception through the lens of the primordial and republican rationales of the nation, one can observe some interesting changes. First of all, there is the traditional anti-Jewish concept: the *primordial* or *ethnic* one. This concept can be found among self-identified right-wingers as well as some left-wingers. From this perspective, a nation is established through genealogy: ethnic, cultural, religious or other. Some consider the Jews a nation, but most do not because they are perceived as a “mixed race” or just as a religion living as “guests” among nations. Their fathers and mothers do not have the same blood. But even if the Jews are considered a nation, the nation concept connects population and territory in a specific way. Under this concept, a nation is constituted through a particular form of genealogy of the population living “forever” in a common territory—an “autochthonous” population. From this perspective, Jews should not be allowed to live in Palestine as a nation, since the so-called Palestinian nation (which is perceived as Arab) has lived there forever. The “autochthonous” Palestinians have the right to live in Palestine, while Israel as an “artificial” construct has to disappear. This concept goes together with such expressions as “Israel

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ This point comes up in times of crisis and war, but is also related to the tax system, elections, the issue of social welfare and so forth.

as a cancer", "colonisers", "imperialists", "occupiers of Palestine" and so forth. Under this primordial concept, there is no space for the Jews, neither as "guests" among the "autochthonous" populations of Europe nor in Palestine.

This brings us to the liberal or leftist *republican concept* and its position towards Israel. Under the republican concept, a primordial concept is against universalistic principles. Different concepts related to Israel can be found, which at the end of the day all serve as political ammunition against Israel as a Jewish state. Firstly, there is the concept that every nation state has to disappear (the *post-national* perspective). The focus is mostly on Israel, since it is one of the more recent states to be established. From this perspective, the deconstruction of nation states should therefore start with Israel. But the concept of the *one-state solution*, a common Jewish-Palestinian state, also means the destruction of the Jewish state. A *two-state solution*, with equal rights for Palestinians and Jews in Israel would also cause problems given the demographic situation, even without considering the "right of return" of the so-called refugees. But what is emphasised most in this perspective is the fact that Israel defines itself a Jewish state. Whether it does so ethnically or religiously, either definition reminds the European "progressives" of their history.¹⁵ Whether it is the religious definition stemming from feudalism or the ethnic definition prevalent in modern capitalist societies, both definitions are seen as having been transcended in Europe and should therefore be overcome in general. From this "progressive" perspective, a nation state with a definition of citizenship based on ethnic or religious genealogy is perceived as racist and something that should be opposed. These universalistic rationales, which historically supported the political emancipation of the Jews in Europe regardless of their ethnic, religious or cultural genealogies, are now being used by the strongest enemies of the Jewish state. Such universalistic perspectives have become a rationale for opposing the existence of the Jewish state. The system of competing nation states and their hegemonic rationales does not include a Jewish state, which can serve as a state of refuge for all persecuted Jews or as a nation state for the Jews.

6. ISRAEL, JEWS IN THE DIASPORA AND DISLOYALTY

What kind of situations do Jews who are not living in Israel face in the context of a system of competing nation states? From the point of view that every citizen is part of one nation and has to serve the interests of their nation state, every Jew is perceived as potentially disloyal towards the state where they are living. The traditional general suspicion of disloyalty of Jews becomes worse when it comes to Israel. In a society based on competing nation states, every Jew is potentially accused of being more loyal towards Israel than to their nation state. Furthermore, as Israel is the only nation state in the world that threatens to be exterminated along with its population, every Jew speaking out against this threat is automatically perceived as a "Zionist" force. In the perception of antisemites, every Jew is an Israeli ambassador and is treated as such.

7. IMPERSONAL RULE, STRUCTURES AND PROCESSES AND ANTISEMITISM

I want to come back to the second aspect of modern capitalist societies mentioned in the introduction, namely the impersonal functioning of such societies and the perception of

¹⁵ I wish to thank Robert Fine for some ideas in this regard.

processes and structures. How is the functioning of capitalist societies perceived and how does this relate to antisemitism?

In contrast to feudalism, exploitation and the production of wealth is not effected through immediate personal dominance in capitalist societies. No individual is physically owned by another. Modern capitalist societies are based on contracts between "free" and "equal" legal entities. Every individual has to sell their labour power on the market if they do not have property for everyday production. The employer does not own the employee. Modern society is based on modern private property and on contracts between "independent" and "equal" individuals. The employer contracts the employee. The employee is "free" to choose the employer. The employee produces wealth for the employer and the employee is paid for his or her daily production. If the employee does not receive enough money for his or her daily production, no one is directly responsible. The employee can "choose".

Especially during crises, when employees earn less, employers cannot accumulate capital and the state can no longer regulate, a responsible party is searched for. In the common perception, banks, stocks, shareholders, multinational companies and politicians are held responsible. People search for culprits and personalise the responsibility of the impersonal capitalist accumulation processes. This is the point where the system of competing nation states is relevant. When the political regulation of the nation state is not able to guarantee a minimum amount of wealth for the daily production of its population, "foreign forces", "traitors", "stockholders", "banks" and "corrupt politicians" are blamed. The "cosmopolitan" Jews, who are "everywhere", have no fatherland and are not perceived as part of the nation are thus blamed for the misery and the social processes that are perceived as being bad.

This specific connection between the perception of the impersonal functioning of capitalism and the system of competing nation states culminates in the Jews being blamed for a "global conspiracy". The Jews are perceived as acting against nations, either from within those nations or against the Palestinians, Arabs or Islam. If the Jews contradict the existence of the nation state and if they are to blame for the above-mentioned misery, as they are according to this perception, in the logic of the antisemites there is only one possible way of dealing with them... This perception of the world therefore makes antisemitism the most dangerous ideology in society today.

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