The Working Definition of Anti-Semitism – Six Years After

Unedited Proceedings of the 10th Biennial TAU Stephen Roth Institute's Seminar on Anti-Semitism

August 30 – September 2, 2010

Mémorial de la Shoah, Paris
Contents

Introduction

The EUMC 2005 Working Definition of Antisemitism

Opening Remarks: Simone Veil, Yves Repiquet

Rifat Bali, "Antisemitism in Turkey: From Denial to Acknowledgement – From Acknowledgement to Discussions of Its Definition"

Carole Nuriel, "History and Theoretical Aspects"

Michael Whine, "Short History of the Definition"

Ken Stern, "The Working Definition – A Reappraisal"

David Matas, "Assessing Criticism of the EU Definition of Antisemitism"

Dave Rich, "Reactions, Uses and Abuses of the EUMC Definition"

Esther Webman, "Arab Reactions to Combating Antisemitism"

Joel Kotek, "Pragmatic Antisemitism: Anti-Zionism as a New Civic Religion: The Belgium Case"

Michal Navot, "Redux: Legal Aspects of Antisemitism, Holocaust Denial and Racism in Greece Today"

Karl Pfeifer, "Antisemitic Activities of the Austrian 'Anti-Imperialists Coordination' (AIK)"

Raphael Vago, "(Re)Defining the Jew: Antisemitism in Post-Communist Europe-the Balance of Two Decades"

Marcis Skadmanis, "The Achievements of Latvian NGOs in Promoting Tolerance and Combating Intolerance"

Yuri Tabak, "Antisemitic Manifestations in the Russian Federation 2009-2010"

Irena Cantorovich, "Belarus as a Case Study of Contemporary Antisemitism"

Jeremy Jones, "The Asian Pacific Experience-the Dubious Relevance of European Declarations in the Third World"
Luiz Nazario, "The Bad Assimilation of the Holocaust: A Brazilian Case"

Haim Fireberg, "Confronting New Antisemitism: From Working Definition to Model Law and Back"

Pierre-André Taguieff, "La nouvelle propaganda 'antisioniste', ou la reinvention de la question juive"

Concluding Remarks: Joseph Bollag, Dina Porat,
The Seminar Statement

Photos

Seminar Program

List of Participants
Introduction

Definitions of antisemitism have been formulated ever since the term was coined, in Germany in 1870 by Wilhelm Marr. They were mostly the product of the intellectual effort of scholars, some of them self declared antisemites, and were published in their writings and in a large number of lexicons and encyclopedias.

The European Union Monitoring Council (EUMC) Working Definition of antisemitism, drafted and adopted in early 2005 differs from the previous ones in a number of aspects. First, its formulation was preceded by the joint, and not an individual, efforts of many scholars, activists and institutes. Second, it is not a theoretical academic one, but rather aims at being a practical guide for identifying antisemitism. Third, being a practical guide it does not try, as the former definitions have, to explain the reasons and developments from which antisemitism originates.

This 2005 definition was hailed as both an achievement and a landmark for all those concerned about monitoring antisemitism and the struggle against it.

In 2010, more than five years after its formulation, and in view of the ten years of new antisemitism, the time was ripe to re-examine the definition, its advantages and disadvantages, its successes and failures. Indeed, the idea to have our 10th biennial seminar focus on the impact that the definition has had thus far, was met with many warm responses, and with suggestions for sessions and presentations: does the definition need additions, or corrections? Does it have a practical impact on monitoring and analyzing of antisemitic incidents? What is its contribution to sensitive current issues, such as double loyalty, relations between antisemitism and anti-Zionism, relations and tensions inside Jewish communities, among them, and between them and local societies? Who actually adopted it and uses it, and how? What are its prospects in the near future? The seminar presentations addressed these issues, as well as some legal aspects and shed light on the situation of antisemitism in selected countries in all regions across the globe.

The idea to meet in Paris was met with no less enthusiasm. Many warm thanks are due to the Memorial de la Shoah, headed by Jacques Fredj, and to its staff, headed by Karel Frakapane, who all hosted us with friendship and generosity. We wish to thank all the participants, who came from all over the globe – from Australia to Turkey and from Venezuela and Brazil to Russia – it is always such a pleasure to meet; the chairpersons, always carrying out a difficult task; those who provided us
with opening remarks, especially Mme. Simone Veil and Mr. Yves Repiquet who graced the opening session with their presence and insight; Mr. François Zimeray, Special Representative of the French Foreign Minister, who hosted a reception for us in the elegant premises of the Quai d'Orsay. Most of the participants took the time and trouble to set pen to paper and sent us their presentations for this publication – Thank you!

We have included the seminar's statement. I kindly ask that you please pay special attention to it and feel free to distribute it.

Finally, as always, many thanks are due to the Institute's staff, especially to Ronit Greenfeld.

The seminar was a great success. Many warm and even enthusiastic reactions were sent to Tel Aviv and to Paris in its wake. Therefore it is with great pleasure and satisfaction that this modest publication is being offered to the participants and to all interested, accompanied by the hope that all of the Institute's ten seminars have proved to be of both a personal and a professional value to us all.

Dina Porat and Esther Webman,
Tel Aviv University
July 2011
The purpose of this document is to provide a practical guide for identifying incidents, collecting data, and supporting the implementation and enforcement of legislation dealing with antisemitism.

Working definition: *Antisemitism is a certain perception of Jews which may be expressed as hatred toward Jews. Rhetorical and physical manifestations of antisemitism are directed toward Jewish or non-Jewish individuals and/or their property, toward Jewish community institutions and religious facilities.*

In addition, such manifestations could also target the state of Israel, conceived as a Jewish collectivity. Antisemitism frequently charges Jews with conspiring to harm humanity, and it is often used to blame Jews for "why things go wrong." It is expressed in speech, writing, visual forms and action, and employs sinister stereotypes and negative character traits.

Contemporary examples of antisemitism in public life, the media, schools, the workplace, and in the religious sphere could, taking into account the overall context, include, but are not limited to:

- Calling for, aiding, or justifying the killing or harming of Jews in the name of a radical ideology or an extremist view of religion.
- Making mendacious, dehumanizing, demonizing, or stereotypical allegations about Jews as such or the power of Jews as collective — such as, especially but not exclusively, the myth about a world Jewish conspiracy or of Jews controlling the media, economy, government or other societal institutions.
- 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.
- 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.

Examples of the ways in which antisemitism manifests itself with regard to the state of Israel taking into account the overall context could include:
• Denying the Jewish people their right to self-determination, e.g., by claiming that the existence of a State of Israel is a racist endeavor.
• 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.

However, criticism of Israel similar to that leveled against any other country cannot be regarded as antisemitic.

Antisemitic acts are criminal when they are so defined by law (for example, denial of the Holocaust or distribution of antisemitic materials in some countries).
Criminal acts are antisemitic when the targets of attacks, whether they are people or property—such as buildings, schools, places of worship and cemeteries—are selected because they are, or are perceived to be, Jewish or linked to Jews.
Antisemitic discrimination is the denial to Jews of opportunities or services available to others and is illegal in many countries.
Simone Veil

Opening Remarks

Mesdames, Messieurs,

D’abord, je veux souhaiter ici à chacune et chacun d’entre vous, experts et chercheurs, la bienvenue.

Nous sommes réunis ce jour pour discuter du racisme et de l’antisémitisme, échanger connaissances et analyses. C’est un progrès formidable !

Avant d’être l’apanage des scientifiques que vous êtes, avant d’être expliqué, disséqué, dénoncé par les historiens, combattu par les femmes et les hommes politiques, et je crois avoir contribué à ce combat, l’antisémitisme, ce crime de la pensée, a si longtemps été considéré comme une opinion, un peu extrême certes, mais banale.


Nous savons, ce Mémorial a pour mission de le rappeler et de l’enseigner, où conduit l’antisémitisme. Pour ma part, je ne le sais pas : je m’en souviens.

Après la Shoah, longtemps, l’antisémitisme s’est glissé dans les recoins les plus obscurs des passions humaines, là où jamais n’entre la raison.

Ce fut le temps de l’antisémitisme des nostalgiques du nazisme, jeunes écervelés en manque de repères ou vieillards battus par l’Histoire. Nous considérions alors l’antisémitisme comme un mal inexorable, aux marges de la vie politique, quantité négligeable qu’il fallait surveiller, parfois punir, mais qui ne nous menaçait plus.

Nous nous trompons, lourdement.

Sur le terreau des conflits au Proche-Orient, autour de la question des territoires, un antisémitisme nouveau, virulent et dangereux a prospéré, bien au-delà de son cercle traditionnel.
Je n’irai pas plus loin, devant vous, sur l’analyse de cet antisionisme délirant qui voit s’acoquiner les extrêmes, gauche et droite, autour d’un ennemi commun. Je n’analyserai pas les causes sociales et politiques qui font qu’un Roger Garaudy est considéré, dans certains pays, comme un penseur majeur. Je me bornerai à constater la résurgence préoccupante, dans les pays musulmans mais aussi en Europe, chez les intégristes ainsi que dans une certaine frange éduquée de la population que la défense légitimes des droits du peuple palestinien conduit aux amalgames, de l’antisémitisme et à la tentative de délégitimisation de l’État d’Israël.

Je veux, en revanche, m’attarder quelques instants sur un autre terreau, moins connu, plus difficile à aborder, sur lequel prospère l’antisémitisme. J’entends ici parler de l’instrumentalisation de la Shoah.

De plus en plus souvent, cet événement unique, historique, est utilisé comme un rappel, une sonnette d’alarme, pour condamner des événements effectivement condamnables et appeler à la vigilance, voire au sursaut démocratique. Cette banalisation de la Shoah, bien plus insidieuse, à laquelle nous-mêmes, parfois, sans doute, nous laissons prendre, ce rappel compulsif aux années trente chaque fois qu’une situation politique peut le suggérer, sont aussi favorables à la résurgence de l’antisémitisme qu’un discours de haine. Plus, peut-être, car sous prétexte de condamner, ils banalisent.

Et ceux qui n’ont pas connu les conséquences ultimes de l’antisémitisme, ceux-là ne mesurent plus ces conséquences. Dans un monde où chacun crie au loup, les enfants finissent par ne plus en avoir peur mais surtout la Shoah, cet événement sans précédent, se voit diminué, rabaisssé, au même plan qu’un fait d’actualité.

Longtemps, la France a refusé d’admettre cette résurgence de l’antisémitisme, de paroles, certes, mais aussi d’actes. Longtemps, les femmes et les hommes politiques ont refusé d’admettre l’existence d’un antisémitisme de banlieue, où les creusets des difficultés sociales, de la solidarité avec le peuple palestinien, de l’intégrisme et aussi, pour une part, des passions exacerbées du temps de la jeunesse s’écoulent dans un même chaudron infernal : la haine du Juif.

Ce n’est plus le cas. La France dispose d’un arsenal juridique contre le racisme, l’antisémitisme et le négationnisme. Ensemble, les pouvoirs publics et les organisations juives travaillent à évaluer annuellement les actes antisémites. Les juges français n’hésitent pas à punir lourdement les auteurs de tels actes ; ils n’hésitent pas à
interdire les publications qui tombent sous le coup de la loi, à dissoudre les groupes qui la violent.

Mais ces dispositifs, parmi les plus complets au monde, ne suffisent pas à lutter contre la vague d’antisémitisme sans précédent depuis la fin de la seconde guerre mondiale que connaît l’Europe.

Je peux affirmer que l’antisémitisme a marqué ma vie d’une indélébile manière. A mon âge, avec mon expérience et mes combats, je ne sais toujours pas comment combattre l’antisémitisme. Comment éteindre un feu que même le vide n’éteint pas ? Comment éteindre une passion que même l’absence d’objet ne stoppe pas ? Car c’est cela l’antisémitisme, une haine qui survit à sa cause. Dans l’antisémitisme, au fond, le Juif n’a qu’une toute petite part, c’est la haine, inextinguible, qui emporte tout.


Me voilà, chers amis, au terme de ce discours. Je voudrais qu’il reste pour vous tous un message d’espoir.

Car, comme beaucoup, sans doute, parmi vous, je continue d’avoir peur. Mais ce qui domine, en moi, c’est la foi. En vous, en nous, et en ce que l’humanité a parfois de meilleur. Merci.
Réunion plénière annuelle de l’Institut Stephen Roth contre le racisme et l’antisémitisme

Mémorial de la Shoah
30 août 2010 – 15h30

Discours d’ouverture
de Monsieur le bâtonnier Yves Repiquet,
Président de la Commission nationale consultative des droits de l’homme

Madame le Ministre,
Madame la Directrice (de l’Institut Stephen Roth),
Monsieur le Directeur (du Mémorial de la Shoah),
Monsieur le Président du Crif,
Mesdames et Messieurs,

Permettez-moi tout d’abord de vous remercier pour l’honneur que vous me faites, et que vous faites ainsi à la Commission nationale consultative des droits de l’homme, en m’invitant à participer à l’ouverture de la réunion plénière annuelle de l’Institut Stephen Roth.

Permettez-moi également de rendre hommage à celles et ceux qui font exister, au cœur de Paris, ce lieu hautement symbolique qui nous accueille aujourd’hui. Le Mémorial de la Shoah est de ces institutions qui constituent des repères pour les générations et qui nous rappellent à notre impérieux et permanent devoir de mémoire et de vigilance.

Certains parmi vous sont familiers des travaux de la Commission nationale consultative des droits de l’homme, ils les ont accompagnés ponctuellement ou y participent régulièrement. Je ne vous apprendrai donc pas que l’histoire de cette commission, que j’ai l’honneur de présider, est étroitement liée à la lutte contre le racisme et l’antisémitisme.

La CNCDH est, vous le savez, l’héritière de la Commission mise en place au lendemain de la Seconde Guerre mondiale par René Cassin, avec comme première mission d’apporter une contribution – et elle fut décisive – à l’élaboration de la Déclaration universelle des droits de l’homme de 1948.
Depuis lors et au long de toutes ces années la CNCDH a vu son mandat élargi et son institutionnalisation affirmée; jusqu'à une récente loi de 2007 qui a fait s'accorder l'institution nationale française de protection et de promotion des droits de l'homme avec les exigences fixées par l'Organisation des Nations Unies.

Forte de l'indépendance qui la caractérise, – de sa capacité d'auto saisine – et du pluralisme de ses membres, la CNCDH assure auprès du gouvernement un rôle de conseil et de proposition dans le domaine des droits de l'homme, du droit international humanitaire et de l'action humanitaire.

Elle est un lieu où se rencontrent et débattent des acteurs de la défense des droits de l'homme aux sensibilités différentes. La fréquentation des uns et des autres permet d'enrichir la réflexion commune. La CNCDH est aussi – et surtout peut-être un vecteur d'échanges entre la société civile et l'État. La contribution de la CNCDH en matière de lutte contre le racisme et l'antisémitisme, depuis plus de vingt ans, est pour nous un sujet de fierté.

*****

Peut-on dire que la CNCDH a participé à l'intensification de la lutte contre le racisme et l'antisémitisme en France ? Je le crois.

Certes, une loi sur la liberté de la presse sanctionnait déjà lorsqu'elles s'exprimaient publiquement par voie de presse ou par tout autre moyen, la provocation à la discrimination, à la haine ou à la violence, la diffamation, l'injure, envers une personne ou un groupe de personnes en raison de leur origine ou de leur appartenance ou non appartenance à une ethnie, une nation, une race ou une religion.

Cette loi fut -nous le savons- complétée en 1972, après la ratification par la France de la Convention internationale sur l'élimination de toutes les formes de discrimination raciale. Le texte posait une définition large du racisme. C'est celle qu'a retenue la CNCDH.

L'histoire de la CNCDH est liée à celle de la lutte contre le racisme et l'antisémitisme en France. La loi de 1990 tendant à réprimer tout acte raciste,
antisémite ou xénophobe, en même temps qu’elle complétait l’arsenal juridique existant, a confié à la CNCDH la charge d’élaborer un rapport annuel public sur la lutte contre le racisme -et de le remettre au Gouvernement le 21 mars de chaque année, date instituée par les Nations Unies comme la journée internationale pour l’élimination de toutes les formes de discrimination raciale-. 

Cela fait donc maintenant vingt ans que chaque année, dans un rapport sur la lutte contre le racisme et la xénophobie, la CNCDH réunit dans un même ouvrage les chiffres et analyses des ministères et administrations concernées et les éléments d’action et de réflexion de la société civile représentée dans son pluralisme. Je parlais tout à l’heure de l’utilité de la CNCDH pour des échanges entre la société civile et les décideurs politiques. Son rapport annuel en est l’expression écrite et publique.

Cela fait près de vingt ans également que la CNCDH publie les résultats d’un sondage d’opinion qui, s’ajoutant à un faisceau d’indicateurs, permettent d’apprécier autant que possible des phénomènes particulièrement délicats à appréhender.

Cela fait vingt ans, en somme, que la CNCDH tente de quantifier les phénomènes racistes et xénophobes, à la fois dans une approche globale et en mettant l’accent sur ses plus forts courants à l’œuvre dans la société française dont -hélas- l’antisémitisme et qu’elle s’attache à dresser un inventaire des politiques publiques dans ce domaine et formule des recommandations.

*****

La CNCDH n’est pas seule pour appeler l’attention du gouvernement français sur la nécessité d’un effort permanent en matière de lutte contre le racisme et l’antisémitisme.

Le contexte international prend toujours plus d’importance, la politique de la France est soumise à des mécanismes régionaux et universels de contrôle qu’elle a parfois contribué à structurer et auxquels elle participe.
La France se doit de respecter ses engagements internationaux en matière de droits de l’homme, naturellement.

Veiller au respect de ces engagements, assister le gouvernement lorsqu’il rend compte aux comités internationaux, appeler l’attention de ces mêmes comités sur des carences éventuelles de la politique nationale, font partie intégrante des missions de la commission que je préside.

Faut-il rappeler que c’est Jean Kahn, alors président de la CNCDH, qui fut à l’origine de la création, en 1997, de l’Observatoire des phénomènes racistes et xénophobes (EUMC), auquel s’est aujourd’hui substituée l’Agence européenne des droits fondamentaux (Fundamental Rights Agency). On ne présente pas aux spécialistes que vous êtes son réseau RAXEN d’information sur le racisme et la xénophobie qui, à l’échelle de l’Europe des 27, constitue un remarquable outil dont la CNCDH est le point d’entrée pour la France.

Plusieurs membres de la CNCDH, siègent en qualité d’experts indépendants dans les instances internationales des droits de l’homme. Qu’il s’agisse du Comité des Nations Unies pour l’élimination de la discrimination raciale ou encore de la Commission européenne contre le racisme et l’antisémitisme (pour le Conseil de l’Europe). Ce n’est pas la moindre des forces de la CNCDH que de permettre cette articulation entre le plan national et le plan international du racisme, de l’antisémitisme et de la xénophobie.

Le très récent rapport de la France devant le Comité des Nations Unies contre la discrimination raciale illustre bien ce rôle joué par la CNCDH entre l’Etat, la société civile et les organisations internationales :

- Consultée au moment de la préparation du rapport de la France devant le CERED, la CNCDH a conseillé le gouvernement.

- Elle a, en parallèle, adressé aux membres du Comité des Nations Unies une note consignant les questions lui apparaissant comme particulièrement préoccupantes et sur lesquelles la France pourrait être interrogée.
• Elle a enfin, dernière étape du processus, été entendue par les membres du Comité dans une séance à huis clos précédant l’examen de la France, et a pu attirer l’attention de ses membres sur des points jugés prioritaires.

• L’une de nos prochaines réunions, à la CNCDH, sera consacrée au suivi des recommandations de la France en matière de lutte contre les discriminations, réunion qui sera l’occasion d’un échange entre nos membres et les administrations concernées.

*****

Ainsi la CNCDH se situe-t-elle en permanence au cœur de la lutte contre le racisme et l’antisémitisme. Voici en quelques mots ce qui ressort du dernier rapport annuel, pour l’année 2009.


Nous avons d’autant plus de raisons d’être inquiets que les violences recensées sont toujours d’une réelle gravité et qu’elles touchent en premier lieu les personnes.

La CNCDH, ne saurait méconnaître les efforts importants menés par le Gouvernement et les acteurs publics d’une part, la forte implication des organisations de la société civile d’autre part. Cependant, face à la recrudescence du phénomène et des manifestations racistes en particulier, confirmée par les statistiques ministérielles, la réponse pénale et son renforcement, sans doute nécessaires, ne suffisent pas.

Il convient de faire porter avant tout les efforts sur la prévention et, dans ce but, de mettre en place une stratégie politique spécifique et concertée à l’échelon national.
La CNCDH recommande sans relâche la réactivation du Comité interministériel de lutte contre le racisme et l’antisémitisme, instance spécialisée de concertation des politiques publiques dans ce domaine, de même qu’elle appelle de ses vœux l’élaboration d’un plan national d’action en matière de lutte contre le racisme et l’antisémitisme. Je ne doute pas qu’elle sera entendue.

Au moment où s’ouvre à Paris la réunion plénière de l’Institut Stephen Roth, je tiens à saluer la qualité de vos travaux qui constituent une référence.

*****
***
*
Antisemitism in Turkey: From Denial to Acknowledgement, From Acknowledgement to Discussion of its Definition

The General Mood until the 1990s

Until the middle of the 1990s both Turkish and international public opinion tended to buy in to the view that “the Turkish Republic was one of those rare countries in which antisemitism had never taken root”. Irregardless of any connection between this notion and the reality on the ground, it is still largely accepted and repeated widely. There are two main reasons for this. The first is simply the needs of Realpolitik, while the second derives from the fact that the leaders of the country’s Jewish community believe that an honest discussion of the question in the public sphere is not likely to produce any solution to the problem—on the contrary: the prevailing opinion is that it will likely end up doing more harm than good.

The Realpolitik refers particularly to several events in the 1970s and 1980s. During the 1980s Turkish-Israeli relations had reached their diplomatic nadir, due to the Israeli government’s declaration of Jerusalem as the country’s ‘eternal and indivisible capital’ on July 30, 1980 and Ankara’s reaction, which was to lower its level of diplomatic representation in Israel to advisory status. Then Turkey attempted, in the wake of the 1973 Oil Crisis, to diplomatically distance itself from Israel in the hope of thereby securing a greater share of Gulf petrodollars that would allow it to overcome its chronic shortfall in foreign reserves and general economic difficulties. In the face of these negative developments American Jewish organizations, along with Turkey’s own Jewish community and the State of Israel all began, in the second half of the 1980s, to make a concerted effort to restore relations between the two countries to its former level.

Parallel to this development was the beginning of annual attempts by American Armenian organizations and their allies to lobby the U.S. Congress to pass a resolution recognizing the Ottoman Empire’s 1915 Armenian deportations as a ‘genocide’. In order to counter these efforts successive Turkish governments would increasingly appeal to American Jewish organizations for support, a support that the latter would generally give with the expectation of an eventual improvement in
Turkish-Israeli relations.¹ These expectations were partially met in December 1991 when Ankara decided to raise its diplomatic relations to both Israel and the PLO to the level of ambassador.

Against this political backdrop all sides found it advantageous to either deny the existence of any trace of antisemitism in Turkey or to portray it as an at best marginal phenomenon. This idiom was dutifully taken up and reiterated by Jewish communal leaders, both in Turkey and abroad. In addition to the political pressures, Turkey’s Jewish leaders understood that any discussion of the problem of antisemitism in the public sphere was liable to damage Turkey’s image in the eyes of the world and in any case had little chance of actually bringing about any positive change in the situation. As a result, neither Turkish nor American Jewish leaders were willing to discuss the issue publicly, preferring instead to keep all their discussions on the matter with Turkish officials behind closed doors while publicly portraying Turkey as an historical ‘haven for Jews from antisemitism’.

As a result, during these decades the mantra of ‘traditional Turkish tolerance’ would be consistently used as an effective tool of counter-propaganda against the anti-Turkish campaign of Armenian, Greek and to some extent Kurdish groups accusing Turkey and its Ottoman predecessor of, respectively, genocide, the occupation of northern Cyprus and widespread human rights violations. Against these charges, the claim was made that from the 1492 Expulsion from Spain until the Nazi persecutions in Europe the Turks had consistently opened their arms to Jews fleeing persecution in Christian Europe and provided them with shelter and a tolerant environment in which they could live and prosper.

**The Social and Political Climate in Turkey from the 1990s until the Present Day**

In line with these efforts much time and money was invested in worldwide recognition and celebration of the quincentennial anniversary of the Spanish Expulsion.² These reached their peak in 1992, but in the following years a number of untoward developments would appear. While up until this point antisemitism in Turkey had largely manifested itself in word, not in deed, this would now begin to

---


² The celebrations were organised by The Quincentennial Foundation, a foundation established in 1989 by Turkish Jewish leaders and businessmen. The foundation established also The Quincentennial Foundation Museum of Turkish Jews which was opened to the public on November 25, 2001. Source: [www.muze500.com](http://www.muze500.com).
change. In 1993 a number of Islamist terrorists would make an attempt on the life of
the Quincentennial Foundation President, the well-known Jewish industrialist Jak
Kamhi.3 Two years later it was the turn of Professor Yuda Yürüm, the head of the
Jewish community of Ankara.4 On August 21, 2003 Yasef Yahya, a Jewish dentist in
İstanbul, was assassinated by Islamist militants, simply by virtue of his being Jewish,
and several months later this trend peaked when a group of al-Qaida sympathizers
carried out suicide bombing attacks against two İstanbul synagogues, killing and
injuring dozens.5 Despite these tragic developments the Justice and Development
Party, Prime Minister Tayyip Erdoğan and numerous Islamist writers would continue
to unambiguously declare that there was no antisemitism in Turkey.

The New Millennium Brings a New Climate and Changed Situation

In comparison with the two previous decades the new millennium was
accompanied by a number of changes in this situation, the first of which being the
ultimate acknowledgement by the mainstream secular media and a small number of
human rights organizations and activists of the existence of antisemitism in Turkish
society (for its part the Islamists continued to deny it). The second—and parallel—
development was the ‘routinization’ (according to the rules of political correctness) of
condemnations of antisemitism by Turkish politicians, scholars and public
intellectuals. The most striking example of this was Adnan Oktar. Known to his
admirers as ‘Master Adnan’ (Adnan Hoca) as well as by his occasional nom de plume
Harun Yahya, a man who in the 1990s authored and funded the publication of some of
the most antisemitic books in Turkey, including a work on Holocaust denial.6 After
9/11 Oktar made a radical public reversal, establishing the website
www.isladminouncesantisemitism.com and making repeated public condemnations of
antisemitism.

Yet, despite these last developments there is little reason to hope for
improvement in the overall situation, as the whole question of antisemitism in Turkey
remains an extraordinarily problematic subject. In order to understand the reasons for

---

3 On January 28, 1993 Jak Kamhi’s car was targeted by Islamist terrorists.
4 On June 7, 1995 Prof. Yürüm’s car was bombed. For more information on Yuda Yürüm see
http://myweb.sabanciuniv.edu/yyurum
6 For a short biography of Adnan Oktar see http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Adnan_Oktar. For Adnan
Oktar’s answer to this article see www.replytowikipedia.com. For an interview with him see “All
Terrorists are Darwinists”, 23 September 2008,
www.spiegel.de/international/world/0,1518,580031,00.html. For his personal website see
www.harunyahya.com
this we must first give a brief of the biases and general assumptions that exist in the Turkish press and among the country’s intellectuals.

1- A situation has become routine in which the State of Israel is referred to as a “robber”, “rogue” or “terrorist” state, or where any and all actions by the IDF are described as “state terror”.

2- The term “Zionist” is used almost exclusively as a pejorative.

3- Zionism itself is understood to be a racist ideology. One well-known Islamist writer has described Zionism as an “outpost of fascism”.7

4- A differentiation is made in the press and among intellectuals between ‘good’ and ‘bad’ Jews on the basis of the simple criterion of whether or not they are known as ‘Zionist’ or ‘anti-Zionist’. Those who denounce Israel or argue against the existence of a Jewish state are seen as ‘good Jews’, whereas those thinking otherwise are placed in the second category. According to this definition, well-known Jewish anti-Zionists such as Noam Chomsky, Norman Finkelstein, Israel Shahak, the members of the Neturei Karta sect and the late Rachel Corrie are naturally seen as good Jews. As for Turkish Jewry, three members who receive the ‘stamp of approval’ are business leader İshak Alaton8, who vehemently denies the existence of antisemitism in Turkey, Mario Levi,9 a well known novelist who after the Mavi Marmara incident declared to the Italian newspaper La Repubblica that Turkish Jews were feeling in solidarity with the people of Gaza, that there was no antisemitism in Turkey, that Netanyahu was a chovenist, Avigdor Lieberman a fascist and Ehud Barak an idiot,10 an article which was translated and widely disseminated in the Turkish press11 and Roni Margulies12, the Trockist poet, antiglobalization and peace activist and columnist for the leftist liberal Taraf13 daily who frequently denounces Israel as an illegal, racist entity and explains away the frequent antisemitic remarks by the country’s Islamist leaders.

5- Turkish writers who in their writings resort to all of the themes found in antisemitic literature will frequently explain that their work is not antisemitic; rather it

---

8 İshak Alaton (1927-) is the president of Alarko Group of companies http://www.alarko.com.tr/indexeng.asp
10 “Noi, ebrei di İstanbul solidali con la gente di Gaza”, La Repubblica, June 2, 2010.
12 His biography can be accessed at http://tr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Roni_Margulies
13 For more information on this newspaper see http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Taraf
is simply criticism of Zionism and Israel. These same writers will reference the statements of the aforementioned Turkish and foreign Jews in order to shield themselves from charges of antisemitism.

6- Turkish journalists and public intellectuals who claim that statements or writings that meet the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA) working definition of antisemitism\(^\text{14}\) should be considered as such, are frequently accused of being ‘Zionists’, ‘Mossad agents’ or ‘the Israelis among us’,\(^\text{15}\) a term used for defining some sort of foreign body or Israeli ‘fifth column’ within the Turkish body politic. A great number of journalists have openly admitted to being hesitant if not entirely unwilling to raise their voices in the face of this intense social pressure that permeates Turkish society in this regard.\(^\text{16}\)

7- Despite the widespread antisemitism within the Turkish Islamic press, the leading politicians and public intellectuals of this sector continue to argue that, in contrast to Christianity, the religion of Islam does not allow for antisemitism, and therefore it is impossible for Turkey’s Muslim society to be antisemitic. The centuries of tolerance and protection afforded to its Jewish population by both the Ottoman Empire and its successor state, The Turkish Republic, are frequently submitted as proof of this claim.

8- Despite their acknowledgement of the indisputably racist character of antisemitism, a very large part of the leftist and Islamist press and intelligentsia tends to hold to the opinion that the State of Israel and its supporters—i.e., ‘Zionists’—attempt to counter all lawful and legitimate criticism of the country with charges of antisemitism; in essence, they see the term “antisemitism” as an ideological weapon to shield them from all criticism while they continue to perpetrate their crimes. To get an idea of just how widespread this notion is it will be sufficient to take a look at entries on ‘antisemitism’ of two on-line dictionaries that are most popular with Turkish university students.

First entry:

\(^\text{14}\) www.fra.europa.eu
\(^\text{15}\) http://icinizdekiisrailliler.blogspot.com “The Israelis among us” is a relatively new term used in the Turkish political jargon. It has been started to be used after the Mavi Marmara incident by the ruling AKP government. It was used against the mainstream secular press and journalists who were critical of AKP’s behaviour after the flotilla incident.
The people that Israel loves more than any other are the antisemites. Israel is an artificially contrived state that produces fear and then feeds on it. Antisemitism only benefits Israel. Antisemitism is an ideology that is produced, reinforced, iterated, expressed and nourished by Israel with the intention of legitimizing its actions.17

Second entry:
The term [antisemitism] is the Jews’ best ally. If someone says that ‘Israel has made a mistake’ the response is immediate from the country’s representatives: “So-and-so is reviving the Nazi period by using antisemitism”. For the Jews, there’s no difference between antisemitism and anti-Zionism. Anyone who opposes Zionism is thought to be an antisemite. In such a situation as this, the logic is that all Jews are Zionists. But that’s not the case.18

9- Just as the problem of a ‘working definition of antisemitism’ has never been discussed the term itself is often interpreted by Turkey’s intelligentsia as a ‘pretext created by the Zionists’ to prevent criticism of the State of Israel. The very rare instance where the definition has been discussed was in June 2010 when Yunus Emre Kocabasoğlu, a wine expert living in Holland and who wrote a series of online articles on antisemitism in Turkey,19 brought to the attention of the Turkish intellectuals the working definition of antisemitism and stated that both Roni Margulies’, (one of the “good Jews” mentionned earlier), writings and Prime Minister Erdoğan’s statements were antisemitic rhetorics which complied with the working definition of FRA.20 This op-ed was heavily criticised by Y. Hakan Erdem, a leftist-liberal professor of history of the prestigious Sabancı University, who wrote as follows:

For example, according to the FRA document it is antisemitic "to draw comparisons of contemporary Israeli policy to that of the Nazis". Please take note! The FRA document does not say "to reach positive [or] negative result" rather, it prevents the use of comparison--a time-honored tool of analysis! In the name of preventing antisemitism it categorically shields [from criticism] any and all of Israel's current and future policies. Do not these mindless definitions equate to telling Israel "You're different; you can carry out ethnic cleansing--even genocide. If anyone

compares your policies to those of the Nazis, I’ll call them an antisemite, I'll protect you”. Don't they effectively mean giving Israel a license to kill?”

The Legal Struggle Against Antisemitism

A new eruption of antisemitism appeared in the Islamist press in response to Israel’s ‘Cast Lead’ operation against the Hamas regime in Gaza between December 2008 and January 2009. In reaction, Silvyo Ovadya, the President of Turkey’s Jewish Community submitted a request to President Gül to add a passage to Turkish Penal Code article 216, which currently prohibits incitement and differentiation of linguistic, religious or racial differences. Ovadya argued that the paragraph, as currently phrased, was not sufficient to prevent expressions of antisemitism, and should instead punish the “expressions and deeds intended to create hatred, discrimination, hostility or violence” and not evaluate them as simply freedom of thought. This action, when reported in the press, produced a strong reaction. In one piece, the Islamist journalist Nureddin Şirin wrote that:

First, you must arise and openly declare that, since their genocidal attacks, the Zionist Israeli regime are the most profound enemies of humanity, that they are gangs of murderers; [this way] we can assume that you are a decent person, then we will say loudly that it is in no way correct to be hostile to such persons.

Şirin then hinted that since the establishment of the Turkish Republic the country’s Jews have, on the one hand, been opposed to the establishment of a Shari’a state and on the other hand, supported Kemalism and concluded as follows:

Somehow, you would like that the country’s prosecutors act on their own initiative against antisemitism. By all means: file a complaint with one or other of the prosecutors; let’s have our day in court. Don’t send your attorney, though. Instead, come yourself, so that we will personally have the chance to spit in your ugly face....

In conclusion, let’s call you what you are in diplomatic terms: Silvyo Ovadya- persona non grata.

Conclusion

23 Turkish Chief Rabbinate Archive, Legal advisor of Turkish Jewish Community Ester Zonana’s study dated February 5, 2009.
24 Editor-in-chief of the pro-Hamas www.velfecr.com website.
Under present conditions, there is no chance that the current anti-discriminatory bill before the Turkish Grand National Assembly, known as the “Law for the Struggle against Discrimination and for the Establishment of Equality”, will pass, or that the draft itself will even contain the so-called Working Definition of Antisemitism.26

In a country like Turkey, where the level of public education is so low, where books, newspapers and public discussion has for decades reflected the antisemitic sentiments of popular culture, where the overwhelming majority of public intellectuals express the opinions found in popular antisemitic works, where not a single serious Western work on antisemitism has ever been translated into Turkish, one should not nurture the unreasonable hope that a topic such as antisemitism would ever come up for a serious intellectual treatment. For such conditions to change it would first be necessary for the current regime—or any Turkish regime—to muster the political will to first acknowledge the existence of antisemitism in Turkey and the seriousness of the problem in the country, and then resolve to contend with it in a serious fashion. But instead we have in recent years witnessed the elimination of various political and public opposition streams, a marked increase in xenophobia, anti-Western and anti-American hostility, chauvinism and antisemitism, Prime Minister Erdoğan’s frequent reiteration of antisemitic stereotypes in his speeches and declarations, and the prevailing opinion among the greater public that there is no such thing as antisemitism in Turkey. Such conditions should persuade us that it is entirely unreasonable to expect such decisiveness from the Turkish polity in the foreseeable future.

Carole Nuriel, Chair of Session

Good morning.

I am thankful for the opportunity I was given to open the first day of this important gathering and to re-assess the long process and attempts of defining antisemitism. In the course of the last hundred and thirty years, since the German publicist Wilhelm Marr coined the term, many definitions and explanations have been suggested – by Jews and non-Jews alike. All reflected the historic circumstances, times and places in which they were defined. The many definitions the term received paved the way to the EUMC definition that was agreed upon 6 years ago. The term definitely deserves examination and re-evaluation as developments in different fields – social and political, but much more important and crucial – those appearing in the mass media, certainly reflect and will influence the definition that is emerging. While this tool should be practical and clear, we should always remember the heavy burden it carries, as the historical process which led to the definition is important in understanding the different layers of the term. Yet, and as was clear six years ago, there is a need for a basic but comprehensive and widely agreed upon definition, which will be used when the questions of what, how, who and why are being asked.

When looking back on the history of the definition, there are two main aspects referred to – the aim and intent, i.e. the idea and beliefs that stands behind the antisemitic act, and the antisemitic act itself. This is pretty tricky as one could live without the other and both can be bonded with almost no ability to separate between them!

Putting the term this way and with all the different aspects it carries, there is no doubt about a common element in all definitions: the feeling of hate motivating all antisemitic acts and beliefs. To stereotype Jews, you attribute them with certain characteristics. But if you do the same when motivated by hate, this is different – this is antisemitism.

In re-evaluating our standards of defining an act as antisemitic, we at the ADL concluded that the swastika, the most re-known hate symbol portrayed toward Jews, can no longer be defined as antisemitic in all cases. Using the symbol should be examined in each of the cases and not be taken for granted as anti-Jewish as was done almost automatically up until now. This is a change in the mindset identifying the
antisemitic acts – a change we have felt is needed if we want to be specific about Hate of the Jews and not hate in general.

Along with hate in all versions, the definitions have varied in their perspective - focused on social, economic and political as well as religious and racial. This was the case until the establishment of the State of Israel, when a new dimension entered the equation – anti-Zionism. The Israeli-Palestinian conflict has fed and fuelled the phenomenon until it became clear that a new version of antisemitism had been created – Antisemitism under the guise of anti-Israeli expressions. This included the historic element of hate, but the audience of "recipients" was much wider to include not only the Jews, but in most cases the Israelis – as the representatives of the hated Jewish entity and values.

I believe that in the years to come, we will face more changes and challenges in the definition of antisemitism. Developments in the European multi-cultural societies, events in the Middle East and on the Iranian arena, but much more importantly in cyberspace, which is a room for a wide range of cyberhate of all kinds, will require adaptations of the definitions of these changes.
A Short History of the Definition

Introduction

In their long awaited report on antisemitism in the EU, the European Union Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia (EUMC, now renamed the European Union Fundamental Rights Agency – FRA) published in 2004, the authors pointed out that the majority of National Focal Points had responded to a survey request that they faced a major problem in compiling data due to “the complete or partial absence of official state monitoring of antisemitism”. ¹

They observed that “different monitoring bodies apply different methods of counting incidents and complaints” which they ascribed in part to the lack of a common definition. They noted moreover, that where there were guidelines for recording they were often ambiguous, and that this led to under reporting by police and other official bodies. The EUMC therefore proposed that one be created which could adequately describe both the demonization and disproportionate criticism of Israel which masqueraded as anti-Zionism, and which came increasingly from Muslims, and traditional antisemitism which might have its origins in religious, racist, economic or political tropes. ²

The problem of defining antisemitic incidents, and the direction from which perpetrators increasingly come, has been spelled out by the compilers of the EUMC (and now FRA) successive annual reports on antisemitism. In their 2006 annual summary, they noted that “The basic premise for a valid monitoring and analysis of a phenomenon is an adequate definition: and the basic premise for comparability is the common use of such an adequate definition within the EU, as the EUMC reference area.³ The EUMC Report on Antisemitism has shown that this is not the case today. Only very few institutions seem to work with an adequate definition of antisemitism, while the others do not make their definition explicit. A major task of the EUMC is to work towards comparability by developing common indicators, working definitions and methodologies, which could also be used by other international organisations. It is also the task of the EUMC to develop precise and reliable working definitions for data collection to improve our understanding of such phenomena and provide a clear...
picture of the situation. In this context the EUMC in close collaboration with OSCE/ODIHR and Jewish organisations discussed in 2004 and 2005 the possibility for a common approach to data collection on antisemitism leading eventually to a draft working definition. The aim would be to propose a common working definition to primary collectors (government and civil society) at both national and international level in order to improve data comparability. Several organizations were consulted. The draft guide to data collection and working definition were then further elaborated by the EUMC and forwarded to its RAXEN National Focal Points (NFPs) for further feedback in March 2005.4

Consultations continued with a favourable reaction from most NFPs, and although some sought slight modification, it was agreed that the Working Definition now be used. The EUMC stressed however that it is a work in progress, pending formal adoption.

**International usage**

Antisemitism is now recognised as a global problem, and one that requires a coordinated multinational approach. Since the 2003 Vienna meeting, the lead in this respect has been taken by the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR). Consequently the Director of the ODIHR Tolerance and Non Discrimination Division and the Advisor on Antisemitism played an active role in formulating the Working Definition and it is recommended in the course leaders’ Facilitators Guide for the programme to assist law enforcement officials to understand and investigate hate crime.5

However ODIHR also promotes a generic Working Definition of Hate Crime.6 At the 2010 OSCE High Level Conference on Tolerance and Non Discrimination in Astana Kazakhstan, speakers in Session 2 on combating antisemitism urged participating states to use and promote the Working Definition, and this was reflected in the report to the plenum.7

Prior to the start of the session, delegates received a leaflet published by the US State Department entitled *What is anti-semitism relative to Israel?*, which quoted the Working Definition in order to illustrate the ways in which antisemitism now manifests itself with regard to the state of Israel, and frequently hides under the cloak of anti-Zionism or criticism of Israel; that is by demonising Israel, by applying double standards with regard to Israel and by delegitimizing Israel.8

2
In 2008, the State Department also endorsed the Working Definition in their Contemporary Global Antisemitism report to Congress. The authors noted that “a widely accepted definition of antisemitism can be useful in setting the parameters of the issue. Such a definition also helps to identify the statistics that are needed and focuses attention on the issues that policy initiatives should address….The EUMC’s working definition provides a useful framework for identifying and understanding the problem and is adopted for the purposes of this report.”

Parliamentarians attending the Inter-parliamentary Coalition for Combating Antisemitism conference in London, in February 2009 issued a call to governments to expand the use of the Working Definition, in order to inform policy for national and international organisations and as a basis for training material for use by criminal justice agencies. Their request was contained within the London Declaration on Combating Antisemitism which was signed and endorsed in the UK by the leaders of the Labour Government and by the Conservative Party leaders before they won the June 2010 General Election.

To aid international understanding and adoption, the American Jewish Committee affiliated European Forum on Antisemitism commissioned translations of the Working Definition into each of the thirty three languages used by the fifty six OSCE participating states in 2008.

The only known use of the Working Definition in a criminal case so far was in Lithuania in 2005, when a court in Vilnius cited it in the trial of the editor-in-chief of the daily *Respublika* who had written that there was a Jewish plot to rule the world. The court found that the text of the article “corresponded to.... the hallmarks of antisemitism.” The defendant was found guilty and fined.

**Adoption in the United Kingdom**

The All-Party Parliamentary Inquiry into Antisemitism observed in its 2006 report that “a racist act is defined by its victim. It is not acceptable for an individual to say ‘I am not a racist’ if his or her words or acts are perceived to be racist. We conclude that it is the Jewish community itself that is best qualified to determine what does or does not constitute antisemitism.”

The Inquiry examined the nature of contemporary antisemitism, and recalled that those giving evidence referred to it as a ‘constantly mutating virus’. It noted that overt racial hatred of Jews became unacceptable in British society in the aftermath of the Holocaust and that Jews are no longer accused of deicide or of...
possessing sinister racial traits. However, it observed that “the latest mutation of anti-
Jewish prejudice is infused with a ‘social conscience’, focussed on the role of Israel in
the Middle East conflict. Jews are seen as natural supporters of Israel, regardless of
whether or not they actually are, and some of those who are hostile to Israel make no
distinction between Israel and Jews. Jews throughout the world are seen by some
extremists as legitimate targets in the struggle to establish a Palestinian state or to
eliminate the State of Israel…..The nature of contemporary antisemitism in Britain is
complex and multifaceted. Unsophisticated acts of physical and verbal abuse against
Jewish people, for example neo-Nazi graffiti or orthodox Jews being attacked on their
way to synagogue, are not a recent phenomenon and are easily identifiable when they
occur. Antisemitic discourse, however, is often easier to recognise than it is to define.
When the boundaries of public discourse become unclear, antisemitic language can
come socially acceptable.”15

The Inquiry acknowledged the difficulties inherent in defining antisemitism,
but recommended that the UK adopt the Working Definition and that it be promoted
by the Government and law enforcement agencies.16

In its initial Response, the government noted that it currently uses the Stephen
Lawrence Inquiry definition of a racist incident, which is an incident that is perceived
as racist by the victim or any other person, and this would include antisemitism.17 It
noted the Inquiry’s concern over antisemitic discourse but that the EUMC in its
evidence stated that the Working Definition was a work in progress and has not been
recommended to states for adoption. It left the door open however and undertook to
re-examine the recommendation if and when the EUMC’s successor body the
Fundamental Rights Agency (FRA) do so.18

In its later more substantive One year on Progress Report, the government
repeated the commitment, noting that the FRA had confirmed that they were
undertaking further testing and comment from stakeholders as to the Working
Definition’s use and effectiveness as a data collection support tool.19

They noted however that the process of transforming the EUMC into FRA
meant that the work was delayed, but that FRA would discuss with ODIHR and other
stakeholders its plans for further action.20

Within the UK, however there have been further developments on the
definition of a hate crime, and a continuous process of reforming the criminal justice
response to hate crimes. The Ministry of Justice Hate Crimes Strategy Group
(formerly the Race for Justice Group), comprising senior representatives from relevant criminal justice agencies and its Advisory Group, comprising independent representatives from each diversity strand (including a Jewish representative) are, with others, monitoring the progress of the Cross Government Hate Crime Action Plan, which includes national occupational standards for all agencies dealing with hate crime, independent training for the judiciary on handling hate crimes, reviewing third party reporting schemes including a national online hate crime reporting system, and effective monitoring by criminal justice agencies through shared definitions.21

The latter initiative involves updating and revising the national police Hate Crime Manual for the umbrella Association of Chief Police Officers, to be published in late 2010. This manual contains the national hate crime definition for use by police officers.22

In view of the above, and in consideration of the fact that there are no barriers to prosecuting antisemitic incitement providing that evidential considerations are met, the Race for Justice Group looked at the Working Definition but felt that it was important that the UK applied a single definition to all sections of racial and religious hate crime.23

Notwithstanding the above, the National Union of Students (NUS) formally adopted the Working Definition at its 2007 Conference following a debate on ‘Anti-Racism: Challenging Racism on Campus and in Our Communities’.24 Thereafter, some individual students unions also adopted the Definition, including Exeter, Birmingham and Aston universities. Adoption was debated at Leeds university, but the motion was defeated.25

**Assessment**

The current reality is that other bodies, notably the US State Department and OSCE ODIHR use the Working Definition but not FRA itself. Indeed FRA currently does not even notify its RAXEN Network of NFPs that it even exists, let alone ask them to use it. It is true that FRA’s mandate has widened enormously, particularly since the adoption of the Lisbon Treaty which place upon the organisation the onus of reviewing the human rights dimension of all European legislation, but monitoring antisemitism still remains a core activity.

Using the Working Definition would certainly assist some EU member states to understand the different direction from which antisemitism comes, but perhaps
their governments do not wish to understand this, preferring as they do to ignore its growth among the mainstream and migrant communities.


1 Manifestations of Antisemitism in the EU 2002 – 2003, p.26, European Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia, Vienna, 2004
2 ibid, p.231
4 ibid, p.22.
7 Session Summary, Session 2 Combating Anti-Semitism, OSCE High Level Conference on Tolerance and Non-Discrimination, Astana, 29-30 June 2010.
8 What is Anti-Semitism Relative to Israel? US Department of State, June 2010.
14 ibid, p.5, pt 18.
15 ibid.
16 ibid, p.5.
17 The Stephen Lawrence Inquiry into the racist murder of a black teenager, which was led by High Court judge Sir William Macpherson, concluded that the Metropolitan Police Service was institutionally racist after it had failed on several occasions to effectively investigate his murder. Its ten recommendations led eventually and indirectly to a complete overhaul of the manner in which the criminal justice system deals with racist incidents and crime. The Stephen Lawrence Inquiry, Cm 4262-I, The Stationery Office, London, 24 February 1999.
20 ibid, p.6.
22 Pending publication of the revised ACPO Hate Crime Manual the definition can be found on the websites of several police forces including that of Warwickshire Police, at http://www.warwickshire.police.uk/Diversity/Policingourcommunities/HateCrimeIncidents
23 All-Part Inquiry into Antisemitism: Government Response-One Year On Progress Report, p.7
24 Motion 801, debate on ‘Anti-Racism; Challenging Racism on Campus and in our Communities, NUS Conference 2007.
Ken Stern

The Working Definition of Antisemitism – A Reappraisal

The conference title says the “Working Definition” is six years old. It was launched by the European Monitoring Center on Racism and Xenophobia (now subsumed into the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights) on January 28, 2005. So, why six years instead of five?

Because the idea for a common definition was, as far as I know, first articulated by Dina Porat, who leads the Stephen Roth Institute, during the NGO conference which AJC organized immediately preceding the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe’s historic Berlin conference on antisemitism in April 2004. I recall Dina, who gets very animated when she latches on to a good idea, talking to me, to my colleague Andy Baker, and just about anyone else she could corner about the need for a definition.

I had to admit that I was somewhat skeptical. Antisemitism, I thought, was akin to obscenity, which U.S. Supreme Court Justice Potter Stewart once wrote was difficult to define, “but I know it when I see it.”

But the more I thought about it, the more I knew Dina was right.

A few weeks before that NGO meeting in Berlin, the EUMC had released a report entitled “Manifestations of Antisemitism in the EU 2002-2003.” This report followed a prior EUMC report which had been suppressed then leaked, amid a controversy about the identity of the perpetrators of antisemitic crimes as they began to spike in the fall of 2000 (and the fact that many young Muslims were responsible).

The new report was viewed mostly in the light of that debate, but two other things struck me more. First, the report itself lamented the lack of a generally accepted definition of antisemitism. How can you document and collect data about anything if there is no definition of what you are counting?

The second problem was more of a concern. The EUMC report listed a series of stereotypes about Jews, saying antisemitism was comprised of these. “The core of antisemitism,” EUMC concluded, was:

Any acts or attitudes that are based on the perception of a social subject (individual, group, institution or state) as “the ‘deceitful,’ ‘corrupt,’ ‘conspiratorial,’ etc.) Jew.”
I had the strong sense it constructed this clunker of a definition because it didn’t know how to deal with the problem of a Jew being attacked on the streets of Paris or anywhere else as a stand-in for an Israeli. Listing stereotypes as the engine and defining characteristic of antisemitism lead EUMC to the conclusion that if the actor saw Israelis through those stereotypical lenses and then attacked the Jew in front of him as a substitute, that was antisemitism; but if the actor was rather animated by dislike of Israeli policies or actions, then that same attack on the Jew-as-the-substitute-Israeli was not antisemitism.

This was crazy on two counts. First, if one has the task of collecting data on antisemitism, it is unworkable to require a clear view of what is in the mind of any actor (many of whom are never found) before making a classification. Second, this construct would make as much sense as saying that the lynching of a black person in the U.S. South in the 1960s was racism if the actor thought blacks were shiftless and lazy, but not if he was animated by the passage of civil rights legislation, or by a speech of Martin Luther King, Jr.

A number of pieces came together later in 2004 to remedy these problems. First, my colleague Andy Baker, probably alone in the organized Jewish community, had not blasted EUMC and its then director, Beate Winkler, over the earlier suppressed report, and had smartly developed a working relationship with her instead.

In May of that year Winkler accepted an invitation to participate in AJC’s annual meeting in Washington, DC. After she spoke, I asked her pointedly – in front of a full audience – about the definition. A Montreal Jewish elementary school had been firebombed, apparently in reaction to an Israeli assassination of a Hamas leader. This was clearly antisemitism, but not technically according to the definition EUMC had used. It was clear that something better needed to be crafted, something that was easy for the monitors to understand – count this, don’t count that.

I set to work drafting something, sharing various drafts with and calling upon experts on antisemitism globally. I recall bus rides during this same conference in 2004 in Israel, discussing and tweaking the definition. In particular Mike Whine, Jeremy Jones, Roni Stauber, Felice Gaer, Yehuda Bauer, Michael Berenbaum and Andy Baker were very much part of that process.

What we produced was changed somewhat by EUMC, after a very exhausting meeting between Beate Winkler, Mike Whine, Andy Baker and my AJC colleague
Deidre Berger. But the key components remained. It saw antisemitism as a hatred – something that people used to define how the world worked, that is by Jews conspiring to harm non-Jews. And it also recognized that criticism of Israel isn’t antisemitic, except when it is, and gave reasonable guideposts to tell the difference, specifically:

Denying the Jewish people their right to self-determination, e.g., by claiming that the existence of a State of Israel is a racist endeavor.

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.

Equally important in the construct was language about antisemitic hate crimes. It was modeled after the U.S. Supreme Court case Wisconsin v. Mitchell, which found that the cornerstone of a hate crime was not animus, but the selection of a victim based on who they are.

Thus, the definition states, in part:

Antisemitic acts are criminal when they are so defined by law (for example, denial of the Holocaust or distribution of antisemitic materials in some countries). Criminal acts are antisemitic when the targets of attacks, whether they are people or property … are selected because they are, or are perceived to be, Jewish or linked to Jews. . . .

In the last five years, the definition has been increasingly used, because it is provides a workable, non-ideological approach to task of identifying antisemitism.

In 2005 the OSCE used the definition in its report “Education on the Holocaust and Antisemitism: An Overview and Analysis of Educational Approaches.”

And starting that same year, the OSCE’s Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODHIR) used it as a core part of its Law Enforcement Officer Training Programme on Combating Hate crimes in two ways: it used the definition of antisemitism verbatim, and used the “selection” model of hate crimes for all types of hate crime.

As AJC documented in its testimony last fall before the Parliamentary Inquiry into Antisemitism in Canada, the working definition has been referenced or relied
upon in or by courts (in Lithuanian and Germany), congressional hearings in the United States, online reference tools, newspapers, blogs, scholarly articles, legal articles, radio shows, student groups, museums, national inquiries of parliamentarians (most importantly in the UK), international meetings of parliamentarians, United States Department of State Reports, The United States Commission on Civil Rights, and in submissions to the United Nations Economic and Social Council Commission on Human Rights, Sub-Commission on the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights. The European Forum on Antisemitism has also translated it into 32 languages.

Perhaps most importantly, the 2009 “London Declaration” from parliamentarians worldwide, included among its action items:

Governments must expand the use of the EUMC “working definition” of antisemitism to inform policy of national and international organizations and as a basis for training materials for use by Criminal Justice Agencies.

And

Media Regulatory Bodies should utilize the EUMC “Working Definition” of antisemitism to inform media standards. [Of course, the definition should be seen as a guidepost for policy if a media group decides it doesn’t want to include antisemitism.]

Dangers

As far as I am aware, there has been no serious criticism of the definition by those whom it was designed to aid the most, for example the law enforcement officers trained to investigate hate crimes (including antisemitic ones). In fact the 2008 US State Department report on Global Antisemitism not only referenced the definition, it actually was structured around it. It continues to be referenced more and more because of its clear utility.

But, of course the definition has been a target of some who would like to protect criticisms of Israel which are antisemitic in nature or would justify denying to Jews, alone among the peoples of the world, the right of self determination in a land of their own.

And some have complained that experts on antisemitism had a hand in crafting this definition, because we are associated with Jewish agencies, particularly AJC. Others have said that the definition will stifle debate by labeling people antisemites. That is a fundamental misreading of the definition. It intentionally gets away from the idea that we need to see what’s in a person’s heart and name it. One can say or do
racist or antisemitic things (which should be counted by monitors of such) without
harboring hate.

The challenge is that most Jewish organizations have not sufficiently used the
definition. I frequently remind our regional offices, for example, that they should cite
it as appropriate in letters to the editor, meetings, and elsewhere. That the U.S.
Department of State and the US Commission on Civil Rights find it useful gives it
additional credibility.

But I also worry that some Jewish organizations, which have discovered and
used it, are doing so in an inappropriate way, which bastardizes what it was intended
to do.

For example, two months ago a group of American Jewish organizations from
the right side of the political spectrum wrote a letter to the president of the major
university system. They complained about a series of antisemitic incidents on his
campuses, prejudged a system the president had set up to tackle the problem as
inadequate, and asked that he “issue a written statement to the entire University . . .
community which: unequivocally condemns all forms of antisemitism . . . including
language or behavior that demonizes or delegitimizes Israel, as per the ‘Working
Definition of Antisemitism,’” which they then quoted.

They additionally demanded that campus policy language be changed to
define antisemitism according to the Working Definition, and that such policy
language “singles out antisemitism from other forms of bigotry and discrimination
and provides clear guidelines for the prosecution of antisemitic behavior.”

The problems with this approach, using the definition in a way it was never
intended, and with the subtlety of a mallet, are real.

First, on a campus – at least in the U.S. – hateful statements of opinion (as
distinguished from harassment or acts of physical destruction or violence) are
allowed. I can say I think Israel is Nazi-like, and shouldn’t have to worry about being
prosecuted. If the campus is working well, promoting critical thinking, there should be
voices pushing back showing why this is an inappropriate comparison, and of course
using the definition in making that case is a fine thing to do. But people, be they
students, faculty, or outside speakers, should not get into trouble with the campus
“criminal law” for saying such things.

The challenge is that inside the Jewish community, those who use the working
definition incorrectly may be perceived as strong defenders against antisemitism,
while those who seek to protect its integrity and utility for major institutions – if they speak out about this problem – may be seen as weak and ineffectual. In this particular case, I spoke privately with the director of the lead Jewish group involved and tried to educate him about why his misuse of the definition was a problem. And I also communicated with the university president, sharing with him the intent of the definition and underscoring that it is a useful tool for identifying and analyzing antisemitism, and understanding when and how leaders should speak out against it, but was never meant to provide a framework for eviscerating free speech or academic freedom, let alone labeling anyone an antisemite.

Looking back, many of us in this room, and many others who worked with us, created a significant tool against antisemitism. But it isn’t a perfect definition, and it doesn’t include everything I think it might reasonably flag.

For example, it doesn’t label the claim that Israel is an apartheid-like regime. There is not question that there is discrimination on both sides of the green line. But to label this apartheid is an accusation linked with antisemitism, because if one sees Israel as an apartheid-like state, it is an evil and pariah state, and then anyone who supports that state in any way is suspect.

Likewise, there are aspects of the growing BDS movement against Israel which might impact antisemitism, but are not directly linked to the definition.

We could debate this, but I wouldn’t. It remains a very good and useful definition. The question was raised yesterday whether it should be tweaked or improved. And I’ve heard some well-intentioned people suggest there should be a different version of the definition for different regions (such as South America). In my view, attempts to change the definition would give away all the gains made by having a uniform definition for five years, would give a great opening for those who would want to scuttle it rather than improve it, and to open this can of worms would be a terrible mistake.

I hope that in the years to come, as more and more institutions use it, we’ll have a better capacity to compare antisemitism and its different manifestations across borders and time. Maybe it will even influence the attitudinal surveys which still look too much at the antisemitism of 1950 instead of also including that of 2010.

But our job at this point still is to help protect it and to encourage others to use it correctly – not to label anyone, but to create a better understanding for monitors and others of what antisemitism is.
Three Final Thoughts

First, I want to disagree a bit with Mike Whine, who said that hatred is an essential element of an antisemitic hate crime. It isn’t, although of course such hatred is frequently present. The case of Wisconsin v. Mitchell, as I mentioned earlier, is based on the “selection” model. So if I’m a black burglar in Harlem, and I choose to burgle other blacks, as opposed to people on Park Avenue, because I think police are less likely to investigate, that’s a hate crime. Likewise, there were burglars in Montana who targeted Jews, not because they hated Jews, but because they thought all Jews were rich.

Second, yesterday we heard some references to Holocaust denial. The definition directly addresses this. It lists:

Denying the fact, scope, mechanisms (e.g. gas chambers) or intentionality of the genocide of the Jewish people at the hands of National Socialist German and its supporters and accomplices during World War II (the Holocaust).

I want to reiterate that Holocaust denial isn’t bad or misinformed history, it is antisemitism. It isn’t about the Holocaust at all, but about Jews. And efforts to combat it need to appreciate this fact as a starting point. Holocaust denial alleges, like classic antisemitism, that Jews conspire to harm non-Jews, and it also gives them a way to explain the world.

Finally, we heard yesterday a reiteration of what we all know to be true – antisemitic incidents spiked in France, the UK and elsewhere during the second Intifada and during the war in Gaza.

There is a chance that, before we meet again in Tel Aviv in two years, something will happen which might correlate with a similar or worse spike. My greatest rear, of course, is if Iran is attacked because it is on the brink of obtaining nuclear weapons, Jews worldwide will become targets, both for terror groups and those individuals who are inspired to act out. If this happens, we’ll be in triage mode, but we shouldn’t forget to cite the definition where appropriate, because then it isn’t only Jews complaining about antisemitism, but Jews relying on how a European body and other important governmental and non-governmental bodies define it.

I don’t want to end on such a depressing note, so I’ll pick up on something Richard Presque said yesterday. He said that we need to find better ways to understand antisemitism, bigotry and prejudice in order to fight them more effectively. There is a project AJC has been involved with for 10 years, based at
Gonzaga University in Spokane, Washington, which is creating an interdisciplinary field of hate studies to try and provide testable theories about how to combat hatred, antisemitism included.

Hate studies is defined as “Inquiries into the human capacity to define, and then dehumanize or demonize, an ‘other,’ and the processes which inform and give expression to, or can curtail and combat, that capacity.”

The second international conference is being held in Spokane, Washington from April 6 to 9, 2011. The U.S. Special Envoy on Antisemitism, Hannah Rosenthal, will be one of the keynote speakers. You are all invited.
Assessing Criticism of the EU Definition of Antisemitism

Is the European Union Monitoring Centre definition of antisemitism good or bad, accurate or inaccurate, helpful or harmful? To answer those questions, we have consider what the definition is, what purpose it serves.

1. EUMC history

The European Union Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia began as the EU Commission on Racism and Xenophobia in 1994. It was transformed into the Monitoring Centre in 1998. The EUMC adopted its definition of antisemitism as a draft operational definition in a 2005 report called "Working Definition of Antisemitism".

The EUMC became in March 2007 the EU Fundamental Rights Agency. The definition of antisemitism proposed in 2005 is still called the EU or the EUMC definition of antisemitism even though the EUMC, as such, no longer exists.

2. "Antisemitism" history

The EU definition makes no attempt at etymology. The word "antisemitism" was coined in the 19th century by William Marr of Germany. Marr wrote a pamphlet, published in 1879, titled The Victories of Judaism over Germanism\(^1\), and founded the League for Antisemitism.

Antisemitism suggests, etymologically, opposition to semitism. Semitism is an imaginary ideology of world Jewish control against which Marr inveighed.

The 1903 Protocols of the Elders of Zion was meant to show the existence of the semitism which antisemites countered. Yet, of course, the Protocols of the Elders of Zion is a forgery.

No Jews, old, young or middle aged, actually subscribed to the nonsense attributed to Jews in the Marr or the Protocols pamphlets. The antisemitism of Marr was opposition to something which did not exist.

3. The meaning of antisemitism

Antisemitism has two meanings, hatred of Jews and discrimination against Jews. Hatred and discrimination are related but distinct phenomena. Hatred is an attitude or an
emotion. Discrimination is behaviour.

Hatred may motivate discrimination. However, discrimination can exist without hatred. And hatred can exist without discrimination.

Antisemites are, in reality, not opposed to a contrary ideology. They are just opposed to Jews as Jews.

That is a sense picked up by the EU definition. The EU definition begins by referring to antisemitism as "hatred toward Jews". However, as one reads through the definition, one can see that it goes beyond hatred towards Jews.

Discrimination can exist by intent or adverse impact. With adverse impact discrimination, the existence of intent is irrelevant. As long as the impact is there, the discrimination is there.

The commencement of the EU definition, stating that antisemitism is hatred towards Jews, suggests that we are dealing only with intent. However, the definition ends with a statement that "Antisemitic discrimination is the denial to Jews of opportunities or services available to others". There is, quite properly, no suggestion of intent in that statement. Denial to Jews of opportunities or services available to others is antisemitism even if it is only adverse impact discrimination or discrimination by effect.

The EU definition refers to manifestations of antisemitism. Yet, adverse impact discrimination is wrongful even if it does not manifest an underlying malice, even if there is no hidden hatred which generates the discrimination. The manifestation is itself the wrongful act rather than just a sign of something wrongful underneath.

4. The EU definition

The definition is 514 words, far too long to quote here. It is attached as an appendix to this text.

A definition that long is not really a definition. The EU definition of antisemitism fails to meet the definition of the word "definition".

The Merriam Webster dictionary defines the word "definition" to mean "a statement expressing the essential nature of something" or "the statement of the meaning of a word". The EU definition of antisemitism, at 514 words, cannot be considered as expressing only the essential nature or meaning of the word "antisemitism". The EU definition does something different.
The EU definition is prefaced by a statement indicating that its purpose is to provide a practical guide for identifying incidents, collecting data, and supporting the implementation and enforcement of legislation dealing with antisemitism. That is, in substance, what the EU definition is - a guide.

5. Assessing the definition

So assessing the definition means evaluating how practical the guide is. Does this guide help us to identify incidents, to collect data, and to support the implementation and enforcement of legislation dealing with antisemitism? Or does it do the opposite? Does it make these tasks more difficult?

In principle, a guide for identifying incidents of antisemitism is useful. Antisemitic incidents mostly do not come with a label pasted on them "I hate Jews". To identify incidents requires familiarity with the phenomenon.

Even the original antisemitism of William Marr required knowledge and understanding. If there really were a Jewish conspiracy of world control, the ideology of William Marr might have had some sense. One has to know that there is no such conspiracy to appreciate that what Marr was preaching was hatred of Jews.

How do we know that the original antisemitism of William Marr is hatred of Jews? We have to work backwards from the manifestation. The Marr manifestation was opposition to a claimed conspiracy of Jewish world control. The EU definition sets out this manifestation as one of many exhibiting hatred of Jews.

What the guide does is to identify manifestations of antisemitism. A guide like this is useful if it picks up all or least most of the real manifestations and ignores phenomena that are something else, and not really manifestations of antisemitism. This sort of guide fails if it misses essential components of antisemitism or if throws into the guide phenomena which do not really manifest antisemitism at all.

The issue then becomes, when assessing the guide, how good are the examples. Are there too many or too few? Are they really unambiguous or will reliance on the examples result in classifying as antisemitic either words or deeds which are benign?

Given the sorry state of human rights in the world, human rights organizations must prioritize. They can not chase down every single human rights violation. The more severe violations take priority over the less severe. The more numerous violations take
priority over the less numerous.

If we under classify or under refine antisemitic incidents, both the number and severity of incidents decrease. That leads to a lower priority for these abuses in the planning and programming of general human rights organizations.

Fragmenting antisemitism has the effect of minimizing the extent of the overall problem. Each piece of the problem may seem small enough to justify not devoting time, energy and resources to the problem. The magnitude of the problem, if it were ever appreciated for what it truly is, may trigger active involvement. But, with fragmentation, that true magnitude is missed.

6. An example


The Argentinean intelligence service investigated this second attack and concluded, in a detailed report, that the attack was planned and organized by the Government of Iran. The decision to mount the attack was taken in August 1993 by Iran's National Security Council. Participating in the decision were the then and current leader Ayatollah Khamenei as well as the then president Hashemi Rafsanjani. Iran used Hezbollah to perpetrate the attack.

Given the proximity in time and parallel in techniques, the two attacks likely had the same source, Iran. What is the difference between those two attacks? Is one antisemitic and the other anti-Zionist? In context, the distinction is artificial. Both attacks were both anti-Zionist and antisemitic. Pretending there is a difference between them ignores the perspective of the perpetrators. Once the perpetrators equate the two, we befuddle our own defences against these sort of attacks if we pretend they are different.

7. Manifestations targeting Israel

So how does this guide score? Does it over or under include? How good is its list?

The guide has essentially two lists - manifestations directed towards individuals and manifestations directed towards the State of Israel. Since it is the second list of
manifestations which is controversial, I will confine my assessment to this second list.

The examples relating to Israel are these:

- "Accusing... Israel as a state, of inventing or exaggerating the Holocaust."
- "claiming that the existence of a State of Israel is a racist endeavour"
- "Applying double standards by requiring of it [Israel] a behaviour 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."

8. Two purposes

The guide set out in the EU definition serves two purposes. One is identifying incidents and collecting data. The second is supporting the implementation and enforcement of legislation dealing with antisemitism. These two purposes are distinct because legislation dealing with antisemitism does not deal with all identified incidents, even in principle.

Legislation, in principle, should oppose discrimination. Legislation, in principle, should not oppose hatred, which is a basic human emotion and impossible to eradicate through statute. Legislation rather should oppose incitement to hatred, hate propaganda. Not every expression of hatred is incitement to hatred or hate propaganda.

When assessing the fear that inclusion of anti-Zionism within the definition of antisemitism would impose an undue limitation on freedom of expression, the distinction between hatred and incitement to hatred should be taken into account. Discrimination against an individual based on race is wrong; but so is discrimination based on nationality. For the anti-discrimination component of antisemitism, the question whether anti-Zionism is or is not part of antisemitism should be an irrelevancy.

One can say something similar to incitement to hatred. Incitement to hatred against an individual based on race is wrong; but so is incitement to hatred based on nationality. For the other component of antisemitism, the incitement to hatred component, the question whether anti-Zionism is or is not part of antisemitism should also be an irrelevancy.

9. Three criticisms
The issue that the EU definition raises is not so much whether in principle anti-Zionism is or is not part of antisemitism as whether the examples are well chosen. Are the examples all either instances of discrimination or incitement to hatred against a group based on either race, religion or nationality?

The Israel specific component of the EU definition has met with three basic criticism. One is that it is too vague. A second is that it fails to distinguish adequately criticism of Israeli government actions from antisemitism. A third is that it imposes undue restrictions on freedom of expression.

a) Vagueness

We have five examples. The list of examples begins with this phrase "Examples of the ways in which antisemitism manifests itself with regard to the state of Israel taking into account the overall context could include:"

The charge of vagueness focuses on the phrase "taking into account the overall context." European Jews for a Just Peace and Rosemary Bechler have criticized the Israel component of the EU definition for causing confusions at the practical level because the examples do not give or indicate what would be the overall context which determines whether they manifest antisemitism.

The answer to this charge is fairly straightforward. There are some contexts in which of the identified language could not possibly be antisemitic. The obvious situation is the use of the language for the purpose of exposition or removal. The definition, after all, itself uses the identified language. No one could sensibly accuse the definition itself of being an act of antisemitic simply because it uses the identified language.

However, these sorts of contexts are atypical. The contextual proviso takes definitional or expository or remedial uses of the language out of the definition of antisemitism.

The definition does not mean to suggest, by reference to a contextual proviso, that there is a need, in every single case, to engage in a contextual analysis to determine whether the use is antisemitic. The contextual proviso is meant only to provide for a defense to the charge of antisemitism in those situations where the context shows that no antisemitism either was intended or resulted.

b) Distinguishing antisemitism from criticism of Israel
The charge that the definition fails adequately to distinguish between antisemitism and criticism of Israel is best answered by considering the wording of the definition. The definition itself states "criticism of Israel similar to that levelled against any other country cannot be regarded as antisemitic." So that criticism is answered directly in the definition.

None of the identified manifestations is a criticism of Israeli policies. It is impossible therefore to criticise this component of the definition as imposing undue restrictions on criticisms of Israeli policies. These manifestations are discriminatory or overtly hateful.

i) Inventing the Holocaust

Let's consider the wording of the examples. Is accusing Israel as a state of inventing or exaggerating the Holocaust a form of Jew hatred? I would say that accusing anyone of inventing the Holocaust, Holocaust denial, and Holocaust trivialization are forms of antisemitism. This is so whether the accusation is levelled against representatives of the State of Israel or anyone else.

ii) A racist endeavour

Claiming that the existence of a State of Israel is a racist endeavour is incitement to hatred against the Jewish people. The claim here is not that there exists discrimination within Israel. The claim here is not the State of Israel has racism within it, but rather that the very existence of the State of Israel is racist.

Calling the existence of the State of Israel a racist endeavour is a form of demonization and delegitimization. If the State of Israel is indeed a racist endeavour, then it should not exist. That indeed is the whole purpose of the charge, not to end or combat racism but to undermine the existence of the State of Israel.

Yet, the existence of the State of Israel is the expression of the right to self determination of the Jewish people. Combating the existence of the State of Israel means denying to the Jewish people, alone amongst the peoples of the world, the right to self determination. And to say that the Jewish people, alone amongst the people of the world, are to be denied any right, let alone a right as significant as the right to self determination of peoples, is a form of discrimination against Jews.

Rosemary Bechler criticises this example as inhibiting discussion of the value of the nation state. However, the example does nothing of the sort.
A person who is opposed to all states should be opposed to a Palestinian state at least as much as a Jewish state. A person who, under the guise of opposing the existence of the nation state, opposes the existence of the Jewish state, but not the Palestinian state, is just a bigot.

Moreover, even the seriousness of a person who opposes both a Palestinian and Israeli state in the same breath can be questioned. Strategically, if a person is opposed to any institution, the most direct way of achieving the goal is to oppose the creation of the new before the demolition of the old.

If, to take an example, you are opposed to skyscrapers, then strategically, the best way to realize your goal is to stop the building of new skyscrapers, not to demolish existing skyscrapers. Similarly, if you are opposed to the nation state, the best strategic way to realize that goal is to oppose the creation of new states, not to advocate the dismantling of existing states.

A strategically directed opponent of the nation state would oppose the creation of a Palestinian state before the dismantling of a Jewish state. But who, in the name of opposition to the nation state, does that?

iii) Double standards

Applying double standards by requiring of Israel a behaviour not expected or demanded of any other democratic nation is on its face discriminatory. The EU example already accepts a double standard, that democratic nations can be held to higher standards than non-democratic nations. This acceptance is arguable. In principle, all nations should be held to the same standard, democratic and non-democratic alike.

One can say, I suppose, about democratic nations that they should be held up to their professed democratic ideals, something non-democratic nations do not have. It is worth noting that the double standard set out here is one with a low threshold, with one form of double standard already tolerated.

European Jews for a Just Peace criticise this example on the basis that it allows it "allows any criticism of Israel to be dismissed on the grounds that it is not simultaneously applied to every other defaulting state at the same time". The suggestion here is that the example puts too heavy an onus on the critic.

This criticism is a mischaracterization of the example. The example does not ask
for an all or nothing approach. The example does not say or mean to say that a critic should criticise everyone or criticise no one. The example refers to what is expected or demanded. The double standard is that Israel is held to a higher standard than others.

Why would someone who holds all states to the same standard single out Israel? In some contexts there may be good reason. Israelis debating about their own government policies would naturally gravitate to a focus on Israel.

This is another situation where context becomes important. Citizens of any state are likely to focus on their own government's foibles. There is nothing discriminatory about that. It would be ridiculous, for instance, to criticise the newspaper Haaretz of antisemitism for focusing on the behaviour of the Government of Israel and not paying anywhere near the same attention to the Government of Canada.

The EU definition example does not suggest the contrary. However, when the singling out is arbitrary and obsessive, then there are legitimate grounds for concern. This is an area where the notion of discrimination by adverse impact assumes importance. It may be difficult to establish that singling out Israel for criticism in an arbitrary and obsessive manner is motivated by hatred of Jews. But it is discriminatory by effect if not intent.

iv) Symbols and images

The fourth example is using the symbols and images associated with classic antisemitism (e.g., claims of Jews killing Jesus or blood libel) to characterize Israel or Israelis. This seems pretty straightforward.

Hatred against some Jews - Israelis - is a form of antisemitic hatred. The mere fact that the hatred is directed to a sub-group does not take the antisemitism out of the hatred.

Moreover, it is impossible to disentangle Israel from the global Jewish community, since the global Jewish community consists of actual or presumed supporters of Israel. As well, Israel is an expression of the right of Jews everywhere, the right to self determination of peoples.

v) The Nazi comparison

The last example is drawing comparisons of contemporary Israeli policy to that of the Nazis. The Nazi metaphor is widely used, overused. These days people who disagree vehemently with their opponents slip all too often into the Nazi metaphor. For example,
in Winnipeg, where I live, the mayor was recently called a Nazi by people who did not like one of his tax policies.

This sort of rhetoric is wildly over the top, but in a non-Israel context not antisemitic. When non-Jews accuse other non-Jews of being Nazis because of disagreements over policy, this is mindless rhetoric, a collapse of the rhetorical imagination, rather than antisemitism.

However, accusing Israel of Nazism is something altogether different. Israelis, the Jewish people, are the survivors of the primary targets of Nazism. To accuse the victims of being their perpetrators is a form of cruelty. One has to be particularly mean spirited to call the primary victims of Nazism Nazis themselves. This labelling mocks the suffering of the victims.

Tony Klug minimizes this sort of rhetoric directed towards Israel as "contemporary mutual animosity" which is "primarily a tragic offspring of the territorial clash in the Middle East". This criticism suffers from false symmetry and failure to distinguish parents from children.

War propaganda and hate propaganda directed against Israel are not the fall out from the Arab Israeli wars. They are its cause. Stilling the incitement would end the wars. The notion that we have to let hateful discourse flow freely till the wars end, at which point the discourse will just stop, ignores the reality of these wars, why they are there, what causes them.

c) Inhibiting freedom of expression

The third criticism of the EU definition, that the definition inhibits freedom of expression unduly, is best answered by returning to the distinction between discrimination by intent and discrimination by impact. The answer to antisemitism is not always prohibition or prosecution. On the contrary, the primary response to any bigotry is education, information, sensitization. Use of the law is a last resort, not a first.

For the die hard bigot, law be the only recourse. For those, however, who are simply not aware of the adverse impact of their own behaviour simply telling them may be sufficient to remove the harm.

Classifying discourse as antisemitic is not necessarily a conversation stopper, as the controversy around the EU definition of antisemitism attests. It is a conversation
10. Conclusion

Antisemitism from the days of William Marr has worn disguises. An imaginary Jewish conspiracy to control the world was one such disguise.

The notion of the Jewish state as a Nazi state, a racist state, a bloodthirsty state, these are just other disguises. The effect is the same - hatred of Jews, discrimination against Jews.

If we want to combat the result, we should know, identify the cause. That is what the EU definition of antisemitism helps us do.

Appendix: The EU's Definition of Antisemitism

The purpose of this document is to provide a practical guide for identifying incidents, collecting data, and supporting the implementation and enforcement of legislation dealing with antisemitism.

Working definition: Antisemitism is a certain perception of Jews, which may be expressed as hatred toward Jews. Rhetorical and physical manifestations of antisemitism are directed toward Jewish or non-Jewish individuals and/or their property, toward Jewish community institutions and religious facilities.

In addition, such manifestations could also target the state of Israel, conceived as a Jewish collectivity. Antisemitism frequently charges Jews with conspiring to harm humanity, and it is often used to blame Jews for 'why things go wrong'. It is expressed in speech, writing, visual forms and action, and employs sinister stereotypes and negative character traits.

Contemporary examples of antisemitism in public life, the media, schools, the workplace, and in the religious sphere could, taking into account the overall context, include, but are not limited to:

Calling for, aiding, or justifying the killing or harming of Jews in the name of a radical ideology or an extremist view of religion.

- Making mendacious, dehumanizing, demonizing, or stereotypical allegations about Jews as such or the power of Jews as collective - such as, especially but not exclusively, the myth about a world Jewish conspiracy or of Jews controlling the media,
economy, government or other societal institutions.

• 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.

• 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.

Examples of the ways in which antisemitism manifests itself with regard to the state of Israel taking into account the overall context could include:

• Denying the Jewish people their right to self-determination, e.g., by claiming that the existence of a State of Israel is a racist endeavour.

• Applying double standards by requiring of it a behaviour 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.

However, criticism of Israel similar to that levelled against any other country cannot be regarded as antisemitic. Antisemitic acts are criminal when they are so defined by law (for example, denial of the Holocaust or distribution of antisemitic materials in some countries). Criminal acts are antisemitic when the targets of attacks, whether they are people or property---such as buildings, schools, places of worship and cemeteries---are selected because they are, or are perceived to be, Jewish or linked to Jews. Antisemitic discrimination is the denial to Jews of opportunities or services available to others and is illegal in many countries.

1 The full text of the pamphlet can be found in translation from the German at
http://www.vho.org/aaargh/fran/livres10/Marreng.pdf
3 "A Commentary on the All-Party Parliamentary Inquiry into Antisemitism" March 2007
4 The example was suggested by Ken Stern of the American Jewish Committee at the Budapest seminar.
Reactions, Uses and Abuses of the EUMC Working Definition of Antisemitism

The EUMC Working Definition of Antisemitism has, since its creation, been at the centre of arguments over antisemitism, anti-Zionism, anti-Israel activity and the relationship (or lack of a relationship) between the three. A document that was written as a practical guide for law enforcement has been invested with much greater meaning and application than ever intended or than it actually carries, by people on all sides of these arguments. This paper will attempt to survey and summarise just some of these arguments; and it begins in Scotland, where in April 2010, a group of anti-Israel activists took it upon themselves to proclaim the defeat of the Working Definition.

This rather ambitious claim was made by the Scottish Palestine Solidarity Campaign (SPSC), when five of its activists were acquitted of charges of racially aggravated conduct that had been brought after they shouted anti-Israel slogans during a concert in Edinburgh by the Jerusalem String Quartet. The protestors had not shouted slogans about Jews, only about Israel, but the prosecution argued that, by referring to the musicians’ Israeli nationality, the protestors had “evinced malice towards them based on their membership of an ethnic group or nationality.” However, the court decided that it would be absurd if protestors against any given state or its policies could not name that state, for fear of committing an offence, and threw out the charges.¹

The reaction of the SPSC to their victory was remarkable. In welcoming the verdict, they claimed that it provided a legal precedent which overturned both the EUMC Working Definition of Antisemitism² and the London Declaration on Combating Antisemitism³ (which had endorsed and recommended the Working Definition). The SPSC claimed that both documents aimed to create ‘thought crimes’ and to criminalise legitimate democratic protest against Israel. Specifically, the SPSC argued that to believe that “the existence of a State of Israel is a racist endeavour” and “drawing comparisons of contemporary Israeli policy to that of the Nazis”, both of which are included in the EUMC definition and are staples of the SPSC’s output, are in fact views that are “widespread [and] consistent with democratic values”, and

¹
should not be criminalised. Clearly, the assurance in the Working Definition that “criticism of Israel similar to that levelled against any other country cannot be antisemitic” did not assuage the SPSC’s concerns.

The SPSC’s reading of the legal status of the Working Definition, the London Declaration and indeed their own court case was entirely erroneous, but their reaction gives some idea of the combination of fear and contempt with which anti-Israel groups in Britain have viewed the EUMC Working Definition since its creation in 2005. An example of why this is the case can be found in the arena of student politics, which is where the Working Definition has been most successfully implemented in Britain. It was adopted as official policy by the National Union of Students (NUS) at their annual conference in 2007, due to campaigning by the Union of Jewish Students, and the policy was renewed in 2010. In 2008, the new policy was put to the test when the main Palestinian student organisation, the General Union of Palestinian Students (GUPS), distributed material at the NUS conference that year which questioned Israel’s right to exist and compared Israeli policy towards the Palestinians with the Holocaust. After consulting the Working Definition, the NUS Executive decided to expel GUPS from the conference on the grounds that their propaganda material was antisemitic. This is the only example I am aware of in which an organisation in the UK has adopted the Working Definition as official policy, and then successfully enforced it in this way. Furthermore, while the debates in 2007 over whether or not to adopt it as policy were extremely heated, there was little protest from GUPS’ allies at their expulsion from the 2008 conference, for fear that they, too, would fall foul of the new policy. Jewish students were thrilled with the adoption of the Working Definition by NUS, feeling that it would give them much-needed protection from intimidation and abuse on campus. Meanwhile, the move was described by the Palestine Solidarity Campaign (PSC – separate from the Scottish organisation named above) as an attempt “to stifle opposition to Israeli violations of human rights and international law.” Although the Working Definition remains the policy of the National Union of Students, this is not binding on individual Students Unions around the country, which would have to individually adopt the Working Definition for it to come into effect. This has happened twice since 2008, at Exeter University and Birmingham University.

The Working Definition gives a wide-ranging account of antisemitism in which aspects related to Israel play only a minor part. However, arguments about the
sections concerning Israel have dominated public discussion of the Definition and its use, to the exclusion of the rest of its text. In this way, it has become a metaphor for all debates about contemporary antisemitism over the past decade. On one side the argument has been made extensively that there is a ‘new’ antisemitism which targets Israel rather than Jews, or that the ‘old’ antisemitism of racist abuse, desecrations and so on are now perpetrated more by Arab or Muslim youths in Europe, and less so by neo-Nazis, than had previously been the case. I am sure I do not need to explain these ideas in any more detail in present company. Meanwhile historically, the far left actively opposed antisemitism, through the framework of anti-fascism, and Jews, socialists and communists formed broad anti-racist fronts in the inter-war and post-war periods. However, this part of the left is now shaped primarily by its anti-imperialism rather than its anti-fascism, so it now actively opposes Zionism, through the framework of anti-imperialism. The view that Zionism is racist, either in its innate character or in practice, is ubiquitous on the far left, and commonly found on the mainstream left. Comparisons with Nazi policy, for example between Gaza and the Warsaw Ghetto, are increasingly made. The Working Definition, therefore, strikes directly at some of the ideas that are received wisdom in parts of the European left. Meanwhile, mainstream Jewish and Israeli arguments about changes in contemporary antisemitism often meet a dismissive or evasive response from this part of the left. Firstly, the idea that antisemitism has changed or increased at all is simply denied; secondly, when the evidence for it is undeniable, it is argued that this is not real antisemitism, but just misdirected political anger; thirdly, the argument is made that any rise in antisemitism is caused by Israeli wrongdoing and the refusal of most European Jews to condemn Israel; and fourthly, it is said that any real rise in antisemitism, while regrettable, should not distract people from the much more important and urgent need to oppose Israel, Zionism and imperialism. It is striking that, in contrast, far right groups in Britain paid relatively little attention to the creation of the Working Definition. It does not cause the same problems for them as it does for leftists who consider themselves to be anti-racists, and therefore object to being told that they hold views which are antisemitic.

The Working Definition has been a victim of these political arguments over Israel, antisemitism and anti-Zionism, but also a key battleground. Perhaps more importantly, it is an example of how vital work in combating hate crimes and other manifestations of antisemitism on which there is a consensus, has been overshadowed
and obstructed by ultimately unproductive arguments over the relationship between antisemitism and anti-Zionism. A case in point is the reception given by the Trotskyist Socialist Workers Party (SWP) to Britain’s All-Party Parliamentary Inquiry into Antisemitism, and its Report which was published in September 2006. The Parliamentary Report found that “violence, desecration of property, and intimidation directed towards Jews is on the rise”; that “anti-Jewish themes and remarks are gaining acceptability in some quarters in public and private discourse in Britain”; and, in the words of the Report, that “Racism and intolerance must be challenged wherever they exist...Britain is at risk of becoming complacent in this respect and...antisemitic abuse, be it physical or verbal, must be condemned in the same unqualified terms as other forms of discrimination and prejudice.”

The SWP is Britain’s largest far left party and the driving force behind campaigning fronts such as the Stop The War Coalition and Unite Against Fascism, which magnifies the importance and impact of its political positions. The findings of the Inquiry Report should have been easily absorbed and welcomed by any organisation which defined itself, as the SWP does, as anti-racist and anti-fascist. However, while the commentary on the Inquiry Report in the SWP newspaper Socialist Worker, written by Jewish anti-Zionist Michael Rosen, accepted the Inquiry’s finding that antisemitism is, in Rosen’s words, “a form of racism that is on the increase in Britain”, it nevertheless described the Report as “an important document to confront, because it is part of a Europe-wide attempt to widen the definition of antisemitism to include root and branch criticism of Israel.” The evidence for this, according to Rosen, was the fact that the Report had endorsed the Working Definition. Nor was Rosen satisfied by the Report’s clear statement that, “The committee unanimously recognised that criticism of Israel should not, in itself, be regarded as antisemitic”, writing: “The message is clear – anti-Zionists beware. Criticism of Israeli government policies will be permitted, but if you attack the core creed of Zionism, then we’ll call in the law.”

This is consistent with a wider trend in which publicly-expressed concerns about antisemitism are often viewed, by opponents of Israel, as a political tool cynically wielded by Israel and mainstream Jewish community organisations to undermine anti-Israel activity. For British anti-Zionists, the EUMC Working Definition, the Parliamentary Inquiry Report and the London Declaration are the most powerful, and therefore most threatening, manifestations of this. And as the Scottish Palestine Solidarity Campaign suggested, it is the clauses relating to Israel’s existence
and the type of language used to attack it which they find most alarming. Opposition to the Working Definition has been uniform across the anti-Israel and pro-Palestinian spectrum, including non-Zionist or anti-Zionist Jewish groups, leftist pro-Palestinians and Islamists. Within these circles, there is consensus that the Working Definition is a form of McCarthyism designed to protect Israel and silence its critics. In another example of this, some supporters of the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS) campaign against Israel have even suggested that the very creation of the Inter-Parliamentary Coalition to Combat Antisemitism (ICCA), and the London Conference, could be seen as “a tribute to the deepening influence of the [BDS] campaign”. In this paradigm, the idea that international efforts to counter antisemitism are driven by real evidence of rising hate crimes against Jews in European cities struggles to even get a hearing. A different Socialist Worker report on the Inquiry noted that none of its fourteen members had voted against the Iraq war in 2003. Nor did it escape the notice of anti-Zionists that American Jewish organisations were involved in writing the Working Definition, and that it has been endorsed by the US State Department. For many leftists, the Working Definition is nothing more than a tool to bolster Zionism and imperialism in the Middle East, and the Parliamentary Inquiry was a Trojan horse intended to smuggle this blurring of antisemitism and anti-Zionism into mainstream acceptance. This rejection of mainstream Jewish and Israeli analyses of contemporary antisemitism, symbolised by the opposition to the Working Definition, in turn leads to a secondary antisemitism: not only is the actual antisemitism denied; it is denied in such a way that those who express concern about it are portrayed as behaving in a dishonest and manipulative way for material or political gain.

While many opponents of Israel believe that the Working Definition stretches the meaning of antisemitism too far, thereby endangering their freedom of expression, there are supporters of Israel who believe that it confirms their contention that some extreme discursive attacks on Israel should be classified as hate speech, and banned from mainstream debate or even prosecuted. Both these beliefs are genuinely held, but both stretch the meaning and power of the Working Definition too far. A particularly active battleground for these arguments is the Guardian’s online blog, Comment Is Free, which has gained a reputation for excessive anti-Israel, and even antisemitic, content, both in its articles and comment threads. A separate blog, CiFWatch, was established by critics of the Guardian in 2009 to monitor Comment is Free’s content
and moderation policies regarding its coverage of Israel, Zionism and Jews. CiFWatch reproduces the Working Definition in full on its website\textsuperscript{18} and frequently uses it as a reference point for identifying Comment Is Free content as being antisemitic. This approach has some benefit, but also sheds light on the Working Definition’s limitations. It is the central feature – perhaps the internal contradiction – of the Working Definition that it was created as a practical guide for identifying antisemitic hate crimes; yet it does so by describing different types of antisemitic discourse. However, the relationship between antisemitic discourse and hate crimes is complex and opaque, while the connection between anti-Israel or anti-Zionist discourse and antisemitism is perhaps the most contentious subject of all. There is relatively little public argument over the classification of antisemitic hate crimes, but there is furious debate as to whether or not public discourse about Israel is, or is not, antisemitic (whether in motivation, content or impact). It is no surprise, therefore, that some people on all sides of the argument assume, either in hope or in fear, that the Working Definition has a much bigger application in the discursive arena than it actually does.

The Working Definition was not created as a guide to antisemitic discourse outside of the context of hate crimes; it can be used to identify antisemitic discourse in non-criminal contexts, but only as a rough guide, or a starting point, which ought to lead to further questions. For example, the Working Definition’s list of examples of antisemitism relating to Israel – which includes describing Israel’s existence as “a racist endeavour” and comparing Israel to Nazi Germany – is preceded by the crucial sentence: “Examples of the ways in which antisemitism manifests itself with regard to the state of Israel taking into account the overall context could include...” (my emphasis). This leaves an obvious question which is not often asked, much less answered: what is the context in which these examples may not be antisemitic? For example, does a statement daubed on a wall differ from the same statement, made in a lecture theatre or written on an internet blog? At what point does the manner and context in which the statement is made demand intervention, either by a website moderator or by the police? The Parliamentary Inquiry Report implicitly recognised these limitations: after citing the Working Definition in its section on Antisemitic Discourse, the Inquiry noted the complexity of the issue and called for more research.\textsuperscript{19} Because the original purpose of the Working Definition was for law enforcement, there is always a risk that lay observers, having identified a piece of discourse as antisemitic according to the Working Definition’s list of examples, will
then wrongly assume that this automatically means it is criminal – which is something else entirely. And while the prosecution of hate crimes is a process with a clear resolution – guilty or not guilty – this is rarely the case for the hermeneutics of antisemitic discourse. Too often, those who refer most often to the Working Definition – whether in support or in opposition to its content – read it too literally, and show a fundamental misunderstanding of its purpose or the limits of its application.

These arguments over the Working Definition have shed a light on the vast differences of understanding of the nature and sources of contemporary antisemitism, and how to fight it. Furthermore, much public debate over antisemitism has the character of a boxing match rather than a genuine effort to understand the issues. The arguments over the Working Definition have been no different. To quote David Hirsh, they form part of “a battle over the boundaries of legitimate discourse. It is not simply about who is right or wrong, it is about who should be taken seriously.”

2 Throughout this paper, I have used the text of the EUMC Working Definition at http://fra.europa.eu/fraWebsite/material/pub/AS/AS-WorkingDefinition-draft.pdf
6 A separate organisation from the Scottish Palestine Solidarity Campaign.
16 http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree
17 http://cifwatch.com/
18 http://cifwatch.com/how-we-define-antisemitism/

It is of no surprise that suspicion and criticism characterized the Arab reaction to the international effort to combat antisemitism. By Arab reaction, I mean the discourse that emerged in public debates in newspapers and in television programs. The OSCE conference on antisemitism held in Berlin in April 2004, for instance, was described by Palestinians as a "red herring" and a "sly distraction" aimed at diverting attention from Israel's behavior toward them. "Which crime is more serious: the desecration of a Jewish grave in some French town, or destroying an entire neighborhood in Rafah? Scrawling a swastika on the wall of a Jewish synagogue in Italy or turning Palestinian towns and villages into virtual concentration camps?," wondered a Palestinian writer in an interview to al-Jazira. Comparing Jews to Nazis, he claimed, is not a "sweeping condemnation of Jews, but rather a rejection of evil actions, behavior and dogmas." This kind of conference, contended Jordanian scholar George Haddad, is taking place according to a plan set up by "International Zionism" in view of the European opinion poll which considered Israel and the US the states most endangering world stability and peace. "It aims at fighting by law and punishment whoever criticizes or denounces an Israeli crime or a Jewish movement." It would have been more proper, added an Egyptian journalist reporting from Berlin, if the conference would have dealt with the negative attitude toward the Arab and Muslim communities in Europe or at least with Israeli violations against the Palestinian people. The Jewish feeling of victimhood is "a political game" for exploiting others and deepening the feeling of guilt in the West, which was responsible in the past for the persecution of Jews, the concentration camps and the crematoria.

These pronouncements reflect the spirit of the Arab claims. In my presentation I'll show that the attitude toward the working definition and the various conferences for combating antisemitism emanates from the Arab perception of antisemitism as a means to mute criticism of Israel and from the Arab and Muslim self-perception as today's target of hatred and discrimination. Nevertheless, I contend that the definition of antisemitism as well as the Jewish attempts to combat it serve as a model for
constructing Islamophobia as an accepted and legitimate term for defining discrimination and exclusion of Arabs and Muslims in western societies.

The wave of antisemitic manifestations in Europe in the wake of the second intifada in September 2000, which prompted the emergence of the term 'new antisemitism,' and the results of the EU opinion poll in 2003, triggered an extensive public debate across the Arab countries on the term and its meaning. Most of the writers chose to ignore the violent incidents against Jews and concentrated on the verbal criticism of Israel as manifested in European newspaper articles, public demonstrations, academic protests and public polls. These were perceived as part of a new European trend and "a political revolution against the Jews." It seems as if "the European street was waiting for a sign to express latent feelings toward the Jews," against their excessive influence and political exploitation, wrote one commentator who predicted that in the near future the traditional parties, which represented the ruling power since the end of WWII, will be replaced by new parties representing new generations, whose foremost issue on their agenda would be the defeat of Jewish influence. For these younger generations, the European antisemitic past would be less compelling. The late shi`i scholar Muhammad Husayn Fadlallah also assessed that "something has really begun to change in the West in general, and in some European states in particular," urging Arabs and Muslims to devote serious attention to it, and exploit the new mood in Europe for enhancing awareness to their cause and to Israel's deeds. What happens in Europe, he claimed, means the failure of the brainwashing campaign of the pro-Israeli or Jewish-supervised media to deceive Europeans. An Egyptian intellectual considered it "the victory of justice." Zionism, he claimed, draws the charge of antisemitism against everyone who criticizes Israel, "the racist state," and thus it became a synonym to anti-Zionism.

The real question should be, according to a Palestinian writer, "why they hate Israel and not why they hate the Jews." Does criticism of American policies mean anti-Protestantism since 80% of Americans are Protestants? The new antisemitism today, opined columnist Jihad al-Khazin, is not comparable to that which prevailed in the 1930s. The old antisemitism was perpetrated by governments and led to the Holocaust, whereas present-day antisemitism is carried out by individuals mainly from the margins of society. Nevertheless, it should be denounced but should not be used as an excuse for Israeli crimes.
Several motifs emerged in this debate, and their main gist was that the accusation of antisemitism is "intellectual terrorism" and a ploy, preserved as a unique prerogative of the Jews. "A whole culture of antisemitism developed." "It's either agreement with Israel on all issues and deeds, or being classified in the category of racism as an opponent of the Jewish race - God's chosen people."

Some of the arguments were intertwined with motifs of Holocaust denial. The Holocaust became part and parcel of the "total antisemitic culture," it had been argued, "turning the victims to a new fence between Israel and the world particularly the Arabs, instead of being a humanitarian bridge. And be careful not to touch this 'shrine' - its numbers or its chronicles."

The inclusion of anti-Zionism denying Israel's right to exist in the working definition drew harsh criticism of Arab commentators, who claimed that antisemitism is far too widely used and abused by Israelis and Jews alike to answer any accusations of Palestinian maltreatment and charges of anti-Arab American policy. Columbia professor of modern Arab politics and intellectual history, Palestinian Joseph Massad, argued that the term is "anachronistic and ahistorical," since today antisemitism's major victims are Arabs and Muslims. Antisemitism "is no longer the hatred of and discrimination against Jews as a religious or ethnic group; …[it] has metamorphosed into something that is more insidious," he claimed and "the transference of popular antisemitic animus from a Jewish to an Arab target was made smoothly, since the figure was essentially the same."

The adoption in the US of the Global Antisemitism Review Act as law in October 2004 also triggered strong condemnation of Arab writers and commentators. As in previous debates on antisemitism, they concurred that the Jews who have taken over the legislative and executive authorities in the US promoted it to prevent criticism of Israel.

The major arguments against the Act accused it of being:

a. An interference in the domestic affairs of states and a violation of freedom of expression;

b. A racist law, hostile to Arabs and Muslims, that ignores the fact that the Arabs who are also Semites are victims of discrimination and persecution;

c. A form of "intellectual terrorism," through which the US is trying to force its hegemony and values on the world;
d. A political and not a humanitarian act, which blurs the line between Judaism and Zionism, in order to protect Israel from legitimate criticism, providing it with a license to continue its terrorist policies against the Arabs. Moreover, it allows the Israeli security apparatus to instigate acts of antisemitism in countries with Jewish communities, such as France, in order to force immigration to Israel.

A three-day conference on the repercussions of the act was held in Cairo University in March 2005 in collaboration with the Egyptian Society of International Law and the now defunct organization, Arabs Against Discrimination (AAD), founded in December 2003 to monitor racist activities and statements of Israeli and Zionist organizations. Several questions were raised for discussion: Will the act muzzle freedom of expression in the Arab and Muslim world? What is the law’s exact definition of antisemitism, and why does it include criticism of Israel and Zionism? And how can Arab countries stand up to it? There was reportedly a general consensus among the experts that the act was designed "to gag critics of Israeli crimes, and underline US global hegemony" as well as target Muslims and Arabs. The act was seen as "a blatant violation of international law," according to which "no country has the right to enact punishment on another country for violating human rights, or committing antisemitic acts." The act's requirement to remove antisemitic statements from Arab school and university textbooks "was meant to distort history, brainwash youths and alienate them from their culture," explained comparative international law professor, `Ali al-Ghatit, who participated in the Arab team for the defense of Garaudy in 2002. The conferees agreed to take action to resist the law's application, and to start by raising public awareness of its perils, especially in the West. The first step in this direction was the opening of an AAD branch office in Washington with the aim of reaching out to the American public and joining forces with experts, intellectuals and human rights activists "to find ways to stop this clampdown on freedom."

Amidst this array of opinions, voices criticizing antisemitic manifestations in the Arab discourse, including Holocaust denial were rare, but they existed. They perceived Arab antisemitism as detrimental to the Arabs' demand for their legitimate rights and their relations with the world, and as unjustified even in light of Israel’s deplorable "crimes" against the Palestinians. Egyptian academic scholar in Leipzig `Umar Kamil called upon Arab intellectuals to free themselves from their abortive
discourse and devise a new one more agreeable to "the other," whereas Egyptian writer 'Ali Salim expected the Arab League to play a role in changing the Arab attitude to the Arab-Israeli conflict and peace in the Middle East.

Some of the writers conceded that antisemitism is a dangerous, deplorable phenomenon, but considered the Arabs also its victims, because they paid and are still paying compensation for antisemitic crimes perpetrated in Europe. Conferences and decisions will not eliminate antisemitism, stated columnist Jihad al-Khazin. The only way is to deal with its causes, he said, and those are embedded in Israeli policies. On the other hand, 'Abd al-Rahman Rashid, the director general of al-'Arabiya satellite TV and former editor of the London-based al-Sharq al-Awsat, who has persistently pursued in his editorials an anti-fascist line, warning the Arabs against aligning themselves with antisemites and Holocaust deniers, was perhaps the only one who made an attempt to justify the American Act. The law should be understood for what it is – a law for monitoring antisemitism, he explained, and instead of condemning it, Arabs should encourage it and seek to expand it to include any incitement to racism against Muslims, blacks and other minorities. Protecting Jews should be the first step to protecting everyone, added an American writer of Arab descent.

However, his voice went unheeded. In fact, in July 2004 Arab states opposed efforts to introduce a UN resolution condemning antisemitism. In the Arab debate on the Danish cartoons the argument raised in the West about freedom of expression, had been contrasted with the intolerance toward antisemitism. ‘Amr Musa, SG of the Arab League put the issue quite bluntly: "What about freedom of expression when antisemitism is concerned? Then it is not freedom of expression. It is a crime. Yet when Islam is insulted, certain powers raise the issue of freedom of expression." The attacks on Islam and the Prophet, wrote one editor, "came in a context of a wave of hostility to Islam that has began to take root in the West since September 11," reiterating that the major European TV stations and newspapers do not attack Judaism or Christianity, and do not dare raise doubts about the Holocaust." In the West, he went on to say, antisemitism is a crime, "but anti-Islamism is an ordinary matter that is classified under freedom of expression. Any protest is met with denunciations and charges of backwardness." An Egyptian professor of political science, who attended the conference on "Combating Discrimination and Promoting Mutual Understanding and Respect," in Bucharest in June 2007, accused Jewish and Zionist organizations there in attempting with the US support to gear the discussion toward antisemitism, as
if it were "the ultimate form of discrimination and all other forms were mere
derivatives.

In conclusion, I would like to contend that this coupling of antisemitism and
Islamophobia increasingly appears in Arab and Muslims' writings as well as in
resolutions dealing with human rights and combating xenophobia and discrimination.
In November 2004, Egypt succeeded in convincing the OSCE at its 10th
Mediterranean seminar which took place at Sharm al-Shaykh, to expand its focus to
include the monitoring of both antisemitism and Islamophobia. In response to the
Danish cartoons crisis, several journalists called on Arab and Muslim leaders to exert
efforts to ensure the adoption of an international law by the UN to criminalize the
defamation of religions. Indeed, in March 2008, the Human Rights Council adopted a
resolution on combating defamation of religions, along the lines of decisions taken by
two separate gatherings of the Islamic Conference Organization in Islamabad in May
2007, and in Dakar in March 2008, which condemned Islamophobia and the negative
stereotyping of Muslims and Islam and emphasized the need to take effective
measures to combat defamation of religions.

Although the Arab discourse rejects antisemitism as a valid term, it does not
refrain from using the parameters that define it for establishing Islamophobia as a
legitimate term. Tariq Modood, one of the members of the Runnymede Trust's
Commission on British Muslims and Islamophobia which published its report in 1997
admitted, that the term Islamophobia "has mainly been formulated in opposition or in
relation to debates on antisemitism, racism and xenophobia in Europe and the United
States. Few Arab writers used the term prior to the Danish cartoon crisis but since
then it became a frequent term to describe what is perceived to be "the hatred toward
Arabs, Muslims and Islam" in the West, constructing a narrative with a long history of
hostility and misconceptions. Whereas the term Islamophobia is new, it denotes old
fears, it has been contended. Imam Abduljalil Sajid, another member of the
Runnymede Trust's Commission maintains that: "Hostility towards Islam and
Muslims has been a feature of European societies since the eighth century of the
Common Era. It has taken different forms, however, at different times and has
fulfilled a variety of functions."

An American national media watch group, FAIR (Fairness and Accuracy in
Reporting) defined 'Islamophobia' as "hostility toward Islam and Muslims that tends
to dehumanize an entire faith, portraying it as fundamentally alien and attributing to it
an inherent, essential set of negative traits such as irrationality, intolerance and violence." It even invoked *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion*, to describe "some of the Islamophobia's more virulent expressions - like *While Europe Slept* by Bruce Bawer, which "include evocations of Islamic designs to dominate the West."

The Arab discourse challenges antisemitism and the so-called status of victimhood of the Jews, and Arabs and Muslims succeeded in introducing Islamophobia as a form of racism and racial discrimination alongside antisemitism in international declarations and resolutions since Durban I. Moreover, Muslims in Europe today are presented as "Europe's new Jews." Racist bigotry still pervades in Europe, wrote one commentator in response to the murder of an Egyptian woman in Germany in July 2009, "only now Muslims replaced the Jews as the bête noirs."
Joël Kotek

Pragmatic Antisemitism
Anti-Zionism as Civic Religion, the Troubling Case of Belgium

In 2009, Belgium witnessed a sudden rise in antisemitic incidents. The number of antisemitic incidents in the first four months of 2009 equaled the total for the whole of 2008. In total, 96 incidents were recorded, apparently the worse year since 1945.

Yet, Belgium has not become the antisemitic country that certain people believe it ought to be denounced as to the rest of the world; Belgian Jews face absolutely no discrimination.

Yet, one should be worried at the brusque liberation of antisemitic discourse.

From Catholic circles to the extreme right, passing through a large part of the left, diverse groups take advantage of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict to liberate antisemitic discourse. Taboos that have been in place since World War II are been totally broken. This is exemplified by several skits broadcast on the leading Flemish television channels, whether public (VRT) or private (VTM). Here are some unbelievable examples: on October 27, 2008, protests by the Forum and CCOJB forced VRT (Flemish public television) to scrap a TV show about Adolf Hitler's supposed favorite dish – alpine trout in butter sauce – as part of a series about famous people's favourite foods. The backlash on the civil society were terrible for the Jews: on December 21 2008, a ‘comedian’ called Philippe Geubels [sic] accused Belgians Jews of overreacting to the food show. "What are they going to do if there is a big gas leak in Antwerp?" he asked, referring to the Belgian port city, which has a large Jewish community. "Take the city to court for provocation? Pre-emptively file charges against anyone who dares joke about that?"

Geubels also said the Holocaust could not happen again because Jews are much smarter. "They have spread across the world. Try rounding them up! Most are in America so you cannot send them by train to Germany to die in gas chambers". One month earlier, another broadcast called "Weg met de Soete", used an image of Hitler disguised into a chippendale to promote a program on Berlin (Canvas, in 27.11.08). But the worse didn't come yet: a new antisemitic skid was observed on the VRT in the broadcast "Man bijt
The movie begins with a drawing showing an ultra-orthodox Jew next to a diamond with as legend: "Joden weer wat boos!!" ("The Jews again angry!!"). Then, a presenter appears and explains that the Jewish community is angry after the comments of Bert Anciaux, Flemish Minister of Culture, who compared the death of the children of Gaza with in a slaughter in a day-nursery in Flander, where a psychopath murdered and hurt several babies and adults. The movie continues: "Boos? Of Joodse gemeenschap? Boos?" ("Irritated? The Jewish community? Angry?"). The comment continues in Dutch and can be translated literally as follows: "To keep (guard) an overview, here is a list of people, institutions and objects against which the Jewish community is not irritated yet: the Association for the Judeo-American friendship, the Movement for the friendship between the Jews and Israel, the Jewish community generally, Rolls-Royce, Rolex and the diamond industry". The Jewish community complained, and for several days Flemish media discussed whether Jews are indeed too sensitive. Yet, the movie associating the Jews with money (diamond and prestigious firms such as Rolex and Rolls-Royce) used clearly antisemitic cliché, already spread & broadcasted in sad past.

**How to explain this phenomenon?**

The failure of the Israeli-Palestinian peace process could only be a part of the explanation. The anti-Israel passion (there is no other word to describe the current hostility towards the Jewish state) is far too big to be explained only by external factors, such as the conflict itself... Nevertheless, let assume than that the *status quo* policy of the Israeli government doesn't help at all. Obviously, Belgian attitudes toward Israel and even now toward Judaism are much more influenced by internal factors.

1. a **Catholic habitus** which gives the Jew the role of the scapegoat and which date back to the Middle Ages (ritual murder, desacration of the hosts, etc.) and was reinforced by the Counter Reformation that actually created Belgium against the calvinist Netherlands.

2. a **radical left habitus**, dating back to the industrial revolution, which associate the Jew with Capitalism, now the United States
3. a difficult relation with the holocaust, especially in Flanders, where a certain
pourcentage of nationalists did collaborate with the Nazis. Anti-Zionism is there an
easy way to forget, forgive or trivialize Flemish collaborationism.

4. The emergence, based on the Intifada of the banlieues, of the Arab-Muslim
judeophobia which holds that the Jews are responsible for all the wrongs of the Arab
world.

Three other factors, that doesn’t concerns a priori the Jews must be added for
being as, if not more, important.

5. The difficulties of the Belgians to dealing with their own colonial past. The silence
around the violence perpetrated by the Belgian colonisators against the Congolese is
astonishing. This amnesia (the only important study has been published by an
American Jewish historian which (wrongly) postulates a Belgian genocide in Congo¹)
is compensated by a felling of guilt toward the Third World and the temptation to turn
aside the emotive charge of colonialism by a radical critique of... Israel, the State of the
Jewish people towards whom the Belgians have also a sense of guilt. It is in this light
that we can understand the statements of the ex-Senator green Josy Dubié, who
affirmed that the Belgians “don’t have blood on their hands..., but the Israelis”.
Without even mentioning the colonial crimes in the former Belgian Congo and the
policy of collaboration durant the SWII, one should remember the responsibility of
Belgium in the Tutsi genocide of 1994 that killed a million in 100 days².

6. A certain dose of pragmatism: above all Belgium is a pragmatic country. As a
(former) leading exporter per capita in Europe, Belgium must, above all, consider its
commercial interests, which drive to a morality of variable geometry, i.e. acts of
compassion tied in with... geopolitics. Economically, it is far less dangerous to have
moral stances on Israel, Taïwan, Nepal and Rwanda than China or Russia...

7. Belgium is engaged in an postmodernity crisis (will it survive its national
contradictions?) within the context of new demographic trends: the decline of Belgian
Jewry and the formidable dynamism of the communities of Muslim origin, which make
up around 25% of the population in the Brussels metropolitan region. Brussels is
already the western capital with the highest percentage of persons from Muslim
cultures or professing the Muslim religion. Population projections show that in about
2030, Islam will be the first religion in Brussels, the capital of Belgium and Europe. The majority are naturalized Belgians or are Belgian by birth; thus, some 20 percent of Brussels’ regional MPs are originated from the Muslim world, mostly from Morocco. In the Brussels regional parliament (PRB), the socialist group mainly consists of members stemming from Morocco or from Turkey.

All these factors combine to marginalise the Jews in Belgium (they just demographically don't count anymore) and to transform Israel into the ideal scape goat nation, a role traditionally awarded to the Jews since the high middle ages. As well as the Jews yesterday, Israel is now 'the misfortune of the world' (cf. 'Die Juden sind unzer ungluck'). In this respect, anti-Zionism could be seen as the latest avatar of this traditionnal habitus of blaming the Jews, despite (or because) of their total innocence. To blame the Jews has always been a tactic that works. This unconscious record of the policy of the lesser evil explain largelly the formidable resurgence of judeophobia among rightist Catholics as well as progressists. This habitus has a long tradition: in the middle age, rather than fighting (armed) infidels in Terra sancta many crusaders choose to kill (unarmed) Jews instead. In the nineteenth century, rather than attack the true leaders of finance, it was for ‘the financier Jew’ that Proudhon or Karl Lueger would reserve the sting of their criticisms. Today, instead of attacking Turkey (Kurds), Morocco (Sahara), China (Tibet), Russia (Tchetchen) or even the USA, one prefers to attack Israel for its human rights violations. By a subtle mechanism of transferral of animosity, the Jewish state has become the figure which substitutes for the rest of the world and especially the United States, a superpower which is far harder to affront. In this case, the special relationship between Israel and the United States helps aturally. This explain why, according to most editorial writers of Wallonia, Flanders and Brussels, all the frustrations of the Arab world are a result of the (non-resolution of the) Palestinian question. By its arrogance, by its powerfulness, Israel—which is one of the smallest states on the planet— constitutes the main threat to the peace of the world. The Israeli plays nowadays the role of the Jew of the dark medieval ages: the one who forbid the world to get right. No other conflict commands such attention in Belgian press, political class, universities, NGO, etc.

The best way to please the new Moslem voters
Above all, the temptation to use Israel as a scapegoat is quite lucrative to please the new Arab-Muslim electorate. During Israel’s Gaza operation (late December 2008-mid-January 2009), the local Muslim population demonstrated its ability to quickly organize a series of mass demonstrations over the period of the war. Most of these rallies were infiltrated by groups of Muslim extremists who equated Israel with the Nazis, IDF soldiers with the SS and the Star of David with the swastika.

The real problem was that all mainstream Belgian parties did participate in those rallies, such as in the pro-Hamas demonstration held on January 17, 2009 during Israel’s Cast Lead Operation, with the exception of the liberal-conservative Reformist Movement (MR), and this in contrast to France, where only extreme left parties took part in such rallies.

**A true civic religion**

This explain why Palestine has risen to the status of a veritable civic religion. Nothing is lacking. Everything is in place:

- Its credo: Palestine is always right; Israel, always wrong
- Its preachers: we think of the inflammatory sermons of Pierre Galand, former socialist MP and president of the Belgo-Palestinian association, a modern clone of the Abbott of Cluny, the “Venerable” Pierre, who dedicated his life to criticise Israël (cf. Russel Tribunal).
- Its apostles: all the politicians who went on a parliamentary trip to the Holy Land
- Its crusades: the campaign of boycott of Israeli products in (super)markets.
- Its martyrs: the citizen-crusaders sent back with the Turkish flotilla.
- Its saints: Palestinian suicide bombers and martyred children
- Its Christ figure: Palestine
- Its Judas: all those leftist who dare to defend Israel as the Dardenne brothers or Claude Demelenne, a left activist that denounce Moslem antisemitism
- Its holy Inquisition: the legal proceedings against Israeli ministers within the framework of universal law competence.
- Its passion: when some anti-israeli movements performed psychodrama in various towns of Belgium seeking to illustrate whether the Nakba (with activist dressed in
Israeli uniforms) or Jesus birth (with Joseph and Maria dressed as Palestinian and the Jews as Romans); those drama being the reminiscence of medieval antisemitic Christian processions and mystery plays.

- Its moments of communion: anti-israeli demonstrations with a fixed and regular time and place for more than 9 years, etc.

Palestine is today the object of all passions. Compared to other conflicts in the world (Kurdistan, Cyprus, Chechnya, Western Sahara, Tibet, Sudan and so on) the war between Israelis and Palestinians occupies a disproportionate place in the Belgian press: not a day goes by without an article, a testimony, a photo; not a week without a television report, a shocked editorial. Today’s Belgium only loves Palestine, nothing but Palestine, ‘all’ of Palestine.

It should be noted that focus on the Arab-Israeli conflict in the Belgian public discourse is relatively new. In his study The Image of the Jews and Judaism in Belgian History Books, Maurice Krajzman showed that the destruction of European Jewry and the struggle to establish a Jewish homeland were given very little attention in the post-war Belgian press. This lacuna included discussion of the Holocaust itself as well as the question of compensation for survivors. The popular French-language weekly of the post-war period Pourquoi Pas?, for example, showed no special interest in the ‘Jewish-Arab conflict in the Holy Land’. Rare articles on the subject that did appear expressed little compassion for the Jews, survivors of the Holocaust. On the other hand, Krajzman notes frequent allusions bordering on the most banal antisemitism. Between 1945 and 1948, the Belgian political establishment aligned itself with British policy on Palestine, the Jewish national struggle finding support only among Communists. Catholic Belgian society, which was traditionally hostile toward Zionism, expressed open concern about the ‘return of the Jews to Judea’. The Socialist Party’s commitment to the Jewish cause was tempered by the ambivalence of its charismatic leader and Prime Minister Paul-Henri Spaak, an anglophile who feared ruining Belgium’s excellent trade relations with the Arab world. During the UN partition vote on Palestine he voted only at the last minute in favour of the plan. During Israel’s war of independence, Jews provided with arms supplies by Eastern bloc countries fought against troops equipped by the West, particularly Belgium. Indeed, in 1948, ‘Arab countries involved in the conflict
represented 49% of *Fabrique Nationale*’s [a prominent Belgian arms company] sales’.\(^5\)

Perhaps this explains why Belgium did not recognise the new Jewish state until January 1949.

**Conclusion: antizionism as the (foreign) policy of esser evil**

One should then consider then antizionism as a veritable ‘cultural code’: it acts as fantastical evidence which serves to express all sorts of purposes:

a) tool for the Belgian to act as a ‘virtuous country’ in Foreign Policy

b) way to rehabilitate those Flemish nationalists who did collaborate with the Nazis

c) pledge for the integration of the new Belgian

The problem is not that Israel is attacked (criticism of Israeli policies is in no way shocking), but rather the manner in which it is done so—incensed, manipulated and impassioned. The problem is not that Palestine is loved and defended but that these sentiments occupy all political and media space, so that it becomes the fetishist destination for any politician on bad form or in need of some good media coverage. Recently, one of the most influential Flemish editorial (Luc van de Kelen) compared the Flemish to the Palestinian, the Francophones to the Israël. Didn't they try to steal, to colonized the Brussels periphery as the Israeli do in Jerusalem ? (sic). Actually, some Wallonian journalists too compare their fate to the those of the Palestinians; the Flemish playing here the role of the cruel Israeli.

Are there dangers in being a Jew in Belgium? Not at all—unless perhaps you happen to wear a kippa, black hat or you frequent a Yeshiva. Since the eruption of the second *Intifada*, some of these Jews have become the objects of vexation. Most of the violent attacks were directed against members of the small but visible Orthodox Antwerp Jewish community. If you walk in the city as a Chassidic Jew, than some Muslim youth usually call out "dirty Jew" at you. One example among others: the 3\(^{rd}\) March 2010, in the Belz hassidic district (Somersstraat), between 8 pm and 8:30 pm, a man, measuring approximately 1m70, assaulted, without any reasons 4 orthodox Jews. The man attacked his victims with a stick by shouting "Allah Akbar" ("Allah is great") and "Yahud, Yahud" ("Jew, Jew"). If it happens mainly in Antwerp, religious Jews could be beaten too in Bruxelles. The 13th of November 2009, just after the friday evening office of the main Synagogue of Brussels (Regence street) a Jewish faithfull was asked in the tram, he just
entered, if he was leaving the Synagogue. Having answer positively, he just received a blow in his face.

For those who doesn't wear a kippa, which is about ninety per cent of Belgian Jews, it is still good to be a Jew in Belgium, on condition that they remain silent when one attacks Israel. They should be totally unconcerned about Israel or, even better, anti-Israeli.

The Belgian case is interesting as it might augur for the new place of the Jews of Europe in the third millennium: a marginal place, if not that of pariah. Parallel to the growth of populations of Arab-Muslim origin and, at the same time, the accelerated decline of the Jewish population (with the exception of France and Britain), the marginalisation of European Jewry will amplify as the instrumentation of the Arab-Israeli conflict.

Even worse: I believe that we could be arriving towards a new phase of European anti-Jewish politics. It is instructive to remind ourselves of the three stage definition of judeophobia developed by Raul Hilberg in his magisterial book devoted to The Destruction of the Jews of Europe:

“Christ’s missionaries said in effect, “You have no longer got the right to live with us if you remain Jewish”. After them, secular leaders stated, “You have no longer got the right to live with us”. Finally, it was the Germans who declared, “You have no longer got the right to live”.”\(^6\)

Since the second Intifada, following the logic of the three stages, there seems discernible a fourth phase of this millennial Jew-hatred:

“You no longer have the right to live with us if you are a Zionist or if you are a Jew with a capital J”, which is to say you have communitarian feelings and are attached to the survival of the State of Israel.

Added to the ‘conversion to Christianity’, the ‘expulsion’ and the ‘annihilation’ is now the ‘conversion to the new civic religion of anti-Zionism’.

‘In the eyes of European progressives’, writes Alain Finkielkraut, ‘…one cannot defend a Nazi state without being Nazi oneself, and one cannot criticise a Palestinian politician from a position of an advocate for peace. This is a new episode of totalitarian confusion among intellectuals.’
This is why, I believe, the Jewish anti-Zionists has become nowadays the modern heroes of our postmoderne societies. They have never been so much in demand: not one television show, not one newspaper and not one public conference without of those converts preaching the right antiisraeli words (cf. Stephane Hessel in France). There are being used as the Jewish converts in medieval Spain.

Never – the Shoah aside – has the gulf seemed so wide between Belgians of Jewish origin and their fellow citizens. In Belgium, the Jews’ solitude is already palpable. In a sense, the Jews of Belgium are victims of what one should qualified as “electoral” or even better “pragmatic” antisemitism. One could even speak about a case of antisemitism without judeophobia as its causes are now (far) more pragmatic than ideological. As we previouldemonstrated, for the Belgium of the third millennium, anti-Zionism is a matter consensus and sense. Opposition to Israel serves the interests of many components of contemporary Belgian society: the left as well as the right, Catholic as well as secular, immigrant as well as Walloons or Flemish. Opposition of Israel is now the smallest common denominator, the policy of the lesser. Let's remember the Second World II when the (socialist) Mayor of Liege, Joseph Bologne, choose to sell the Communists and the Jews to the nazis to save his Socialist and free massons friends.7.

Anti-Zionism is clearly the apex of the new cyclical evolution of millennial European antisemitism. As Pierre-André Taguieff has written, for many Europeans, ‘a utopian future for the world would be a globe without Israel, or even without Jews’. Misguidedly, many Belgian Jews and indeed Jews from other parts of Europe see themselves emigrating to more favourable environments.

XXX

Will Europe finally win at losing all its Jews? It's a possibility, as Romano Prodi pointed out recently in the European voice. The former President of the European Commission suggested, in effect, and not without courage, that the negative image of Israel and foreign policy, in combination with ‘vestiges of prejudices or veritable antisemitism’ force Europe to ask itself difficult questions. He would be happy if his words were heard and Europe finally renounced its old demons. It is imperative to act. Must we really wish for a Europe without Jews?

1 See Adam Horschild King Leopold’s Ghost’s, Macmillan, 1998.

Every Friday, from 12.30-13.30 there is a first ‘peace rally’ for Palestine outside the Israeli Embassy in Brussels. Every Friday too, there is a second ‘peace rally’ for Palestine, at the Place de la Bourse, Brussels, from 16.00–18.00.


Redux: legal aspects of Antisemitism, Holocaust Denial and Racism in Greece Today

The patterns of antisemitism in an EU state, which I explore refer to Greece. Unfortunately this topic still keeps occupying me today, after my presentation at Stephen Roth Institute 9th biennial seminar in Tel Aviv exactly two years ago and the publication of my article pertaining to the very same issue on April 2009. Today I will refer shortly to the two last related judgments and their impact on the working definition of antisemitism.

On 13 December 2007 the neo-Nazi Greek writer Konstantinos Plevris was sentenced by the Athens Court of Appeal under Greek Anti-Racism Law 927/1979 (henceforth: the Anti-Racism Law), for a patently antisemitic book *Jews, the Whole Truth*, to a suspended sentence of 14 months. He was acquitted on March 2009. Subsequently, requests to the Prosecutor of the Supreme Court to file a motion for cassation of that acquittal judgment were submitted.


In the epilogue of my article I wrote that while preparing it for publication I was notified about the acquittal. Thus, being unable to refer to the reasoning of the court itself, I commented on the basis of what was released then, a response of Kentriko Israilitiko Symvoulio, (the Central Board of Greek Jewish Communities – KIS) and concluded:

“The decision of 27 March 2009, is not a manifestation of the principle of freedom of speech. Rather, it defends an antisemitic and neo-Nazi author and the defamatory writings in his racist book”.

Now I will further elaborate on some key excerpts from the reasoning and its relation to the Anti-Racism Law. According to the court:

“[t]he defendant does not revile the Jews solely because of their racial and ethnic origin, but mainly because of their aspirations to world power, the methods they use to achieve these aims, and their conspiratorial activities… The actual
incidents and quotes from historical persons that the author uses to support his views are based on historical sources, which he cites, and which merely underscore some of his harsher phrases… Taken as a whole, the content of the book does not demonstrate that the defendant had the intention of using it to incite the reader to actions that could cause discrimination, hatred or violence against Jews, nor does he express offensive ideas against [the Jews] solely because of their racial or ethnic origin…. This is because he does not revile all Jews collectively, but only those Zionist-Jews who implemented the specific acts he cites in the book…”

Hence, it seems that not only Plevris was charged with violation of the Anti-Racism Law, but Greek Court of Appeal blatantly infringes the law. It is corroborated by the latter’s attitude to the following extracts of the above book included in the indictment.

The phrase: “[t]hat’s what the Jews deserve. For it’s the only way they understand: firing squad within 24 hours...” was not considered by the court as incitement to violence and hateful provocation against Greek Jews.

Similarly, the passage: “Get rid of the Jewish propaganda, that deceives you with concentration camps, gas chambers, ‘ovens’ and other fairytales of the pseudo-holocaust...” was not deemed as an insult to the Greek Jews.

Thus, after a first instance conviction for a double violation of the Anti-Racism law, Plevris was acquitted by the Appeal Court as follows: regarding Article 1(1) (incitement to actions that may provoke racist hate and violence) he was acquitted with 4 votes in favor and 1 vote against; whereas regarding Article 2 (dissemination of insulting ideas against a group of people), Plevris was acquitted unanimously.

The acquittal from the double violation not only proves that racism may be manifested with impunity, but in fact makes the situation even worse. By resolving not to convict Plevris on the basis of the Anti-Racism law, the court explained that Plevris had reviled the Jews mainly due to their conspiracy to dominate the world.

Moreover, in its reasoning, the court’s reference to the “actual incidents” and “historical sources” that Plevris used reminds us of other expressions throughout Plevris’ trial. At the beginning of the trial the prosecutor called Plevris’ book a “scholarly study”. Similarly, the minority judge of the first instance who voted for Plevris’ acquittal wrote a 32-page report giving the reasons for her dissenting opinion. On 9 November 2008, the date of the 70th commemoration of Kristallnacht, Greek
human rights NGO, Greek Helsinki Monitor (GHM) disseminated selected excerpts of the judge’s views. Inter alia, the judge wrote with reference to Plevris that he: “…cites documental evidence given in detail in his book in his attempt to cast doubt on the extent of the Holocaust, which he contends concerned only 66,000 to 350,000 Jews as shown in official data held by the International Red Cross, and not 6,000,000 as claimed by the Zionist movement to further its own interests…”

Thus, those examples indicate that more than 70 years later and in the 21st century antisemitic views continue to be held in Greece even among judicial officers at various instances. Do these judicial officers agree with at least part of the ideas promoted by Plevris? Or do they simply turn a blind eye to reality. Since the appearance of Plevris’ book assaults on Jewish cemeteries and Holocaust monuments, throughout Greece, where over 90% of Greek Jewry had been perished, increased tremendously.

Following the acquittal, Greek Ministry of Foreign Affairs Spokesman George Koumoutsakos answered a related question in a briefing on 8 April 2009: “Extremist views like those expressed by the person to whom you referred (Plevris – M.N) do not represent and do not correspond to the beliefs and feelings of the Greek people…I would add, in fact, that extremist views such as these essentially insult the Greek people as a whole; a people who fought with all their power against the Axis powers, against the forces of Nazism and fascism”

Such an expression coming from an official source could have been very encouraging. The truth of the matter, however, is that it was not circulated by any media outlet in Greece, even though it was distributed by Athens News Agency.

Then, between 27 May and 3 June 2009, GHM, KIS and another Greek NGO, Antinazistiki Protovoulia (the Anti-Nazi Initiative), all involved as prosecution witnesses in the trial submitted requests to the prosecutor of the Supreme Court to file a motion for cassation of that acquittal judgment. The Court of Cassation is the Greek Supreme Court for civil and criminal law (in Greek: the "Areios Pagos"). It examines only legal and not factual issues if the Court of Cassation concludes that a lower court has violated the law or the principles of the procedure, then it can order the rehearing of the case by the lower court, the Court of Appeals. The Court of Cassation's decisions are irrevocable and it is the highest degree of judicial resort. The prosecutor is the sole competent authority to examine whether a judgment is legally wrong and it
is at his discretion to file an appeal in the interests of the law, i.e. in cases of mistake or violation of the law, or if the judgment rendered by the lower court was not full. On 4 June 2009, the deputy prosecutor of the Supreme Court who was assigned the file, rejected the above request with a hand-written five-line note that “there is no legal reason to file a motion of cassation against that judgment in my opinion (it has a special and thorough reasoning, has interpreted and applied the law correctly, without ambiguities, inconsistencies, rational gaps, and without creating any invalidity).”

However, a few weeks later the file was assigned to the senior deputy prosecutor of the Supreme Court. The latter on 1 July 2009, filed a 17-page special motion for cassation on behalf of the law (no. 34/2009), on the grounds of “lack of the special reasoning required by the Constitution, and erroneous interpretation and application of the substantive criminal provision.” It included long quotations from Plevris’ book which lead to the conclusion that “it is automatically self-evident that the author with intent publicly expressed ideas that could incite discrimination, hatred and violence against Jews and offended persons and a group of persons because of their ethnic origin.”

These two responses of the two prosecutors do not only contradict each other, but due to their dates they had different implications had the Court of Cassation accepted them.

The deadline to file a motion for cassation that could, if successful, lead to a new trial was 9 June 2009. In such a case, if the Court of Cassation had ordered the rehearing of the Court of Appeals it could affect the defendant. However since the time has lapsed when the senior prosecutor filed the motion on 1 July 2009, there would be no retrial and it would have no consequences on the parties to the trial.

Yet, there would still be an advantage to that legal proceeding, provided the motion is accepted because the law would be interpreted by the Supreme Court.

As already mentioned on 15 April 2010 with Judgment 3/2010, the Greek Supreme Court’s Criminal Section, sitting in plenary, by a majority of 24 judges with two dissenting opinions, dismissed the appeal in cassation in the interests of law.

In its ruling the Court of Cassation, inter alia, held: “The provisions of law 927/1979 must be interpreted limitedly and not strictly, in view of the provisions of articles 14 par. 1 and 16 par. 1 of the Greek Constitution and article 10, par. 1 of the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR), with which freedom of expression
is established as regards the thoughts of a person (orally, in writing and via the press) as well as freedom of the art, science, research…”

The majority found the reasoning of the judgment appealed against to be full and clear, the Anti-Racism Law to be properly applied and thus the reasons for cassation to be groundless.

After reviewing the two last related judgments, known as the latest development as of the date of my presentation (for further development see the epilogue) I analyzed updated information regarding the number and nature of cases brought, convictions obtained and sentences imposed under the Anti-Racism law.

Pertinent to this issue is a similar question submitted to Greece by the Rapporteur of UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD) in late June 2009. Before expounding the question and the Greek response I would like to refer to that date of late June 2009, which I have not mentioned randomly.

Probably because of the related special question on judgment 913/2009, the file was assigned to the senior Deputy Prosecutor of the Supreme Court who, as aforesaid on 1 July 2009, filed a special motion for cassation on behalf of the law, after the motion for cassation was rejected by another prosecutor on 4 June 2009.

The question submitted to Greece by the Rapporteur reads as follows: “Please provide updated information on the application of Law 927/1979 ‘on punishing acts or activities aiming at racial discrimination’, including the number of convictions and the sentences imposed. What measures have been taken to ensure that acts of violence against members of ethnic minorities are always promptly and effectively investigated and prosecuted?”

That question, which asks for a very detailed information regarding the application of Anti-Racism Law, refers to the article 2(a) of the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Racial Discrimination which stipulates that: “Each State Party undertakes to engage in no act or practice of racial discrimination against persons, groups of persons or institutions and to ensure that all public authorities and public institutions, national and local, shall act in conformity with this obligation”.

In its statement to UN CERD session on August 2009 the Greek delegation related to the above question, explaining that one of the main reasons that until recently, the the Anti-Racism law has had a very limited application was the
reluctance of the courts to restrict free speech including the expression of offensive ideas.

As I already said such an argument is too facile and utterly misleading. A clear distinction has to be made between freedom of expression on the one hand, and incitement and the usage of antisemitic and racist ideas on the other hand.

Unfortunately, as mentioned above, even the supreme court in its dismissal of the appeal in cassation relied on the principle of freedom of expression as a fig leaves for the purpose it is always used, i.e., to conceal that distinction and to fend off criticism.

In a country like Greece, where antisemitism is deeply entrenched in Greek mainstream society, first and foremost there should be an appropriate legislation. Criminal law provisions should be developed and promoted to combat offences of xenophobia, racism, antisemitism and holocaust denial (the latter does not constitute, in Greece, a penal offence). Yet, the mere existence of the law is not in itself a guarantee for its application. Prior to Plevris’ conviction in December 2007 no convictions had been made in Greece on the basis of the anti-racist legislation in the 35 cases brought before the courts. Plevris’ conviction, which was overturned by the appeal, was followed by two other convictions, on March 2008 and on July 2008, and the number of cases involving that legislation had reached fifty by the end of August 2008. The conviction of March 2008 was vindicated on appeal. Thus that was the first conviction at the appeal level court under the Anti-Racism Law 927/1979 and as of today is the only one, in more than thirty years of the law’s existence. The conviction of July 2008 was reversed by the appeal court on 24 March 2009.

After the acquittal of Plevris on March 2009 at the Five Members Appeal Court of Athens, the only hope was the adjudication of the supreme court in the appeal in cassation in the interests of law. It was expected that the supreme court would use the opportunity to provide guidance on the interpretation of Law 927/1979, which would develop a coherent body of jurisprudence in that respect.

As already mentioned, while dismissing the appeal, the supreme court ruled that the provisions of the Anti-Racism Law must be interpreted limitedly and not strictly. The Court also upheld the principle of freedom of expression enshrined by article 10 paragraph 1 of ECHR. It is submitted that such a right, laudable as it is, does not automatically rank higher than other rights. There is no hierarchy amongst fundamental human rights in Europe. When opposing fundamental human rights
conflict with each other a balance must be drawn between the safeguarding of a right and curbing any abuse of it.

It is not surprising that in its concluding observations of August 2009, before the decision of the supreme court, CERD was concerned that Greece “… is not effectively implementing legal provisions aimed at eliminating racial discrimination and in particular those relating to prosecution and punishment of racially motivated crimes… The Committee further requests the State party to provide in its next report updated information concerning the application by courts of criminal law provisions punishing acts of racial discrimination, such as those contained in Law 927/1979 “…

A similar conclusion was reached by European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI), the Council of Europe’s independent human rights monitoring body specialising in combating racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia, antisemitism and intolerance. Its report on Greece published on 15 September 2009 reads as follows: “ECRI regrets, as the authorities have acknowledged themselves, that Law 927/1979 continues to be rarely applied although information indicates cases of incitement to racial hatred in Greece.”

Moreover, NGOs have informed ECRI that the cases applying the Anti-Racism Law were brought to court on their initiative. Therefore, ECRI demanded more action on the Prosecutor’s part, as it appears that he rarely brings cases to court ex officio. In that respect, the Greek authorities have informed ECRI that, a special Prosecutor has been recently appointed as a contact person. They also added that all prosecutions based on the Anti-Racism Law are monitored and relevant statistical details being sent to the National Focal Point on Racism and Xenophobia.

ECRI also refers in its report to the administration of justice. Despite the information provided by the Greek authorities that the National Judges’ Academy provides training on human rights in general and the fight against racism in particular, ECRI has received reports of some judges and prosecutors making racist statements.

In view of the prevailing atomosphere of antisemitism in Greece and examples of miscarriage of justice, training on human rights to public officials, members of the judiciary and law enforcement officials is essential. It is all part of awareness-raising and training initiatives aimed at civil servants, elected representatives and politicians on issues of racism and antisemitism that became part of the public discourse and it is not punished. For example, the leader of LAOS, the extreme right wing party, often
makes public antisemitic and racist statements. Thus far, he has not been prosecuted for any of these statements under Law 927/1979.

Lamentably, in view of the growing antisemitic events in 2009, both in scope and intensity, the components of the working definition are still relevant. However, towards its concluding section, it is suggested that the definition of contemporary examples of antisemitism in public life should be broaden to encompass: “…support and promotion by public authorities and/or public institutions of any manifestation of antisemitism enumerated above.”

Due to the fact that the enactment of a new legislation or even the amendment of the existing laws involve a long process, it is recommended that the working definition, even in its current form without modifications, be implemented and applied. Its citation in a Lithuanian court in 2005 can serve as exhibit A.

It is expected that the proposed inclusion in the working definition will assist in the struggle against antisemitism. When being monitored, states are more likely to increase the efforts of implementing and enforcing legislation or working definition dealing with antisemitism, rather than impeding such process, and being stained for using antisemitism, deeply entrenched in their institutional bodies, as their narrative.

The Greek Supreme Court validated the acquittal of the Court of Appeal of the self proclaimed Nazi, racist and antisemite, Plevris. It is nothing short of a legitimacy given to racism and antisemitism by the Greek judicial system at the end of the first decade of the 21st century.

**Epilogue:**

I concluded the first part of my presentation with my citation from Judgment 3/2010 rendered by Greek Supreme Court on 15 April 2010 saying: “that is the latest development as of today.” However, a new event of great concern was about to occur in Greece in the second half of September 2010. Not only it links directly to the conclusion of my paper, but regrettably it indicates that in comparison with September 2007, when the trial of Plevris commenced, the situation in September 2010, three years later, is worse.

As already mentioned, the Supreme Court rejected a motion for cassation upholding the acquittal of Plevris.

After that acquittal, criminal charges were brought against three members of the Anti-Nazi Initiative, who as already mentioned, were formerly witnesses for the prosecution in Plevris trial. The public prosecutor's office in Athens started legal
action against them and they were accused of “…propagation of false news which could cause unrest to citizens regarding the impartiality of the Greek judicial system”.

According to the indictment, that false information related to the fact that Kostas Plevris is supported by antisemitic prosecutors and judges.

Plevris, on whose complaint report the court case was initiated, was summoned as the only prosecution witness in their trial before before the 2nd Three-Member Appeals Court of Athens.

The trial that has been set for 22 September 2010 was postponed for 6 December 2010.

On 24 January 2011, two GHM officers and four KIS officers will be tried before the 6th Three-Member Misdemeanors Court of Athens for false accusations, perjury and aggravated defamation they expressed in their testimonies during the trial against Plevris, which resulted in his conviction by the first instance. Possible sentences for these offenses are: six months to five years and a fine for dissemination of false information; three months to five years, a fine and stripping of civil rights for one to five years for aggravated defamation; one to five years for false accusations; and one to five years for perjury.

The witnesses for the prosecution were turned into accused to be prosecuted.

It is not only a travesty and a mockery of justice. Dr. Moshe Kantor, President of the European Jewish Congress (EJC) describes it more accurately. He said that Plevris was using a form of “lawfare against human-rights organizations and the Jewish community.” Dr. Kantor continued: “[T]his is a test case for the Greek justice system which is supposed to defend the people against racists and xenophobes like Plevris … If Plevris is successful then it will send a shameful message throughout Greece and into Europe that racists and anti-[S]emites have tools to attack human-rights activists…” It is hoped that the proceedings instituted against the officers of the Anti-Nazi Initiative, GHM and KIS are withdrawn. These courageous people who stood up against Plevris and publicly spoke out against him are being prosecuted, while the self-confessed promoter of Nazism and racism remains unpunished by the highest instance of the Greek Judiciary. Yet, the fact that dates have been set for these new trials is outrageous. It indicates the prevailing attitude of tolerance to antisemitism and intolerance of human rights defenders and especially their activities against antisemitism in Greece today. Under these circumstances no wonder that the
Greek judicial system is employed to silence critics and opposition to racist and antisemitic views.

**An up-date to the epilogue:**

I am writing these lines on 10 December 2010, Human Rights Day. A few days ago, on 6 December 2010, I was informed that on the same day a three-judge panel in Greece unanimously acquitted the three Greek officers of the Anti-Nazi Initiative, on trial for speaking out against judges who had acquitted Plevris.

As I already wrote, judicial proceedings must be scrutinized to prevent partiality from the bench and the prosecution. However, prevention of all acts of harassment, including those at the judicial level, is not enough. Human rights activists who fight against racism and antisemitism, and in Greece the cases applying the Anti-Racism Law were brought to court on their initiative, deserve not only our support, but also our protection. In addition, such activists should be encouraged rather than discouraged.

The theme for Human Rights Day 10 December 2010 is human rights defenders who act to end discrimination. Throughout their activities they advocate justice and seek to protect victims of human rights violations. Human Rights Day 2010 intends to promote the achievements of human rights defenders and it will emphasize the primary responsibility Governments have to enable and protect their role. The focus on the work of human rights defenders will continue through all of 2011.

It is anticipated that the ruling in favour of the three brave Anti-Nazi Initiative activists in the beginning of December 2010 will mark not only a change in the approach towards those human rights defenders, but will designate a new era in the combat of racism and antisemitism in Greece.
Antiimperialists in Vienna and in Bielefeld

As a journalist I am going to report on the case of a small leftwing group in Vienna.

This group can be qualified according to the Working Definition of Antisemitism as transporting crude Antisemitism.

Vienna Action against Antisemitism v. Antiimperialist Coordination (AIK)

A formerly Trotskyite group founded in 2000 by the 30 years old Wilhelm Langthaler, who remained until now the guru of this group. Langthaler was invited several times by Saddam Hussein and very early AIK took a stand against Israel.

Langthaler and his group demonstrated of course for Saddam Hussein and his terror-regime.

AIK had collected money for the “Iraqi resistance” and some of their declarations were antisemitic. The Vienna Aktion gegen den Antisemitismus, (Vienna Action against Antisemitism) which published on the website of the Documentation Centre of Austrian Resistance (DÖW) in 2003 an article Antiimperialistische Coordination (AIK) – Antisemitism in leftwing clothes. The author of the article has criticized their slogan “An Arab Palestine from the Jordan to the Mediterranean”, in which settlement in the service of Imperialism will not be tolerated” and “will be canceled”. For them the "Al-Aqsa-Intifada" with suicide attacks and antisemitic propaganda demonstrations where radical islamist imams and functionaries of Hamas, Jihad and other groups call for the killing of Jews ,is nothing less than an outcry of battling of the great majority of the Palestinian people, which is no longer disposed to accept the Zionist rule and it’s daily crimes behind the smoke-screen of the 'peace process'.

The long article (19,702 characters http://www.gegendenantisemitismus.at/00012003.php ) was full with quotations from the publications of AIK and their orbit.

Dr. John Bunzl supported AIK

The whole world is looking on, when in Sudan (Darfur) Hundred Thousands are killed. There are no demonstrations against this genocide, and we can see very seldom a
report on this misery on TV. Recognizing that there is legitimate criticism of Israeli politics and actions in this war and a lively debate going on in Israel itself, the red line is crossed whenever Israel is accused - without proof - of war crimes, if the activities of Israeli army are compared or brought into connection with the Wehrmacht. Needless to say, that “Middle East experts” profit from a boom. One of the often quoted Austrian “Middle East experts” is Dr. John Bunzl, who is staff member of the *Austrian Institute for International Affairs* and lecturer for political science at two Austrian universities.

When the DÖW published the exposé on its website in the column of “Action against antisemitism” it produced a very strange reaction from Dr. John Bunzl. He sent an e-mail letter to DÖW, which was published also on the website of AIK. Since it has been removed from there, here the translation:

John Bunzl’s letter to DÖW published by AIK on February 18, 2003:

„Re: DÖW exposé: „The antiimperialist coordination (AIK) - Antisemitism in leftwing garment“ (Antisemitismus im linken Gewand).

I admit, it was somehow confusing to discover the well known DÖW at the Front of the brave fighters against the völkisch antisemitism - of the Palestinians (!). But the enigma let itself easily solved, here a representative of the rubbish of the “antigerman left” („antideutschen Linken“ ADL) was set to work. Because their simple logic is here celebrated:

1) The worst thing on earth is “Germany”
2) The biggest crime of “Germany” is the genocide against the Jews.
3) Israel is the state of the victims of this genocide
4) The resistance against Israel of Palestinians, Arabs, Moslems and Leftist must defined as a prolongation of the völkisch antisemitism, which led to the annihilation of the Jews.
5) Violence coming from Israel must be defined accordingly as prolongation of antifascist resistance.

Logical? In a publication of ADL the logical conclusion was drawn and Sharon was celebrated as a proletarian hero….

According to my opinion this rubbish has nothing to do with the reality of the Middle East (representatives of ADL distinguish themselves in this regard through
astonishing ignorance) it serves the (Profilierungsnervosen) image-neurosis and identity-acrobatics of ruined German (and Austrian)

Left-wingers, who in unrestrained self importance want to fight at last on the “right” side against National-Socialism and want to enjoy the psychological effect to accuse other left wingers of antisemitism.

Unfortunately the official Jewish community has according the motto, the enemy of my enemy is my friend has been taken in by ADL. They should have better taken the motto with friends like these, who needs enemies...

The method of ADL is as simple as banal: to quote selectively, out of context, to denounce, to assume Nazi-motives, to make sweeping judgments - only no serious dispute with (often problematic) positions of leftists and absolutely not with those of Israel. By the way, the frantic projection of a “völkisch” antisemitism on the Palestinians comes from the same mechanism, which moves Leftists and Rightists in this country out of causes of discharge, to identify Israel with National-Socialism.

Instead to ask the legitimate question, who and why is taking which position, in order to go sure, the worst is assumed, what result finally in a trivialization of the antisemitism- reproach.

It reminds me of a very old Israeli joke: Not everyone, who finds Brigitte Bardot more beautiful than Golda Meir is an antisemite…

University lecturer Dr. John Bunzl”

When his letter was received in DÖW, the question was raised, if this e-mail letter is genuine, because style and content of the letter did not fit into what is expected from a lecturer of political science at an Austrian university. Bunzl confirmed right away to be the author.

Instead of quoting at least something out of the exposé of DÖW, he preferred sweeping judgments on the “antigermans”, a leftist pro-Israeli group in Germany and on the Jewish community of Vienna. All the matters raised by him, had nothing to do with the article about the virulent antisemitism of AIK, which was documented in detail in the article „The antiimperialist coordination (AIK) - Antisemitism in leftwing garment”. A few months later AIK went so far, as to express solidarity with Dr. Ibrahim Alloush, a prominent Arab Holocaust denier.
Bunzl’s vicious attack on the DÖW which was founded in 1963 by former resistance fighters, victims of Nazi persecution and committed academics to combat those who wanted to write national socialism out of Austrian (and German) history and memory said more about him than about the DÖW.
http://www.tau.ac.il/Anti-Semitism/asw2002-3/austria.htm

**AIK defends Ibrahim Alloush June 2003**

AIK has published an article expressing solidarity with an economics and statistics professor in Jordan who, it claims, was "fired for his solidarity with Palestinians and Iraq". They go on to describe Dr. Ibrahim Alloush, as "one of the most important persons in the progressive Pan-Arabic movement". Alloush is an official of the Jordanian "Association against Zionism and Racism", a member of the editorial board of the online "Free Arab Voice" and a member of Jordanian Writers Association Alloush has assiduously represented the "revisionist", Holocaust denial viewpoint. He has also published several articles in the Journal for Historical Review, the mouthpiece of the US-based antisemitic Institute for Historical Review (IHR).

In its May-June 2001 edition, for example, he wrote an article titled "Between public relations and self-alienation: Arab intellectuals and the ,Holocaust' ". The same issue also carried an interview with him.

In one of his contributions to the IHR rag, Alloush offers advice to the crew of Nazis and white supremacists who publish it: "What I am suggesting here," he says, "is that efforts be made to reach people from different continents, races, and ideological affiliations. For example, in the Arab world, many supporters of revisionism are leftists. For them, the myths of the ,Holocaust' are associated with rationalizing Zionist and imperialist hegemony in the Arab world."

The day after Alloush's links with the IHR were exposed, the AIK published a disclaimer asking "victims of the annihilation machine" to pardon its "mistake".

Dr. Wolfgang Neugebauer – at the time director of DÖW declared that for DÖW conflict with “Revisionism” is highly important and that Austrian criminal law is prosecuting Holocaust denial.

It was important to confront AIK. Even if it is an obscure ultra-leftist sect, is not an unknown quantity in Austria. It could mobilize politicians from the SPÖ and the Green
On 1 July 2003 the AIK again published a letter of solidarity with Alloush: “Voices from the Arab and Anti-imperialist side meant it by right, that it would be Eurocentric, to equate things simply and to leave it at that. Not the Arabs are responsible for the Holocaust…. Alloush’ motives and his aim are however completely different from those of European Revisionists. He takes simply the Zionist argument the Holocaust would give them the Right to Palestine seriously and contradicts it not through showing the false combination but through the denial itself of the fact of the annihilation of Jews.”

AIK has taken also a stand for the Serbian fascist Vojislav Seselj, who is accused by the international tribunal in Den Haag to have committed war crimes.

After demonstrating in Rome on December 13 2003 with fascists (Serge Thion was one of the supporters) even some of their comrades where shocked. Langthaler claimed:

“Finally there are a handful of people originating from the right who have broken with historic Fascism and who oppose the intrinsic imperialist and pro-US stance of the Italian right like Maurizio Neri, who came from the far right, embraced "national Bolshevism" in the 1990s and eventually took an explicitly anti-Fascist Communist position …

Claiming to fight totalitarianism represented by Islam and the anti-imperialist movements in general, they [Liberalist pro-American bourgeoisie] wage a pre-emptive war violating and negating the most basic human right and tending towards permanent genocide."

http://www.antiimperialista.org/en/node/2143 and “Here we are again at the so-called red-brown block which is detected wherever there is resistance against imperialism – lately we had to face this accusation with regard to Palestine and Iraq.”

http://www.antiimperialista.org/en/node/2159

Solidarity with Hamas

“What is happening under our eyes is the extermination of the Palestinian people as a nation with the full consent of the US and their European allies.

In Palestine Zionism shows what the American empire might mean to the peoples of the world: the complete submission under the joke of a "chosen people" legitimizing their
terror by a "divine mission".

http://www.antiimperialista.org/en/node/2093

Comparison with Nazi crimes 2005

„Yesterday in Italy, Today in Iraq the same crimes, the same resistance“

”... Already during WWII, the Anglo-American armies committed horrible crimes, through carpet bombings which exterminated millions of civilians, especially in Germany and in Italy, not to mention Hiroshima and Nagasaki where the Americans, committing the greatest war crime of all time, actually used atom bombs even though Japan was already on its knees. Hitler’s design of total world dominion is the same design as the USA has been following right up to now. Wherever they went, the stars and stripes armies have left an endless trail of blood behind them.... On the second anniversary of the aggression against Iraq, we will demonstrate to celebrate Falluja and Sant’Anna di Stazzema as symbolic twin cities, in order to jointly commemorate the martyrs of Nazism, of fascism and of US imperialism, to state that the ideals of freedom and independence of Italian partisans are the same as those of the Iraqi partisans, to denounce all imperialist war crimes, whatever mask or pretext they may use, to say no to US wars, to call for the immediate withdrawal of all occupation troops from Iraq, to support the Resistance of the Iraqi and Palestinian peoples until their victory.

http://www.antiimperialista.org/en/node/2344

“Let Gaza live” (AIK front organization) planned a conference in the Lutheran Albert Schweitzer house

On Saturday, May 17, 2008 “let Gaza live” (a front for the AIK) planned a conference in the Lutheran Albert-Schweitzer house. AIK has published an article on its website under the headline: "Vienna conference for Gaza’s survival defies Zionist obstruction."

“The conference has come under heavy attack by the Zionist forces which called it antisemitic. Upon intervention of the official Jewish Community (IKG) the hall booking was cancelled only a few days before the event without even offering a reason. The venue was rented from an institution of the Lutherans as they have been showing more sensibility to the quest of the Palestinian people while the dominant forces close to social democracy and the Catholic Church made it clear from the very beginning that
they would not give a place to such an event.”

http://www.antiimperialista.org/en/node/5680

As a matter of fact “let Gaza live” also rented a hall from the “Workers chamber”, an Austrian institution that is led by social democrats, but they also cancelled the hall booking.

The reason for the cancellation was the Antisemitism of AIK, which declared its understanding of denying the Holocaust by reference to the work of Ibrahim Alloush, a Jordanian contributor to Neo-Nazi media. http://www.spme.net/cgi-bin/facultyforum.cgi?ID=1738

AIK and “let Gaza live” are denying any Antisemitism and believe that the fact that two token Jews were to participate is the best proof for their claim. However AIK published also a crude antisemitic speech of a man called Moishe Arye Friedman, who has close ties to extreme right wing members of the Austrian Freedom party and who later participated at the Holocaust denial conference in Teheran. http://www.doew.at/frames.php?/projekte/rechts/chronik/2003_12/zurzeit.html

One of the activists of this conference is Prof. Dr. Walter Sauer, whose letter to the administrator of the Lutheran institution was published on the Homepage of “let Gaza live”.

Sauer is Professor of Social History at Vienna University and also Assistant Chairman of the working group for policy development of the Austrian social democratic party as well as Secretary of the International Department of Austrian Trade Union Conference (ÖGB). He informs about his stand against political Catholicism and writes:

“Just because of that we shouldn’t close our eyes before the lingering genocide against Palestinian caused by the state ideology and state praxis of Jewry, especially in Gaza.” http://www.gazamussleben.at/de/946

A protest against this blatant antisemitic declaration was sent to the then president of Austrian Trade Union Federation Rudolf Hundstorfer (now minister for social affairs), who answered, that Antisemitism has no place in the Austrian Trade Union and reprimanded Dr. Sauer. However the social democratic party (SPÖ) did not react.

The Herald Tribune of July 25, 2007 mentions 240,000 Arabs in Gaza in 1950. In 2008 1,537,269 Arabs lived on the same territory. It is the privilege of a Viennese
Professor of Social History to declare that a growth of population of 640% is a “lingering genocide.”

With this absurd claim, he is delivering an additional proof for the antisemitic tendency of his group, which goes with a lingering relativisation of the Holocaust. It has nothing to do with reality in Gaza and everything to do with the need for compensation in Austria, to level the difference between the many Austrian perpetrators during the period of National Socialist rule and the Jewish victims of that rule.

**Palmach therefore war criminal**

**The crime of being a Zionist**

- Unbelievable but true
- Bielefeld November 19, 2009 my lecture was scheduled in AJZ Bielefeld about racism and Antisemitism in Hungary
- Two days before lecture the youth centre AJZ refused to have me there as a lecturer, because I served in Palmach and committed war crimes
- When asked where and what crimes they answered „Pfeifer is a Zionist“


(Re)defining the Jew: antisemitism in post-communist Europe – the Balance of Two Decades

While we planned to discuss various aspects of the working definition of antisemitism after six years, it occurred to me whether the antisemites – or those we brand them as such by our definitions - whether they have a working definition of the Jew – and if my logic is correct, than perhaps - if we can understand the various forms of defining the Jew, it may help us in understanding the dynamics of antisemitism.

I shall focus on post-communist Eastern Europe – and one of my aims is also to highlight the differences between the East European experience- as compared to other countries and areas that we are discussing at this conference.

I would like to start with two examples both from Romania which will present some definitions and perceptions of the Jew in the past two decades.

In early August 2010, Radu Ioanid, of the USHMM, well known researcher and member of the International Commission of Historians on the Holocaust in Romania (the Wiesel Commission) warned that the Romanian National Bank (BNR is about to mint a memorial coin with the image of Miron Cristea, Patriarch of the Romanian Orthodox Church and for a brief time the Prime Minister of Romania in the thirties, who was known for is antisemitic views. The Romanian newspaper, Tricolorul, of the Greater Romania art wrote in its issue of August 5, 2010, "He (Ioanid) is a Jewish fascist - this pork, who has the face of a pork on a plate, all he needs is an apple in his mouth and a spicy pepper in his behind". The paper included gross personal attacks and similar terms in criticizing this intended step of the Romanian National Bank, which was amply quoted by the media both in Romania and abroad.

A more "pseudo-intellectual" description appears in poem published in Romania Mare, the organ of the Greater Romania Party, by its leader Corneliu Vadim Tudor, one of the younger court poets of Ceausescu. In the 1993 poem "Someone", Vadim Tudor wrote that "someone has been chaining us for two thousand years…boasting they are the chosen people, while we be savages…look here bastard, don't you have a country?"
The course, a paranoia of the highest level, which characterizes the antisemitic discourse of extremist movements, in which the Jew and other aliens are to blame for all misfortunes. In the first example, the Jew is identified with the slaughtered pig – and a fascist. Of course, this also raises the question of the presence, or rather absence of the legal system in coping with such expressions of the "freedom of (hate) speech".

The number of Jews in post Communist Eastern Europe is very small, and in most countries we speak of a few thousands, more in Hungary, yet we see the image of the Jew, or rather they see the imaginary Jew – as the classical stereotypes are evident today – recycled with adaptations to the modern era.

Thus, for example, the allegations of Jewish economic interests and control of economy from the period of the Protocols of the Elders of Zion feature today as Jewish interests in globalization, in global markets, and Zionist manipulation of US interests in the war against enemies of world Jewry.

The Jew is seen as both a real character but also a virtual one – often Jewish characteristics are attributed to persons who are not at all Jews, thus the expression is not even a code word – but it is an overt expression to someone you hate, and has the characteristics and the behavior that one associates with a Jew.

Furthermore, in this type of virtual presentation of the Jew, - it is enough if your target behaves like one, even if he is not such. Thus, in order to delegitimize someone in such a discourse, the trigger is to identify him with as a Jew.

As we know, the association of the Jew with forms of behavior is an ancient form of stereotyping, but it seems that in post-communist Eastern Europe the usage of the expressions such as "do not Jew me- do not cheat me" in various local forms, has a longer life span than in the West.

Perceptions of the Jew have been reinforced or reshaped in Eastern Europe – and for the purpose of the present essay, "Eastern Europe" refers to the former communist states in the region, - by the experience of the Communist regimes. The role of communists of Jewish origin, hence also the well known Polish expression, "zydokomuna", the Jew being a propagator of communism has entered into the post communist vocabulary in various forms associated with Jewish guilt, especially in those countries were there Jewish members, some in high positions of the Party and the security services, as in Poland, Hungary and Romania. Most of the blame on the repressive security organs was placed on the role of the Jews, mostly ignoring or downplaying the local ethnic elements. Thus we have another definition of the Jew in
the post-communist vocabulary: the Jew is not only the one who has brought communism, but he was in charge of the repressive state organs of the party and the security apparatus. According to this narrative Jews are to be blamed for the survival of the communist regime through the years until 1989. This discourse shifts any blame or most of the blame for the negative memories of the communist period to the Jew. Thus, for the anti-communists the Jew is identified as the communist oppressor.

One of the more grotesque aspects of post-communist memory is that "our" local ethnic communist is seen in a better light than the Jewish communist. In such narratives, the impression is that the local party activist in the small village or town, where people know each other and their families, with all his faults as being a communist, he is still "one of us", and that "we can even try to understand his wrong motives for being a bloody communist activist, but – the Jewish communist is the real bad guy, he is an alien, with his own specific interests to rule and to destroy us in the name of the communist ideology, and to destroy our national will through communism."

Thus the image of the travelling Jewish merchant pushing his cart of "shmates", is no more valid because he was killed in the Holocaust, but he has been replaced by the travelling Jewish "agit-prop" activist, and those familiar with the East European -Soviet terminology, know the expression of the "agitation-propaganda" apparatus and the memories that such activities and activists are triggering in popular memory.

Antisemites do not bother very much with our type of definitions of "who is a Jew" as they have much clearer answers to that – the children of those identified as Jews, are of course Jews, who are continuing the family tradition of functioning as such, and busy destroying the local ethnic community.

Indeed, and I mean in real life, we may find in the post-communist space, sons, daughters and family members of former communist activists of Jewish origin, who have continued after 1989 various careers, in the media, intellectual life, politics. Their behavior is immediately classified as "Jewish", and as such, having the same very characteristics and continuing the traditions of their families. These persons are branded automatically as aliens and destructive to the present, as their immediate relatives were in the communist past, for the obvious reason that they are "Jews".

Such was the case with Petru Roman, the post - 1989 Romanian Prime Minister, who was immediately identified as a Jew because his father, a well know
Comintern activist and communist leader, Walter Roman, actually a Hungarian Jew, Erno Neulander, born in Transylvania, which makes him even a worse character was such. But than, even antisemites may find use for some of our definitions of who is a Jew by the Halacha, and a narrative was built up, that Petru Roman's mother a Spanish woman whom Walter met during the Spanish Civil War, where he fought in the international brigades, was in fact a Sephardi woman, thus making him, Petre Roman. A kosher Jew from all sides.

Another case, also in Romania, is that of the well known academic scholar, Vladimir Tismaneanu, who is of Jewish origin, his father also a former active communist in the Soviet Union having returned to Romania after World War Two. Tismaneanu, and his numerous opponents always mentioned him with a Russian nickname, as 'Volodya' was the head of the Romanian government commission on the crimes of the Communist regime, and since 2010 the President of the National Institute for the Study of the Crimes of the communist regime, yet his opponents, and this is much more complicated that briefly presented here, never missed a chance to accuse him of being a Jew, who tried to whitewash the sins of his communist relatives.

We can call this phenomenon as "generational antisemitism" when Jewish characteristics are passing from one generation to another, the eternal Jew, which in the case of post-communist Eastern Europe, his grandparents and parents brought in communism and now they descendants are manipulating the real estate business. Jews in this case are to be blames both for communism and the ills of its downfall, as all "stays in the family".

The Jews is again, as it was in the period between the two wars, the carrier of liberal and democratic ideas. In the right wing Hungarian discourse, the SzDSz – the Alliance of Free Democrats, who have disappeared from the political map in the 2010 elections, was branded as the "zsidlib" party, meaning "Jewish liberals", and one of the very overt codes for this party was, "the party of a small aggressive ethnic minority". Indeed some leading members of the SzDSz were of Jewish origin, members of the Hungarian intellectual elite which championed human rights and a liberal, pluralistic society.

Thus in the extremist discourse, the Jew, like in the Nazi ideology is identified with liberalism, which was seen as a Jewish invention. The liberal is identified and
defined as a "Jew", and of course one must not necessarily be a Jew to be defined as such, by being a "liberal" person, automatically is as such.

As formulated by Magdalena Marsovszky, one of the leading analysts of extremism and antisemitism in Hungary, "... thus in post - 89 Hungary antisemitism is not always directed at Jews or those perceived as Jews, but against all those who personify cosmopolitanism, urbaneity and liberal thinking, as opposed to the "true Magyars".

Jews are not only the liberals but they are also the homosexuals, and in the extremist discourse this triangular relationship is evident. One Hungarian web site, mentioning a yellow paper as "the paper supporting Jews and homosexuals", wrote about a Hungarian celebrity pair, Matan and Kristof, who are about to be married, and the Hungarian site wished them a "Palestinian katyusha" rocket as a wedding present to these products of "Jewish genetic garbage".

The identification between Jews and other forms of the "other" – as homosexuals presents them as perverts in the racial sense as genetic garbage, or carriers of perverted ideologies as liberalism.

Another definition of the Jew is a member of your opposing football team, as was recently in Poland in Rzeszow between Resovia and Stal, the same as in Hungary, with the Ajax team in the Netherlands, and numerous studies that have focused on soccer hooliganism have provided ample examples to the role of antisemitism in sports.

Football hooliganism is very interesting as an exercise in social psychology because it is a encoded antisemitism, which on the more obvious level would associate a football team with being identified with Jews, as it had allegedly been before the War, meaning, having Jewish players and support, at least 75 years ago. There is a clear element of historical continuity – attaching Jewish identity to a football team because of its alleged identification some three generations ago. But there is also another subtext to this message – the opposite team, or the hostile team is being deligitimized and dehumanized by attributing to them Jewish characteristics and wishing them the fate that befell the real Jews, and when the placards call "death to the curved noses" and of course the other team's players have no curved noses, and even if Jews had curved noses, the Polish or other fans of 2010 have most probably never seen Jews in their lives, yet they wished their rivals a death that befell those identified as deserving it because of the shape of their noses.
Above all the Jew is defined as not one of "us" and in the born again post communist nationalist discourse, and based on the image of the cosmopolitan Jew and that of Zionism reinforced by the communist regimes, the Jew represents the threat to national existence, national culture and way of life, thus anyone opposing the national idea as perceived by the extremists, is a Jew. As such, he represents Jewish aims, thus, open society, liberalism, pluralism, the flow of free ideas, differing lifestyles, are all attributed as being Jewish characteristics.

Why such perceptions have a longer life span in the former communist countries?

The legacy of the communist regimes is a very important factor. We must realize that more than two decades did not erase the negative stereotypes, even on the contrary, the new freedoms, which is also the freedom to hate, revived the pre war extremist ideas and re packaged them for the post communist, globalized era.

The post-communist region still serves as a fertile ground for the survival of misconceptions and prejudices about the Jews, as the previous regime did not really cope with the Jewish past, the impact of antisemitism and the fate of the Jews. The ideological dictum that the "national problems" were solved, left the issue of prejudices against the Jews just bellow the surface, to be picked up and revived under post-communist. The definitions of the almost imaginary Jew essentially remained almost unchanged, only adapted to the new conditions. The Jew is the one who brought communism and capitalism, the Jew is the cosmopolitan, and/or Zionist – and in this discourse there is no contradiction between the two terms, the Jew is the one who represents global financial interests, in other words, he is the carrier of globalization. It is very characteristic of the post-communist antisemitic discourse that the Jews are those behind the decadent culture of the shopping malls, aiming to destroy the local peoples' local businesses. After the Marxist regimes, the Jew is again the cigar puffing capitalist and the cunning alien representing his own foreign interests.

This brief presentation did not aim to outline the nature of the antisemitic movements and their social and political aims. The intention was to see some of the ways in which the Jew is being defined and identified as such. One challenging question in the wake of the specific features of antisemitism in the post-communist space is the future of this phenomenon on the light of the process of the EU expansion and the time factor with the coming of age of a new generation that was already
exposed to a free society and pluralism. While these issues need a much more thorough analysis, it is my opinion that judged by the continuing presence of antisemitic ideas and traditional perceptions of the Jew, albeit less based on religious dogmas, the specific features evident in the "East" will still be present in the near future as compared to the "West".

A better understanding of the ways in which various types of extremists present their definition of the Jew, can certainly help us in understanding the dynamics of present day antisemitism in different areas.
Marcis Liors Skadmanis

The Achievements of Latvian NGOs in Promoting Tolerance and Combating Intolerance

In recent years, Latvia has seen an increasing number of manifestations of intolerance against people due to their race, ethnic origin, or sexual orientation. These are expressed in insults, abusive comments, violent attacks against people, desecration of Jewish cemeteries or memorials (painting them with swastikas or other Nazi symbols).

In 1990, the Supreme Council of Latvia accepted a Declaration on Condemnation and Inadmissibility of Antisemitism. In 2006, several editors of Internet portals, representatives of NGOs and state institutions signed a declaration titled “Internet without hatred”, which calls for restricting commentaries of antisemitic nature.

There are over 12 thousand non-governmental organizations in Latvia which are active and important players in different fields and give significant benefit for the society as service providers, educators and advocates for public interests and rights.

The role of non-governmental organizations in policy-making processes is also recognized by state authorities due to broad advocacy and participation activities of NGOs. The environment for the work of the non-governmental organizations in Latvia can generally be considered as favourable - the legal framework is quite advanced. There are diverse possibilities for individuals and NGOs to engage in the decision making process both on national and local levels.

The rise of intolerance in Latvia reveals the necessity of approaching this increasing danger by means of civil and social action. Several activities and methods have been developed and implemented by various organizations, serving as good practices in addressing issues of racism, Antisemitism and right-wing extremism.

Two of the NGOs which are active in the promotion of tolerance in Latvia are the Latvian Centre for Human Rights and the Jewish Religious Community in Latvia (known as Shamir).

The Latvian Centre for Human Rights (LCHR) was established in 1993 with the aim to promote human rights and tolerance in Latvia through monitoring,
research, advocacy, legal assistance and training of activities. In recent years, its main focus has been on two broad areas: human rights in various institutions, and social integration, which includes all minority-related and tolerance issues, as they represent the most important problems of human rights in Latvia.

The LCHR collects and analyses diverse materials and phenomena related to its main area of expertise, and is regularly involved in collecting data and closely following legislative, policy and real case development in the human rights and social integration areas. In addition, visits to various institutions are being conducted, and LCHR staff lawyer provide free-of-charge legal assistance to individuals with human rights cases.

The LCHR has published numerous reports, chapters in books, papers and articles both locally and internationally. Every year it publishes a Human Rights Report about the main developments and problems of the previous year in Latvia, which attracts significant media and public attention. It also provides an electronic daily press digest on integration issues.

The LCHR is frequently providing expert opinions both locally (to government, parliament, media, educational institutions, courts, prosecutors and lawyers), as well as internationally (to embassies, foreign ministries of various countries, and to regional and international organisations, such as the European Commission, OSCE, Council of Europe Parliamentary Assembly, etc.). The LCHR has been also providing written expertise upon request to local prosecutors, security police, courts and lawyers (on incitement, hate speech, language restrictions in media), as well as to foreign lawyers and courts on refugee cases.

Apart from collecting data, providing analysis and expertise, the LCHR has been actively involved in advocacy for change, ranging from raising public awareness to specific policy or legislative change. Different staff members have at various times also been invited to participate in policy or legislative work groups at the Ministries of Justice, Welfare, Interior, at the former Secretariat of the Special task Minister of Social Integration affairs, at the national Board of Television and Radio, and at the President’s work group.

Since its establishment, the LCHR has been a member of the International Helsinki Federation for Human Rights until December 2007 when the Federation was closed. In May 1998, it has received the EU-US Democracy and Civil Society Award. In October 2003 it has been chosen by an international jury to receive the first Van
der Stoel Prize for being “an authoritative and objective source on human rights and inter-ethnic issues in Latvia” (this award recognizes outstanding contributions towards the improvement of the situation of national minorities in the OSCE participating states).

Since 2003 the LCHR serves as a European Information Network on Racism and Xenophobia National Focal point. The network is a core activity of the EUMC. The primary objective of the EUMC is to provide the European Community and its Member States with objective, reliable and comparable data on racism and xenophobia at the European level, in order to help them take measures or formulate courses of action. The Information Network is designed to collect data and information on racism, xenophobia and antisemitism on the national level. This is done via National Focal Points that are contracted by the EUMC to collect, coordinate, disseminate and exchange national information. On the basis of the national reports the EUMC has initiated comparative European studies which cover 5 priority areas: employment, education, racial violence, housing and legislation.

The LCHR has collected information on organizations which are active in fighting racism and xenophobia in Latvia since 1995, their activities and publications. The data has been stored in the EUMC database, which is publicly available on its website.

The second NGO is Shamir (the Jewish Religious Community in Latvia). One of its projects is teaching about the Holocaust in the secondary schools in Latvia. More than 2 thousand pupils of secondary schools participated in the Holocaust educational project, which aim is to commemorate more than 90 thousand Latvian Jews, exterminated during the Holocaust as well as to develop of tolerance and democracy among Latvian teenagers.

Due to different reasons, Latvian teenagers are not familiar with some events in Latvian and world history, such as the Holocaust, the deportation by the Soviets of Latvian citizens in 1940-41, who Hitler was and what Nazism is famous for. Since it is impossible to build a new democratic society without knowing its history, “Shamir” developed the project on teaching about the Holocaust in secondary schools.

Pupils and teachers of each school attend lectures about the Holocaust and Jewish history in Latvia, delivered by the most outstanding local Holocaust researchers. They also arrive to Riga for excursions; visit the “Jews in Latvia” museum, the former Riga Ghetto, the Choral Synagogue memorial, Jewish school and
the places of the extermination of Riga Jews. Later, the pupils submit creative works on the topic.

Another project of "Shamir" is seminars for Latvian teachers. For example, in February 2010 a group from Latvia, consisted of 25 history teachers, arrived at Yad Vashem for a ten days seminar about the Holocaust in cooperation with the Ministry of Education and Science of Latvia. It consisted of lectures on the history of the Jews and the Holocaust from the best Israeli researchers, as well as excursions in Jerusalem and other places in Israel.

Two seminars on “Methodology of Holocaust teaching” for history teachers took place in 2008 and 2009. More than 150 people participated in these seminars.

A seminar on the “Methodology of Holocaust and discrimination problems teaching” took place in May 2008 in Latvia. It was organized by “Shamir” in cooperation with the ITF, The Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany, Ministry of Education and Science and Ministry of the Foreign Affairs of Latvia, the Secretariat of the Special Assignment Minister for Social Integration, the Embassy of Israel in Latvia and others. History teachers, librarians, museum managers and students were the target audience of this seminar. The most distinguished researchers of Holocaust and Jewish history in Latvia took part in the seminar. The celebration of Israel's 60th Independence Day became a part of this seminar. Speeches of Israeli ambassador Chen Ivri and the chairman of the management board of "Shamir" rabbi Menachem Barkan were followed by performances of students of Sunday Jewish school, Klezmer band and a Russian vocal group. The Participants also visited the Shkede memorial, where Jews were murdered during the WW II.

The competitions “Children of Latvia Draw and Write against Holocaust" and "Children of Latvia Draw Discrimination” was organized by "Shamir" to motivate teenagers to find out more about Jewish history in Latvia. The aim of the competition is tolerance and integration of Latvian society by creating an understanding about multicultural society. "Shamir" received more than 2 hundred creative works (poems, writings, pictures, videos, photo albums, diaries, newspapers) from 27 schools, including evening schools, schools of prisons and schools for children with special needs. The exhibition of these works was opened by the President of Latvia Valdis Zatlers. In his speech he emphasized the importance of educating children and telling them about different cultures since their childhood. Other speakers had developed the
thesis about the importance of children in trespassing of culture and norms and also in breaking boarders and stereotypes.
Antisemitic manifestations in the Russian Federation 2009-2010

Antisemitism is still the constituent part of Russian xenophobia and radical nationalism. But in the course of time and due to the changes in social and political realm of Russia antisemitism itself is going through the complex of transformations. Human Rights defenders (and I represent here Moscow bureau for Human rights) need to analyse and take into considerations all these transformations. Only then we could have a real influence upon the Russian authorities in order to improve the sad situation with xenophobia in Russia.

In its analysis of the state of the antisemitism in Russia Moscow bureau for Human Rights monitors the next antisemitic manifestations: attacks and vandalism (These are Attacks and vandalism on persons and property, breaches of websites of Jewish organizations, antisemitic graffiti upon the monuments, walls of houses etc), use of antisemitic rhetoric in election campaigns, antisemitism in mass media, antisemitic statements and actions of the authority representatives, public antisemitic actions, rehabilitation of Nazism and denial of the Holocaust, accusation of the Jews in so-called “ritual murders” (“blood libels”), religious antisemitism manifestations, and anti-Israeli statements. Responses to antisemitism manifestations from the part of the authorities, Russian Orthodox Church and Jewish community of Russia are reviewed separately as well as law-enforcement practice concerning the antisemitic crimes.

As for open antisemitism manifestations, according to the results of MBHR monitoring, their number is being kepted approximately on the same level as during recent years: about 10 attacks on the Jews, 10 attacks on the premises occupied by the Jewish organizations. Thus one can state that a number of attacks on the Jews is as quite small as before. More of that one can say about unusually low level of aggressive antisemitism, if to take into consideration that in 2009 in Russia altogether 82 persons were killed and more then 300 persons suffered in a result of xenophobic attacks.
From our point of view such seemingly hopeful situation can be explained by several reasons:

1. Antisemitism in today's Russia is much less popular (if we may say so) than other ethnic antipathies (migranto-phobia, Caucasian-phobia, Islam-phobia), and the source of such attitudes is evident from the designations of the phobias themselves. These phobias can be explained by comparatively recent Chechen wars, terrorist acts in Russia. Also mass labour migration to Russia provokes the negative reactions of the majority of population.

2. Radical change of state authorities' and law enforcement agencies attitudes to Antisemitism also gave positive results. I shall say about it a little later in more details.

3. And at last we have to take into considerations that simple fact, that the Jews (unlike natives of Central Asia or Caucasian region) are being identified with much more difficulties in a crowd, then other ethnic groups. In result almost always only religious and not secular Jews are becoming the targets of antisemitic attacks.

But the low level of open aggressive antisemitism does not testify itself about the general decrease of antisemitism. Just the new forms of Antisemitism are coming to the foreground. There is a great amount of Antisemitic films and books on the Russian market and in mass-media. Antisemitic rhetoric is used occasionally in election companies. The traditional Church antisemitism also has place, in spite of some positive developments. And as before one can meet everywhere so called daily or popular Antisemitism.

Among the most noticeable new manifestations of antisemitism in Russia in the last year I could point to the next ones:

1. This is the penetration of antisemitic ideology into the official educative literature. More of that, one of such books, namely a textbook on the history of Russia and state law was destined for the students of the University of the Ministry of Internal affairs in St-Petersburg, in other words for future police officers. Two other books were written by the professor of the Academy of the General Staff and published by well-known antisemitic publishing house. It is a significant fact that the publication of both books (their common output exceeded 40 thousands copies, that is a very large figure for Russia), were blessed by Bishop Veniamin of Vladivostok, one of the most active antisemits within Russian Orthodox Church.
2. An attempt was made to mobilize Russian Moslems under anti-Israel and anti-Zionist flags in January of 2009, during the Operation of TSAHAL in Gaza, although the organizers of this action did not get a success, because of the reasons we shall try to clear out later.

Public polls also demonstrate that antisemitic feelings are quite popular in Russian society. From one side, only 3% of Russian population speak openly about their antipathy to Jews (one can compare this attitude with attitude to Caucasians who are disliked by 29% of recipients). At the same time 17% of respondents are not ready to see Jews as their work colleagues and 28% don’t want a Jew to become a member of their family. The results of another public poll show that 25% of Russians do not want to live close to Jews. And the number of the people who support the nationalistic slogan "Russia is for Russians" is quite high and constitutes now 18% in Russia and 27% in Moscow (nationalistic tendencies are usually higher in megalopolises).

What is the source of antisemitic feelings in Russia in the last years? Such feelings strongly depend from external circumstances and go through considerable fluctuations.

Traditionally a difficult social and economic situation, caused by internal historical and economic reasons as well as by the contemporary global economic crisis and accompanied by high level of corruption is behind antisemitic feelings in Russia. Social disillusion is traditionally colored in Russia into ethnic enmity and if in 90-s many people considered authorities being responsible for disastrous situation, now these are certain ethic groups, which are being accused. There is a popular stereotype that the main threat for Russia is coming from the part of non-Russians, and the Jews traditionally take a place in this list of non-Russians. According to different polls data up to 80% of ethnic Russians keep to such ideas. And due to the fact, that ancient prejudices continue to flourish, the Jews remain the most “convenient” target for suspect and accusations.

It’s always not easy to explain the xenophobic stereotypes because of its complex nature, when psychological, socio-cultural, and political factors are tightly intertwined. Antisemitic feelings still continue to constitute profoundly interiorized element of Russian ethnic consciousness. This consciousness is overburdened with various traditional stereotypes, and treats the Jews as a closely inter-connected and separated group, which is opposed to all humanity.
This is a well-known fact that during the last decades the absolutely new phenomenon has appeared, namely the antisemitism of the leftest part of European intellectual elite, the antisemitism of University professors. Founded on the idea of political correctness and abstract principles of humanism, such antisemitism takes the form of anti-Israelism or Anti-Zionism, and substitutes the old traditional forms of antisemitism.

However as concerning for Russia, the traditional antisemitism in its right-wing form has not lost its position in Russia. Antisemitism of leftiest also exists, but these are mostly communists who express such ideas. The significant difference is that communists do not belong to the elite of society and usually ignored by most of the population. In this sense the western situation seems to me as being much worse.

Along with the communists' attitudes, antisemitism in its anti-Israel and anti-Zionist form has been demonstrated from the side of Islamic community, at least part of it.

Again, in difference with the Western countries, the most part of society takes a neutral stance towards Israeli-Palestinian conflict or even supports Israel. Thus, in 2008 according to the poll 51% of population expressed the positive attitude to Israel and 37% - the negative attitude (in 2006 correspondingly only 46% took positive stance and 31% took a negative position). Thus it might be said about growing polarization of opinions and clearly not in favor of Palestinians: 61% of the questioned persons stated that they didn’t support any side in Palestinian-Israel conflict. At the same time 67% estimated Russian-Israeli relations within the range from normal to excellent.

As for the comparatively recent events, it may be stressed that in fact any attempts to mobilize more or less significant number of people to condemn Israel for its actions in may of 2010 against so called "flatilla of freedom" failed. Only a few small meetings and demonstrations with not more than 20-30 participants had a place.

Thus we may say that so called new antisemitism in the form of anti-zionism until now has not rooted itself in Russian soil.

Obviously there are several reasons for such state of things. First of all it is again the memory about the war in Chechnya and terrorist activity on the North Caucasus, which have been associated by many Russians with the activity of Palestinian terrorists. And curiously the attitude of many Israelis to the war in Chechnya and to the figure of Vladimir Putin who had to resolve the Chechen
problem, radically change from the attitudes of Westerners, as I know. And in result there is an unusual coexistence in Russia of moderately pro-Israel and moderately antisemitic feelings.

It is important to say that official or so called state antisemitism in Russia is practically absent – it became possible due to radical changes in social-political and economic structure of Russia during last 20 years as well as due to the principal position of high-ranking officials. President of Russia as well as prime minister demonstrate publicly their respect to Judaism, Vladimir Putin and Dmitry Medvedev attended synagogues on some special occasions; several years ago Vladimir Putin organized a kosher dinner in Kremlin, for the first time in the history of Russia. I would even say that Vladimir Putin demonstrated his judophilia, which is caused by different reasons. I shall not to stop on them in details.

Official authorities continued to make decisive statements against antisemitism. The official rhetoric in the sphere of foreign policy, directly or indirectly condemning antisemitism, was clearly activated. There were special statements on Auschwitz, as well as concerning of the process of glorification of Ukrainian and Baltic collaborationists. Thus a failure to mobilize Russian Moslems under anti-Israel and anti-Zionist flags in January of 2009, during the Operation of TSAHAL in Gaza, was not successful much due to the neutrality of the authorities and because of their control over electronic mass-media. This process which could be called "the movement from above" finds its reflection in public life. Thus in 2009 the eventual rise of the followers of anti-fascist ideology in Russia was fixed.

So there is nothing amazing in the fact that the representatives of extremely-right antisemitic groups express very negative attitudes to the highest state officials, considering them as Jews themselves or as Jewish puppets. It is concerning as for President Medvedev, so for Prime-minister Putin. Especially Putin can be called a main target of militant Antisemits. Several years ago I wrote a special report "President Putin in the mirror of Antisemitic propaganda" and the situation has changed a little during this time.

But at the same time one has to recognize that the authorities do a little in order to oppose antisemitic press, antisemitic propaganda in Internet, even in the cases when this propaganda is directed against themselves personally (and that occurs very often). It does not mean that there were no actions against antisemits. Three antisemitic newspapers were closed, several publishing houses paid a big fine after
printing antisemitic books, as well as bookshops which sold literature, listed in the Federal List of extremist materials. One pro-nazi party, called "Slavic Unity" was forbidden. But it is really a drop of water in the sea. There are really dozens and dozens of such newspapers, shops, Internet websites and the situation demands for much more active actions.

There is a need for new approaches to law practice. For example the vast majority of tried militant antisemites, and among them the most well-known ones, were not sentenced to the real imprisonment but got suspended sentences, which only gave them the high authority in the eyes of their followers, the image of “those who suffered from authorities”. And certainly such sentences do not prevent them to continue their xenophobic activity.

During the first five months of 2010 about 20 persons were tried for antisemitic activity and only one was condemned to three years of imprisonment, which can not be called a satisfactory result. Law enforcement agencies refuse often to begin proceedings on the cases of antisemitic vandalism. Sometimes they make non-professional decisions (such as the inclusion of the scholar works as biography of Hitler into the list of extremist materials, or to recognize the Jewish book written in the late 18\textsuperscript{th} century as an extremist one). Sometimes the decisions have been taken which could be viewed as the demonstration of connivance towards the radical nationalists, for example when clearly antisemitic or chauvinist actions were claimed as usual acts of hooliganism. Also the very serious problem with legislation is that the laws against extremism many political leaders of different ranks use as the pretexts for struggle with political opposition and journalists.

Many officers of law enforcement agencies just do not understand what is nationalism, antisemitism etc. I myself had an experience of talking to investigator, who seemed to me a quite honest and good guy but who knows nothing about xenophobia and racism.

**Conclusion and Recommendations**

Antisemitism, which is still being the constituent of Russian radical nationalism, affects the population – and first of all the consciousness of spiritually immature and embittered youth. The situation is aggravated by profound economic crisis leading to the worsening of economic situation and rise of unemployment. In result a lot of young people begin to search enemies among “aliens” - those who has another color of skin, another religion or non-traditional sexual orientation.
From the above-said, the next recommendations can be proposed for state structures and Non-state organizations in the field of combat against antisemitism:

1. The Ministry of Home affairs and Investigatory committee of the office of public prosecutor in order to improve their work in the course of combat xenophobia and antisemitism must attract a larger number of competent experts to this work. This would allow to avoid a lot of mistakes in evaluations of xenophobic events and tendencies. It is necessary to stop using of the Law on extremism in the struggle with political opponents.

2. We suggest to view the antisemitic and racist actions as grave crimes. If such crimes have serious consequences for the life, health or of the persons or for their property they must be sentenced not to suspended sentences, but to be imprisoned. In less serious cases they must pay large penalties or to be subjected to the “ban on profession” (for journalists and those who publishes antisemitic literature).

3. Ministry of education and science as well as NGOs representatives must activate preventive educational work directed against dissemination of antisemitic feelings in Russia. Such measures may include special classes and courses in school and college programs on history, distribution of materials revealing antisemitic prejudices, publication (or re-publication) of popular literature on this subject, establishing of corresponding websites, organization of the conferences and round tables.

4. Have more tight contacts with international organizations combatting against antisemitism, claiming a clear position and reacting to the antisemitic actions all over the world, to anti-Israeli and antisemitic provocations.

5. Combat against antisemitism requires joint efforts of authorities, national-cultural autonomies, rights defending organizations, and cultural institutions and can be realized only in the context of general combat against racism, xenophobia and ethnic prejudices.
Belarus as a Case Study of Contemporary Antisemitism

Belarus, like most of the other post-Soviet states, is a country of many nationalities. However, if we compare it to the other states in the antisemitic aspect we must admit that it is very different from them in two main points:

First, I have been working at the Stephen Roth Institute for almost 7 years and I don't remember even a single case of beating a Jew in Belarus.

The second point (not less important) is that in Belarus there is no commemoration and praising of local collaborators with the Nazis during the Second World War as we can see in Ukraine, Moldova & the Baltic states.

Belarus sees the Second World War and the resistance to the Nazis as one of the characteristics of modern Belarusian identity. This may be because the Soviet Republic of Belorussia was one of the countries that suffered most under the Nazi occupation – one-third of its population (including Jews) was exterminated and its non-Jewish population was less cooperative with the Nazis than the Lithuanians and Ukrainians were. Belarus, the most “Soviet” in political characteristics of all other post-Soviet states, recognized Jewish suffering during the Holocaust and (usually after endless persuasions by the Jewish communities) allows the establishment of memorials to Holocaust victims around the country (mostly initiated and financed by Jewish communities and donors). The Museum of History and Culture of Belarusian Jews was opened in Minsk in 2002. It organizes educational events and engages in teaching and researching the Holocaust and the history and culture of the Jewish people in Belarus.

However, high officials, writers, journalists and others refrain from attending Holocaust memorial services and some have even questioned the very existence of the Jewish tragedy. In March 2008, for example, during a session in Minsk of the Coordination Council of the Republic of Belarus which discussed approving a memorial to Holocaust victims in Vitebsk, one of the participants, a Belarusian sculptor, said (and I quote): "Until when will the Jews exaggerate their tragedy? There was no Holocaust. This must be stopped" (end of quote). Fortunately, the memorial was approved anyway.
The year 2008 seemed to be a turning point. Several Holocaust memorials were unveiled that year, such as a sign indicating the way to the former Minsk ghetto, a stone commemorating German Jews who were transferred to this ghetto and perished there, and many others. After what seemed to be endless efforts by local Jewish leaders, in August permission was finally granted by the city authorities of Mogilev to establish a Holocaust memorial (financed by private donations) on the site of the local ghetto, where more than 10 thousand Jews were murdered by the Nazis. In October an exhibition was opened at the Museum of the Great Patriotic War in Minsk titled "War, Holocaust, Memory without Limit".

Also in 2008, after decades of denial, the authorities recognized the fact that a 17-year-old girl, who had been a member of the anti-Nazi city underground in Minsk and was executed by the Nazis with other members in October 1941, was in fact a Jewish girl called Masha Bruskina.

The 65th anniversary of the liquidation of the Minsk ghetto was marked by several events in 2008. On October 20, an annual ceremony was held at the Yama memorial complex in Minsk, attended for the first time after at least a decade by President Alexander Lukashenko, who said that (and I quote) "a small part of Belarusian Jews survived…They were killed merely because they were Jews…The new generations have not forgotten what happened in the middle of the last century…We are determined to counteract any manifestations of Nazism and religious intolerance" (end of quote). Never before (or after) this ceremony has the president made such a declaration.

Another event for the 65th anniversary was the issuing by the Belarus Ministry of Communication of a stamp entitled "In Memory of Holocaust Victims" in Hebrew and Belarussian, as well as a First Day Cover (you can see it on our website). And, last but not least, on October 24, Minister of Defense Leonid Maltsev awarded medals for courage and heroism to 21 heads of groups in the Jewish anti-fascist resistance in the Minsk ghetto. The medals were transferred to the Museum of the History and Culture of Belarus Jews and after locating the descendants, the museum held a ceremony in November during which the medals were presented.

However, nothing really changed. There is still no official Holocaust Memorial Day in Belarus in spite of the Jewish communities' efforts to persuade the authorities to enact one; and the real scale of the murder of Jews in this country remains unknown. The subject of the Holocaust is covered only superficially in
textbooks (if at all), and mainly stresses the aid the local population extended to the Jews and not the uniqueness of the Holocaust itself – a direct continuation of the Soviet policy on this subject. Obviously, collaboration of the local population with the Nazis is not mentioned anywhere. Furthermore, in 2009 dissertations of a number of graduate students on the Holocaust were not approved by the relevant academic committees, allegedly for administrative reasons.

It looks like the change which seemed to be beginning in 2008 was motivated by pragmatic political and economical reasons. As a result of the global financial crisis that year, which hit hard on Belarus, the authorities began to drift away from Russia to the West hoping to get help for its collapsing economy. In late 2008 Belarus joined the Eastern Partnership program of the EU, dedicated to establishing an economic and strategic partnership between the EU and the post-Soviet countries without their becoming members of the EU. It maybe that, as part of this "getting closer to the west" policy, the Belarusian authorities thought that modifying their attitude to the Jews in general and to the Holocaust in particular would show them in a positive light to the western world and bring financial support and investments by wealthy Jews.

But, when this didn't happen, there was a complete turnabout, and this year (2010), on International Holocaust Memorial Day, instead of commemorating Holocaust victims, President Lukashenko held a meeting with a special envoy from Iran during which he expressed his deep sympathy to Iran’s Holocaust denying President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad. This is only a small example of the recent policy of getting closer to Iran, Syria, Libya and Venezuela – well known antisemitic and anti-Israeli countries. It may as well be that the last-minute cancelation of the performance of Israeli singer Harel Skaat at the opening concert of this year's Slavianskii Bazar summer festival in Vitebsk is part of this policy as well. The Slavianskii Bazar is a very important festival in Belarus, lasting several days and attended each year by famous singers of former Soviet countries and others, including Israel.

Now, let's go over some other antisemitic manifestations in Belarus.

When the Soviet Union collapsed and the Communist Party and KGB stopped being the main carriers of antisemitism, the relationship between the authorities and the Jewish population underwent a great change. State antisemitism disappeared. There is no official policy (and I stress – official policy) of limitations on professions,
no official numerus clausus in higher education, no restrictions on emigration, and other limitations from which the Jews suffered in the past. Although there is still antisemitism by individuals who occupy this or that high position, even this becomes rarer every year. Judaism was recognized as one of the traditional religions in the country. There are 36 active Orthodox and Reform Jewish communities, divided between three religious organizations. And 23 secular communities are united under the Union of Jewish Associations and Communities.

Nevertheless, the Belarusian authorities' attitude toward the "Jewish question" can be summed in the well known French Revolution slogan "We must refuse everything to the Jews as a nation and accord everything to Jews as individuals". No Jewish school, newspaper or cultural establishment is subsidized by the state budget, nor is any air time on radio or television allocated to the Jewish minority. There is no Jewish publishing house, and in academic, referential and educational literature the history of the Jews in Belarus is minimized. Since there is no law on property restitution, Jewish communities must rent facilities for their activities, even thought there are many buildings all over the country which once belonged to the Jewish communities, including synagogues. In parallel, Christian communities are getting back their facilities which were confiscated by the Soviets and the state even helps them in financing restoration work.

Each year there are many cases of desecration of Jewish facilities, graves and Holocaust memorials (although not as many as in Russia and Ukraine). For example, on May 9, 2010 (Victory Day), a Holocaust memorial was desecrated in the center of Brest. The police classified the incident as "damage to an historical-cultural site", not recognizing the antisemitic motive behind it. The same monument was desecrated many times during the last 7 years; however, the perpetrators were never caught.

One of the expressions of antisemitism in the world is antisemitic graffiti, both on Jewish and non-Jewish facilities. In Belarus too this phenomena is very common in recent years and in some cases we can be quite sure that the graffiti was not done by a youth who does not know what he is doing. For example, "Kill Mikhoels", a crossed out Star of David and a large swastika were painted on a summer house in the woods of Stepanki in 2009. The nature of this graffiti shows us that the perpetrators (or whoever sent them) probably knew that according to one version, this was the place where in January 1948, the great Jewish actor and leader of the Jewish Anti-Fascist Committee, Solomon Mikhoels, was killed by orders from Stalin himself.
On 12 July 2010 the Belarusian oppositional website www.charter97.org reported that antisemitic graffiti, such as "14/88", "Sieg Heil", "20 April", "Hitler", swastikas and others "remained for months" on the walls of a garage in Pinsk. Here too I am quite sure that the perpetrators knew what they were doing: knew the meaning of the numbers 14 and 88 and that April 20 is Hitler's birthday. In spite of requests by local inhabitants to remove the graffiti, the authorities did nothing about it. And this is only one case out of many when graffiti is not being erased for a long time.

Recently, antisemitism penetrated into sports as well. In late June 2009, for example, a large swastika and "FCDM 100% Nazi" appeared on a building on Gebelev street in Minsk. FCDM stands for Football Club Dinamo Minsk. Mikhail Gebelev, after whom the street was renamed in 2005, was one of the leaders of the Jewish underground of the Minsk ghetto.

On 28 April 2010 (two days after the birthday of Rudolf Hess), during a football match in Minsk between the same Dinamo Minsk and a team from Vitebsk, fans of Dinamo held a large banner with a portrait of Hess and the inscription "your life is loyalty and example for us". The management of Dinamo published an apology and the club was fined about 80 thousand US Dollars - the largest fine in the history of Belarus football.

This July, during a champions' league football match against a team from Island, fans of the BATE team from Borisov held banners with the neo-Nazi code numbers 14 and 88. The BATE management issued an official statement after the game saying that they do not think those numbers were a coincidence and it is most probable that (and I quote) "certain stupid people in such a dirty way salute Nazism and decided to damage the club's image" (end of quote).

One of the main carriers of antisemitic propaganda in Belarus is the well-known writer Eduard Skobelev, who has been publishing antisemitic articles in local newspapers for many years, while defying all laws of the press, and even was the editor of the presidential bulletin till 2008. Let's take for example a 10-colomns-long article of his titled "On the Technologies of Worldwide Domination" in the Russian newspaper "Russkii Vestnik" in August 2009: it contains praises to the "generous and honest" Stalin and to Ahmadinejad while condemns the Tsarist regime which "had mercy on the Jews" and other pearls against the Jews. An interesting idea he brings in this article is that the Khazars, who as is well known existed between the 7th and the
12th centuries, were already Zionists, who fooled the peaceful Slavs and turned them into slaves. According to Skobelev they still exist and are trying to dominate the entire world. By the way, since he started being published in the 1970s he never used the word "Jews" - always "Zionists".

Another Belarusian author who uses the idea of Jewish world domination is Vasilii Yakovenko. In 2008 he published a collection of stories and articles in the Belarusian language titled "Hard Fate", which can be freely downloaded from the Internet. Explaining the reasons for the Second World War he writes about the "historical truth of Hitlerism" and how Hitler tried to put an end to the idea of world domination by the "God's chosen people" (and we can all guess what people Yakovenko had in mind).

Describing antisemitism in Belarus, I would like also to refer very shortly to the Belarusian reaction to two events connected to Israel, and it will be very short because there is simply not much to say about it. The first event is Operation Cast Lead. Surprisingly, the only notable reaction to it in Belarus was that of Mufti Ismail Voronovich, head of the Muslim Spiritual Directorate of Belarus, who in early January 2009 submitted a letter to Israel’s ambassador to Belarus, Zeev Ben-Arie, labeling Israel’s actions “a genocide of the Palestinian people” and “crimes against humanity,” and demanded an immediate end to “the murder of the peaceful population.”

The second event is the so-called "Peace Flotilla". Here I found only two reactions: one – by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, which condemned Israel for "violating international norms". And the second reaction was an article in the Belarusskaia Gazata on June 7, equating Zionism to Nazism and claiming that Israel is supporting the idea of one race being superior to others.

These reactions, or rather almost lack of reactions, is somewhat surprising if we take into account that in Belarus there are many (maybe thousands) refugees, students, businessmen and others from Iran, Iraq, Libya, Katar and other Arab countries, not to mention the great sympathy of president Lukashenko to Ahmadinejad and Chavez.

And lastly, a few words about responses to antisemitic manifestations. One of the main problems in the antisemitic field in Belarus (in addition to the existence of antisemitism itself) is the unwillingness of the prosecutor's office and police to thoroughly investigate incidents motivated by antisemitism and put the perpetrators
on trial and most (if not all) incidents remain unsolved. For example, in 2009 a swastika and other antisemitic graffiti were painted on a building in Slutsk, where the offices of the Jewish community are located. I think we can all agree that this incident was motivated by antisemitism and should have been classified as "incitement of ethnic hatred". Instead it was classified under "hooliganism" and most probably the perpetrators will never be caught.

The most important response to antisemitism since Belarus became an independent state was the closure (by a court in Minsk) in December 2008 of the "Christian Initiative" organization (also known as "Pravoslav Initiative") which has been publishing antisemitic books. This was the result of a struggle of many years by the local Jewish community (joint by the Belarusian Orthodox Eparchy which ended all its contracts with this organization in 2006). This too may be attributed to the short period of trying to get closer to the west and its wealthy Jews, about which I talked earlier.

On the same occasion 13 books, such as "The Mystery of the Zion Protocols" and "Jewish Revolution", were banned for antisemitism. It should be especially stressed that none of the publications of this organization "received the blessing" of the Belarusian Orthodox Eparchy. They were all reprints of books which were published in Russia. Even the organization's director, Vladimir Chertovich, admitted it after the court's ruling (and I quote): "by recognizing those books as extremist, we actually recognize that the Russian Pravoslav Church is engaged in extremist activity, incites inter-ethnic and inter-religious hatred, or at least gives it its blessing" (end of quote).

The organization of course filed an appeal but it was rejected in February 2009. And here is another interesting fact in this context: during the appeal session, Chertovich's advocate, whose last name is Talibov (which is a Muslim name), said that rejecting the appeal might harm the relationship of Belarus with both Russia and … Iran!
“The Working Definition of Antisemitism”

The European or “western” perspective is not the only perspective. If we are to adopt a global approach to this global challenge, it is necessary to understand how little is known or understood about Jews and Judaism, let alone Israel, within some full member states of the United Nations.

Consider my first specific, Pacific, example. Some years ago I received, completely out of the blue, an email which was both nothing out of the ordinary and quite extraordinary.

The question posed to me was along these lines: “What are Jews? Are you brown or white? Are you in Europe or in other places? What is your belief and ideas about people?”

Ordinary, in as much as there is no special reason as to why any individual should necessarily know anything about Jews, given the diversity of things to know about.

Extraordinary because the sender, it transpired, had been a delegate to a United Nations meeting in New York where she had, for the first time, been exposed to hearing about Jews – who were identified as the enemies of all decent, progressive people on the planet. It is worth noting, in the context of this seminar’s focus, that in the confines of Western-free caucuses, it was not Israel or Zionism which had been the subject of demonization and derision, but Jews.

Due to an odd turn of events, I met that individual and hope our encounter led to not only knowledge but a positive impression – particularly given her strong Christian conviction, so common in the leadership of Pacific Island nations.

Two points relevant to our discussions:

Antisemites and those who exploit antisemitism, in certain circumstances will rely on pre-existing stereotypes, but in other situations can contaminate otherwise virgin intellectual soil; and

We need to be aware of the destructive activities of those who successfully create a complete psychological disconnect between the Jews in the Bible and contemporary Jewry.
Perhaps due to the geographic location of my home, perhaps due to the places on the globe to which my work has taken me, lack of even basic knowledge concerning Jews is something I encounter reasonably often.

In a major Asian nation some years ago, I was one of Judaism’s representatives at a large interfaith gathering. At the opening reception, my delegated host told me that an important business woman and influential political figure wanted to meet me. (I wasn’t the only Jewish person there, but the fact I wore a kippa made me the only visibly identifiable Jewish person). The first question I received was “Tell me all about Jewish people”. Given the environment, I began with a well-tested opening gambit: “Are you familiar with the Bible?” which allows discussion of Abraham, Moses, King David and Solomon and other celebrities. The answer was “No. What is in the Bible?”

It transpired that my interlocutor was quite familiar with Christians, but had no idea of their history, core texts, or founding mythologies, and she worked with them as she did with Muslims, Buddhists and Hindus. Unlike Jews, these major world faiths were visible and had known histories in Asia. But Jews? Outsiders, novelties, not really “in the family” – even at an interfaith gathering. Fertile ground, which in some similar cases I have found already ploughed, seeded and even harvested, to plant anti-Jewish hostility.

Ignorance of Jews is certainly not the issue in some other parts of Asia – obsession with Jews, despite the absence of any contact or reasonable understanding of Jews, is a feature of some of the Muslim-majority or Muslim-dominated states.

It can be confronting for a Jewish person who would regard themselves as part of the broad, overwhelming, majority to be treated as an eccentric due to a simple fact of wanting decent relations with people who are not Jewish. But it does not require much investigation to discover why this is the case.

Imagine if the only knowledge one had of Muslims were accurate, direct transcripts of the most inflammatory sermons and pronouncements, of the type documented by MEMRI. No exceptions, only those which speak with complete contempt and hatred of non-Muslims. Those which come across as arrogant, selfish and malevolent. Or if your only, complete knowledge of Christianity was encounters with Fred Phelps of the Westboro Baptist Church or Terry Jones of “International Burn a Koran Day”, with a sprinkling of accurate news reports of reverend gentlemen’s crimes of paedophilia.
For many Muslim audiences in Asia, “knowledge” of Jews is informed by selected sections of the Quran and later literature sourced to respected thinkers, which identifies the most negative imaginable “qualities” of Jews, then add on comments by contemporary rabbis or other identifiably Jewish figures which are condemned or ignored by nearly all but those who make them but, once uttered, are forever on the record.

The average Muslim in Indonesia, for example, will know nothing of Chessed, of Rabbi Hillel, Tikkun Olam, of the Jewish contribution to social justice. They will all have heard the most recent pronouncement of Rabbi Ovadia Yosef, which will be treated as proof of Judaism’s malicious and vicious intentions concerning Muslims and others who won’t bow to a Jewish will. These will be no context, no understanding of the reactions of, no consideration of the effect of the rabbi’s malediction on Jews – simply a reinforcement of hostile stereotypes.

If we are serious about addressing the problem of antisemitism, we need to be aware of structural obstacles such as this.

There are virtually no Jews in Indonesia, but a run-down synagogue which is a relic of pre-Independence days, serving a community of a handful of elderly men and women was the focus of a rowdy and angry march when Israel responded to Hamas’ aggression in early 2009 (but on the other side of the coin in the two largest-membership Muslim organisations in the world, both based in Indonesia, have featured mainstream, Orthodox, unashamedly pro-Israel Jewish speakers at recent major events)

In Malaysia, probably the most misunderstood entity in Asia, a major public debate has been raging this year on the question of which of the two most significant political forces are more anti-Jewish (The “winner” is whomever is seen to be simultaneously most anti-Jewish at home and most moderate abroad). Amongst the issues around which the debate has revolved has been the association with businesses which are associated with Jews, which to the dismay of some commentators is a not unusual situation in a globalised environment. The big question is not whether Jews are good, bad or neutral, as two of those three propositions are simply too radical to be considered plausible. No, the “moderate”, progressive argument, and I quote directly from an authoritative translation, is this:

“My advice is this. Even if you don’t like something about a person, don’t reject them, and everything about them, entirely. That is not the Islamic way. Islam
simply does not reject anything that is good, not even if it comes from the Jews. In our time, most knowledge, much scientific and technical equipment is controlled by the Jews. So must we reject all the inventions and creations of the Jews just because we hate the Jews? If this is the case then we must reject modern computer technology, which was pioneered by Jews. These days, whether we like it or not, we must use that new technology, there is no other option. We waste so much of our time in controversy among ourselves, while other people are busy devising and developing the means to grasp hold of the stars…”

Australia and New Zealand, also in my region, are far more culturally European than Islander or Asian. Elements and echoes of the problems faced by opponents of antisemitism in the OSCE region are present and of concern.

Rhetoric of “apartheid Israel”, Israel as Nazi-like or “simply” criminal, the Jewish State as a serial human rights abuser and Jews as exploiting Holocaust-guilt to behave in unethical and abhorrent ways is present, but fortunately still relatively restricted to the far left, extreme right and segments of abroad and diverse Muslim population. Organisations and individuals with pretensions to political respectability simply can and affect to be perceived as antisemitic, so although a small number of anti-Jewish bigots ride on the coat-tails of mainstream political colleagues or survive due to cloaking their true views, the anti-Jewish rhetoric is rarely aired publicly.

With some exceptions.

Those who Anthony Julius so accurately describes as “Jews who are proud to be ashamed to be Jewish” were, only a few years ago, marginalised by both the pro- and anti-Israel communities, the pro- as they had nothing to offer intellectually or ethically, the anti- as they so obviously were people with psychological issues or were suspect as even amongst the most fanatical anti-Israel segment it was understood that Zionism was logically supported by identifying Jews. This has changed, and now every anti-Israel group, be it far left, ultra-right or even Islamist has a pet domesticated “Jewish-born” lapdog.

Another change is with the media. The globalisation of industry has lead to the globalisation of much media, and some of the worst of the European (and to a lesser extent US) anti-Israel drivel finds its way, courtesy of syndication, into popular press and broadcasts in Australasia.

Further, in the past, the more blatant anti-Jewish letters to editors would have automatically been consigned to garbage bins, but on-line comments sections on web-
sites of newspapers, radio and television have served as a new podium for medal-worthy malice. Even allegedly “moderated” pages host many megabits of malevolent misinformation and are littered with the literary contributions of conspiracy theorists, aggressive extremists and straightforward hate-mongers.

Dignified public discourse eschewed antisemitism – the new on-line open conversation seems to encourage a defiance of decency!

Regardless of the subject, on-line commentary provides evidence that antisemitism is alive and sick in the South Pacific. Arguments against the erection of an eruv, for example, are not of necessity antisemitic, but the cavalry of condemnation was led by those who made it quite clear they had enough of “privileged” Jews in Sydney’s green and pleasant north shore. Whether the decision by the New Zealand government to regulate against Shechita was driven by misguided science guiding genuine humanitarianism or by anti-Jewish feeling, the cheer-squad included a decidedly unkosher constituency. Sensible discussion of the Middle East, of multiculturalism, of religious rights and responsibilities – indeed of any topic which has an element of Jewish interest – can be submerged at worst, and complicated at least, by anti-Jewish interventions.

Perhaps then it will be a surprise to learn that the OSCE Working Definition of Antisemitism is both familiar and functional. It has been used constructively in discussions with politicians, media, academics and Islamic and Christian groups. It is logical, reasonable and persuasive.

But there is one very important caveat – it only has utility where goodwill exists. It is not a weapon for hand to hand combat with those wielding apologia, nor alchemy to turn poisonous rhetoric into constructive dialogue.

But when a person who is fair-minded, open-minded if not necessarily an ally, wants to engage in serious argumentation, the Working Definition is a definition which works.

In this brief paper I have endeavoured to convey some of the challenges which we face when we try to cooperatively work on a global level. There is complete ignorance about Jews and Judaism, exploited by those who sow seeds of mistrust, distrust and antagonism. There are pre-existing stereotypes and a historiography of hatred which provide foundations for constructing new edifices of contempt and confrontation. There is a new on-line world which has provided a megaphone for malevolence, “virtual” families for like-minded fanatics and a leaking sewer for
slanderers, stirrers and sedition against tolerance. Different means and modes, alliances and avenues, are required in each situation. The Working Definition is not only valuable, but vital in many environments in the contemporary world.
The Bad Assimilation of the Holocaust: A Brazilian Case

In December 2007, carnival artist Paulo Barros and the president of the Grêmio Recreativo Escola de Samba (GRES) Unidos da Viradouro, Marco Lira, sought the President of the Israelite Federation of Rio de Janeiro (FIERJ), Sergio Niskier. They wanted to communicate the intent of the School to include in its 2008’ plot entitled “It’s Creepy!”, in the block “Troubles, misfortunes, lives lost in this world of evil,” a float of the Holocaust.

The FIERJ appreciate the initiative of the carnival-men, but pointed them to the inadequacy of such allegory in the context of the popular party of Momo: the population would not be able to understand the meaning of this Holocaust denouncing just looking for a car with stacks of plastic dolls representing burned human bodies and skeletal faces contorted with pain. The Holocaust was the result of the antisemitism turned into a state policy under the Nazis, which did not translate into a pile of dolls with rags and shoes, along with other cars that denounced or praised other things. The float would be, well, disrespectful to the memory of the 50 million dead in World War II, including 6 million Jews in the Holocaust.

Sérgio Niskier remembered the hundreds of Brazilian fighters killed in the war - bodies of several of them are in the Mausoleum of the Fatherland, and said that the car attacks people still alive who went through the Nazi hell, many of them living in Brazil: “In our skins there are trademarks, even those born after the war ended,
because there is no Jewish family that has not lost relatives in the previous
generation.” Acknowledging the good intentions of allegory, devoid of antisemitic
connotation, the FIERJ considered, however, the proposal to recall the Holocaust
dancing the samba disrespectful to Jews, and incompatible with common sense. That
would be exacerbated by the exceptional coverage of the Brazilian carnival around the
world.

After taking the initiative to listen to FIERJ on the float, the carnival
professional did not consider what they heard or considered the issues set out only
superficially. A week before the parade, the FIERJ was informed that the float of the
Holocaust had been maintained. However, to alleviate the problems mentioned, it
would be “the only car without samba dancers.” The carnival artist Paul Barros stated
that his float “was inserted in the sector of the executions, which also brings the fire,
gallows, the guillotine and the electric chair”. These traditional means of
execution, among which he had inserted the “Holocaust”, would be “forms of
condemnation of barbaric crimes or sentences that oppress ideological, cultural and
religious differences.” Paulo Barros concluded that the goal was “not dealing with the
Holocaust, but the thrill of horror caused by the disregard for diversity and intolerance
with the difference.”1

The “thrill of horror” that Paul Barros felt regarding the intolerance with the
difference had nothing to do with his disregard for the difference of the Jewish
community, whose position had been clearly exposed by the President of FIERJ, but
not seriously taken by the Viradouro. Sergio Niskier in interviews to the newspapers
O Día, Folha de S. Paulo and Meia Hora reiterated the FIERJ position calling
attention to a research made by Viradouro, showing that many people had interpreted
the float of the Holocaust as a tribute to the 186 victims of the recent crash of the
TAM airplane.

To the newspaper O Día, Paulo Barros responded to the remark about the
interpretation that had been given to the float of the Holocaust as an allegory about the
air disaster occurred in July 2007: “The accident of TAM is totally out of the plot and
I would be irresponsible if I touched this issue. The car is based on a historical event
[emphasis mine]. [...] [The float was] not [made] to hurt but to remember that the
Holocaust can’t happen again.”2

The carnival artist added that the allegory would be preceded by blocks “that
show the atrocities done by the Mankind to end the Life.” But Paulo Barros did not
say the whole truth about the context in which he wanted to enter the float of the Holocaust. The float would be preceded by the block “The Thrill of the Execution” (with fire, electric chair and guillotine) and be followed by a outrageous float about the Kama Sutra, with men and women naked, painted in gold, in various sexual positions, in the block entitled “The Thrill of Desire” and by the amusing block entitled “The Thrill of Disgust” with samba dancers dressed as spiders, rats and cockroaches…

A reporter noted: “Paul [Barros] hopes to amuse the public with fantasies about beheaded and hanged.” The float of the Holocaust belonged to the block “The Shiver of the Execution”. It was assumed that the carnival artist understood the Holocaust as a form of execution, reducing the event to an instrument of death, the same way that “the fire, the gallows, the guillotine and the electric chair.” In Paulo Barros’ view, these “executions” such as the Holocaust, were “historical facts” and so they could be “carnivalized”. But the recent disaster of TAM was not a historical fact yet. So he “would be irresponsible” if he approached that subject. His ethical scrupulous only reached the present and immediate past, events that happened 60 years ago turned into History, and could be recounted in a samba-theme that mixed a lot of Jewish gassed bodies, some beheaded and hanged, couples having sex and people dressed as spiders, rats and cockroaches.

The Israeli government, through its embassy, has expressed its displeasure by displaying such allegory of the Holocaust. The first secretary Rafael Singer noted that the theme was not confined to the Jewish community, but concerned the whole Humanity, and “to blend [the Holocaust] with the Carnival is inappropriate.” The Simon Wiesenthal Center, represented by Sergio Widder, spoke out against the use of the theme for the Rio Carnival, and sent a letter to Viradouro to give up the idea. Even acknowledging that the FIERJ, the Embassy of Israel and the Simon Wiesenthal Center did not approve the allegory, the School decided to keep it, with only some alleged changes: a car with no dancers, and whose passage would take place in silence. A silence rather hypothetical in the Carnival chaos…

In an attempt to renew the Brazilian Carnival, new carnival artists, both contaminated by American mass culture as by the anti-American leftist militancy, found the seams of the “cosmopolitan thematic” and of the “political realism”, of the “critical controversy” and of “social engagement”. The milestone of this turning point was the plot “Rats and Vultures, Drop My Fantasy” by the carnival artist Joãozinho
Trinta, who imagined in 1989, for the School Beija-Flor, a parade of “beggars” in protest against poverty in Brazil including a huge sculpture of Christ the Redeemer as a beggar. The Catholic Church prevented in court that the School Beija-Flor exposed the Beggar Christ in the Sambadrome: the huge sculpture was covered during the parade by a giant canvas. Still, that was the most impressive parade in the history of Brazilian Carnival. A great landmark that became banal, however, with the increasing calls in marketing to “controversial” subjects mobilizing the media with programmed scandals and sensations.

Thus, in 1998, Chico Spinoza wanted to use swastikas in his fantasies. After protests from the Jewish community, and under judicial mandate, the costumes entered the Avenue with the swastikas covered with black stripes. The carnival artist declared then full of resentment: “I think it is absurd that Justice allow a Jewish class (sic) to rip a page of the History (sic). It's a big farce.” By ensuring compliance to memory, the Jewish community has been paradoxically charged to “erase the History”, as the release of the use of swastikas in carnival costumes would represent an undeniable advance of the historical consciousness of the masses, authoritatively frustrated by the “Jewish class”.

In 2000, it was the turn of Catholics feel offended by the carnival artists: in a request of the Church against the GRES Unidos da Tijuca the police had seized a statue of Our Lady of Good Hope and a cross representing the cross used in the First Mass celebrated in Brazil according to historical iconography that would be used as ornaments for some profane allegory. But the lawyers of Unidos da Tijuca won the case and the school could avoid this prohibition. The GRES Grande Rio, however, which addressed the issue of religion too, preferred to avoid problems with the Church exchanging preventively a statue of Our Lady for a dove.

In 2003, the GRES Beija-Flor brought a couple of black people representing Adam and Eve and made Jesus Christ to intervene in the current violent Rio de Janeiro resuscitating a young woman killed by a stray bullet. It was anticipated, however, that Jesus Christ would trade shots with the Devil. Before the controversy raised by an allegory of an armed Jesus Christ discharging his pistol against the Devil, and over the protests of the Church, the school eventually disarmed the Christ. The shooting was replaced by a Devil who shot alone as the Christ, rather than retaliate with gunfire, offered palms.
In 2004, Joãozinho Trinta of the GRES Grande Rio under the pressures of the Prosecutor’s Office for Children and Youth of Duque de Caxias and of the Catholic Church had to cover two floats in order to hide some gigantic sculptures in a float on the Kama Sutra, where sex was represented explicitly.

In 2006, in two different operations in the Zona Norte of Rio de Janeiro, the Military Police arrested 47 people, including five minors, wearing costumes exalting the Nazism (Figure 1) and vests that brought a portrait of Hitler holding an AK-47 on the front and a huge swastika (Figure 2) on the back. The costumes, jackets and clubs seized were sent to the Institute of Criminology Carlos Eboli for examination. The costumes brought a “positive” association of the Nazism with the drug trade in Rio, an exaltation of Hitler as a “volcano”, or a kind of top leader of the drug traffickers. This disturbing politicization of the crime in Brazil has not yet been sufficiently investigated.

In 2007-2008, the GRES Estacio de Sá ranged between prototypes of their costumes for the carnival an “Section Hitler” with dancers dressed in black with swastikas and skulls³, an allusion to Nazism ambiguously suggesting both a repudiation of this regime, associated with death, as an allusion to African tribes or even the symbol of the SS. Cid Carvalho, the author of the theme “The history of the future,” said the fantasy was related to Nostradamus, who would have predicted the monstrosities of Nazism. As the use of the swastika is banned by law in Brazil, FIERJ notified the school. Shortly before the parade, Marcos Aurelio Fernandes, Director of GRES Estacio de Sá, informed the removal of the costumes with swastikas and the cancellation of “Section Hitler”⁴. The inadequacies of the costumes were recognized by the GRES Estacio de Sá.

---

Figura 1

Figura 2

---
At the same time, the FIERJ talked with Paul Barros, trying to dissuade him from the idea of representing the Holocaust in a carnival float. But one day before the parade, the FIERJ was informed about the presence of a dancer disguised as Adolf Hitler on top of the pile of naked bodies and skeletal. The FIERJ protested and suggested to put the car on the track “Holocaust never again.” The school rejected the idea. Niskier stated that the inclusion of a “Hitler” atop a pile of dolls was no more disrespect, but mockery. “Barros argued that his “Hitler” was not intended to dance samba, but, instead, would get in the car with an “attitude of shame.” The block would lead to the Avenue a repentant Hitler incarnate by the entrepreneur Corintho Rodrigues, who “would make an interpretation of guilt,” according to Barros. It was amazing that the carnival artist had argued in defense of his allegory that it would bring a repentant Hitler. An idea so absurd in his revisionism of History proved that his assimilation of the Holocaust was the worst. How could this carnival artist pretend to convey an image-synthesis of the Holocaust for the masses if he barely assimilated the basic meanings of those historical events?
It was also amazing that no association of historians, or none historian with access to the press, have spoken out against the menace of such historical revisionism in a mass media with international repercussions. The FIERJ decided to appeal, then, to a law of the City Council who punishes schools that were hurting religious groups with offenses. The Law Department of FIERJ filed a lawsuit alleging “vilification of religious feeling.”

On February 31, 2008, Judge Juliana Kalichsztejn, on duty at the Forum in Rio de Janeiro, granted the injunction in favor of FIERJ, indicating that “no tool of worship to hatred” should be used, prohibiting the display of Hitler’ costumes and the dolls representing the victims of the Holocaust. The veto prompted the carnival artist Paulo Barros to tears. In fact, he did not intend to spread hatred of Jews with his allegory; rather, he wanted to “denounce the Holocaust.” He was not an antisemite, and identified himself with the Jews persecuted for possibly being homosexual feeling in his skin the persecution of being “different” - the “difference” was the real theme of his allegory. Only he used the Holocaust as a symbol of the repression of the “differents”, and was not really interested in the singularity of the Jewish question. His problem was another, and his case was that of a bad assimilation of the Holocaust: a purely emotional reaction in the face of barbarism, without interest or historical basis for specific problem of the Jew people. A case of lack of culture coupled with vanity and lack of real solidarity with other minorities.

Before the Carnival, Paulo Barros had consulted the FIERJ in search of... some advises? To be applauded? Feeling some insecurity? Who knows? After the banning of his allegory, Paulo Barros acted as a victim of the Censorship, persecuted by what could appear as a “Jewish plot” (the FIERJ, the Law Department of FIERJ under the direction of Dr. Jackson Grossman - and the Judge - Juliana Kalichsztejn). Viradouro decided not to appeal, and as the school preferred to dismantle the car, which coasted R$400 mil instead of paying a fine of R$200 mil if they car were maintained. The carnival artist Paulo Barros elaborated a revenge against the decision of the Justice retracing the car in twenty-four hours with a new allegory, now on “The Execution of Freedom of Speech.”

Paulo Barros argued that no one could “censor History,” and that the samba was not less noble to tell a true story than the movies, like Schindler’s List. Under the exclusive influence of mass culture in America, he probably ignored the controversy generated by several films about the Holocaust, including Schindler's List that Claude
Lanzmann accused of being a real assault on History. I do not agree with the author of *Shoah*, the best movie about the Holocaust ever made, but it is impossible to ignore what he said about the complexity of dramatizing the event in a Hollywood spectacle, and what intellectuals like Elie Wiesel, Saul Friedländer and Bruno Bettelheim wrote about the dangers of representing the Holocaust in the film industry.

Viradouro’s President, Marco Lira, supported Paulo Barros: “I would not say it was a reproach, but our intention has been curtailed somewhat [...]. The right of expression that we will portray will be focused directly on our people.” Thus, in the form of a protest against “censorship” (which they admitted to the press that was not a censorship but a court ruling on law enforcement), the float that would carry the plastic bodies was converted in a car with samba dancers as victims of the censorship with the mouths silenced by a cloth. At the top of these living victims, no more a repentant Hitler. In his place, the same “actor” now represented the Brazilian martyr Tiradentes between protest banners that read: “Freedom albeit late” and “No one builds the future by burying History.” The carnival artist Barros told reporters: “The car of the Holocaust is buried. He was done with great affection and respect. Unfortunate the people did not understand”.

The controversy has won all media, national and international. In Israel, the daily *The Jerusalem Post* splashed the news of the injunction on his website and *Ha'aretz* reported the decision with a large photo of the sculpture of the skeletal and naked bodies that should comprise the car. *CNN* has published online the veto. A reporter of *The Herald Review* of Illinois wrote: “There will be no pile of naked and mutilated bodies, and no dancing Hitler in the world’s largest carnival.”. The *BBC* pointed the reaction of FIERJ. A matter of special cover of *Epoca* asked both sides: “Is it fair to the victims and the survivors that genocide should be a theme of a float? Is it fair to limit the creativity of a carnival artist only to themes considered “appropriate” to the carnival? [...] Could anything be allowed in the party of Momo?”

Several differing opinions were expressed about the episode, from violent antisemite diatribes by net users to rational criticism of both sides by journalists and intellectuals. The enormity of the reactions caused by the veto has divided even the Jewish community. Liberal Rabbi Nilton Bonder has sent to his list of emails a text that he did not wish to publish to not expand the controversy. According to him, both sides (the School and FIERJ) were wrong in their positions. Humorist Juca Chaves, among other famous members of the Brazilian Jewish community, argued in favor of
the Holocaust float. But Carnival artist of GRES Grande Rio, Roberto Szaniecki, criticized Paulo Barros: “I was deeply troubled [...]. It has no context, even inside the plot... It is a lack of sensitivity. The broadcast of the parade is transmitted to Europe. They will see this. I did not have my grandparents because of the Holocaust.” Two days after this remarks, Szaniecki was fired from the Rio Grande, who invited Paul Barros to replace him. Paulo Barros declined, saying he had full creative freedom in Viradouro.

At Época, the journalist Adriano Silva (one of the directors of the program Fantástico at Rede Globo) came out in defense of the freedom of Viradouro to express his fantasy about the Holocaust: “You will need to ask permission to talk to someone [of genocide]? To study them, narrate them or represent them artistically? [...] Paulo Barros visited [FIERJ] to talk about the float. A courtesy that quickly gave way to ideological interference and censorship against a manifestation that should be autonomous [...]. The Jews are not the owners of the Holocaust. [...] No one can hold the intellectual rights on a historical fact. Who has to decide whether the Holocaust can be subject to the carnival parade is not the Jewish Federation. The FIERJ saw no antisemitic intent in the parade of Viradouro - but thought that the Holocaust was no subject to the Carnival plot. Who has to decide this are the schools and the carnival - not the Jewish Federation [...]. For a long time Carnival has been serving as a popular expression that absorbs and re-read, in his peculiar way, subjects of the most varied hues. [The Carnival] should have the right to continue to do so, with mistakes and successes, with more or less taste. After the parade, a school may be criticized, even processed, but should never be censured beforehand. Some of the smartest people I know are Jewish. [...] At the same time, there is a Jewish wing which insists in keeping the wounds of the past open. And that worships their own wounds as if unwilling to let them heal, as if their existence depended on that to continue living. Isn’t it about time to break this market reserve of pain and look forward with joy? The Carnival is there just for that reason.”

Adriano Silva associated the expression of the thought of carnival artist Paulo Barros as an “artistic autonomous manifestation”, blaming a “Jewish wing” who expressed negative attitude to this fantasy. The expression of the thought of that “wing” was “an ideological interference” and “a censorship.” For the journalist, “the Jews are not the owners of the Holocaust.” That is, “the Jews” (now all “wings” of the Jewish people) have no right and no moral authority to know or suggest how the
Holocaust should or should not be represented within the Carnival. Only carnival artists have that right and moral authority. This article in a magazine of national circulation generated new controversy.

Among many other voices in the Jewish community, Silvia Levy protested: “To see evoked in the form of parade and samba, with everyone singing and dancing [the] kidnapping, torture and murder […] is to reduce a terrible story to a fairy tale. There are no Jews in a wing dedicated to keeping alive the wounds of History; this statement is part of the arguments that thrive on antisemitic ideology. All the Jews consciously keep alive the memory of its History to remember who they are and to learn from it. In the case of the Holocaust, so that it does not happen again.”

In the article “Regarding the pain of the Jews,” the social anthropologist Adriana Dias noted that the question is to know “what kind of memory you want to involve the marks of the Nazi genocide” […]. It is not “a question of ownership […]. The Jews bear the pain of the Holocaust, in the skins, souls, lives. So the pain is theirs, and this, who did not live it, can not understand.” Her thinking was based on the essay Regarding the pain of others by Susan Sontag, especially in its conclusion: “‘We’ - that ‘we’ is anyone who has never gone through anything like what they suffered - do not understand. We do not perceive. We can not actually imagine how it feels. We can not imagine how dreadful, how terrifying war is; and how it becomes normal. We can not understand, we can not imagine. That’s what every soldier, every journalist, every rescuer and every independent observer who spent some time under the fire of war and was lucky to dodge the death that put down others around him, feel in such a stubborn way. And they are right.”

Adriano Silva responded to his critics defending Paulo Barros again. He compared now the carnival artist to Pablo Picasso: “I think that Art - push a little Carnival to fit in there - should be free to represent whatever you want, the way you want. Picasso painted Guernica. Paulo Barros could bring to the avenue the tragedy of the Twin Towers. Or Rwanda. Or the urban violence in Brazil through the brutal death of boy João Hélio. Or whatever he wanted. Why not? We may applaud or deplore the results - and the culture and civilization will advance with it. What is terrible is to censor in advance, stick a carpet of eggs under the artists feet […]. I do not see how the float could insult the memory of the dead. I think the result would be exactly the opposite. I just think that the Holocaust is not owned by anyone. Or rather - it is a shameful and painful burden that belongs to us all. And that can be
represented artistically, even as a mean to overcome it. Of course the Jewish community has the right to opine. Just doesn’t have, I think, [the right] to impose its view.”

Refusing to understand what the controversy was about, Adriano Silva defended, in fact, not the freedom of expression of the artists, but the “freedom of expression” to offend the Jewish people. He still reproached FIERJ for wanting to “censor” this “right” when FIERJ recurred to the same law that Church applied when Catholics were offended by “artistic” profanations in Carnival. The reporter found that “free speech” of the Carnival should prevail over the “free speech” of FIERJ. As the Court decided for that “free speech” of FIERJ, this turned into “ideology”. Only the “free speech” of the carnival artist would be “autonomous manifestation” and “a form of art” without any ideology, so it could not be “censored”. It must be noticed that the argument of “free speech” is used here in the same way used by all revisionists of the Holocaust.

In the view of Adriano Silva, the Jewish minority could be offended by the non-Jewish majority in the Sambadrome. This aggression could never be considered as ideological and could not be prevented. There could only be a process after it happened. Jews should stop moaning and just “look forward with joy,” even when they feel offended by perverted representations of the Holocaust. The Jewish community can not control the representations of the Holocaust, and a Samba School has the right to make what his Carnival artists wants with it, because he is so creative. Jews could only opine on the representations of their genocide, since these opinions had no effect. So, the “spiteful Jewish wing” should “overcome” the Holocaust with joy, dancing samba around a Holocaust float with his dead “parents” in the Carnival.

A Holocaust float made with good or bad intentions was defended by journalists over the feelings of a partially offended Jewish community as a “popular” and “artistic” manifestation when it was a mere product of the mass culture, which long ago replaced both the popular culture and the high culture – hence, the true culture: “Who has to decide [it] are the schools and the Carnival - not the Jewish Federation [...]. The Jews are not the owners of the Holocaust”. We almost see Adriano Silva dancing samba while he wrote this harrowing diatribe. According to him and many other journalists of the mainstream media, the aesthetic, historical and even moral authority in the field of representations of the Holocaust in Carnival should belong exclusively to the Carnival artists. For them, the samba speaks louder
than human dignity… Those kinds of antisemitic feelings presented proudly as a liberal statement, those disguised anti-Jewish protests in the name of the freedom of speech reveal the dangers of the bad assimilation of the Holocaust.

Luiz Nazario is Professor of Film History at the Fine Arts School of the Federal University of Minas Gerais. Author of a PhD thesis on the role movies played in the preparation of the Holocaust: Imaginários da destruição (Imaginaries of Destruction, 1994) and of several books, including Da natureza dos monstros (From the Nature of Monsters, 1998), As sombras móveis (The Moving Shadows, 1999), Segredos (Secrets, 2001), A cidade imaginária (The Imaginary City, 2005), Autos-de-fé como espetáculos de massa (Autos da Fe as Mass Spectacles, 2005) and Todos os corpos de Pasolini (All the Pasolini’ Bodies, 2007). Since 1996 he collaborates with the data from Brazil for the Anti-Semitism World Wide Report of the Stephen Roth Institute of the Tel Aviv University.

4 FIERJ digital, n° 328, January 30, 2008.
5 O Dia, January 30, 2008.
Confronting New Antisemitism: From Working Definition to Model Law and Back

It could be said that 'new antisemitism', a term that is so commonly in use, and that emerged after the outbreak of the second intifada in 2000, is an elusive concept. Nevertheless, it can not be denied that by using it we actually mean politics.

In 2004, after experiencing the notorious Durban conference (Sept. 2001), Dina Porat noted that: "For the present [2003-2004], one can say that the image of the Jew and his supposed intentions are no different from those of the past; however the arena is now of radical Islam, which utilizes antisemitic motifs that originated in Christian Europe […]. Their materials purposely blur the difference between Israel and the Jewish communities in the world; thus the differentiation between antisemitism and anti-Zionism which was existed in the past is becoming […] less clear".¹

Roni Stauber while speaking at Yale in 2009, about The Academic and Public Debate over the Meaning of the New Antisemitism, should have of course a better perspective on the phenomenon. Summarizing the opinions of several scholars such as: Alain Finkielkraut, Peter Pulzer, Alvin Rosenfeld, and others, he defined new antisemitism as: a clear identification between Jewish communities and individuals and Israel, which are perceived as a single evil entity. "Since the end of 2001", he added, "Israel is at the forefront of Western civilization and world Jewry, which racially oppress underprivileged elements in both Israel-Palestine and Europe. Thus, antisemitism has become interchangeable with anti-Zionism and the word 'Zionist' is identified with Jew."²

But what Dina Porat didn't dare say out loudly in 2004 was expressed by Stauber in 2009. Yes, the liberal left, and of course the extreme left, could also be considered as part of the problem by encouraging and even promoting 'new-antisemitism'. Beside the right wing extremists, Islamists and agitated Muslim youngsters, new antisemites could also be: "Left-wing intellectuals and human rights champions who, on the one hand, contribute considerably to the demonization of
Israel, [,..] and on the other, tolerate terror and violent actions against Israel and Jewish targets.³

Let me say in their defense that most of them deny those accusations and strongly reject the attempt of being categorized as antisemites. Some of those blamed for antisemitism are in fact Jews themselves. Their main argument is that criticizing and even bashing Israel and Zionism is a legitimate political position. Even when calling to abolish the State of Israel as a homeland to the Jewish people.

So what has changed in those few years? Concerning our discussion, in 2005 the EU, by one of its significant organizations, the EUMC [The European Union Monitoring Center on Racism and Xenophobia], a.k.a today the FRA [Fundamental Rights Agency] adopted on 28th January 2005 "A Working Definition of Antisemitism". Apparently, the definition does not deal with new antisemitism; it could serve in defining also traditional age-old antisemitism: “Antisemitism is a certain perception of Jews, which may be expressed as hatred toward Jews. Rhetorical and physical manifestations of antisemitism are directed toward Jewish or non-Jewish individuals and/or their property, toward Jewish community institutions and religious facilities." But the next sentence, that seems separate from the entire paragraph, says: "In addition, such manifestations could also target the state of Israel, conceived as a Jewish collectivity."⁴

The document continues in presenting us with what is called: "contemporary examples of antisemitism". The fourth and fifth examples deal with Holocaust denial.⁵ There is no mention in the document of the term 'new-antisemitism', but the next five paragraphs abandon traditional antisemitism and deal with what is recognized today as 'new-antisemitism'.

"Examples of the ways in which antisemitism manifests itself with regard to the State of Israel taking into account the overall context could include:

* Denying the Jewish people their right to self-determination, e.g., by claiming that the existence of a State of Israel is a racist endeavor.
* 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."⁶
The Working Definition was introduced to the 55 members and affiliates of the OSCE [Organization for Security and Coordination in Europe], and it was adopted by the ODHIR [Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights] as a guideline for law enforcement programs on combating hate crimes. In my opinion it is impossible to overestimate the importance of these clauses. The Working Definition today is still a cornerstone in confronting antisemitism and antsemites, but in which way? Could it be used as an active and effective tool in combating antisemitism?

I am not aware of many of cases that the working definition was challenged in court either by prosecutors or by defense attorneys, or that it was used by judges to base their verdicts upon it. Ken Stern exposed us to such a case in Lithuania in July 2005, six months after the working definition was published. In this case the editor-in-chief of the daily Respulika was found by the court of "propagating national, racial and religious enmity" by claiming that Jews rule the world. The court based his decision also on the EUMC's working definition and found that the newspaper's text "correspond [ed] to the […] hallmarks of antisemitism enumerated by the EUMC". Undoubtedly, this case is the exception to the rule.

When Gregg Rickman, the first US special envoy for monitoring and fighting antisemitism published his 2008 report, "Contemporary Global Anti-Semitism", he based it on the concepts of the working definition. He made it clear that although traditional elements of antisemitism are still thriving, his report sees the new-antisemitism as the prominent form of antisemitism today and a threat, – not only to Jews themselves but also to the world order - that shadows every traditional form of this old hate.

So although the former US administration viewed the working definition as an important tool for understanding the antisemitic atmosphere and in interpreting reality, as is apparent in its 2008 report on the subject, it did not take the next necessary step which would be to use the definition when combating antisemitism through the court system and through legislation.

In Britain, an 'All Party Parliamentary Committee against Antisemitism', chaired by John Mann, launched in November 2005, an 'Inquiry Committee into antisemitism'. The committee concluded that "Ironically, the latest form of anti-Semitism appears to be based on anti-racism. Jews are no longer accused of killing Christ, […] Modern anti-Semitism has, out of necessity, become more nuanced and subtle. […] anti-Jewish prejudice is now infused with a ‘social conscience’, focused
on the role of Israel in the Middle East conflict. Jews are seen as natural supporters of Israel, regardless of whether or not they actually are, and some of those who are hostile to Israel make no distinction between Israelis and Jews." Although it does not mention the working definition, the basic conclusion of the inquiry is similar in spirit to the working definition.

In its response to the parliament, the British Government mentioned the working definition but rejected the idea of adopting it formally and publicly as a political guideline in combating antisemitism. "The Government’s position on the definition rests as stated in its response to the Inquiry’s report, namely that the definition was a work in progress that had not yet been recommended to Member States for adoption. […] The FRA has confirmed that the definition is still seen as a work-in-progress that requires further testing and comments from stakeholders as to its practical use and effectiveness in supporting data collection." The British Government added a significant reservation with a lot of implications for the future of the definition in confronting antisemitism: "The Government undertook to re-examine this if and when the EUMC/FRA recommended the definition to Member States." One can interpret such declaration as saying: 'when we have to, we will kill the definition. In the meantime it does not hurt anyone. So please do not shake the boat, as we have our own definition that does not wave with the uniqueness of antisemitism over other hate crimes.'

Five years after its publication, the necessary conclusion is that the working definition has limited impact on decision makers and law enforcement agencies in combating antisemitism.

One should not be astounded that several Jewish groups and individuals came to a conclusion that the FRA intentionally drags its feet, and is actually trying to dissolve its commitment to convert the working definition into an obligatory resolution. So they started to promote legislation against antisemitism in Europe through the European parliament. A 'model-law', or an 'ideal law', that will be adopted firstly by the EU members and later on by the OSCE members into their legislative systems. The draft is still in a preliminary stage, so there is nothing that could be said about its content and whether 'new-antisemitism' is explicitly on its agenda.

Recently it seems that these groups concluded that it would be easier and maybe less provocative, to encourage and to promote legislation that was already initiated by EU legislative bodies. One EU legislative act that deals with anti racism
etc. that I know about, is The Council of European Union framework decision 2008/913/JHA from 28 November 2008 (was published officially in December 2008). Its subtitle reveals its purpose: "on combating certain forms and expressions of racism and xenophobia by means of criminal law".

In its present condition, is the framework decision a good basis for an ideal law on antisemitism that European Jews and others can expect to deal with new-antisemitism as well? And is it a good basis in dealing especially with the linkage between Israel, Zionism and hatred of Jews? To my best judgment, the answer is undoubtedly no.

Indeed the preamble of the framework decision provides a marginal mention that the purpose of the decision is to "oppose any form of racism, anti-Semitism and xenophobia as already expressed by the European Council in December 2003", but this is the only instance that fighting antisemitism as a unique phenomenon is mentioned in the entire decision. Analyzing carefully the decision, it could be said that the recommendations in dealing with personal persecution are really impressive. They cover almost every area of prejudice, hate and racial discrimination. The recommendations are clear and spoken out unequivocally, always based on past international and European decisions against racism. One main problem is that the framework decision is not forcing state members to adopt and to implement into its future laws the existing EU recommendations on special cases, such as the working definition of antisemitism. On the other hand it is only fair to say that the framework decision is not preventing the member states from "adopting provisions in national law which extend Article 1(1)(c) and (d) to crimes directed against a group of persons defined by other criteria than race, colour, religion, descent or national or ethnic origin, such as social status or political convictions."  

But more disturbing is the priority that is given to freedom of expression when it is compared with all other recommendations on racism and xenophobia. In article 7, under the title of "Constitutional rules and fundamental principles", it said that "This Framework Decision shall not have the effect of modifying the obligation to respect fundamental rights and fundamental legal principles, including freedom of expression and association, […] [and] shall not have the effect of requiring Member States to take measures in contradiction to fundamental principles relating to freedom of association and freedom of expression, in particular freedom of the press and the freedom of expression in other media […]".
Of course I am not opposing the almost sacred principles of freedom of speech and the freedom to express ideas. But one should bear in mind that the very essence of 'new antisemitism', as was expressed in the working definition, is the war of ideas!!! It is not its clauses against personal incitement of Jews or against violent manifestations that makes the working definition so important. Its uniqueness is in the recognition of the possibility that words - that on the surface could be presented as a legitimate political dispute or a legitimate political opinion - are actually antisemitic in nature and should therefore be prohibited as antisemitic manifestations. The most important achievement of the working definition is that certain political stands against Zionism, the State of Israel and their ties with world Jewry are also included in the definition of antisemitism.

It could be counter productive for the cause of confronting new antisemitism if the war of ideas about the connections between political ideas, even when they are extremely biased against Israel and Zionism, will find its way to constitutional courts on a regular basis.

In challenging the courts to choose between the principle of fundamental constitutional rights – e.g. freedom of expression – and antisemetic hate speech, especially in connection with Israel, I am not so sure if the consequences will always be satisfying. The main force of the working definition lies in its moral declarative attitude that could help us in the political arena in convincing politicians and decision makers to support our cause because it is right and justifiable. The political game allows flexibility, but it is harder to reverse court decisions, especially if they are considered constitutional precedents.

Laws against Holocaust denial and its derivatives already exist in fourteen European countries (Austria, Belgium, Czech Republic, Germany, Italy, France, Lithuania, Luxemburg, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, Spain, Switzerland, and most recently in Hungary in 2010). Mike Whine analyzed the situation in Europe in his article, Holocaust Denial in the New Millennium. He shows that where laws against denial already exist the courts tend to convict the offenders, and reject their appeals to justice under Article 10 (freedom of expression) and other Articles defending individuals' rights of the European Convention on Human rights. Whine concludes that "the legal and political climate in Europe, and not just the twenty-five states of the EU, […] now severely condemns denial and seeks to prosecute it […] Moreover, it encourages those countries, which have not yet legislated upon it to do so, either
But recent cases prove that when you challenge the court with issues, even if, as Whine put it, they are the European Bon-Ton; allegations that include Holocaust denial, one can not predict the final verdict. Michal Navoth told us about the Konstantinos Plevris case. Greece does not have specific legislation on Holocaust denial, so Plevris who defines himself as an antisemite and his writing and books include vast material on Holocaust denial, was originally charged for violating the Greek anti-Racism Law. He was charged, inter-alia, with: "expressed [ing] offensive ideas against [...] Jews". Reading the Plevris case as told by Michal Navoth you almost can not believe it happened in contemporary Europe. But although the case concentrated very much on Holocaust denial the Fifth Appeals Court in Athens, in March 2009, acquitted Plevris and cancelled his conviction by a lower court. The court ignored the clear evidences of Holocaust denial and concluded that Plevris was not guilty of "incitement to racial hatred and violence against the Jews".

We should not confuse things. 'new-antisemitism' should not be considered as a new phase of the old traditional antisemitism. 'new-antisemitism' is first and foremost the code name given by us to the total war that is conducted against Israel, against its national aspirations – aka Zionism – and against world Jewry (at least against those Jews who support Zionism).

Yoram Hazony, the founder of MERKAZ SCHALEM in Jerusalem and a prominent intellectual, tries to draw our attention to a new paradigm of war that Israel and world Jewry are facing in the last few years.

Following Thomas Kuhn's ideas about the condition of when and why paradigms are going to shift, Hazony claims that unless we understand the new paradigm regarding Israel and Zionism we can not win the contemporary wars. "[... Israel's] standing has been deteriorating for the past generation, not because of this or that set of facts, but because the paradigm through which educated Westerners are looking at Israel has shifted. We’ve been watching the transition from one paradigm to another on everything having to do with Israel’s legitimacy as a sovereign nation.

"[The] old paradigm [...] is the one that granted Israel its legitimacy in the first place. The modern state of Israel was founded, both constitutionally and in terms of the understanding of the international community, as a nation-state, the state of the
Jewish people. [...] An offspring of an early modern movement that understood the freedom of peoples as depending on a right to self-protection against the predations of international empires. [...] "But the idea of the nation-state has not flourished in the period since the establishment of Israel. [...] With the drive toward European Union, the nations of Europe have established a new paradigm in which the sovereign nation-state is no longer seen as holding the key to the well-being of humanity. On the contrary, the independent nation-state is now seen by many intellectuals and political figures in Europe as a source of [...] evil. [...] Moreover, this new paradigm is aggressively advancing into mainstream political discourse in other nations as well—even in countries such as the United States and Israel. "While hatred for Israel may, at a given moment, be focused quite sincerely on certain [daily] facts, the trajectory of international disgust or hatred for Israel is [...] driven by the rapid advance of a new paradigm that understands Israel, and especially the independent Israeli use of force to defend itself, as illegitimate down to its foundations. If you believe that Israel is, in some important sense, a variant on Nazism, then [...] of course this comparison leads to the conclusion that Israel has no right to exist and should be dismantled. "But if Israel falls, it will not be by way of Iranian missiles. It will be by way of words, as the Soviet Union fell. Jews and non-Jews will simply cease to understand why such a state should exist—and then one day, with awesome speed; the independent Jewish state will be no more. But the danger isn’t coming from Israel’s traditional enemies and it can’t be fought using the traditional means. You can’t fight a paradigm with facts [...] you can only fight a paradigm with a competing paradigm." In conclusion We are not here to suggest a competing paradigm. We intend to confront the bad guys at the battle fields of the present 'new paradigm', where Israel and Zionism are an embodiment of the ultimate evil. And we do it with the humble tools we already have in hand. In combating new-antisemitism we can not give up either the working definition or the legislation against antisemitism. In a boundless mega-state of Europe, that is not going to favor any nationality above another, the anti-racist and anti-xenophobic legislation should be viewed favorably. Individuals, even certain groups,
would find there comfort and support. But one should not rely only on the idea of fairness and objectiveness of the courts. Justices have their political agendas and they cannot always conceal them. The case of Goldstone is only one notorious example. For these reasons, the courts should not be considered the right arena to confront antisemitic cases of political nature.

Undoubtedly the ultra anti-nationalists, those who see Israel as the ultimate evil, are certainly against transforming the working definition into an obligatory guideline for all EU (and OSCE) members. In my view, it is not a coincidence that the FRA is dragging its feet. It was difficult enough to persuade the EUMC to develop the draft in the first place. Just remember the British Government's reaction, in 2008, to the 'Inquiry Committee into antisemitism' recommendation to check their stand on the working definition. Their answer was that they do so only if and when it would be relevant. A diplomatic way of saying – NO.

Although the EU mega-state system is in progress we can still identify those who are still in support of the national-state order. Even in the institutions of the EU there could be find those who call to slow down the rush for one Europe state. The clauses that deal with new-antisemitism in the working definition give us the justification to approach those politicians and to ask them to support the case of Zionism and Israel against their bashers. Although the future of the working definition is unclear it is still a powerful political instrument.

And as for the future, the last thing I would want to see is the abandonment of the working definition as irrelevant. It was, and remains, relevant and it is time to challenge the FRA and encourage them to develop it into a formal act. I think that combating antisemitism only through more legislation will be counter productive. It would be best if the proper means could be found to persuade the Council of European Union to mention explicitly antisemitism as well as the working definition in a revised framework decision, and to encourage the member states to integrate it into their anti racist legislation.

So, we walk together in the wake of the working definition and of anti racist legislation. We raised doubts about their relevance now a day. But my conclusion is, and I would be pleased if you agreed with me, that we can not give up on either one of them. They complete each other to one powerful instrument in the fight against antisemitism.
3 Ibid, p. 9.
5 *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.*
6 Ibid. The document limits and presents a situation when criticism of Israel could not be considered as antisemitism: "However, criticism of Israel similar to that leveled against any other country cannot be regarded as antisemitic."
8 Ibid, p. 27. It is based on the Lithuanian court decision: Vilnius City District 2 Court judge A. Cininas, #A11-01087-497/2005, 7 July 2005.
10 Ibid, p. 4.
14 Ibid, p. 1 clause (2).
15 Ibid, p. 1 clause (10).
16 Ibid, pp 3-4, article 7.
20 Ibid, pp. 79-80.
Pierre-André Taguieff

La nouvelle propagande « antisioniste », ou la réinvention de la question juive

Je considère qu’une guerre idéologique totale est aujourd’hui menée contre Israël et « le sionisme », soumis à une diabolisation permanente. Ce traitement diabolisant est dénué de limites : il tend à s’appliquer non seulement à tous les Juifs, mais encore à tous ceux qui, parmi les non-Juifs, marquent leur attachement à Israël et sont en conséquence stigmatisés en tant que « sionistes ». Il s’ensuit que, dans la nouvelle vision antijuive planétairamente observable, la distinction entre Juifs et non-Juifs semble avoir perdu une grande partie de sa pertinence. Certes, parallèlement, l’on peut constater que le vieil antisémitisme se survit à travers la simple substitution du mot « sioniste » au mot « Juif », notamment chez les adeptes de la pensée conspirationniste, qui se contentent d’un changement minimal de vocabulaire ne modifiant en rien les représentations : le « complot juif international » est ainsi rebaptisé « complot sioniste mondial ». Mais c’est

---

1 Philosophe, politologue et historien des idées, directeur de recherche au CNRS, Paris, Centre de recherches politiques de Sciences Po (CEVIPOF).
désormais l’opposition manichéenne « sionistes/antisionistes » qui fonctionne pour distinguer clairement l’ami de l’ennemi. Ce qui implique une reconfiguration de la totalité du champ de la judéophobie. Les nouveaux ennemis des Juifs ont fabriqué un tableau paranoïaque du monde où ils peuvent par exemple dénoncer le président égyptien Hosni Mubarak comme « le chef des sionistes arabes », selon la formule de Ayman al-Zawahiri, le numéro deux d’Al-Qaida, visant les dirigeants arabes alliés aux démocraties occidentales. Et Zawahiri d’ajouter : « Ces sionistes arabes avec qui nous vivons et échangeons des sourires sont plus dangereux que les sionistes juifs. » Déclaration de circonstance, certes, mais révélatrice d’un remodelage des représentations. Dans cette perspective, et si l’on prend le discours islamiste à la lettre, l’ennemi absolu, c’est « le sioniste », qu’il soit juif ou non, et non pas « le Juif » comme tel. Toutefois, dans la vision islamiste du monde, un axiome vient aussitôt restreindre la portée de cette clause : les Juifs sont considérés comme des « sionistes » dans leur immense majorité. Les Juifs non sionistes ou antisionistes ne peuvent être en conséquence que des exceptions. Dès lors, les termes « sioniste » et « Juif » ont en règle générale la même référence. C’est pourquoi, dans leurs déclarations, les chefs d’Al-Qaida emploient indifféremment les mots « Juifs » et « sionistes ». Un Juif n’est en principe tolérable que s’il prend parti publiquement et sans réserve contre Israël et « le sionisme », il n’est acceptable que s’il se dit « antisioniste » et prouve son engagement contre « le sionisme » par ses actes, lesquels sont le plus souvent d’ordre symbolique (déclarations, pétitions, manifestations, « aide humanitaire », etc.). Il accède dès lors à un statut comparable à celui qu’occupait le « compagnon de route » dans le

4 Déclaration de Ayman al-Zawahiri diffusée sur Internet le 19 juillet 2010 : « Qui encercle notre peuple à Gaza ? N’est-ce pas le chef des sionistes arabes, Hosni Mubarak ? »
communisme lénino-stalinien. Même « antisioniste », participerait-il à sa manière au jihad mondial, un Juif devenu antijuif doit rester à sa place : celle, inférieure, de dhimmi. Sauf s’il se convertit à l’islam. Ce qui n’empêche pas de juger suspecte sa conversion. Car la vision islamiste est intrinsèquement paranoïaque.

**Islamisation et gauchisation de l’antisionisme radical : le retour de l’universalisme abstrait**

Cette mobilisation démonisante contre tout ce qui est perçu comme « sioniste », israélien ou juif présenté en outre, dans une perspective historique, deux caractéristiques nouvelles, constituant les principaux facteurs de sa globalisation aussi récente que foudroyante. En premier lieu, l’islamisation croissante des passions antisionistes et/ou antijuives, qui révèle l’islamisation profonde de la cause palestinienne, de moins en moins masquée par un discours nationaliste devenu désuet. Et cette islamisation prend de plus en plus clairement le sens d’une jihadisation. Dans l’histoire de la judéophobie moderne, cette imprégnation islamiste croissante représente le phénomène majeur observable au cours de la période ouverte par la Guerre des Six-Jours. Or, la nature de l’islamisme est étrangement méconnue dans le monde des élites médiatiques et politiques. La méconnaissance porte notamment sur la figure du nouvel ennemi incarné par l’islamisme radical sous toutes ses formes (du Hamas à Al-Qaida, en passant par le chiisme à l’iranienne) : un ennemi caractérisé par son intransigeance absolue et avec lequel aucun compromis n’est possible. Un ennemi qui, rêvant d’accéder au statut de « martyr » (shahid) à travers l’engagement dans le jihad, échappe donc au champ de vision des acteurs politiques postulant, conformément à la tradition
politique occidentale, que la négociation et le compromis sont à la fois toujours possibles et toujours souhaitables. Mais comment peut-on négocier un accord de paix avec des dirigeants politico-religieux qui pensent, comme tel prédicateur islamiste, que les Juifs « sont un peuple d’assassins » et qu’Israël doit être détruit par tous les moyens ? À commencer par ceux qui relèvent du terrorisme d’inspiration jihadiste : attentats-suicides et/ou « bombes humaines ». Pour comprendre la bataille de Gaza (27 décembre 2008-18 janvier 2009), qui a déclenché une mobilisation antijuive planétaire, il importe de comprendre que l’instrumentalisation des civils constitue une stratégie utilisée par le Hamas dans la guerre contre Israël, en parfaite conformité avec la doctrine jihadiste fabriquée naguère par les Frères musulmans. C’est ce que suffit à prouver une courte vidéo d’un discours prononcé en février 2008 par Fathi Hamad, représentant du Hamas au Conseil législatif de l’Autorité palestinienne. Dans ce discours, ce leader islamiste palestinien, reprenant à son compte l’expression lancée par Hassan al-Banna en 1937-1938 : « l’industrie de la mort », se félicitait, en février 2008, que son mouvement ait transformé les femmes, les enfants et les vieillards pour en autant de boucliers humains pour se protéger contre l’armée israélienne, et ainsi contribué au jihad :

« Pour le peuple palestinien, la mort est devenue une industrie dans laquelle excellent les femmes et tous les habitants de ce pays : les vieillards y excellent, les combattants du jihad [moujahidines] y excellent, les enfants y excellent. En conséquence, [les Palestiniens] ont créé un bouclier humain de femmes, d’enfants,

de vieillards et de combattants du jihad contre la machine de guerre des sionistes, comme s’ils disaient à l’ennemi sioniste : “Nous désirons la mort, tout comme vous désirez la vie”7. »

En deuxième lieu, on observe une *gauchisation croissante* des passions dites « antisionistes », leur fixation quasi-exclusive sur le pôle de l’extrême gauche, nouveau moteur idéologico-politique des mobilisations judéophobes dans un contexte où le vieil antisémitisme d’extrême droite est en déclin. L’angélisme pro-palestinien de style gauchiste empêche de comprendre ce qui est en jeu dans le conflit israélo-palestinien, et, imposant une vision à la fois moralisante et marxisante du conflit (les bons « dominés » palestiniens contre les méchants « dominants » israéliens), chasse toute analyse réaliste de la situation géopolitique au Proche-Orient.

Une irrépressible montée de la judéophobie d’extrême gauche tandis que décroît la judéophobie d’extrême droite, voilà qui constitue un phénomène historiquement inédit. L’une des conséquences idéologiques de ce double processus, d’islamisation et de gauchisation croissantes, n’est autre que la banalisation des légitimations du terrorisme, soit au nom du jihad érigé en première obligation individuelle et collective de l’islam, soit au nom des prétendus droits supérieurs des faibles contre les forts, des opprimés contre leurs oppresseurs supposés, bref, au nom de la Justice. D’une part, une vision jihadiste de l’islam, devenu machine à justifier le meurtre des civils, d’autre part, une conception dévoyée de la défense des droits de l’homme, transformée en un instrument de vengeance, en mode de légitimation du ressentiment et de la violence aveugle. Les

---

7 Fathi Hamad, 29 février 2008, Al-Aqsa TV (Hamas, Gaza). Voir la vidéo (sous-titrée en anaglais) sur le site de MEMRI, [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g0wJXf2n4Y](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g0wJXf2n4Y), ainsi que la traduction française des propos tenus : « Le Hamas dit se protéger derrière un bouclier humain composé de femmes et d’enfants », 1er janvier 2009, [http://www.bivouac-id.com/2009/01/01/](http://www.bivouac-id.com/2009/01/01/).
« bons sentiments » sont ainsi mis au service d’une politique de la haine, n’ayant d’autre programme que l’incitation au meurtre.


On peut interpréter la vision antisioniste du monde comme une nouvelle figure historique de néo-religion politique s’inscrivant dans l’espace des religions séculières (Raymond Aron), des « religions politiques » ou des mouvements

---

gnostiques modernes (Eric Voegelin). Je propose de définir ce qu'il est convenu
d'appeler l'« antisionisme », au sens fort du terme (disons, l'antisionisme radical),
comme une nouvelle religion séculière, c'est-à-dire comme une doctrine de salut
collectif capable de donner un sens aux engagements qui paraissent s'en déduire
logiquement.\footnote{Sur la nature de l'antisionisme radical, voir Pierre-André Taguieff, \textit{La Nouvelle Propagande antijuive}. pp. 1-135.}

Le second phénomène est l'accent mis sur l'universel dans toutes les
argumentations « antisionistes » récentes. L'universalisme abstrait constitue le
nouveau point d'appui des intellectuels et des propagandistes « antisionistes »
radicaux, qu'ils soient juifs ou non-juifs. Il permet aux nouveaux judéophobes de
théoriser l'accusation de « racisme » visant les « sionistes » ou, plus largement, les
Dans le discours de
combat du vieil antisémitisme politique d'obéissance nationaliste, les Juifs,
dénoncés pour leur « cosmopolitisme » et accusés d'avoir « judaïsé » la société,
étalent sommés de se « déjudaïser » pour devenir acceptables. Dans le nouveau
discours judéophobe se réclamant de l'universalisme, du cosmopolitisme ou d'un
internationalisme quelconque, les Juifs sont sommés de se « désioniser » s'ils
veulent échapper à la diabolisation et à la déshumanisation. La « désionisation »
commence par le fait de se désolidariser publiquement d'Israël, sur la base de
n'importe quel argument. L'important est la publicité donnée à cette prise de

distance, qui s'accompagne ordinairement de légitimations moralisantes, et se traduit logiquement par l'appel au boycott. Lançant un appel à la « solidarité internationale » et prônant un boycott total contre Israël, Stéphane Hessel s'adresse ainsi en juin 2010 aux « citoyens du monde » pour les inciter à participer activement à l'initiative dite de « Boycott, Désinvestissement et Sanctions » (BDS), qu'il présente comme une « stratégie morale » qui aurait « démontré son potentiel de réussite » dans le cas de la « Flottille de la Liberté » ou « de la Paix ». On sait que cette opération pseudo-humanitaire était une provocation anti-israélienne préparée par la Fondation pour l’assistance humanitaire (IHH), organisation islamiste turque, provocation qui a nécessité l’arraisonnement par la marine israélienne, le 31 mai 2010, de l’un des bateaux dont l’équipage refusait toute négociation12. L’assaut, en raison des attaques lancées contre les soldats israéliens, qui ont dû riposter pour défendre leur vie, a fait 9 morts parmi les islamistes turcs, ce qui a provoqué dans le monde une indignation largement orchestrée. Une fois de plus, c’est Israël qui a été mis en accusation, alors même que, rapidement, la véritable nature de l’opéra de ladite « Flottille » a été dévoilée : fabriquer des « martyrs » (volontaires) pour forcer Israël à lever le blocus sur la bande de Gaza, dictature islamiste et fabrique de terroristes. Bref, venir en aide au Hamas. Comme naguère le communisme léno-stalinien, l’islamisme a aujourd’hui ses « idiots utiles ».

Dans le nouveau discours anti-israélien, le recours à la rhétorique universaliste ou internationaliste, avec des accents moralisants ou au nom de « la raison », est déterminant. Dans l’histoire des passions anti-juives, le phénomène est cependant loin d’être nouveau. Après avoir montré que les grandes figures du rationalisme

des Lumières, de Voltaire à Kant, sans oublier Hegel, avaient nourri une « doctrine clairement antijuive », et ce, au nom d’une vision normative du genre humain, Yirmiyahu Yovel conclut : « On ne peut pas se fier à une philosophie de la raison et des Lumières pour servir de rempart contre les préjugés anti-juifs et les sentiments qui s’expriment publiquement. » Dans un contexte planétaire où les im préca tions contre Israël font désormais partie de la prière quotidienne de centaines de millions d’individus, cette dimension universaliste permet à des Juifs de rejoindre le camp des antisionistes radicaux, d’adhérer aux dogmes de la gnose « antisioniste », bref, de se convertir à cette néo-religion de salut. Un Juif converti à l’antisionisme radical – un « Alterjuif » – échappe ainsi à la diabolisation et à l’ostracisme, il cesse d’appartenir à la catégorie des monstres inhumains (« les sionistes »), il redevient une personne humaine digne de respect, un « bon citoyen » ou un « humaniste ». S’il est un intellectuel, un écrivain ou un artiste, il devient un auteur invitée dans l’espace médiatique. S’affirmer antisioniste, c’est se placer dans le camp du Bien. Or, il est devenu très difficile de se dire Juif et pro-israélien ou « sioniste » : s’affirmer tel dans l’espace public, c’est faire preuve de courage. Aujourd’hui, un Juif ne peut se soustraire à la stigmatisation qu’en adhérant publiquement aux dogmes de l’antisionisme radical, ou en se présentant comme un Juif coupable d’être juif en raison des « crimes » ou des « fautes morales » qu’il convient d’attribuer à Israël. Le bénéfice psychique de l’opération et ses avantages culturels ou médiatiques permettent de comprendre les conversions croissantes d’intellectuels juifs, en général déjudaisés, à l’antisionisme radical, celui qui est aujourd’hui professé, côté athéisme, par les « Alterjuifs » Noam Chomsky ou Norman Finkelstein, mais aussi par Robert Faurisson et

---

Dieudonné, non moins que, côté islamisme, par les Frères musulmans, Oussama Ben Laden ou Mahmoud Ahmadinejad. Mais les formes radicales de l’antisionisme ne valent qu’en tant que miroir grossissant d’un phénomène d’opinion moins visible : la formation d’une zone grise en expansion occupée par les adeptes de l’antisionisme de bonne compagnie, celui de la bien-pensance de gauche. La conversion massive des intellectuels occidentaux à la gnose antisioniste montre l’importance de la dimension culturelle dans la récente vague judéophobe, centrée sur la diabolisation d’Israël.

**Genèse du système des accusations**


---

Naqba, soit celui d’un crime fondateur (un nettoyage ethnique programmé), et l’utilisent comme moyen de propagande pour diaboliser l’État d’Israël et lui dénier le droit à l’existence. Au mythe répulsif construit autour de la figure d’Israël répond la mythisation positive de la Cause palestinienne. Le dualisme manichéen ainsi mis en place chasse toute analyse politique nuancée, remplacée par un affrontement mythique entre porteurs du Bien et suppôts du Mal.


On reconnaît dans l’antisionisme radical nombre de thèmes d’accusation, de stéréotypes négatifs et de récits mythiques diabolisants empruntés à l’antijuïdaïsme théologico-religieux et à l’antisémitisme politique de type nationaliste à légitimation raciale, mais adaptés au contexte politique et culturel contemporain, ce qui les rend parfois méconnaissables. Mentionnons quelques-uns de ces thèmes d’accusation avec leurs éventuelles reformulations : la « haine du genre humain » (d’où le « racisme »), la manipulation, le pouvoir occulte et le complot (désormais le « complot sioniste » ou « américano-sioniste mondial »), la cupidité et la domination financière (d’où la vision d’une ploutocratie cosmopolite profitant de la mondialisation), l’exploitation ou la « mise en esclavage » des peuples étrangers (d’où le « colonialisme »), la cruauté sanguinaire liée à l’accusation de meurtre.

---

rituel (d'où le « génocide », ainsi que les accusations de meurtres d'enfants palestiniens, parfois liées à l'accusation de trafic d'organes). Ces invariants de la thématique antijuive apparaissent sous diverses formes, ils sont traduits par des variations idéologiques liées aux situations nouvelles dont ils orientent et structurent les interprétations dans un sens judéophobe. Il ne s'agit pas seulement de préjugés et de stéréotypes qui resteraient dans les limites d'une judéophobie de salon. Les Juifs ont toujours vécu tant bien que mal dans des contextes où ils étaient plus ou moins fortement stigmatisés. Mais il y a eu l'extermination nazie des Juifs d'Europe, la Shoah. On a longtemps pu croire qu'elle constituait une limite absolue posée devant la haine des Juifs, une frontière infranchissable interdisant toute nouvelle vague judéophobe. Or, la Shoah est désormais relativisée, minorée, voire niée, ou encore instrumentalisée à des fins anti-israéliennes. On peut désormais craindre qu'il ne s'agisse d'un précédent. La nouvelle configuration antijuive fait renaître, au-delà de la destruction de l'État juif, la hantise d'une élimination finale du peuple juif. Certaines déclarations publiques du président iranien, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, comme celles des islamistes radicaux liés à Al-Qaida, se présentent en effet comme des mixtes de menaces et de prophéties d'extermination, à l'instar du célèbre discours prononcé par Hitler le 30 janvier 1939 devant le Reichstag16. Dans l'avant-guerre, qui donc prenait au sérieux la menace d'une élimination physique du peuple juif ? Et pourtant, l'invraisemblable s'est réalisé.

Ces accusations plus ou moins chimériques, variant sur les thèmes « sionisme = racisme » et « sionistes assassins ! », sont désormais intégrées dans l'arsenal rhétorique des deux principaux groupes d'ennemis idéologiques d'Israël : d'une

part, les mouvances de la nouvelle extrême gauche antimondialiste et anti-impérialiste, et, d’autre part, les milieux islamistes, dont les actions de propagande, légitimées par le jihad, ont contaminé la culture musulmane mondiale. S’ajoutant aux incitations à la haine lancées par les tenants de « l’anti-impérialisme des imbéciles » (qui a pris la relève du « socialisme des imbéciles » qu’était le vieil antisémitisme nationaliste), l’influence diffuse de la propagande islamiste permet de comprendre la globalisation accélérée des motifs judéophobes depuis le début des années 1990.

Au cœur de l’antisionisme radical, on trouve l’argumentation idéaltypique de la judéophobie ontologique : « X est sioniste (ou juif), donc X est raciste, assassin, complice ». Mais le postulat « tous les sionistes (Juifs) sont racistes, assassins et complices » (seconde prémisse du syllogisme) peut être transformé par inversion : « Tous les racistes, assassins et complices sont sionistes (juifs) ». Ce qui élargit considérablement l’extension de l’expression « les sionistes ». Ce type d’accusation peut être illustré par le propos suivant de l’humoriste-démagogue antijuif Dieudonné : « Les gros escrocs de la planète sont tous des Juifs » (16 avril 2010). Le postulat judéophobe peut aussi prendre une forme restrictive qui définit un « propre » du groupe visé, ainsi stigmatisé : « Seuls les sionistes (Juifs) sont racistes, assassins et complices – et tous le sont ». Ceux qui croient qu’un tel énoncé est vrai ne peuvent que conclure à la nécessaire élimination de ces « ennemis du genre humain ». C’est bien au nom de l’universel qu’est prononcé le nouvel appel à l’extermination.

La construction de l’amalgame « sionisme = racisme »

Le 29 mai 1967, à la veille de la guerre des Six-Jours, Raymond Aron écrivait
dans Le Figaro : « Par la voix du président Nasser, la menace d’extermination retentit de nouveau. Ce qui est en jeu (…), c’est l’existence de l’État d’Israël, cet État que tous les pays arabes tiennent pour un corps étranger qu’il faudra tôt ou tard éliminer, cet État dont les citoyens ont juré qu’ils le défendraient jusqu’à la mort17. »

Avant la victoire d’Israël contre la coalition arabe, les intellectuels de gauche et les « progressistes » en général se contentaient de poser que le « sionisme » était un « fait colonial » et que l’État juif était une « base avancée de l’impérialisme », conformément à la langue de bois soviétique. À partir de l’automne 1967, par les effets conjugués des propagandes respectivement soviétique et arabo-musulmane, Israël a été traité avec une virulence croissante comme un « État en trop », voué à l’élimination. Cette reconstruction mythique diabolisante de l’État d’Israël a réussi, dans l’opinion mondiale, à se substituer en partie à sa réalité sociohistorique, tout en détournant l’attention du public de la menace islamiste, quant à elle bien réelle.


---


Quoi qu’il en soit, par ces dénis et ces accusations, les Juifs sont transformés en représentants d’un non-peuple, du non-peuple juif, et à ce titre chassés comme des intrus du concert des nations. Dans la perspective antisioniste radicale, tous les individus humains sont censés avoir droit à une nation ou à un État. Sauf les Juifs. En octobre 1903, Lénine, dénonçant autant les sionistes que les bundistes, avait réglé la question à sa manière : « L’idée d’un peuple juif séparé est réactionnaire politiquement, et insoutenable scientifiquement. » Le succès en France - ou, plus exactement, dans la France intellectuelle et médiatique - de l’indigeste pamphlet, à la fois « post-sioniste » et « antisioniste », de l’historien d’extrême gauche israélien Shlomo Sand s’explique par le fait qu’en affirmant que le peuple juif n’existe pas, qu’il n’est qu’une fiction idéologisée par des leaders nationalistes aux XIXe et XXe siècles, il paraît justifier historiquement la principale proposition des antisionistes radicaux : l’élimination de l’État d’Israël. Pourquoi un « peuple »

---


sanguinaire des « sionistes » porterait ces derniers à privilégier, parmi les non-Juifs, les enfants, et plus spécialement les enfants palestiniens, arabes ou plus généralement musulmans. Dans le discours de propagande des pays arabes à la suite de la guerre des Six-Jours, la légende du meurtre rituel juif avait été réactivée en même temps que le mythe du complot juif mondial, ce dont témoignent les nombreuses rééditions des Protocoles des Sages de Sion au Proche-Orient et le succès rencontré par les libelles accusant les Juifs de meurtre rituel, comme celui du général syrien Mustafa Tlass (1932-), La Matza de Sion, paru en 1983. La vision conspirationniste du « sionisme » est cependant restée longtemps dominante dans la rhétorique anti-israélienne, en dépit de l’inflexion provoquée par la dénonciation orchestrée du massacre de Sabra et Chatila (16-18 septembre 1982), perpétré par des phalangistes chrétiens et abusivement attribué à Isahal. Cette attribution calomnieuse d’un massacre à Israël n’est ni la première, ni la dernière. Mais elle est devenue paradigmaticque en ce qu’elle a constitué la première victoire médiatique mondiale de la propagande « antisioniste » fondée sur la dénonciation des « sionistes » comme criminels-nés.

Les voies de la criminalisation des « sionistes »

La criminalisation des « sionistes » est devenue un thème majeur de propagande avec l’application du schème du meurtre rituel aux opérations israéliennes de maintien de l’ordre à l’époque de la première Intifada (lancée le 9 décembre 1987), où les jeunes Palestiniens étaient cyniquement placés en première ligne, voués à faire des victimes émouvantes idéologiquement exploitables. D’une

---


Sur la représentation du meurtre rituel attribué aux « sionistes » s’est greffé un abominable retournement contre eux d’une accusation portant historiquement sur un aspect significatif de la « Solution finale » mise en œuvre par les nazis, à savoir l’extermination physique des femmes et des enfants juifs par gazages ou par fusillades. En outre, l’accusation de « tuer des enfants » relève d’un classique mécanisme de projection, tant il est vrai que les « opérations martyr » visent le plus souvent des civils israéliens, dont des femmes et des enfants, souvent en bas âge. Il s’agit bien d’une attribution projective, impliquant une inversion causale : on accuse les ennemis dont on tue les enfants, les Juifs, de tuer les enfants de leurs ennemis. Accusation dénuée bien sûr de fondements empiriques : les Israéliens n’ont pas pour objectif final d’éliminer physiquement les Palestiniens, femmes et enfants, et aucun soldat israélien ne vise intentionnellement des enfants palestiniens pour les tuer de sang-froid. Comment ne pas voir, à moins d’être totalement endoctriné, que cette accusation mensongère est maximalement diffamatoire ?

De telles projections des traits du bourreau sur la victime font partie des

---

mécanismes élémentaires de la propagande visant à mettre en acceptabilité des pratiques criminelles contre un ennemi. Mais ce processus d’attribution abusive par inversion causale est particulièrement pervers visant les Juifs à travers les Israéliens : on ne saurait l’analyser sans en souligner l’abjection.


La légitimation internationale de l'amalgame nazifiant (Durban I et II)

Massivement diffusé par les pays arabes et l'empire soviétique au cours des années 1960 et 1970, l'amalgame polémique entre « sionisme » et « racisme » a été fortement et mondialement légitimé par la honteuse Résolution 3370 adoptée le 10 novembre 1975 par l'Assemblée générale de l'ONU, condamnant le sionisme comme « une forme de racisme et de discrimination raciale ». L'adoption de cette Résolution pseudo-antiraciste s'est faite d'une façon mécanique : depuis plusieurs années déjà, les Palestiniens bénéficiaient d'une majorité « automatique » à l'ONU. Ironisant sur ce vote de l'Assemblée générale de l'ONU, Aḥba Ḥaban, ministre israélien des Affaires étrangères de 1966 à 1974, a déclaré à l'époque que cette même majorité, « s'il fallait voter que la Terre est plate, voterait que la Terre est plate ». Le rôle de la bêtise dans l'Histoire est aussi important que celui du conformisme majoritaire, avec lequel il fonctionne souvent en symbiose. Cette Résolution, qui présupposait l'existence de fortes ressemblances entre le « sionisme » et des systèmes racistes comme le nazisme ou le régime sud-africain d'apartheid, ne sera abrogée que le 16 décembre 1991. Mais le mal avait été fait : l'accusation de « racisme » avait été mise en orbite, légitimée par cette Résolution de l'ONU durant une quinzaine d'années. Elle s'était inscrite dans le discours « antisioniste » d'usage international. Réciproquement, l'accusation de « sionisme » avait été intégrée dans l'arsenal des thèmes « antiracistes ». Depuis le milieu des années 1970, l'association des mots « racisme » et « sionisme » est devenue une évidence idéologique, qui a inspiré nombre de slogans et de mots d'ordre, en particulier ceux qui appellent au boycottage d'Israël (en matière de commerce, de culture, de recherche et d'enseignement, etc.), ainsi traité en État
criminel. La force symbolique de l’amalgame nazifiant a donc survécu à l’abrogation de la Résolution 3370.

L’une des plus significatives manifestations internationales du pseudo-antiracisme visant le sionisme et Israël aura été la première « Conférence mondiale contre le racisme, la discrimination raciale, la xénophobie et l’intolérance », organisée par l’ONU à Durban (Afrique du Sud) du 31 août au 8 septembre 2001, quelques jours donc avant les attentats antiaméricains du 11-Septembre. La corruption idéologique de la défense des droits de l’homme et de la lutte contre le racisme, détournés et instrumentalisées par les promoteurs d’un néo-tiers-mondisme mâtiné d’islamisme, s’est révélée à travers le déchaînement de haine contre Israël et l’Occident qui marqua cette prétendue « Conférence mondiale contre le racisme ». Ce qui s’est passé à Durban, où des milliers d’ONG ont déversé leur haine, a montré que la démonisation « antiraciste » d’Israël et du « sionisme » restait le principal geste rituel des nouveaux judéophobes. Mais l’accusation de « racisme » véhiculant une série d’autres accusations diabolisantes et criminalisantes, qui culminent dans celle d’extermination et de génocide, une nouvelle figure du Juif comme ennemi absolu a été construite. Condamner l’État d’Israël comme « État raciste », en l’assimilant au Troisième Reich ou au régime sud-africain d’apartheid, c’est le vouer à la destruction. On ne discute pas avec l’ennemi absolu, on l’élimine physiquement.

Huit ans plus tard, du 20 au 24 avril 2009 s’est tenue à Genève la Conférence de suivi, dite de « Durban II ». L’objectif de cette seconde Conférence mondiale de l’ONU contre le racisme était de « préciser les acquis de Durban ». Le projet de résolution qui devait être adopté au terme de cette Conférence mentionnait Israël

comme un pays « raciste et occupant ». Fin février 2009, le projet de document final comportait cinq paragraphes consacrés à Israël, accusé de racisme et de mener un politique raciste similaire à l’apartheid vis-à-vis des Palestiniens. On ne saurait s’en étonner, compte tenu de la composition du Bureau du comité préparatoire, dont les membres ont été élus en août 2007 : la Libye y figure en tant que présidente, Cuba en tant que rapporteur, la République islamique d’Iran comme vice-présidente, et le Pakistan s’y affirme comme porte-parole militant de l’Organisation de la conférence islamique (OCI). C’est sous la pression de l’OCI qu’avaient été inclus, dans les dernières versions du projet de déclaration finale, jugées inacceptables par les pays européens, outre une violente mise en accusation d’Israël, le thème de la « diffamation des religions », puis la notion de « stéréotype négatif des religions », à l’évidence en vue d’interdire toute critique de l’islam. Cependant, le 17 avril 2009, le troisième et dernier comité préparatoire de la conférence d’examen de Durban, après un dur marchandage, s’est conclu sur un « compromis minimal ». Huit pays ont néanmoins décidé de boycotter la conférence avant même son ouverture : Israël, le Canada, les États-Unis, l’Italie, la Pologne, les Pays-Bas, l’Australie et la Nouvelle-Zélande. Ils ont été rejoints par la République tchèque le 20 avril 2009, après la diatribe anti-israélienne du président iranien, présentant comme une action criminelle la création de l’État d’Israël et dénonçant le « gouvernement raciste » d’Israël. La veille de son discours à la tribune genevoise de l’ONU, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad a déclaré à la télévision iranienne que « l’idéologie et le régime sionistes sont les porte-drapeaux du racisme », précisant que les sionistes « pillent les richesses des nations en contrôlant les centres de pouvoir du monde » et qu’ils « ont créé les conditions pour que rien ne puisse être dit au sujet de ce phénomène diabolique dont les effets pèsent sur les habitants des nations ». Il a ajouté que la Conférence de l’ONU se
tiendrait alors que « le sionisme mondial va employer tous les moyens pour étouffer les voix innocentes contre la tyrannie ». Les institutions internationales les plus prestigieuses sont ainsi devenues des scènes sur lesquelles les représentants des pires dictatures donnent des leçons de liberté et de fraternité au genre humain.

Dans son intervention du 20 avril à Genève, le jour de l'ouverture du Colloque de l'ONU - qui coïncidait avec la journée annuelle du souvenir de la Shoah -, le président iranien a accusé Israël d'être le « régime le plus cruel et le plus raciste ». Il a stigmatisé la création de l'État hébreu après la victoire des Alliés sur le nazisme, esquissant pour l'occasion un récit historique parfaitement fantaisiste mettant une fois de plus l'Occident en accusation :

« Après la fin de la Seconde Guerre mondiale, ils [les Alliés] ont eu recours à l'agression militaire pour priver de terres une nation entière sous le prétexte de la souffrance juive. […] Ils ont envoyé des migrants d'Europe, des États-Unis et du monde de l'Holocauste pour établir un gouvernement totalement raciste en Palestine occupée. »

Les propos virulents du président iranien, applaudis par les pays musulmans et de nombreux pays africains et asiatiques, ont provoqué le départ de la salle du siège de l'ONU à Genève, sous les huées de la salle, d'une quarantaine de diplomates représentant 23 pays européens (4 autres pays ayant boycotté la réunion). Pourtant, Ahmadinejad avait décidé au dernier moment, pour des raisons tactiques, d'atténuier la virulence de son allocution27. Le même jour, le leader du Nouveau parti anticapitaliste (NPA), Olivier Besancenot, effectuait une visite en Israël et à Gaza pour « témoigner de sa solidarité avec la population palestinienne

et avec ceux qui, en Israël, s’opposent à la politique criminelle de leur État». Une journée hautement symbolique.

L’icône al-Dura, vecteur de la nouvelle propagande antijuive

avec Israël.


Le tournant dans l’histoire des débats et controverses a eu lieu lorsque France 2 et Charles Enderlin ont décidé d’engager des poursuites contre Philippe Karsenty pour avoir publié le 22 novembre 2004 sur le site de Media-Ratings, agence de « notation des médias » qu’il dirige, un article intitulé « France 2 : Arlette Chabot

et Charles Enderlin doivent être démis de leurs fonctions », où l’on pouvait lire notamment : « Au regard des éléments dont nous disposons, nous affirmons que le correspondant de France 2 à Jérusalem, Charles Enderlin, a effectivement diffusé un faux reportage ce 30 septembre 2000. »

Ce fut la naissance de « l’affaire al-Dura », dans laquelle quatre thèses n’ont cessé de s’affronter en référence au reportage de France 2 : 1. la thèse officielle de l’Autorité palestinienne selon laquelle les soldats israéliens auraient sciemment ou délibérément assassiné l’enfant – thèse soutenue par le caméraman Talal Abu Rahma, suivi par Charles Enderlin (et par la quasi-totalité des médias), en dépit de son caractère évident de grossière propagande ; 2. la thèse de la bavure militaire tragique, ayant provoqué la mort de l’enfant ; 3. la thèse de l’erreur d’interprétation du journaliste, supposé de bonne foi, mais vraisemblablement trompé par son caméraman militant ; 4. la thèse de la mise en scène palestinienne et de la manipulation médiatique anti-israélienne.

Cette affaire a donc été doublée d’une « affaire Enderlin » (ou « Enderlin et France 2 ») : le correspondant de France 2 s’est-il trompé ou bien a-t-il été trompé ? Dans les deux cas de figure, on pouvait lui reprocher d’avoir trompé le public, en refusant de reconnaître par la suite comme non fondées ou pour le moins fort douteuses les deux affirmations constitutives de son commentaire : en premier lieu, l’origine israélienne des tirs supposés mortels – jugée hautement improbable par les expertises balistiques ; en deuxième lieu, la « mort en direct » de Mohammed al-Dura, dont le reportage de France 2 ne comporte aucune image – les rushes ayant permis au contraire de voir, dans l’image qui suit la dernière du reportage, l’enfant relever la tête et lever un bras après sa mort supposée.

---

Ces images de la mort d’un prétendu "enfant-martyr" palestinien ont été massivement diffusées au cours de la seconde Intifada qu’elles ont servi à justifier et à radicaliser, avant de servir de prétexte à des actions terroristes ou des assassinats de Juifs en tant que juifs (tel celui de Daniel Pearl, fin janvier 2002). La décennie 2000-2010, qui a commencé par la vague judéophobe mondiale ayant accompagné la seconde Intifada, symbolisée par l’image du « petit Mohammed » présumé « assassiné » ou « tué de sang-froid » par « les sionistes », s’est terminée par une série de violences « antisionistes », souvent clairement antijuives, dont l’offensive militaire israélienne contre le Hamas à Gaza (27 décembre 2008-18 janvier 2009), pourtant fort justifiée, a servi de déclencheur et de prétexte.


**Efficacité de la propagande « antisioniste » : quelques résultats de sondages**

La mythologie « antisioniste » structure le système des croyances des masses musulmanes soumises à un endoctrinement permanent par les services spécialisés

---

d’États autoritaires ou despotiques, présentant pour certains des traits totalitaires, que ce soit dans le monde arabe (Libye, Syrie, Arabie Saoudite) ou ailleurs, en particulier en Iran. Une enquête d’opinion sur les attitudes envers Israël dans cinq pays arabes (Égypte, Jordanie, Arabie Saoudite, Koweit et Liban), réalisée en mars 2002 par Zogby International, montre que le sentiment anti-israélien y est extrêmement fort : les opinions très défavorables envers Israël vont de 79% en Égypte à 97% en Arabie Saoudite. Dans le sondage publié par la BBC le 19 avril 2010, portant sur les opinions respectives de 28 pays, l’Égypte vient au premier rang des pays dont la population juge négativement l’influence d’Israël : 92% (pour 3% la jugeant positive). La Turquie vient en seconde position, avec 77% de sondés la jugeant négative (pour 6% la jugeant positive). Par ailleurs, d’autres enquêtes permettent d’établir que le rejet d’Israël se traduit par le rejet des Juifs : une étude d’opinion réalisée en Égypte après les attentats du 11 septembre 2001 montre qu’environ 90% des personnes interrogeées ne souhaitent pas avoir un Juif pour voisin. Une enquête d’opinion dont les résultats ont été rendus publics le 25 mai 2010 au Parlement israélien montre que la défiance des Arabes israéliens envers leurs concitoyens s’accentue : 29% des citoyens arabes d’Israël ne veulent pas entendre parler d’amitié avec les Juifs, alors qu’ils sont de plus en plus nombreux à commémorer la Naqba (la « catastrophe » qu’aurait été la création de l’État d’Israël). D’autre part, la proportion d’Arabes israéliens prêts à quitter Israël pour rejoindre un État palestinien futur augmente de dix points (24% contre 14%)

Depuis le début des années 1980, en particulier depuis l’invasion israélienne du Liban et les massacres de Sabra et Chatila (été 1982) - commis par les Phalanges chrétiennes et abusivement attribués en propre aux Israéliens -, suivis de l’exploitation qu’en ont fait les propagandes du monde arabo-musulman, l’image d’Israël n’a cessé de se dégrader dans l’opinion européenne jusqu’à la fin des années 2000, avec une nette accélération à partir de la seconde Intifada, lancée fin septembre 2000. Pour en donner une idée, on peut se référer aux résultats du sondage intitulé « L'Irak et la paix dans le monde », commandé par la Commission européenne dans le cadre de l’Eurobaromètre et réalisé à la mi-octobre 2003 dans les quinze États membres de l'Union européenne, sur un échantillon de 7 515 personnes. Ce sondage, rendu public le 3 novembre 2003, révèle qu’Israël est considéré par 59% des Européens comme « une menace pour la paix dans le monde », ce qui le place en tête des pays jugés belligènes, devant les États-Unis, l’Iran et la Corée du Nord, ces trois pays, estimés dangereux par 53% des personnes interrogées, occupant la deuxième place à égalité. Cette catégorisation négative d’Israël rencontre une forte adhésion aux Pays-bas (74%), en Autriche (69%), au Luxembourg (66%), en Allemagne (65%), au Danemark (64%), en Belgique (63%), en Irlande (62%) et en Grèce (61%). La France, avec un rejet s’élevant à 55% des personnes interrogées, se situe entre l’Italie (48%) et l’Espagne (56%). Voilà qui montre la pénétration dans l’opinion européenne de l’une des représentations « antisionistes » les plus diffusées après ce que Léon Poliakov appelait « le tournant de la guerre des Six Jours » : Israël belliciste (et/ou impérialiste), voire Israël « cause de la Troisième Guerre mondiale ». Dans le

sondage de la BBC publié le 19 avril 2010, Israël, avec en moyenne 50% d’opinions négatives (pour 19% d’opinions positives), fait partie du groupe des pays les plus rejetés, après l’Iran (56% d’opinions négatives, pour 15% d’opinions positives), le Pakistan (51%, pour 16% d’opinions positives) et la Corée du Nord (48%, pour 17% d’opinions positives). L’influence d’Israël est jugée négative, selon un ordre décroissant, par l’Égypte (92%), la Turquie (77%), l’Allemagne (68%), le Brésil (61%), l’Espagne (60%), la Thaïlande (59%), les Philippines (58%), la France (57%) et l’Indonésie (56%). L’influence d’Israël n’est jugée positive que par les États-Unis (40%, pour 31 d’opinions négatives) et le Kenya (39%, pour 34% d’opinions négatives).

**Anéantir Israël : le rêve du président iranien**

Au début du XXIᵉ siècle, la vieille et triste histoire qu’est la légende du « crime rituel juif » continue d’être racontée sous différentes formes dans certaines régions du monde, en particulier au Moyen-Orient. Mais la grande nouveauté est que, sous de nouvelles formes, elle circule internationalement comme un thème d’accusation visant l’État d’Israël et les « sionistes », stigmatisés comme des « criminels », ainsi que l’attestent les slogans « Mort à Israël » et « Sionistes assassins »³⁵. Tel est le thème sur lequel a longuement varié le président iranien Mahmoud Ahmadinejad dans son intervention à la 63ᵉ Assemblée générale de l’ONU, le 22 septembre 2008 : « Les sionistes assassins et usurpateurs poursuivent depuis plus de soixante ans leur entreprise exterminatrice en Palestine. » Comment ne pas conclure qu’il faut exterminer les exterminateurs ? Le même jour, au cours d’une conférence de presse, Ahmadinejad a réitéré son accusation criminalisante visant Israël : l’État

juif n’aurait vu le jour selon lui que pour « tuer des femmes et des enfants. » Comment ne pas conclure que cet État-assassin doit être éliminé totalement et définitivement ? Le président iranien est coutumier de ce genre de prédiction menaçante, lancée aux « sionistes » : « Laissez-moi leur dire que s’ils ne mettent pas d’eux-mêmes fin au sionisme, le bras fort des peuples effacera de la surface de la terre ces germes de corruption. » C’est ainsi qu’aujourd’hui s’opère la déshumanisation des Juifs, préambule à leur anéantissement espéré par leurs ennemis.  

Soixante-dix ans après le discours d’Hitler du 30 janvier 1939 menaçant les Juifs d’Europe d’extermination, Ahmadinejad, au nom d’une idéologie non moins totalitaire que le nazisme, mais d’un type différent, menace l’État juif de destruction totale, en recourant à la métaphore pathologisante de « germes de corruption » pour stigmatiser « les sionistes » ou à celle de « microbe noir » pour stigmatiser Israël - emprunts flagrants au langage des antisémites européens les plus radicaux de la fin du XIXe et du début du XXe siècle, dont Hitler s’inspirait dans ses diatribes contre le « parasite juif », « l’empoisonneur des peuples », l’incarnation de la « tuberculose raciale des peuples », le « bacille » ou le « virus juif ».

Un modèle d’intelligibilité de l’antisionisme radical

Cette vision démonisante des Juifs en tant que « sionistes » explique l’indignation et la mobilisation sélectives auxquelles on assiste régulièrement dans

---

les pays occidentaux depuis le début de la seconde Intifada. Les moments paroxystiques de déchaînement contre les Juifs du monde entier sont bien connus : d’abord les mois qui ont suivi le déclenchement de l’Intifada al-Aqsa (à partir de la fin septembre 2000), ensuite le printemps 2002, après que les services palestiniens de propagande, relayés par les diverses mouvances antisionistes, eurent lancé le 8 avril 2002 la rumeur du « massacre de Jénine » - massacre parfaitement imaginaire -, enfin la période correspondant à la bataille de Gaza (fin décembre 2008-janvier 2009), dénoncée comme la réalisation partielle d’un plan d’extermination des Palestiniens. Les manifestations anti-israéliennes de masse, comme les critiques permanentes et hyperboliques lancées contre Israël, illustrent le principe « deux poids, deux mesures » (« double standard »), dont l’accusation de « réaction » ou « riposte disproportionnée » est l’une des illustrations les plus courantes37. Cette pratique systématique de la mauvaise foi, dès qu’il s’agit de l’État juif, conduit à la condamnation unilatérale d’Israël, indépendamment de toute analyse des faits. Ce qui est déterminant, ce n’est pas tant la qualité « palestinienne » de la victime supposée que la qualité « israélienne », « sioniste » ou « juive » du coupable désigné. Un agresseur supposé n’indigne et ne mobilise contre lui que s’il est reconnu comme « sioniste ». Prenons un exemple, pour illustrer la pratique du « deux poids, deux mesures ». Le 26 mars 2010, un sous-marin nord-coréen a tiré une torpille contre une corvette sud-coréenne, qui a coulé. Dénue de toute justification, l’attaque nord-coréenne a fait 46 morts parmi les marins de la corvette sud-coréenne. Or, aucune campagne d’indignation internationale n’a été lancée, aucune manifestation de masse n’a été organisée hors de la Corée du Sud, les journaux n’ont publié que fort peu d’éditoriaux dénonçant l’agression

inqualifiable, et les intellectuels engagés, si prompts à réagir contre Israël, ont gardé le silence. Deux mois plus tard surgit dans l’espace médiatique l’affaire de la « Flottille » dite « humanitaire ». Le contraste est saisissant dans la différence de traitement. Ce qui frappe aussitôt tout observateur des médias est l’unanimité dans la condamnation morale d’Israël depuis que l’intervention israélienne du 31 mai 2010 contre un groupe d’islamistes radicaux turcs accompagnés de « pacifistes » et d’« humanitaires » pro-palestiniens leur servant d’alibis, est devenue l’affaire de la « Flottille de la liberté », avec ses « martyrs » mis en avant par la propagande des islamistes du Hamas et exploités à des fins géopolitiques par le gouvernement turc d’obéissance islamiste, soucieux d’apparaître comme le « champion » de la cause palestinienne. On peut y voir une nouvelle preuve du conformisme, du suivisme et du politiquement correct qui règnent dans l’espace médiatique. Et bien sûr aussi une illustration parfaite du « deux poids, deux mesures » dans le traitement médiatique d’Israël. Mais il faut tenter d’aller plus loin, et esquisser une hypothèse explicative concernant le système médiatique. La mise en accusation quasi-planétaire d’Israël est moins le résultat de la propagande palestino-islamiste qu’un effet du fonctionnement du système médiatique. La condamnation unanime d’Israël, avant toute enquête et indépendamment de toute analyse critique des faits tels qu’ils ont été rapportés par les islamico-humanitaires, témoigne d’abord du mode de formation et de diffusion de l’information journalistique. Les professionnels des médias réagissent dans l’urgence, sans prendre la peine de faire un véritable travail d’investigation, en se contentant de s’inspirer des dépêches d’agence, copiées passivement, hâtivement ou complaisamment, sans esprit critique. À cela, il faut ajouter une sélection des informations selon un critère idéologico-politique dominant : les médias choisissent de privilégier les récits allant dans le sens des présupposés de la culture
politique de gauche, qui est largement majoritaire dans le monde professionnel des journalistes. Or, l’anti-israélisme et le propalestinisme, depuis les années 1990, se sont inscrits dans la doxa journalistique, reflétant le parti pris « antisioniste » partagé, avec plus ou moins de virulence, par toutes les gauches. Cette violente mise en accusation publique d’Israël, avant tout établissement des faits, a été due aux médias, relayant une opération de propagande anti-israélienne. Faisant preuve d’un unanimisme aussi spontané que suspect, ils ont choisi de constituer en événement majeur cet épisode secondaire de la guerre islamiste contre Israël. C’est, en matière d’imposture, leur dernier coup de maître, comparable à leur dénonciation hâtive du pseudo-massacre de Jénine ou à leur indignation aveugle face à « l’assassinat du petit Mohammed ». On peut faire l’hypothèse que les professionnels des médias ont projeté sur l’affaire leurs préjugés anti-israéliens, voire leurs passions judéophobes. Il y a là l’aveu d’une haine aveugle à l’égard d’Israël et le signe inquiétant d’une connivence croissante avec la propagande islamiste à destination de l’Occident.

En outre, la critique, aussi argumentée soit-elle, de l’islamisme est disqualifiée au nom de l’idée reçue selon laquelle elle se réduirait à une manifestation d’islamophobie, cette dernière étant érigée en forme principale du « racisme » observable dans le monde. Critiquer la dictature islamiste du Hamas dans la bande de Gaza, ou encore l’opération provocatrice des islamistes turcs sous couvert d’action « humanitaire », ce serait faire preuve d’islamophobie ! Il s’ensuit qu’alors que la critique de l’islamisme est rejetée en tant qu’islamophobe, la critique systématique d’Israël est présentée comme légitime et allant de soi. Si les diffamateurs radicaux d’Israël se rencontrent surtout à l’extrême gauche (et bien sûr toujours à l’extrême droite), on trouve des diffamateurs modérés de l’État juif à gauche comme à droite. Les positions anti-israéliennes qui alimentent le discours
unique des médias sur ou plutôt contre l'État juif sont bien à l'image de l'« antisionisme » qui prévaut dans les milieux qui se situent à gauche.

C'est pourquoi les manifestations, souvent violentes, dites « pour » (la paix au Proche-Orient, la défense du peuple palestinien, etc.) sont essentiellement des manifestations « contre » (les Israéliens, les sionistes, les Juifs). Dans les milieux antisionistes radicaux qui se mobilisent, face à tout ce qui est perçu comme juif « sioniste » ou pro-israélien, la pratique systématique du « deux poids, deux mesures » est de rigueur : ils ne se mobilisent pas contre des gouvernements qui répriment dans le sang toute opposition, ni contre ceux qui organisent ou couvrent des actions criminelles contre des minorités ethniques ou religieuses. Ce mode de discrimination dans les critères de l'indignation et de la mobilisation peut être retenu en tant que composante d'un modèle descriptif de l'antisionisme radical, modèle permettant de distinguer ce dernier de la critique légitime, dans une perspective libérale/pluraliste, de la politique de tel ou tel gouvernement israélien. D'une façon générale, la critique démocratique de la politique d'un gouvernement, relevant du débat public légitime, ne doit pas être confondue avec l'appel à la destruction d'un État-nation. Or, c'est un tel appel à l'éradication qui forme le cœur du programme de l'antisionisme radical.

Cinq traits permettent de définir le discours des antisionistes radicaux : 1° le caractère systématique de la critique d'Israël, une critique hyperbolique et permanente faite sur le mode de la dénonciation publique et recourant aux techniques de la propagande (sloganisation, amalgames, etc.) ; 2° la pratique du « deux poids, deux mesures » face à Israël, c'est-à-dire le recours au « double standard ». Cette pratique systématique de la mauvaise foi, dès qu'il s'agit de l'État juif, conduit à la condamnation unilatérale d'Israël, indépendamment de toute analyse des faits ; 3° la diabolisation de l'État juif, traité comme l'incarnation du
mal, impliquant une mise en accusation permanente de la politique israélienne fondée sur trois bases de réduction : le racisme/nazisme/apartheid, la criminalité centrée sur le meurtre d’enfants palestiniens (ou musulmans) et le complot ; 4° la délégitimation de l’État juif, la négation de son droit à l’existence - donc la négation du droit du peuple juif à vivre comme tout peuple dans un État-nation souverain -, ce qui implique d’isoler l’État d’Israël sur tous les plans, en organisant notamment contre lui un boycott généralisé ; 5° l’appel répété à la destruction de l’État juif, impliquant la réalisation d’un programme de « désionisation » radicale, ou plus simplement une guerre d’extermination, où l’Iran nucléarisé jouerait le rôle principal.

**L’antisionisme radical comme forme contemporaine de racisme**

Je soutiens donc la thèse suivante, en parfaite contradiction avec les certitudes de la vulgate « antisioniste » inscrite dans le *Zeitgeist* : l’antisionisme radical est l’une des principales formes de « racisme » - précisons : de « racisme culturel » ou de « néo-racisme »\(^{38}\) - apparues depuis la fin du XX\(^e\) siècle. En procédant à la nazification du « sionisme », il légitime un programme raciste d’élimination d’Israël. Nous sommes donc en présence d’une variété de racisme éliminationniste. Mais il s’agit d’une forme de néo-racisme qui, étant largement partagée par les milieux intellectuels et culturels, n’est pas reconnue comme telle, et demeure socialement invisible. Les évidences « antisionistes » (stéréotypes, préjugés, rumeurs) se sont installées en effet dans la « doxa intellectuelle » de l’époque, ce

---


La nazification d’Israël, du « sionisme » et des Juifs (non antisionistes) est l’acte de dénonciation diabolisante qui résume la nouvelle propagande antijuive. Dans la perspective adoptée par l’Observatoire européen du racisme (EUMC), qui rejoint la conceptualisation que j’ai proposée dans les années 1990, l’« antisémitisme » contemporain ou la « nouvelle judéophobie » peut s’exprimer par l’acte de « dénoncer l’existence de l’État d’Israël comme un projet à caractère raciste », ou par l’assimilation de la politique israélienne aujourd’hui (à l’égard des Palestiniens) à celle des nazis (envers les Juifs). Or, cette assimilation polémique s’est inscrite dans la doxa au cours de la dernière décennie. Par

exemple, selon une étude d’opinion réalisée en Allemagne par l’université de Bielefeld au début des années 2000, 50% des personnes interrogées comparaient la politique d’Israël envers les Palestiniens au traitement des Juifs par les nazis sous le Troisième Reich. De la comparaison à l’identification, il n’y a qu’un pas.


**Conclusion**

---

Le programme « antisioniste », considéré dans ses formulations radicales, a un objectif explicite qui, exprimé de diverses manières, revient à vouloir « purifier » ou « nettoyer » la Palestine de la « présence sioniste » ou « juive », considérée comme une « invasion » qui souille une terre palestinienne ou arabe (pour les nationalistes) ou une terre d’Islam (pour les islamistes). L’article 15 de la Charte nationale palestinienne (adoptée en mai 1964 lors de la fondation de l’OLP, puis modifiée en juillet 1968 dans un sens « ant-impérialiste ») précise :

« La libération de la Palestine est, du point de vue arabe, un devoir national (qaoumi), ayant pour but de refouler l’invasion sioniste et impérialiste du sol de la patrie arabe, et de liquider la présence sioniste en Palestine41. »

Ce qui fait surgi la question restée sans réponse : comment peut-on éliminer le sionisme en Palestine sans éliminer les sionistes ?


démystification d’Israël et du sionisme peut seule ouvrir la voie à la paix au Proche-Orient, en rendant possible une reconnaissance mutuelle entre Israéliens et Palestiniens. À la condition que les pays arabes, ainsi que l’Iran, acceptent de reconnaître la légitimité de l’État juif, donc son droit à l’existence et, partant, son droit de se défendre. Mais, comme on le sait, la vision islamiste du conflit interdit la voie du compromis : elle légitime exclusivement une guerre de destruction contre l’État juif. Pour ne pas désespérer, il faut donc miser sur un reflux de l’islamisme dans les pays arabes. En attendant, il importe que l’État juif résiste aux chants de sirène de ceux qui, au nom des «bons sentiments» et selon une logique paternaliste (supposer par exemple que les Américains ou les Européens savent mieux que les Israéliens ce qui est «bon» pour ces derniers), veulent remettre son destin entre les mains de grandes puissances supposées bienveillantes. Il convient d’avoir à l’esprit la percutante formule : «Si les Arabes palestiniens déposaient les armes, il n’y aurait plus de conflit. Si les Israéliens déposaient les armes, il n’y aurait plus d’Israël. » Aussi faible soit-elle, la probabilité d’une telle reconnaissance entre Israël et ses ennemis actuels doit faire l’objet d’une espérance active. Il n’est pas impossible qu’une telle paix soit possible.

42 Je fais bien sûr ici allusion à l’argumentation dangereuse de l’« Appel à la raison » (« J Call »), lancé à Bruxelles le 3 mai 2010.
Concluding Remarks

Preamble

I think it is totally wrong to continuously declare that antisemitism is the problem of the antisemite and not the problem of the Jews. I cannot sit quietly and not defend myself in such a situation. We therefore have to act ourselves and coordinate our efforts to combat for our existence.

We have to deal with 4 different problems:

1) Since Durban the fig leaf of separating Anti-Zionism from antisemitism has finally dropped and it became very clear that all involvement against Israel under the flag of Anti-Zionism was nothing else than pure antisemitism.

We should face the dramatic situation that all attacks against Israel are also attacks against all the Jews in the Diaspora.

We should be aware that the delegitimation of Israel finally leads to depriving the Jews in the Diaspora of their Human Rights (Erdogan in Turkey speaks about “The Israelis among us in Turkey”).

To boycott Israeli products will lead to boycotting Jewish business, as it has already lead to the closing of various kosher-corners in department stores.

2) In most cases the official representatives of the Jewish community of a country do not stand up with all the necessary strength against antisemitism. Very often the problems are being minimized or marginalized in order not to wake up sleeping dogs. This political policy is even more practiced concerning Anti-Zionism or unbalanced critics against Israel with its clear double standards. Often Jewish community leaders cover themselves behind the slogan: “Criticism against Israel is absolutely legitimate”. This attitude does not take into consideration that the same critics are not so vigorously or even applied to other governments, some of them openly and constantly infringing Human Rights. Therefore most of the time, the national Jewish representatives out of political reasons will not fight openly against antisemitism, Anti-Zionism and bashing Israel.

3) The same as above applies for the government of Israel. They have their own agenda to follow (very understandable), which is not necessary the straight
forward fight against antisemitism and Anti-Zionism. The Israeli government can be
very helpful but cannot act from time to time.

4) Do we have any allies in the fight against antisemitism, Anti-Zionism?
   a) The State Churches choose to be very critical against Israel condemning
      whenever possible and copying the Anti-Zionist slogans of the Arab world.
   b) The media in overwhelming extent are against Israel and taking exclusively
      the Palestinian point of view as their policy. There are also vigorously and extensive
      interpretations of Human Rights, political correctness and tolerance towards people,
      who do not accept Human Rights, do not practice political correctness nor have a
      tolerant way of conduct.
   c) Governments play their own games and cannot be considered as a secure
      ally, with very few exceptions.
   d) The academic world is right now being conquered by academics who are in
      favor of boycotting Israel. In this field we have also the phenomena of fighting against
      an inner enemy of Israeli academics who are against Israel.

   It seems that the only allies we do have are the “new Christian churches” like
   the Evangelists and other free churches. Their ideology is based on the diction on the
   holy book: “who is good to my people (Israel and the Jews) I will be good to him
   “(not original translation). This is the basis of their love to Israel and to the Jewish
   people. Some of them may have a hidden agenda that all the Jews will become
   Christians at the end of the days. As long as it does not lead to aggressive
   evangelizing I would suggest leaving aside this ideology and making use of the
   unbiased support of these Christian people. The political impact of this circle has been
   underestimated for a long time. Only if we deal with these people we can profit from
   their support.

Conclusion

I believe that all the Jewish NGOs should finally put their strength and efforts
   together, set up an efficient network and have a common taskforce to answer to all the
   attacks (except military) against Israel and the Jewish people.

I call upon NGOs like ADL, AJC, WJC, the Presidents Conference in USA
   and the parliament group against antisemitism to join efforts with the Stephen Roth
   Institute and to gather for a start-up meeting as soon as possible. I am not sure
   whether we are still “in the driver’s seat” but we should try to put our destiny in our
   hands.
Dina Porat

An Attempt to Sum Up

A lot has been said during the seminar about the chances of the Working Definition which served as the focus of discussions and deliberations, to become the practical tool envisaged by its initiators. Towards the end of the seminar we all agreed that despite its disadvantages and problems, its wording should not be changed. First, because the efforts invested in reaching an understanding and consensus among the many individuals and organizations who took part in formulating it, cannot be repeated. Second, because it has already become, at least to a certain extent, a landmark and an established fact.

Therefore, the seminar's participants concluded not only to confirm the support of the Definition, but to call upon anyone concerned to disseminate it and encourage its adoption as a criterion for assessing antisemitic manifestations. In addition, it is strongly recommended that legislation against antisemitism and Holocaust Denial be enacted in additional countries (today such legislation exists in only 18 countries), and that law enforcement agencies recognize the possibilities offered by the combination of the Definition and better legislation. Finally, it has been suggested to form a network organization to maintain contact between individuals and the various bodies involved in combating antisemitism and to enable consultations and coordination of action.

The Working Definition as such does not dwell on the reasons from which antisemitism originated, and does not refer to any of its causes, nor does it specify what are the "certain perceptions of Jews, which may be expressed as hatred toward Jews". Hatred is not the only feeling that motivates antisemitic expressions, but the political manipulation of widespread emotions is a far more dangerous phenomenon. The discussion of this issue, as important as it may be, does not appear in the definition.

Another missing issue which had been raised in the seminar's deliberations concerns the ways Holocaust memory effects contemporary antisemitism. According to Yad Vashem scholar, Israel Gutman, international and Jewish public opinion regards antisemitism as the major cause that brought about the Holocaust. Yet, despite this widespread belief, antisemitism was not defined in the aftermath of World War II, either within Jewish circles or international bodies. On the contrary, Gutman goes on,
the Holocaust was a crime on such a colossal scale, that defining antisemitism and even referring to the need for its monitoring was evaded during several post-war decades, and has been absent from international declarations and treaties until the 1990s. Therefore, it became possible to ignore antisemitism as a cause for the Holocaust and attribute it to other factors, such as Zionism.

It was already in the 1970s that Jim Allen, playwright of "Perdition", accused the Zionist leadership during the Holocaust for collaborating with Nazism, an accusation that has later been transformed into equating Israelis with Nazis. The equation diminishes the heavy cloud of guilt that hovers over Europe that had not found the stamina and unity to stop the Nazi party on time, and thus had not prevented the Holocaust from happening. By equating Israelis and Jews with the Nazis, the most abhorrent right movement, the left establishes itself as the opposite pole, depicting itself as right and just, whereas Zionism and Israel are the incarnation of evil and cruelty. And if cruelty is the true essence of today's Zionists and of Jews since Biblical time, there is little doubt that they could have cooperated with the Nazis.

One may then say that pre-WWII antisemitism was one of the causes of the Holocaust, yet it is increasingly becoming clearer that the Holocaust in its turn brought about new post war antisemitism and anti-Zionism. It was Allen Finkelkrout, the French-Jewish philosopher, who first traced the origins of new antisemitism in anti-racist rather than racist ideas. Indeed, substantial antisemitism is discerned in the stances advocated by European liberal intellectual circles, and especially among NGOs activists, who fight globalization, racism, colonialism, fascism – and the USA. These activists are idealist, and the multitudes of youth they muster to demonstrations against Israel and the Jewish people are looking for ideals and symbols to believe in. But their ever deepening ignorance regarding World War II and the present situation in the Middle East leads them to see Jews and Israelis as the source of all evil.

There is a Spanish saying that "He who owns the pain owns the world". Many groups, says Bernard-Henri Lévy, compete today on the status of victimhood, but the Jew, who allegedly controls the world, has already snatched for himself the role of the ultimate victim. The Jews, who foster the uniqueness of their victimhood, carry an incriminating accusation for their suffering, ignore the suffering of others and even feel entitled to inflict suffering on others. The left, always looking for underdogs to support and thereby strengthen his righteous image, supports radical Muslims and their propaganda and turns against the Jews and Israel.
There is no proof as yet that the teaching and commemoration of the Holocaust diminish antisemitism. Meanwhile, the memory of the Holocaust, its use and abuse, keep raising severe questions as to antisemitism and the future of the attitudes towards Jews. The Working Definition mentions these problems in a rather concise manner. It is therefore our responsibility to keep discussing all the issues raised by the Definition on the one hand, and strive to turn it into an effective tool even in its present form, on the other hand.
The Seminar's Statement

We, the participants of the 10th Tel Aviv University Stephen Roth Institute for the Study of Contemporary Antisemitism and racism international seminar on anti-Semitism, organized at the Memorial de la Shoah in Paris on August 30th to September 2, 2010, and addressed by Mme. Simone Veil and Mr. Yves Repiquet, and hosted by Mr. Francois Zimeray in the Quai D'orsay

Urge parliamentarians, educators, legislators, law enforcement agencies and human rights organizations to extend their use of the EUMC Working Definition of Antisemitism adopted by the European Commission in Cordoba in early 2005.

The Working Definition sets antsemitism in the context of the contemporary world, encourages consistent analysis of the phenomenon and offers venues for reactions against it. It is our hope that it might perhaps serve as a model for future definitions of other evils, and as a basis for rapprochement and coalitions among minorities and ethnic groups.
The Stephen Roth Institute for the Study of Contemporary Antisemitism and Racism

The Working Definition of Antisemitism - Six Years After
August 30 – September 2, Paris

Monday, August 30, 15:30-19:00

Greetings:

Chair: Dina Porat - Head, Stephen Roth Institute
Jacques Fredj - Director, Memorial de la Shoah

Keynote Addresses:

Simone Veil - Member of the French Academy, Honorary President of the Fondation pour la Mémoire de la Shoah
Yves Repiquet - Président, Commission Nationale Consultative des Droits de l'Homme (CNCDH)

16:40 – 17:00 Break

17:00 – 18:00 Panel: From Antisemitism to Anti-Zionism

Chair: Andrew Baker - American Jewish Committee, Special Advisor for anti-Semitism for the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE)

Jean Yves-Camus - Institute of International and Strategic Studies
"Islamism and the Far-Left: the Strategy and Ideology of anti-Zionism in France"
Rifat Bali – Publisher and independent scholar
"Antisemitism in Turkey: From Denial to Acknowledgement – From Acknowledgement to Discussions of Its Definition"

18:00 – 19:00 Panel: Preventing and Combating Antisemitism

Chair: Karel Frakapane - Memorial de la Shoah,

Richard Prasquier - Président, Conseil Représentatif des Institutions juives de France (CRIF)
Alain Jakubowicz – President, Ligue contre le Racisme et l'Antisémitisme (LICRA)

Respondent: Anne-Marie Revcolevschi – President, Aladdin Project
19:00 – Reception at the Memorial de la Shoah

Tuesday, August 31

Session One: 9:00-10:30 - History and Theoretical Aspects

Chair: Carole Nuriel, ADL Israel

Mike Whine – "Short History of the Definition"
Ken Stern – The Working Definition- A Reappraisal"

10:30 – 11:00 Break

Session Two: 11:00-12:30 – Between Theory and Practice

Chair: Jean Muttapa, Editions Michel Albin

David Matas – "Assessing Criticism of the EU Definition of Antisemitism"
Dave Rich – "Reactions, Uses and Abuses of the EUMC Definition"
Esti Webman – "Arab Reactions to Combating Antisemitism"

12:30-14:00 Lunch Break

Session Three: 14:00-15:30
Facing Changing Patterns of Antisemitism – EU States I

Chair: Joseph Bollag – President, ISSN Foundation

Ron Refaeli – "La Liste Antisioniste: A French Case"
Joel Kotek – "Anti-Zionism as a New Civic Religion: the Belgium Case"
Michal Navot – "Redux: Legal Aspects of Antisemitism, Holocaust Denial and Racism in Greece Today"

15:30-16:00 Break

Session Four: 16:00-18:00
Facing Changing Patterns of Antisemitism – EU States II

Chair: Philippe Allouche, Director-General, Fondation pour la Mémoire de la Shoah

Rafal Pankowski – "Antisemitism and the Populist Radical Right in Poland"
Karl Pfeifer – "Antisemitic Activities of the Austrian 'Anti-Imperialists Coordination' (AIK)"
Raphael Vago – "(Re) Defining the Jew: Antisemitism in Post-Communist Europe – the Balance of Two Decades"
Marcis Skadmanis – "The Achievements of Latvian NGOs in Promoting Tolerance and Combating Intolerance"

**Wednesday, September 1**

**Session One:** 9:00-11:00 - **Facing Changing Patterns of Antisemitism – CIS**

**Chair:** Raphael Vago, the Stephen Roth Institute

**Yuri Tabak** – "Antisemitic Manifestations in the Russian Federation 2009-2010"
**Vyacheslav Likhachev** – "Dynamics of Displays of Antisemitism in Ukraine (2002 - 2010): Hate Crimes, Hate Speech and a Political Context"
**Irena Cantorovich** – "Belarus as a Case Study of Contemporary Antisemitism"
**Natalia Sineaeva-Pankowska** – "Some Aspects of Holocaust Denial in Eastern Europe"

11:00-11:30 Break

**Session Two:** 11:30-13:00
**Facing Changing Patterns of Antisemitism – North America and Australia**

**Chair:** Dave Rich, CST

**Jeremy Jones** – "The Asian Pacific Experience – the Dubious Relevance of European Declarations in the Third World"
**Aryeh Tuchman** – "New Technologies for Tracking Antisemitism"

13:00-14:30 Lunch Break

**Session Three:** 14:30-16:00
**Facing Changing Patterns of Antisemitism – Latin America**

**Chair:** Graciela Ben-Dror, the Stephen Roth Institute

**Luiz Nazario** – "The Bad Assimilation of the Holocaust: A Brazilian Case"
**Sammy Eppel** – "Patterns of Antisemitism in Chavez's Venezuela"
**Ariel Seidler** – "Antisemitism on the Web"

16:00-16:30 Break
Closing Session: 16:30-18:00

Panel: Prospects for Future Implementation of the Working Definition

Chair: Jacques Fredj, Director, Memorial de la Shoah

Dina Porat – "Prospects of an Updated Working Definition"
Charles Small – "Defining Contemporary Antisemitism in the Context of Globalization"
Haim Fireberg – "Confronting New-Antisemitism: From Working Definition to Model-Law and Back"
List of Participants

Simone Veil, Member of the French Academy, Honorary President of the Fondation pour la Mémoire de la Shoah
Yves Repiquet, Président, Commission Nationale Consultative des Droits de l'Homme (CNDCH)
Andrew Baker, American Jewish Committee, Special Advisor for Anti-Semitism, OSCE
Rifat Bali, Publisher and independent scholar, Turkey
Karel Frakapane, Mémorial de la Shoah
Richard Prasquier, Président, CRIF
Alain Jakubowicz, Président, LICRA
Ann-Marie Revcolvschi, President, Aladdin Project
Carole Nuriel, ADL, Israel
Mike Whine, CST, London
David Matas, B'nai Brith Canada
Esther Webman, TAU, Israel
Joseph Bollag, ISSN, Switzerland
Ron Refaeli, SPCJ, France
Joel Kotek, Belgium
Michal Navot, Israel
Philippe Allouche, Director-General, Fondation pour la Mémoire de la Shoah
Karl Pfeifer, Vienna
Raphael Vago, TAU, Israel
Marcis Skadmanis, Latvia
Yuri Tabak, Russia
Irena Cantorovich, TAU, Israel
Dave Rich, CST, London
Jeremy Jones, Jewish Affairs Council, Australia
Areyh Tuchman, ADL, NY
Graciela Ben Dror, Moreshet, Israel
Luiz Nazario, Federal University of Minas Gerais, Brazil
Jacques Fredj, Director, Mémorial de la Shoah
Dina Porat, TAU, Israel
Haim Fireberg, TAU, Israel
Ken Stern, AJC, NY
Jean-Yves Camus, IRIS, France
Ariel Seidler, Argentina
Sammy Eppel, Venezuela
Sarah Rembiszewski, TAU, Israel

Seminar Sponsors:

The American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, Inc.
Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Ministry of Public Affairs and the Diaspora
The Kantor Center for the Study of Contemporary European Jewry
World Zionist Organization