

## Jewish Political Studies Review

In his foreword, Clemens Heni states that postwar anti-Semitism in Germany has never been so accepted and disseminated as it is today.<sup>3</sup> He disputes German anti-Semitism expert Werner Bergman's assertion that rarely has anti-Semitism in Germany been pushed so far to the sidelines. Heni, who translated Wistrich's book, stresses that there is still little ideological analysis of the various forms of Islamism, even though for decades Wistrich has called for such a specific analysis of Islamism, the Muslim Brotherhood, and Arab nationalism.

The end of the book presents a few hate cartoons from the Arab world—further examples of the extreme hatred of Israel and Jews in major Arab media. Included are the cover of a book with a swastika and the Star of David interconnected, which the Arab Lawyers Union distributed in 2001 at the United Nations World Conference Against Racism in Durban; a picture of Ariel Sharon as Hitler's successor in major Egyptian daily *Al Gomhuria*; and a short list of Nazi crimes compared with a long list of Israel's "crimes" in the Syrian daily *Tishreen*, which is associated with the government. These provide graphic proof of Wistrich's on-target thesis about the true nature of Muslim anti-Semitism.

### NOTES

1. Robert Wistrich, *Muslim Antisemitism* (New York: American Jewish Committee, 2002).
2. Dan Bilefsky, "Toulouse Killer's Path to Radicalism a Bitter Puzzle," *New York Times*, March 29, 2012.
3. Clemens Heni is a political scientist, founder of the Berlin International Center for the Study of Antisemitism (BICSA), and publisher (Edition Critic in Berlin).

DR. MANFRED GERSTENFELD is a member of the board of the Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs, of which he has been chairman for twelve years. He has published twenty books, several of which deal with anti-Semitism and anti-Israelism.



### A MODERN-DAY RIGHTEOUS GENTILE

*Israël et la question juive (Israel and the Jewish Question)*, Pierre André Taguieff, Les Provinciales, 2011, 282 pp. (in French)

Reviewed by MICHELLE MAZEL

Pierre André Taguieff is a well-known French philosopher and historian. He has taught at the elite Institute for Political Science in Paris, commonly known as

Sciences Po, and now serves as associate researcher at the Center for Political Research (CEVIPOF) of that institution. CEVIPOF focuses on analyzing the major factors which shape political power and institutions together with those which contribute to orienting the political behavior and attitudes of ordinary citizens. A Gentile, Taguieff has made what appears to be a lifelong study of anti-Semitism in all its manifestations. He popularized the term Judeophobia to describe feelings of hatred and revulsion toward the Jews and, in 2008, published a lengthy volume entitled *Judeophobia of Modern Times: From the Enlightenment to World Jihad*,<sup>1</sup> where he attempted to explain how hating and fearing the Jews had morphed into hating Israel, stating that “radical anti-Zionism is a contemporary manifestation of Judeophobia.” This somewhat heavy book with its nearly seven hundred pages was followed two years later by *The New Anti-Jewish Propaganda from the Al-Dura Symbol to the Rumors of Gaza*,<sup>2</sup> in which he describes what he calls “the Islamization of the anti-Jewish discourse...which consists of establishing, explicitly or implicitly, jihad against the Jews as a sixth religious imperative that every Muslim must observe.”<sup>3</sup> *Israel and the Jewish Question*, his third work in this series, is easily the most accomplished and readable. It is both concise and well documented thanks to the fifty pages of notes at the end. Some of the ground it covers has been presented at length in the two previous books, but here Taguieff has made an effort to explain his theories in brief and lucid chapters.

Taguieff traces the roots of the Islamization of the anti-Jewish discourse, a process which he claims that the Muslim Brotherhood initiated in Egypt in the 1930s and which Nazi Germany fostered. Therefore, it predates the establishment of the state of Israel. This is a very important point. Hatred of the Jews is anchored in a number of verses of the Koran as well as in the works of Islamic writers, such as Sayyid Qutb, the ideologue of the Muslim Brotherhood who wrote *My Fight against the Jews*. Indeed Hassan el-Banna, founder of the Brotherhood, is quoted in the preamble of the Hamas charter: “Israel will exist and will continue to exist until Islam will obliterate it, just as it obliterated others before it.” Hamas, it follows, is an offshoot of the Brotherhood. Article 2 of the Hamas charter states that “the Islamic resistance movement is one of the wings of the Muslim Brotherhood in Palestine.”

According to Taguieff, what we have today is the re-Islamization of the Palestinian question, namely, the religious dimension of the conflict, which makes any political solution impossible. He argues that from the outset, the Palestinian movement was fueled by Islam. This process was halted by Yasir Arafat, who adopted a secular approach. At present, Palestinian leaders openly advocate the “purification” of Palestine and the elimination of Israel. In 2006, Ayman el-Zawahiri, then Al-Qaeda’s second-in-command, stated, “Palestine is a land of Islam, its liberation is a duty for every Muslim.... The Palestinian cause is one of the arenas where the Muslim Ummah [nation] confronts the Zionist-

## Jewish Political Studies Review

Crusader attack; to isolate jihad in Palestine from jihad conducted by the Muslim Ummah against the Crusaders and their agents can only lead to the loss of the religion.”<sup>4</sup>

In a related phenomenon, anti-Zionism, which has taken the place of anti-Semitism, no longer is linked to the traditional rightist milieu; the left has taken over. “The pro-Palestinian otherworldliness in its leftist manifestation is a bar to understanding what is at stake in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict; by imposing a moralizing and Marxist view of the conflict (‘good,’ oppressed Palestinians against ‘evil’ Israeli oppressors), which prevents any realistic analysis of the geopolitical situation in the Middle East.”<sup>5</sup>

In Taguieff’s view, anti-Zionism has become a type of secular religion, with Israel acting as the embodiment of evil incarnate. By eliminating the root of this evil, humanity would break free of its chains. He proposes a new definition of what usually is referred to as anti-Zionism: “A new political or secular religion, or a doctrine of collective salvation, theoretically able to become universal, which can give meaning to undertakings and acts which appear to be its logical deductions.”<sup>6</sup> It not only pertains to Israel; Jews all over the world find themselves in an untenable position. If they support Israel, they face accusations of racism, fascism, and complicity in unspeakable crimes. It is easier to condemn Israel, even at the cost of making the Jewish state solely responsible for the stalled peace process.

Another revealing factor is what Taguieff sees as an all-out war against Israel: “Western countries, still feeling guilty about their colonial past, tend to see the issue of Palestine as a classic conflict between Zionist and ‘colonialist’ Jews versus Palestinian Arabs suffering from colonial rule and spoliations.” As a corollary, “The West (colonialist, imperialist, racist) is the only true responsible [party] for all the ills that befall a suffering mankind.”<sup>7</sup> It follows that if the people perceived as oppressed react by committing violent acts, it is essentially self-defense. By deciding that the “oppressed” are innocent no matter what they do, one may conveniently ignore historical facts such as the Islamist dimension of the problem and the collaboration of leaders such as Haj Amin al-Husseini with the Nazi regime. This leads Taguieff toward the bleak observation that “to be anti-racist at the start of the twenty-first century is, on the one hand, to display anti-Western if not anti-white racism—including militant anti-Christian phobia—and on the other, anti-Israeli or anti-Zionist—even anti-Jewish racism.”<sup>8</sup>

In the second part of the book, Taguieff dissects a number of recent events in Europe and more specifically in France. Here, he points out the responsibility of the media. The Al-Dura Affair, in which the Israel Defense Forces allegedly intentionally killed a Palestinian child, is what Taguieff calls an international media manipulation. It “demonstrates the triple role of a number of media (mainly those of the left) in France and elsewhere in Europe and the West, in their political and

cultural war against Israel and Zionism: inciting hatred, legitimizing hatred, keeping silent on the effects of that hatred they fostered and justified.”<sup>9</sup> For example, this was the case when two Palestinians murdered five members of the Fogel family—including a three-month-old baby—in cold blood while they slept. There was little or no condemnation, since the victims were “settlers” living in Itamar, in the “occupied territories.” The effects of this massive effort to demonize Israel are evident in several surveys carried out by reputable institutes. According to the BBC, in 2010, 92 percent of the Egyptians had negative views about Israel with only 3 percent admitting to positive views; in the same survey, 50 percent of opinions worldwide were negative, with Israel second to Iran (56 percent).

Throughout this strong, dense book one senses the indignation of the author, which is directed against what he sees as renewed attacks against the Jews and a deliberate war against Israel, aided and abetted by so-called mainstream media. Since the book appeared, however, there has been a slight and subtle shift in public opinion. The much-touted Arab Spring clearly has shown the growing strength of the Muslim Brotherhood and its call for imposing Sharia as a prelude to restoring the caliphate. In France, there have been several bloody attacks on French Jews—including the cold-blooded murder of three children and a rabbi in Toulouse—and on Jewish institutions, which have caused many to take note of homegrown fanatics who did not hesitate to target French soldiers and French policemen as well.

NOTES

1. Review by Michelle Mazel, in: *Jewish Political Studies Review* 21, 1 & 2 (Spring 2009): 190–192.
2. Review by Michelle Mazel, in: *Jewish Political Studies Review* 22, 3 & 4 (Fall 2010): 128–129.
3. *The New Anti-Jewish Propaganda*, 9.
4. *Ibid.*, p. 29.
5. *Ibid.*, p. 51.
6. *Ibid.*, p. 60.
7. *Ibid.*, p. 106.
8. *Ibid.*, p. 135.
9. *Ibid.*, p. 141.

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