

## Parallel Lines: Anti-Zionism and Anti-Semitism in the 21st Century

Robert S. Wistrich

About twenty years ago, when writing *Anti-Semitism: The Longest Hatred*, my emphasis lay on the longevity, near-ubiquity and persistence of anti-Jewish hatred in Europe and the Middle East over many centuries. However, already in 1990 it was impossible to ignore the fact that the demonization of Israel and the Jews was reaching new heights in the post-war world. In part this was bolstered by the rise of a fanatical Islamic fundamentalism with its stark refusal to accept the right of Jews to exercise *any* form of sovereignty in what it defined as an exclusively Muslim domain.<sup>1</sup> This attitude was by no means new. In the Arab world, since the 1950s, outright rejection of the Jewish State was virtually axiomatic. The term Jews (*Yahūd*) had long been used interchangeably with Zionists (*Sahyūniyyūn*) and/or Israelis. The repeated publication of best-selling editions in Arabic of *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion* throughout the Middle East had, moreover, reinforced the popular view that there was a powerful satanic conspiracy directed by Zionists together with the Western powers against Islam and the entire Arab world. More recently, as I have demonstrated in a wide-ranging study, this type of radically antisemitic narrative masquerading under the cover of "anti-Zionism" has gained considerably in strength, especially since the year 2000.<sup>2</sup> It not only vilifies the Jews and Zionism as being intrinsically malevolent and as the spearhead of a Western imperialist assault on Arab-Muslim culture – it also denounces Israel as a uniquely criminal "Nazi" and "racist" State.<sup>3</sup>

The historic roots of the continual convergence between Muslim-Arab anti-Zionism and classical European antisemitism can already be found in the 1930s with the rise of the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt as well as in the *de facto* alliance between German Nazism and Haj Amin el-Husseini, the undisputed leader of Palestinian Arab nationalism. Antisemitism was an important, even vital, cement of such ideological and political alliances.<sup>4</sup> It was also no accident that during the 1950s, in Nasser's Egypt, a number of German Nazi advisers on the "Jewish Question" not only found a refuge from justice but helped to organize a large-scale "anti-Zionist" propaganda campaign that reached out across Europe, Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Middle East.<sup>5</sup> The common antisemitic assumption behind this massive indoctrination program led by Egypt was the notion that Israel, Zionism and the Jewish people *per se* represented a single poisonous and deadly root of a Jewish plan for world-domination. The branches of this global Mafia allegedly extend from Jerusalem and New York to the farthest corners of the earth. This "anti-Zionist" political warfare against Israel has been inextricably linked by its Muslim-Arab protagonists to the struggle of the Prophet Muhammad against the Jews in the Arabian Peninsula – a conflict that ended in their expulsion more than 1300 years ago.<sup>6</sup>

The Six Day War of 1967 and the fall of Arab East Jerusalem into Israeli hands exacerbated still further the Islamist militancy of the old-new antisemitic "anti-Zionism." Koranic vituperations against the "treacherous," perfidious Jews were now widely quoted, medieval polemical tracts against Judaism and the Jews were dutifully dug out; while the antisemitic writings of authors like the martyred ideologue of the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood, Sayyid Qutb (executed by Nasser's regime in 1966) were widely circulated. The scale of the 1967 debacle of the Arab States with its

accompanying sense of national humiliation, loss of Arab honor and the occupation by Israel of what was deemed to be "Islamic territory," sharpened and intensified the pre-existing demonology of Zionism. Increasingly, the Jewish State was seen as a twentieth-century reincarnation of the cunning and insidious "spirit of Judaism."<sup>7</sup> Khomeini's revolution in Shi'ite Iran in 1979 added an even more radical element to this Islamist boiling-pot of theological-political anti-Semitism. "Khomeinism" combined a specifically Shi'ite Iranian horror of Jews as ritually "unclean" (*najas*) with Islamic religious hostility to them as an ancient foe of Islam. This was superimposed on a demonizing misperception of a non-existent "American-Israel satanic conspiracy" to destroy Iran. From Khomeini to Ahmadinejad and Ali Khamenei, Iranian Islamic "anti-Zionism" (in which the U.S. is the "great Satan" and Israel figures as the "little Satan") continues to attribute all evils in the world to boundless Jewish deviousness and an incessant Zionist craving for "global domination."<sup>8</sup>

This antisemitic *and* anti-Zionist ideology motivates not only Iran but the Lebanese Shi'ite Hezbollah as well as the Sunni Muslim Hamas (an offshoot of the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood) in Gaza. It is important to note that neither Iran, Hezbollah nor Hamas shrink from an openly genocidal, *annihilationist* demand for the total destruction of the State of Israel.<sup>9</sup> Brazen and naked Holocaust denial, especially in Iran and in much of the contemporary Arab world (a point to which we shall return) is the other side of this radically antisemitic coin. It is surely no accident that those forces in the Middle East who insistently deny that the Nazi Holocaust ever happened are the same elements who demand the physical elimination of Israel – which would, if successful, mean a second genocide of the Jewish people – this time in the name of

Allah.<sup>10</sup> This scenario is precisely the consummation devoutly wished for publicly, on *Al-Jazeera* TV, in 2009, by the Egyptian-born Sheikh Yusuf al-Qaradawi, the leading Sunni Muslim cleric in the world today.

#### Palestinian Anti-Zionism

Both the Palestinian Fatah in the past and even more clearly the Hamas movement today, have fully embraced such radical rejectionism and its "starkly expulsionist" program.<sup>11</sup> The original Palestinian National Covenant of the PLO (1964) as well as its later editions, all declared Zionism to be an "illegal movement," dismissed the Balfour Declaration as "null and void," and categorically denied any historic connection between the Jewish people and the land of Israel. No wonder that U.S. President Bill Clinton was driven to a state of total frustration by the intransigence of PLO leader Yasser Arafat in the summer of 2000 during the American-hosted negotiations with Israeli Premier, Ehud Barak.<sup>12</sup> Clinton's own mistake, however (repeated by virtually all Western and even some Israeli leaders), was to assume that the "Palestinian question" is ultimately about land and not about the very existence of Israel as a sovereign Jewish State in the Middle East. Arafat's doubletalk (pretending to accept a truncated Israel when speaking to Western audiences while preaching  *jihad*  to  *liberate all of Palestine*  to his own people) undoubtedly made such Western self-deception about Palestinian intentions much easier. This level of dissimulation has now changed to a certain extent. Hamas's draconian control of Gaza since 2006, its subordination of Palestinian nationalism to its own militant Islamic creed (openly raising "the banner of Allah over every inch of Palestine"), and its blatantly anti-Semitic incitement, make such pretenses futile. As one Israeli historian bluntly put it, for Hamas, "the destruction of the Jewish state is Allah's command."<sup>13</sup>

## The West Reacts

The Western response to the unprecedented wave of antisemitic violence since 2000, especially within the European Union (EU) – some of it Islamist in motivation – has, on the whole, been disappointing.<sup>14</sup> A rare exception was the late Oriana Fallaci (a fiery Italian journalist) who wrote back in 2002: "I find it shameful that in France, the France of "Liberty, equality, fraternity," synagogues are torched, Jews are terrorized, and their cemeteries profaned . . . that in Holland and Germany and Denmark youngsters show off the *keffiyah* like the vanguard of Mussolini displayed the Fascist emblem . . . that in almost every European university, Palestinian students take over and nurture anti-Zionism."<sup>15</sup> These passionate remarks have lost none of their pertinence during the past ten years, though Fallaci was predictably harassed by Muslim and leftist organizations on bogus charges of encouraging "racism" and "Islamophobia." Indeed, things are considerably worse today as a particularly virulent strain of pro-Palestine campus antisemitism has spread to North America and Great Britain – accompanied by repeated efforts at boycotting Israel as an "apartheid State."<sup>16</sup>

With regard to the United States the warning-signs were already there at least ten years ago. In September 2002 Lawrence Summers, then President of Harvard, in an address to the Harvard community, observed that anti-Zionism had begun to tip over into antisemitism, even in "progressive intellectual communities" in the United States. Many of the fashionable anti-Israel positions in academia, he pointed out, were "antisemitic in effect if not intent," especially when the Jewish State was being singled out for general opprobrium over issues of human rights whose violation was totally ignored elsewhere.<sup>17</sup> Moreover, the growing number of anti-Semitic incidents

out of “anti-Zionist” activism on American campuses (from San Francisco State to Yale) was a clear indication that something was seriously amiss. Supposedly "anti-Zionist" criticism of Israel was shamelessly exploiting a long-established repertoire of anti-Semitic stereotypes to reinforce its compulsive demonization of the Jewish State. This campus agitation recklessly disregarded factual arguments in favor of turning the story of one complex nation (Israel) into a universal scapegoat for all societal evils.

Such hyperbolic hatred of Israel is not only irrational but it constitutes a moral pathology in its own right. In May 2002 Laurie Zoloth, director of Jewish Studies at San Francisco State University, summed up her own feelings about this new style of antisemitism as follows: "I cannot fully express what it feels like to have to walk across campus daily, past maps of the Middle East that do not include Israel, past posters of cans of soup with labels on them of drops of blood and dead babies, labeled 'canned Palestinian children meat, slaughtered according to Jewish rites under American license' . . ."18

#### The New Anti-Semitism

Today, across the Western world, such vile slogans, or their equivalents, are present in many walks of life. This "new antisemitism" is driven, above all, by the desire for the systematic delegitimization, defamation and demonization of Israel as a Jewish State. It comes not only from Islamic fundamentalists, Palestinian nationalists or neo-Nazis; it is also increasingly popular on the "anti-racist" Left (Marxist, third-worldist, anti-globalist) and even widespread in certain liberal, "enlightened" and intellectual circles.<sup>19</sup> The openly exclusionary weapon of supporting the boycott of Israeli academics (boycotts have been a classic antisemitic tool in modern European history) is one especially ugly symptom of this trend. The relentless assault on the

"Jewish/Zionist Lobby" is another tell-tale signal of the "new antisemitism." No less racist is the myth of a neo-con (codeword for "Jew") conspiracy to push the U.S. into the 2003 Iraq war or the malicious stigmatization of a hawkish, "warmongering Israel," allegedly seeking to perpetrate "genocide" against the stateless Palestinians.<sup>20</sup>

In this morass of falsehoods, one of the most striking features is the stubborn refusal of the anti-Zionists to engage in any substantive critique of radical Islam and its suicide-bombing atrocities. Moreover, whenever the subject of leftist or Muslim antisemitism is thrust into this particular boiling pot, a kneejerk counter-accusation is usually made – the critic is allegedly "stifling criticism" of Israel, protesting in bad faith or supposedly acting as a venal apologist of "the Zionists." Such baseless accusations invariably shut down any serious discussion of the stigmatizing vocabulary and paranoid conspiracy theories concerning Jews, so widely prevalent today among many Islamists, Marxists and even "liberal" adversaries of modern Zionism.

There is something grossly simplistic about reducing discussion of Muslim, leftist or other forms of contemporary antisemitism to allegations about "immunizing" Israel from legitimate criticism. Among other things, it should be obvious that "criticism" of Israel, far from being silenced, is in fact very common, not to say *rampant* in a substantial part of the Western media. So what kind of "silence" is this to begin with? Indeed, claims that Israel resembles the racist regime in South Africa have become all-too-fashionable in much contemporary Western discourse, despite their self-evident hollowness to any knowledgeable observer. As for the Islamists, they have never disguised their relentless effort to definitively "cleanse" the Middle

East of what they openly call the "Jewish cancer." Yet many leftists and "progressive" liberals either remain completely silent about the monstrosity of this genocidal language or cynically suggest that Israel is exaggerating the Iranian threat to justify future aggressions of its own.

In its moralistic sermons about the "sins of Israel," the anti-Zionist left invariably ignores its own racism. Moreover, it is typically obsessed with imaginary depictions of Zionism as a uniquely racist movement, while studiously ignoring, dismissing or massively downplaying the very real, existential threats to Israel emanating from Iran and its proxies. Even more objectionable is the way that left-wing "anti-Zionists" (some of them Jewish) recklessly compare Zionism and the Jewish State with the murderous persecutions of Jews by Hitler and the Third Reich. Such stunningly mendacious accusations repeat, almost to the letter, the hateful propaganda cynically spread by the Soviet Union and its communist allies in the 1970s when "Zionism" was continuously demonized by the USSR as an intrinsically fascist movement. At that time, Communists, like the jihadists and some anti-Zionist left-liberals today, were remorseless in slandering Israel as a militarist state purportedly based on "ethnic cleansing," "racial segregation" and aggressive expansionism.

#### The Soviet Influence

The Soviet media related to "world Zionism" as a sinister international network that supposedly controlled thousands of publications around the world. This "Mafia," it was claimed, had the unlimited resources of American imperialism at its disposal – which were being mobilized to dominate the Arab world, Asia, Africa, and Latin America. "Zionism" was branded as Public Enemy No. 1 by the vast Soviet

propaganda apparatus which expended seemingly endless amounts of money and vitriol in bracketing Israel with the unholy trinity of racism, imperialism and colonialism. "World Zionism" was endowed by Communist propaganda with extraordinary satanic powers. It was invariably presented as the embodiment of the forces of darkness, as a truly *monstrous* force aspiring to global domination. There was a never-ending stream of repetitive depictions of the Zionist enemy as "an invisible but huge and mighty empire of financiers and industrialists"; as a giant octopus whose tentacles extended into almost seventy countries around the globe. In the fictional world of Soviet and Arab propaganda after 1967, the "Zionists" already had an iron grip on the Western mass media, on the big banks and publishing houses, especially in the United States, not to mention its armaments industry.

In Communist Eastern Europe, too, the mythical theme of a "world Zionist conspiracy" was activated during the Polish antisemitic campaigns of 1968 and following the successful effort (imposed by Soviet tanks) to bring down Alexander Dubcek's innovative Czech experiment in humanizing "real" Socialism. In both cases, Moscow employed the time-honored techniques of racist and diversionary antisemitism under the label of "anti-Zionism" to crush internal dissent, suppress trends towards democratization and channel smoldering East European nationalism away from targeting the Soviet Union. By 1968, under Communist rule in the U.S.S.R. and Eastern Europe, anti-Semitism was emerging as a quasi-official state doctrine. "Anti-Zionism" was the necessary rationalization for this new campaign. In 1968, an ethno-nationalist Communist version of the myth of the Jew as "the enemy of Poland" became openly manifest in Poland. Popular slogans like "Purge the Party of Zionists" (*Oczyścić Partię z Syjonistów*), or "Zionists represent Israel, not Poland"

surfaced, alongside an official façade of "opposing antisemitism." The Government and Party hacks cynically substituted "Zionist" for "Jew" in their racist propaganda, though there were scarcely any Zionists left in post-Shoah Poland. The anti-Stalinist Left in Western countries – despite its vehement "anti-racism" – has often used similar rhetoric and stigmatizing techniques.

In defining who was a "Zionist," hard-core antisemites in Communist Poland relied on biological criteria that echoed Poland's pre-1939 ultra-nationalists with their xenophobic calls for the "ethnic cleansing" of Jews by forced emigration. Prime Minister Gomułka, in a notorious speech of March 19, 1968, to Party activists, acknowledged the possibility that there might be a few Polish patriots among the Jews but the great majority (defined as "cosmopolitans," "national nihilists," or else as "emotionally" tied to Israel) could have no place in Poland. Indeed, since July 1967 Gomułka had condemned anyone in Poland who dared to support "the Israeli aggressor" as belonging to "a fifth column" and as being a "threat" to national security. This was a theme widely disseminated on Communist State-controlled radio and television.

"Zionists," in particular, were singled out by the regime for conspiring with the external "enemies of communist Poland" – led by the United States, Israel and West Germany. "Zionist" Jews supposedly constituted an "antinational" and anti-Communist group in the ruling Polish Workers Party, according to Mieczysław Moczar – at the time, Minister of the Interior, and the driving force of the 1968 anti-Jewish campaign. Others, like Andrzej Werblan (head of the Department of Science and Learning in the Party Central Committee) favored expelling Jewish Communists

since they were allegedly imbued with a "bourgeois" and cosmopolitan ethos. Their disproportionate influence "in certain organs of the power apparatus, in propaganda, and in the Foreign and Internal Affairs Ministries" had "polluted" Polish Communist thinking and alienated the Party from the Polish people. As in the Arab world and in the Soviet Union, government-controlled anti-Zionism and antisemitism had become synonymous.

#### The Pathology Spreads to Europe

In Western Europe, a different kind of anti-Zionism emerged around 1968, especially in the student New Left, among intellectuals and disillusioned ex-Communists. This chorus found a lead tenor in the veteran Polish-born ex-Trotskyist Isaac Deutscher, who, shortly before his death in July 1967, deplored

that frenzy of belligerence, arrogance, and fanaticism of which the Israelis gave such startling displays as they rushed to Sinai and the Wailing Wall and to Jordan and the walls of Jericho.<sup>21</sup>

Deutscher's harsh polemic against the Six Day War victory over three Arab states contained every known cliché about Israel as a "Western agent," as a parasitic excrescence dependent on foreign aid and an outpost of "religious obscurantism and reaction." Himself Jewish, Deutscher nevertheless asserted that the Jewish State was built on "the spirit of racial-Talmudic exclusiveness and superiority." Ignoring Arab threats to drive the Jews in to the sea, Deutscher squarely blamed Israeli "militarism" for the 1967 war, damning contemporary Jewish nationalism as that "of conquerors and oppressors." At the same time with breathtaking sophistry, he whitewashed the exclusivist, intolerant character of Arab nationalism, idealizing it as anti-colonialist and "progressive." Israelis were caricatured as "the Prussians of the Middle East, swollen with "chauvinistic arrogance and contempt for other peoples," while the

ocean of Arab dictatorship, repression and hate-speech was treated with kid gloves. Deutscher's special loathing was reserved for what he reviled as "Talmudic obscurantism" and "*hassidim* jumping for joy at the Wailing Wall. . . ." Nor did he fail to blame Israel for the genocidal antisemitism in the Arab world – as if Arabs bore no responsibility for their own words and deeds.

Deutscher and other Marxist "critics" during the past 40 years have repeatedly sought to discredit the Jewish State as an "alien, imperialist interloper" in the region. Through intrinsically false comparisons with some of the darker pages of Western colonial history – Algeria, Vietnam or apartheid South Africa – the anti-Zionist Left hopes to deny to Israeli Jews (after 64 years of remarkably successful nation-building) their inalienable right to national self-determination and self-defense against those who seek their annihilation. Typically, the anti-Zionists present Israel as an outlaw country, a "rogue" state, and the leading serial violator of human rights or even the Number One threat to world peace. None of these charges has the slightest objective merit. But with the built-in majorities that such bogus claims automatically enjoy in the United Nations, broad global support is virtually ensured for the spread of a rabidly anti-Israel narrative in the international arena.<sup>22</sup>

The prevailing anti-Israel climate of opinion – currently exacerbated by wars, revolutions, chaos and chronic instability in the Middle East (and the reality of 56 Islamic countries and 22 Arab states against just *one* Jewish state) has without doubt contributed to the dramatic increase during the past decade of antisemitic events world-wide. Many of the anti-Jewish incidents were ostensibly triggered by Israel's tough responses in the Second Intifada (2000-2004), the Second Lebanon War (2006)

and the Gaza conflict (2009). The violent attacks across Europe on synagogues, Jewish communal institutions and individual Jews (as well as the cemetery desecrations) were not unconnected to the many hostile articles in the European media about the Jewish State; or to the antagonistic editorials, Internet blogs, commentaries and anti-Israel demonstrations in European capitals since 2001, whether in London, Paris, Brussels, Amsterdam, Oslo, Stockholm, Rome, Berlin, Madrid or in several American cities. Sometimes, governments provided the lead, as in Venezuela, for example. Its pro-Iranian, pro-Cuban and virulently anti-Israel socialist president, Hugo Chávez, by using violent and incendiary language about a wholly fictitious Israeli "genocide" of the Palestinians, seriously damaged the physical security and viability of the local Jewish community.<sup>23</sup> In European nations like Spain, Sweden, Norway, Belgium and Greece, where there are only tiny Jewish communities, anti-Israel hate speech – especially among Muslims or from the far Right and radical Left – has also contributed to undermining what still remains of a viable Jewish communal life.<sup>24</sup>

#### The Intelligentsia and Anti-Zionism

European writers and intellectuals, too, have played a singularly inglorious role in demonstrating how contemporary anti-Zionism can become inextricably linked with some of the worst antisemitic clichés. For example, the prominent Norwegian writer, Jostein Gaarder (author of the best-selling *Sophie's World*), venomously slandered the State of Israel in a newspaper article of August 2006, stressing that he personally no longer recognized its right to exist. At the same time, Gaarder deplored what he called the arrogance of the "chosen people" who were allegedly inflicting "war-crimes" on the wholly "innocent" Palestinians and Lebanese. There was, of course, not a word about the highly provocative Hezbollah actions that provoked the

war of 2006.<sup>25</sup> Another Norwegian intellectual, Joachim Galtung (founder of the discipline of international Peace Studies) went even further in 2012. He suggested that the Israeli Mossad was behind the cold-blooded massacre in Norway a year earlier by the lone gunman Andrei Breivik of seventy-seven Norwegian youngsters at a summer camp outside Oslo. For good measure, Professor Galtung, a veteran anti-American and anti-Zionist leftist declared the notorious antisemitic forgery, *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion*, to be a serious text for understanding Israeli policy. If that were not enough, he also insisted that the main source of contemporary evils was Jewish-Zionist control of American politics, the banks and the media. For his skewed information, Galtung relied on the bogus statistics of a deceased American neo-Nazi, William Pierce.

Again, in 2012, the German Nobel Prize Laureate for Literature, Günter Grass (a Social Democrat who had once served in the Waffen-SS), gratuitously accused Israel of planning a nuclear strike to annihilate "the Iranian people," again, without offering even the tiniest shred of evidence.<sup>26</sup> German public opinion appeared to be solidly behind Grass's deeply offensive anti-Israel polemic (presented in the guise of a "poem") – though the German government and more responsible German media sharply condemned his hollow assertions. But the pro-Grass public reaction in Germany is less surprising when one follows the results of recent surveys revealing that virtually 50% of all Germans believe Israel to be conducting "a war of annihilation" (*Vernichtungskrieg*) against the Palestinians. This stunningly false perception (with its ugly Hitlerian echoes) represents a particularly obnoxious "anti-Zionist" form of *Holocaust inversion* – suggesting that the Israelis are "Nazis" and the Palestinians are "Jews." This is a repellent trend which is increasingly common not

only in Germany but also in Poland, Hungary (where far-right antisemitism is on the rise) and many other EU nations. By pretending that the Jewish State is pursuing a "genocidal" policy today, the need to face the scale of European guilt and complicity in the mass murder of Jews during the Holocaust can be more easily deflected.

During the past 30 years, Holocaust inversion and denial has become an increasingly important strand in contemporary antisemitism and anti-Zionism. One of the foremost French Holocaust deniers, Robert Faurisson, made this crystal clear on French radio as far back as December 1980. Faurisson, then an associate professor of French literature (with carefully disguised far-right sympathies), asserted:

The claim of the existence of gas chambers and the genocide of Jews by Hitler constitutes one and the same historical lie, which opened the way to a gigantic political and financial fraud of which the principal beneficiaries are the state of Israel and international Zionism, and the principal victims the Germans and the entire Palestinian people.<sup>27</sup>

This gross fabrication did not prevent Faurisson from receiving qualified support for his quack theories from some intellectuals on the French Libertarian Left. Faurisson even succeeded in 1981 in publishing his defense of Holocaust denial accompanied by a preface from Noam Chomsky, the celebrated American scholar - a virulent Jewish anti-Zionist and a left-wing maverick. Although Chomsky subsequently claimed that he had never read Faurisson's work, he nonetheless deplored efforts to "silence" Faurisson, asserting that the French literary critic had been the target of "a vicious campaign of harassment, intimidation and slander." However, in defending Faurisson's right to free speech he quite wrongly referred to him as a "liberal." He also

praised his associate Serge Thion (a prolific left-wing Holocaust denier) as a "libertarian socialist scholar." Amazingly, Chomsky even wrote that he could see "no hint of antisemitic implications" in Holocaust denial as such.<sup>28</sup> Nor did Chomsky, himself a merciless critic of the United States and Zionism for many decades, find anything objectionable in the totally false claim that the Holocaust "is being exploited, viciously so, by apologists for Israeli repression and violence."

Left-wing anti-Zionist Holocaust inverters like to emphasize that there have been many genocides in history and that the Jews cannot claim any monopoly on suffering. Thus the French left-wing lawyer Jacques Vergès (who zealously defended the notorious Nazi criminal Klaus Barbie in France in the late 1980s) has consistently compared French colonial oppression in Algeria with the Holocaust in order to better relativize and neutralize its uniqueness.<sup>29</sup> Although Vergès stopped short of denying that the Holocaust actually happened, there were others who have used similarly relativist arguments to negate the Shoah. Thus the French ultra-leftist militant Pierre Guillaume and his followers could find no difference between the mass murder of European Jewry and the American internment of Japanese-born U.S. citizens during World War II; between official French government harassment of Spanish Republicans before 1939, and the German concentration camps in wartime; or between what happened to millions of Russians, Poles and Ukrainians who were shot or died of starvation in German camps, and the fate of the Jews.<sup>30</sup> The relativists usually end up embracing radical anti-Zionism or some other version of antisemitism. This was the case of the Third worldist libertarian, Serge Thion, for whom the real Nazi Holocaust of Jews came to be seen as a fiction, while the purely fictitious Israeli "genocide" of Palestinians was turned into something real. This is a classic symptom of the "new antisemitism."

Another revealing example from France of the close nexus between anti-Semitism, anti-Zionism and Holocaust denial was the scandal in the late 1990s involving Abbé Pierre, a missionary Catholic, a humanitarian defender of the poor, and a self-proclaimed former member of the French wartime resistance. Abbé Pierre, an extremely popular priest in France, was already in his eighties when he came out in support of his old friend Roger Garaudy, whose 1995 book, *Les Mythes Fondateurs de la politique Israélienne*, is generally recognized as an unadulterated piece of Holocaust denial. Garaudy, an ex-Stalinist, ex-Catholic, and leftist convert to Islam, had come to be immensely appreciated in the Arab world for his vitriolic hostility to Israel and hatred of the "Judeo-Christian" West. The emerging Arab cult of Garaudy was greatly reinforced by his 1995 blood libel against Israel, which was not only anti-Zionist but unmistakably anti-Jewish – despite all his vehement denials. When Abbé Pierre nonetheless rallied to Garaudy's Holocaust "revisionism," it caused a considerable stir in France.<sup>31</sup>

Open or latent antisemitism has undoubtedly been a key factor behind the spread of Holocaust denial and inversion, which has in turn strengthened latent hatred of Jews. In Germany, the "revisionists" have tended to play more on the widespread German desire to be released from historic shame and guilt, to "normalize" the Nazi past, and reclaim their right to a robust patriotism. Even sophisticated scholars like the German philosopher and historian Ernst Nolte have used arguments in their writings which are clearly taken from Holocaust denial literature. Nolte, for example, has ludicrously insisted that a statement by Dr. Chaim Weizmann (president of the World Zionist Organization) in September 1939 that Jews would support Great Britain and

the Western democracies, amounted to a declaration of war on Nazi Germany, thereby justifying Hitler's treatment of them as hostages. This is a classic negationist thesis. Nolte is not an anti-Semite but rather a historical relativist who argues that the Holocaust (except for the "technical detail" of the gas chambers) is no different from other major massacres in the twentieth century. More provocatively, the German scholar insisted that the Nazi genocide was essentially a pale copy of the Soviet Gulag – the Bolshevik extermination of the kulaks and other class enemies. Indeed, for Nolte, the Nazi extermination of Jews was best understood as a preventive measure against "Asiatic" barbarism from the East. Such arguments have given some legitimacy and even encouragement to outright deniers and antisemites, whatever Nolte's personal intentions may have been in the matter.<sup>32</sup>

#### Exploiting the Internet

Not all Holocaust denial, relativism and inversion, as we have already noted, is motivated by antisemitism or hatred of Israel. Nevertheless this has become a central motif among Holocaust deniers, especially in the United States, Britain, Canada and Australia as well as in France, Romania, Austria and Germany. An early pioneer in exploiting the World Wide Web for this purpose was the German-born Canadian hater, Ernst Zündel, an inveterate showman who, at one time, ran a mini-multimedia empire out of Toronto. Though eventually extradited and indicted in Germany, Zündel was able for several decades to cast himself as a heroic warrior against what he called "the lie of the century." He openly sought to vindicate Hitler and the Nazis even as he maligned the Jews. The Internet provided him (and other deniers) with an effective way to circumvent stringent European legislation designed to punish neo-Nazi propagandists and Holocaust *negationists*.

About twenty years ago, the Institute for Historical Review based in California also developed its own web sites to promote the notion that the Holocaust was a "Zionist" fiction. One of the institute's most active American collaborators in the 1990s was the libertarian Bradley Smith, who exploited the Web as an extension of his "Campus Project" to promote Holocaust denial as "revisionist" history at American colleges and universities. Under the guise of defending pluralism and free speech, his aim was to legitimize denial as an authentic part of Holocaust study. The "truths" of the deniers are, of course, pure fabrications which ignore the huge mass of evidence that runs counter to their conclusions. The right-wing deniers are usually engaged in rehabilitating Nazism, fascism or white supremacist racism – an endeavor in which antisemitism (wrapped up as "anti-Zionism") plays a crucial role. For left-wing deniers, hatred of Israel is often the most compelling motif. But it is an outlook which almost inevitably involves some variant on the theory of a Jewish conspiracy

Muslims and Arabs Adopt European Tropes

In the Arab world, it should be said, the so-called Holocaust "hoax" has been defined from the outset as a Jewish or Zionist conspiracy.<sup>33</sup> It is certainly significant that Arab and Muslim Judeophobes – despite their hatred of the West - have chosen to annex the symbols and expressions of *European* antisemitism without any hesitation (including Holocaust denial) as an integral part of their war against Israel.<sup>34</sup> One finds a growing readiness among Muslims to believe, for example, that the Jews consciously *invented* the "Auschwitz lie," the "hoax" of their own extermination, as part of a diabolical plan to overwhelm Islam and achieve world domination. In this surrealistic, super-Machiavellian scenario, the satanic archetype of the *conspiratorial* Jew – author and beneficiary of the greatest "myth" of the 20th century – achieves a gruesome and novel apotheosis.

One of the attractions of Holocaust denial to Arab Judeophobes evidently lies in what they interpret as its radical challenge to the moral foundations of the Israeli State. Palestinian Arab leaders and intellectuals have been particularly prominent in promoting this endeavor. Thus, Palestinian Hamas leader Khalid Mashaal, appearing on Al-Jazeera TV (July 16, 2007) wished "to make it clear to the West and the German people" that they were being "blackmailed because of what Nazism did to the Zionists, or to the Jews." For Mashaal, it was self-evident "that what Israel did to the Palestinian people is many times worse than what Nazism did to the Jews, and there is exaggeration, which has become obsolete, regarding the issue of the Holocaust." This belief also motivated Mahmoud Abbas (better known as Abu Mazen), the chief PLO architect of the Oslo peace accords and currently head of the Palestinian Authority, to embrace Holocaust denial nearly thirty years ago. In 1984 he authored a work entitled *The Other Side: The Secret Relationship between Nazism and the Zionist Movement* that accused Israel of deliberately inflating the number of Jews killed in the Holocaust. He openly questioned whether gas chambers were really used for extermination. Abu Mazen even suggested that the number of Jewish victims of the Shoah was "even fewer than one million."<sup>35</sup> He has never publicly repudiated these utterly baseless assertions

In Iran, too, Holocaust denial has spread since the early 1980s, alongside Nazi-like caricatures of the "Talmudic Jew," the promotion of the poisonously antisemitic forgery *Protocols of the Elders of Zion*, and repeated calls to eradicate the Zionist "cancer" from the planet.<sup>36</sup> This escalation was a logical step for militant Khomeini-style radicalism, which, since 1979 has totally demonized Zionism as the

enemy of the human race. Hence, it is no surprise to find that the present-day Supreme Guide of Iran, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, could proclaim to his people:

There is evidence which shows that Zionists had close relations with German Nazis and exaggerated statistics on Jewish killings. There is even evidence on hand that a large number of non-Jewish hooligans and thugs of Eastern Europe were forced to emigrate to Palestine as Jews . . . to install in the heart of the Islamic world an anti-Islamic State under the guise of supporting the victims of racism. . . .<sup>37</sup>

Iranian President Ahmadinejad, as we have already noted, has in recent years pushed this kind of denial to a new level of obscenity by repeatedly attacking the Holocaust since 2005 as a "myth" or as despicable "Zionist propaganda." Many Iranian journalists, taking their cue from these reckless utterances, have repeated *ad nauseam* that the "Zionist lobby" uses the Holocaust "as a club with which to beat and extort the West." Such spurious claims can also periodically be heard from the lips of anti-Zionist Western intellectuals.

In December 2006, Iran hosted a much-publicized conference featuring the world's best-known Holocaust deniers – most of them from the Western world. The Iranian Foreign Minister, Manouchehr Mottaki, opened the proceedings, stating that, "If the official version of the Holocaust is thrown in doubt, then the identity and nature of Israel will be thrown in doubt." The participants either questioned the historical fact of the Holocaust or categorically denied its reality, or else distorted the event beyond recognition. The consensus view was that the Holocaust had been grossly manipulated to serve Israel's financial and political interests. The Tehran

conference can be seen as a major symbol of Iran's state-sponsored "anti-Zionist" antisemitism.

#### Palestinian Denial

The Palestinian Mufti of Jerusalem, Sheikh Ikrima Sabri, has also consistently adopted the Iranian-sponsored line, telling the *New York Times*:

[W]e believe the number of six million is exaggerated. The Jews are using this issue, in many ways, also to blackmail the Germans financially. . . . The Holocaust is protecting Israel.<sup>38</sup>

Other Palestinians have also been explicitly "revisionist" in their perceptions of the Holocaust. Hassan al-Agha, professor at the Islamic University in Gaza City, declared on a PA cultural affairs television program back in 1997:

[T]he Jews view it [the Holocaust] as a profitable activity so they inflate the number of victims all the time. In another ten years, I do not know what number they will reach. . . . As you know, when it comes to economics and investments, the Jews have been very experienced even since the days of *The Merchant of Venice*.<sup>39</sup>

As we have already seen, the European intellectual most frequently mentioned as a source of inspiration for contemporary Arab Holocaust deniers is the former French Stalinist (and convert to Islam) Roger Garaudy. Indeed, the trial and conviction of Garaudy in France in 1998 for "negating the Holocaust" made him a hero almost overnight, in much of the Muslim and Arab Middle East. Among his enthusiastic admirers was the former president of Iran, the still influential Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani, who in a sermon in Tehran Radio, declared himself fully convinced that "Hitler had only killed 20,000 Jews and not six million," adding that

"Garaudy's crime derives from the doubt he cast on Zionist propaganda."<sup>40</sup> Rafsanjani is the same "moderate" cleric who, in 2001, proclaimed on "Jerusalem Day" in Tehran that "one atomic bomb would wipe out Israel without a trace," while the Islamic world would only be damaged rather than destroyed by Israeli nuclear retaliation.<sup>41</sup> In the Iranian case, Holocaust denial is openly linked to extreme anti-Zionism, lethal antisemitism, and the sponsorship of global terrorism, driven by the cult of Islamic *jihad*, which relentlessly seeks the eradication of the "tumor called Israel."<sup>42</sup>

The Garaudy Affair underlined the vitality of antisemitic and anti-Zionist Holocaust denial in Iran and the Arab world. Arabic translations of Garaudy's work became best-sellers in many Middle Eastern countries, even though in France he was convicted of inciting racial hatred.<sup>43</sup> Some Arab professionals eagerly offered their services to help Garaudy. The binding ideological cement behind this outpouring of solidarity was a *Protocols*-style antisemitism which definitively branded the Holocaust as a Jewish conspiracy and a diabolical "Zionist invention." Hence the favorable reaction to Garaudy's thesis by so many Arab newspapers and magazines or by prominent Egyptian clerics such as Sheikh Muhammad al-Tantawi, leading Lebanese politicians such as the late President Rafiq Hariri, or well-known Pan-Arab intellectuals such as Mohammed Hassanin Haikal.

It is no accident that Palestinian intellectuals, clerics, and legislators have displayed great reluctance to incorporate any aspect of Holocaust study into their teaching curricula, evidently fearing that it might strengthen Zionist claims to Palestine. Hatem Abd al-Qadar, a Hamas leader, once explained in an internal Palestinian debate that such instruction would represent "a great danger for the

formation of a Palestinian consciousness." The Holocaust, he stressed, was a threat to Palestinian political dreams and religious aspirations. It could undermine the promise by Allah that the *whole of Palestine* was the exclusive sacred possession of the Arabs. Other Palestinian intellectuals proposed sowing "doubts" about the "veracity" of the Holocaust, while calling for an exclusive focus on Zionist "terror," "cruelty," and alleged "massacres" of Palestinians. The Palestinian narrative evidently cannot tolerate any reference to Jewish victims of the Holocaust.<sup>44</sup> Denial Spreads through the Middle East

Since the 1990s, Holocaust denial has become a much broader and widespread phenomenon throughout the Middle East. Since 2000, one can find increasing numbers of high-ranking Iranian, Syrian, Palestinian, Hamas and Hezbollah officials making Holocaust denial statements. In the Egyptian, Jordanian, and Saudi media, where antisemitism has long been rampant, negationist rhetoric concerning the wartime mass murder of European Jews has become a very common theme.<sup>45</sup> This is important to our analysis because Holocaust denial is a particularly malevolent and obnoxious form of racist incitement – one of the most up-to-date rationalizations for hating Jews invented since 1945, thinly disguised under the anodyne mask of revising history. This is why deniers been called assassins of memory, fanatics engaged in a new kind of symbolic genocide against the Jewish people. Where the mobs once cried "Death to the Jews," it is as if the deniers now cynically proclaim that "the Jews never died." If that were true, then the Jews would have successfully fabricated a monstrous (though profitable) lie – itself a highly toxic antisemitic claim.

Holocaust denial, anti-Zionism and antisemitism belong to a common species of bigotry and incitement against the Jewish people that has persisted throughout the

centuries. Anti-Zionism (like Holocaust denial) is, of course, much more recent than antisemitism. However, it is precisely the defamation of Israel which has become in our time *the* primary vehicle for expressing "politically correct" antisemitism – whether it be Islamist, Christian, nationalist, right-wing or left-wing in its inspiration. Both anti-Zionism and antisemitism are essentially teachings of contempt, ideologies of hatred and negation directed against Jewish dignity, the right to collective self-definition and to a Jewish national identity. Both ideologies embody a mind-set bent on diffusing hateful images and distorted perceptions of Jews which link them to a whole gamut of contemporary evils – including racism, militarism, apartheid, ethnic cleansing, fascism, Nazism and genocide. The anti-Zionists and the antisemites are equally determined to transform the Jews (*the* ultimate victims of mass genocide in the 20th century) into criminal perpetrators and evil murderers – exactly as the Church Fathers did with their fabrication of the deicide charge against the Jewish people two thousand years ago.

Neither antisemites nor contemporary anti-Zionists are remotely interested in "criticism" of Jews. They prefer to rely on defamation, demonization or open dehumanization – most of it ideologically motivated. While in democratic Western societies (though not in the Arab-Muslim world) the taboo on classical antisemitism has not yet been completely eroded, anti-Zionist bigots feel free to libel Israel with complete impunity. There are few, if any, legal sanctions available to counter such anti-Zionist vilification, which is often protected as "free speech" or else as the expression of a "legitimate" political viewpoint. Unfortunately, Western liberties have often been exploited in perverse ways to present assaults on Jewish targets as if they were justifiable "revenge" attacks against Israel. In the minds of the jihadists there is

generally no distinction in theory or practice between Israelis and Jews. For that matter, Muslims, Christians as well as “non-believers” have also fallen victim to this indiscriminate Islamist violence.

#### Denying Judaism's Roots in Israel

More recently the Palestinians and their supporters have widened their delegitimization campaign to an all-out negation of Israel's history and the denial of any link between Jews and the Holy Land. Israel's enemies increasingly seek to undermine the very roots of Jewish history, religion, cultural memory and national identity in the land of Zion, by placing a special emphasis on the uniquely "Arab" character of Jerusalem at the expense of the Jews. Already at Camp David in 2000, Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat insistently denied to President Clinton that the Jews had ever built or worshipped in the First and Second Temples in Jerusalem, or indeed that these edifices had even existed. Similarly, the then-Mufti of Jerusalem Ikrama Sabri, in 2001, publicly declared that the Wailing Wall in the Holy City had no connection whatsoever with the Jewish past and was simply part of an organized effort by the "deceitful" Jews to swindle Muslims and the entire Gentile world. Since then, there has been a systematic Arab effort, led by the Palestinian Waqf, to destroy any material traces or archeological vestiges of the ancient Jewish presence in Jerusalem (about three thousand years old) as part of its organized policy of delegitimization directed against Israel.

The fact that the Temples in Jerusalem are mentioned no less than 534 times in the Hebrew Bible and as many as 70 times in the New Testament, does not, of course, deter anti-Jewish or anti-Israel bigots. But Palestinian negationism has nonetheless fallen on fertile soil, drawing on Arab national myths, Islamic fanaticism,

deeply-rooted anti-Jewish currents in Christian theology and the sheer weight of political expediency in the United Nations, and beyond. Once again, antisemitism and anti-Zionism readily converge in their common goal – to dismantle the Jewish State and return the people of Israel to an exilic and largely powerless condition – that of being permanently "wandering Jews" at the mercy of their would-be persecutors.

## Notes

<sup>1</sup> Robert S. Wistrich, *Antisemitism: The Longest Hatred* (New York: Schocken Books, 1994), pp. 64-67.

<sup>2</sup> See Robert S. Wistrich, *A Lethal Obsession. Anti-Semitism from Antiquity to the Global Jihad* (New York: Random House, 2010) for an overview of the subject.

<sup>3</sup> Pierre-André Taguieff, *La nouvelle propagande anti-juive* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 2010), pp. 143-182.

<sup>4</sup> See Zvi Elpeleg, *The Grand Mufti: Haj Amin Founder of the Palestinian National Movement* (London and New York: Routledge, 1993).

<sup>5</sup> Robert Wistrich, *Hitler's Apocalypse* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1985), pp. 172, 176-178, 188.

<sup>6</sup> Andrew G. Bostom (ed.), *The Legacy of Islamic Antisemitism* (New York: Prometheus Books, 2008), pp. 31 ff.

<sup>7</sup> Emmanuel Sivan, "Islamic Fundamentalism, Antisemitism, and Anti-Zionism," in Robert Wistrich (ed.), *Anti-Zionism and Antisemitism in the Contemporary World* (New York: MacMillan, 1990), pp. 74-82.

<sup>8</sup> On Ahmadinejad and the antisemitic Iranian state ideology of "annihilating Israel," see the last chapter of Robert S. Wistrich, *A Lethal Obsession*, op. cit., pp. 879-938.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid., pp. 600-630 for the globalization of these attitudes.

<sup>10</sup> See *Spiegel Online International*, "Ahmadinejad Leading Iran into Isolation: Remove Israel or We Will," Feb. 13, 2006; and MEMRI, Special Dispatch, Iran, June 15, 2006. Iranian Presidential Adviser Mohammad Ali Ramin, "The Resolution of the Holocaust will End in the Destruction of Israel."

<sup>11</sup> Benny Morris, *One State, Two States: Resolving the Israel/Palestine Conflict* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009), p. 31.

<sup>12</sup> Mitchell G. Bard, *Myths and Facts: A Guide to the Arab-Israeli Conflict* (Chevy Chase, MD: American Israeli Cooperative Enterprise, 2006), p. 247.

<sup>13</sup> Morris, *One State, Two States*, op. cit., p. 158.

<sup>14</sup> Robert S. Wistrich, *European Anti-Semitism Reinvents Itself* (New York: The American Jewish Committee, 2005), pp. 1-7.

<sup>15</sup> Quoted by David A. Harris, *In the Trenches: Selected Speeches and Writings of an American Jewish Activist*, Vol. 3, 2002-2003 (Jersey City, New Jersey: Ktav, 2004), p. 361.

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- <sup>16</sup> Robert S. Wistrich, "Anti-Zionism and Antisemitism," in: Michael Fineberg, Shimon Samuels and Mark Weitzman (eds.), *Antisemitism. The Generic Hatred. Essays in Memory of Simon Wiesenthal* (London: Vallentine Mitchell, 2007), pp. 9-13.
- <sup>17</sup> Lawrence Summers, Address at Memorial Church, Harvard University, September 17, 2002. See also the introduction by Ron Rosenbaum to his edited book, *Those Who Forget the Past. The Question of Anti-Semitism* (New York: Random House, 2004).
- <sup>18</sup> Quoted by Todd Gitlin, motherjones.com, June 27, 2002. Also Eli Muller, yaledailynews.com, March 1, 2003 for an example from Yale. For an updated view of the situation today on the Californian campus of Santa Cruz, see Tammi Rossman-Benjamin, "The Academic Legitimation of Anti-Zionism and Efforts to Combat It: A Case Study," in Eunice G. Pollack (ed.), *Antisemitism on the Campus. Past and Present* (Boston: Academic Studies Press, 2011), pp. 393-414.
- <sup>19</sup> Pierre André Taguieff, *La nouvelle propagande . . .*, op. cit., pp. 180-205. See also Robert S. Wistrich, *From Ambivalence to Betrayal. The Left, the Jews and Israel* (Lincoln, Nebraska: The University of Nebraska Press, 2012), pp. 509-534.
- <sup>20</sup> Wistrich, "Anti-Zionism and Antisemitism," op. cit., pp. 13-14.
- <sup>21</sup> Robert S. Wistrich, *From Ambivalence to Betrayal . . .*, op. cit., pp. 60-62.
- <sup>22</sup> Robert S. Wistrich, *A Lethal Obsession*, op. cit., pp. 465-493.
- <sup>23</sup> Luis Roniger, "Antisemitism, Real or Imagined? Chávez, Iran, Israel and the Jews," *Acta* (The Vidal Sassoon International Center for the Study of Antisemitism, Hebrew University of Jerusalem), No. 33, 2009, pp. 1-36.
- <sup>24</sup> See Manfred Gerstenfeld (eds.), *Behind the Humanitarian Mask. The Nordic Countries, Israel and the Jews* (Jerusalem: JCPA, 2008), pp. 18-77.
- <sup>25</sup> *Aftenposten*, August 5, 2006.
- <sup>26</sup> Daniel Jonah Goldhagen, "Grass: Ignorant or Calculating Cynic?," *The Jerusalem Post*, 11 April 2012.
- <sup>27</sup> C. Columbani, "Des universitaires s'affrontent sur le cas Faurisson," *Le Monde*, 30 June 1981; Nadine Fresco, "Les Redresseurs de Morts," *Temps Modernes* (June 1980).
- <sup>28</sup> See the booklet by Werner Cohn, *The Hidden Alliances of Noam Chomsky* (New York, 1988), pp. 11-12. The Holocaust deniers of the Institute for Historical Review approvingly published Noam Chomsky's article, "All Denials of Free Speech Undercut a Democratic Society," in its house organ, the *Journal of Historical Review* 7, no. 1 (Spring 1986): 123-127.
- <sup>29</sup> Jacques Givet, *Le Cas Vergès* (Paris, 1986).

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<sup>30</sup> See Pierre Guillaume, *Droit et Histoire* (Paris: La Vieille Taupe, 1986).

<sup>31</sup> "Le faux pas de l'abbé Pierre," *L'Express*, 25 April 1996, p. 33; Eric Conan and Sylviane Stein, "Ce qui a fait chuter l'abbé Pierre," *L'Express*, 2 May 1996, pp. 20-25.

<sup>32</sup> On Nolte, the West German *Historikerstreit*, and its implications, there is a significant literature. See Richard J. Evans, *In Hitler's Shadow. West German Historians and the Attempt to Escape from the Nazi Past* (New York, 1989), pp. 24-91. A good example of Nolte's own approach can be found in Ernst Nolte, "Between Myth and Revisionism? The Third Reich in the Perspective of the 1980s," in *Aspects of the Third Reich*, edited by H. W. Koch (New York, 1985), pp. 17-38.

<sup>33</sup> For a probing analysis of the links between Arab anti-Zionist and antisemitic demonology, the *Protocols of the Elders of Zion*, and Holocaust "revisionism," see Pierre-André Taguieff, *Les Protocoles des Sages de Sion. Faux et Usages d'un Faux* (Paris, 1992), pp. 295-363.

<sup>34</sup> Goetz Nordbruch, *The Socio-Historical Background of Holocaust Denial in Arab Countries*, ACTA no. 17 (Jerusalem: Vidal Sassoon International Center for the Study of Antisemitism, Hebrew University of Jerusalem, 2001); see also Pierre-André Taguieff, *La Judéophobie des Modernes. Des Lumières au Jihad mondial* (Paris, 2008).

<sup>35</sup> See ADL, *Holocaust Denial in the Middle East. The Latest Anti-Israel Propaganda Theme* (New York, 2001), pp. 5-6. Abu Mazen never retracted his Holocaust denial book despite a request to do so from the Simon Wiesenthal Center in Los Angeles.

<sup>36</sup> See *Imam* (March 1984 and May 1984) – a publication of the Iranian Embassy in London; also n.a., *The Imam against Zionism* (n.p.: Ministry of Islamic Guidance, Islamic Republic of Iran, 1983), for the Ayatollah Khomeini's malevolent view of Israel.

<sup>37</sup> *The Jerusalem Post*, 25 April 2001. A year earlier, the conservative English-language Iranian newspaper, the *Tehran Times*, had insisted in an editorial that the Holocaust was "one of the greatest frauds of the 20th century." This prompted a complaints by the British MP Louise Ellman to the Iranian ambassador in London: *Agence France-Presse*, 14 May 2000.

<sup>38</sup> *New York Times*, 26 March 2000. Sabri added: "It's certainly not our fault if Hitler hated the Jews. Weren't they pretty much hated everywhere?"

<sup>39</sup> Quoted in ADL, *Holocaust Denial in the Middle East*, p. 12.

<sup>40</sup> ADL, *Holocaust Denial in the Middle East*, pp. 8-9.

<sup>41</sup> The remarks were made at Friday prayers held at the University of Tehran on December 15, 2001 and widely reported in the world press. A day earlier on Iranian

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TV, Rafsanjani stated: "The establishment of the State of Israel is the worst event in history. The Jews living in Israel will have to migrate once more."

<sup>42</sup> It is no accident that European Holocaust deniers like the Austrian engineer, Wolfgang Fröhlich, and the Swiss Jürgen Graf, are welcomed and resident in Iran. See ADL, *Holocaust Denial in the Middle East*, pp. 7-8.

<sup>43</sup> Roger Garaudy, *Les Mythes Fondateurs de la politique israélienne* (Samizdat, 1996). A former Catholic, then a Communist, Garaudy became a Muslim in 1982 and married a Jerusalem-born Palestinian woman. On the echoes in France, see Pierre-André Taguieff, "L'Abbé Pierre et Roger Garaudy. Négationisme, Antijudaïsme, Antisionisme," *Esprit*, no. 8-9 (1996), p. 215; Valérie Igounet, *Histoire du Négationisme en France* (Paris, 2000), pp. 472-483. See also her newly published biography, *Robert Faurisson, portrait d'un négationniste* (Paris: Denoël, 2012) which among other things, casts light on Garaudy's borrowings from Faurisson and the often tense relations between them.

<sup>44</sup> *Al-Risala* (Gaza), 13 April 2000. In *Al-Risala*, 21 August 2003, Abdelaziz al-Rantisi – then the second most important leader of the Hamas – insisted that the Zionists had invented and diffused the "Holocaust lie" to divert attention from their wicked crimes against the Palestinians. I heard him say something similar in Gaza in May 2003, when I interviewed him for a British Television Channel Four documentary, "Blaming the Jews," for which I acted as the chief historical adviser.

<sup>45</sup> See Meir Litvak and Esther Webman, *From Empathy to Denial. Arab Responses to the Holocaust* (London, 2009).