Anti-Semitism and anti-Muslim racism in Europe

By Yves Coleman of *Ni patries, ni frontières* (France)
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1. A long-term outlook is necessary to understand the present situation

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The first one stretches from 1945 to 1974: it was characterized by an “unprecedented economic growth, a low unemployment and a solid welfare provision” which went along with a growing integration of foreign workers.

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2. Before analysing these phenomenon and their extent today, one has to recall some of the important political changes which started in the mid-1970s and set the context for anti-Semitism and Muslim racism today.

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Around 1.1 million Jews live in the European Union and 19 million Muslims. It’s obviously very difficult to compare the situation of an ethnic/cultural/religious minority living in Europe today, and in some cases only during the last 40 years.

Nevertheless, many militants (inspired by left academic researchers) compare anti-Semitism in the 30s to the situation of Muslims in Europe today.

This comparison is flawed, for many reasons, but it remains a fact that the anti-Islam paranoia which dominates Western media, and the long and complex relations between the Islamic world and Western powers nourished extended racist and xenophobic visions against Muslim workers, “alien” or not, living in Europe.

For definitions of anti-Semitism and anti-Muslim racism this text mainly uses those provided by the European Fundamentals Rights Agency (FRA) with a few additions. Obviously they have not been conceived by so-called “revolutionaries” and do not have a great theoretical significance. They are clearly focused on discrimination: this legalistic and multiculturalist perspective deliberately neglects, or even completely erases, social inequalities, the division of society into classes, and refuses to take into account discriminations if they are not based on ethnic, racial, religious, or gender peculiarities.

In addition, if you study in detail, from a historical and anthropological point of view, anti-Semitism and all the issues linked to the cultural, religious, economic and military contacts between Islam and the “Christian West”, contacts which have given birth to today’s anti-Muslim racism in Europe, then the differences between anti-Muslim racism and anti-Semitism appear so huge that you can no longer engage in any comparison – or only so from a purely demagogic angle.

The too famous “comparing memories” can lead you to compare the statistical figures of the Armenian, Jewish, Gypsy, Cambodian, Tufts genocide with the victims of the transatlantic slave trade or the number of victims of colonialism; and then you will be inevitably led to establish a dangerous hierarchy between this evil and that one, as if you can, go as far as suggesting that capitalism is preparing a “muslimicide” analogous to Hitler’s Judeocide, as if Europe of the 2015-16 is in a similar position to European Jews in the mid 30s...

This article deliberately takes a minimalist focus: the issue of democratic rights for all human beings, whatever are their origins and philosophical beliefs. In this limited frame, the great advantage of the FRA definitions is that they focus on concrete, identifiable, phenomena, which we want to take up and develop in order to see if they don’t cover their more general socio-economic causes.

The polemics which have been launched between social scientists – and by extension between radical social left activists – around the content of these two definitions often hide ideological discourses, including in our own ranks, provided we open our eyes and are ready to lose... some “friends” or “comrades”.

To this very general definition, one can add that anti-Zionism can sometimes, not always, lead to anti-Semitic conclusions: when Jews are exaggerated of excelling the others, when they are denied the right to self-determination, granted to all the other peoples living on this planet; when classic anti-Judaic and anti-Semitic clichés are used to characterize Israel or Israelis; when Israeli policy is systematically compared to that of the Nazis when Jews are considered as a “fifth column”, a “lobby” of “cosmopolitans” people who are only loyal to Israel, etc.

ANTI-MUSLIM RACISM

Anti-Muslim racism ("Islamophobia") for the European Union and Organisation of Islamic Cooperation is an ideology which sees Islam as a "monolithic bloc", sharing “no common values with other cultures”, "incompatible with the Western way of life", "backward and barbaric", "more sexist” than all the other religions, “supportive of terrorism” and of an aggressive politics leading to military conflicts. It is not correct.

Anti-Muslim racists justify “discriminatory practices towards Muslims and the exclusion from mainstream society”, practices which they want to enshrine in laws.

To the elements of this FRA definition, one can add that anti-Zionism is often mixed to (and fuses with) anti-Semitic, anti-African, anti-Arab or anti-Turkish racism, up to the point it’s difficult to distinguish between them.

Today in the Western world, anti-few racism and Anti-Muslim racism are not, most of the time, religiously motivated. They can mobilise “anti-capitalist” or “anti-imperialist” plot theories which denounce the role of the “Jews”, or present Islam as the main threat to human civilisation today. Anti-Semites and anti-Muslim racists hide themselves behind a veil of radicalism and a pseudo-humanist reasoning; some pretend they are particularly moved by the sufferings of the Palestinians; others that they only want to defend women’s rights and democracy; some pretend European Muslims should not be blamed for what happens in the Middle East and North Africa, but constantly blame European or American Jews for what happens in Israel; some consider Europeans Muslims should spend all their time condemning Daesh (ISIS), Boko Haram or al-Qaeda, but defend any military aggression of Tsahal, any “targeted murders” with their inevitable “collateral damage”,... or condone racists for racist Israeli settlers or Israeli far-right politicians. It’s rather easy to unmask these discourses, including in our own ranks, provided we open our eyes and are ready to lose... some “friends” or “comrades”.

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After 1975, a new period started, in which we are still living now, with growing manifestations of violence against migrants: street-level murders, fire bombings by fascist youth gangs, skinheads attacking migrants or ethnic minorities, police “blunders”, etc. According to the British Home Office, “racially motivated incidents” rose from 4,283 in the early 70s to 7,785 in 1992 in the UK. We can add that “In 2011/12, there were 47,678 ‘racist incidents’ recorded by the police in England and Wales. On average, that is about 130 incidents per day”, according to the Institute of Race Relations website.

Neil Macmaster recalls there were around 250 racist incidents per year in Germany before 1990 but the numbers rose to 6,721 incidents in 1991 and several murderous attacks were organised on refugee hotels between 1991 and 1993. Exactly like the anti-fascist movement in France, the Anti Nazi League in Britain, “depicted these young males as fascist descendants of Mosley, Hitler, Goebbels and Mussolini.” According to Macmaster, this was a political mistake, and I think he is right, although he does not propose any alternative politics. Most of these “fascists” were often coming from “a deprived background of family breakdown and educational failure who used anti-immigrant scapegoating as a means to assert their own self-esteem and priority as ‘German’ or ‘English’ over and against ‘parasitic outsiders’” and did not belong to fascist groups. The youth subculture of these marginal violent men praised “masculinity”, “bravery”, “group solidarity”. They despised women and homosexuals when they did not harass or beat them up.

According to Neil Macmaster, this new social process coincided with three new political phenomena:

• The appearance of a “new racism”, based on culture and not on race, called in France “differentialist racism” and propagated by the “Nouvelle Droite” (New right), the GRECE and Alain de Benoist. This ideological operation ended far right or neo-fascist leaders, once they had assimilated the lesson, to deny they were racists and to reverse the accusation against the left, or today against the “bourgeois-bohemian” middle classes (“bobbies” in France), labelled as anti-British in the UK, “anti-White racists” in France, etc.;
• The formation of national-populist parties which stressed much more the importance of national identity and surreptitiously introduced a hidden cultural (anti-Muslim) racism: French Front National; Sweden Democrats; True Finns; Austrian Freiheitliche Partei Österreich — FPO; Italian Northern League; Lega Nord; Dutch Party for Freedom — PVV; Belgian Vlaams Belang, etc.;
• The adoption by mainstream right and left parties (including social-democracy) of a “common sense racism” based on the refusal to mix cultures and wishing to impose the national “culture” of the majority on the new foreign-born minorities. In France, Giscard d’Estaing, Charles Pasqua and later Nicolas Sarkozy promoted this line.

CULTURE

The same evolution took place in Germany, Sweden, Denmark or the Netherlands: in each nation-State, mainstream politicians and conservative intellectuals tried to reshape and impose a supposedly century-old definition of French, German, Dutch or Swedish “culture”, “national” or “Republican values”, invoking a strong “Christian” or “Judeo-Christian” tradition, according to the countries.

Neil Macmaster notes that this general right-wing turn was hidden by a “Janus-faced attitude towards racism.” European governments adopted many laws, resolutions and recommendations against racism, anti-Semitism and discrimination; they condemned “Islamophobia” and “anti-Semitism”, promoted “multiculturalism” and even “inter-cultural” or (worse, at least from an atheist point of view) “interfaith dialogue”; but this was only a “smokescreen for anti-immigrant acts that have undermined ethnic minorities and reinforced highly negative stereotypes.”

One can quote two striking examples to illustrate this “Janus-faced attitude” of the European Union:

• Of 800,000 Romanian Jews, 400,000 were exterminated during the Second World War. Among the remaining 400,000 Jews, most of them progressively emigrated to Israel or the United States. Today, only 7,000 to 9,000 Jews live in Romania, most of them being quite old. It was not until 2004 that President Iliescu acknowledged that the Jews had been persecuted in Romania — and he did that only to comply with the European Union recommendations and evade sanctions. Therefore, he decided that 9 October would become Holocaust Day. But the Romanian political life remained unchanged and the Greater Romania Party, Romania Mare, continued to spread its anti-Semitic propaganda in the media.

• Corneliu Vadim Tudor, who gathered 3.3 million votes when he was defeated by Iliescu (6.6 million votes) in 2000 declared on national TV that “we [the Romanian people] are not at their [the worldwide Jewish mafia] mercy, and we are not one of their colonies” and he was not prosecuted; the anti-Semitic Iron Guard is hailed in all sorts of events, Jewish cemeteries are regularly desecrated, etc. And Romania has never been condemned by the European Union.

What is the function of anti-Muslim racism in this general pattern? Neil Macmaster’s hypotheses, although formulated in 2001, help us to better understand how some far right and fascist leaders of the 70s and 80s have managed to create national-populist “respectable” national-populist parties which have gained more and more electoral influence. He considers “anti-Muslim” racism has a double function:
II. The growth of anti-Muslim racism

If one is interested in anti-Muslim racism, one has to study not only the statistics of the crimes documented by the cops and Muslim associations, but also the structural, institutional, discrimination operating in education, housing and employment.

Anti-Muslim racism takes different forms, according to the specific history of each nation-State. In some countries (France, Austria, Germany, United Kingdom, Greece) the majority of so-called “Muslims” enjoy, at least officially, the same civil rights as the nationals; in case they have been naturalised or because their parents already had local citizenship.

In other States – Italy (3%), Switzerland (20%) – only a small fraction of Muslims enjoy citizenship rights, which is obviously a very powerful obstacle to them being treated as equals by the “natives” and the local “democratic” State.

Some European states have a long experience of direct colonial rule, while others have not had colonies in Asia. The colonial past obviously influences the way “native” citizens treat migrants, including Muslim workers.

Although there are important national differences inside the European Union, we can spot three common patterns to the discriminations and social exclusion affecting “Muslim” workers, be they “native” or “foreign”:

- A higher level of unemployment and a lower level of education.
- Basic anti-working class discriminations blend with national and religious discriminations, the statistics presented here are obviously affected by a certain bias (apart from the ideological bias of those who collected these numbers).

One has to take into account that a greater school failure rate or an inferior job qualification do not always reflect racist or religious discriminations but cultural inequalities linked to very different class standards. For example, when young migrants decide to quit studies and not go to university, because they want to help their parents who have low paid jobs; because they can’t study and work at the same time; because they want to escape from their parents’ and community’s control, or even because they don’t master the local language as well as native-born youth, it’s not always because these young people are victims of a specific racial discrimination.

It’s because they are working class boys and girls with limited financial means at their disposal and because, belonging to the working class, they don’t master the right strategies to climb up the social scale as easily and quickly as the children of the lower and upper middle classes.

In Belgium, 38% of the Moroccans and Turks are unemployed and only 6.1% have a higher education degree. “One large temporary employment agency told [us] it had a special unit to record requests from clients that could be at odds with European anti-discrimination legislation with the aim of making those clients comply with it.”…

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crease. These discriminations are very accurately described in a FASILD report: discrimination by skin colour and/or name; housing discrimination and a third one, strangely labelled “community discrimination”: for example when a Chinese restaurant manager hires only Chinese cooks or waitresses; or when a building company hires only workers coming from the same country, region or ethnic group. But the FASILD acknowledges that “the multiplication of positive discriminations [...] by the process of exclusion in France leads to increased rejection and exclusion from the other categories of youth.” This report describes discrimination in education, and in the housing sector, both private and public. Even if it does not mention the religion of these youth we know, for sure, that a good proportion of them are “Muslims” – or treated as such.

Women are also especially discriminated against: “(...) Muslim women frequently hold jobs in the mobile tertiary sector, comprising work as private or domestic service and shop-keeping; only 16% are salaried in the public sector with its associated benefits.” “Muslim wearing a hijab choose to be self-employed or to work at home to avoid discrimination.”

In the United Kingdom, “South Asian Muslims are one of the most disadvantaged ethnic minority groups in the country.” Statistics show that “over 60% of Pakistanis and Bangladeshis are in poverty compared to 20% of whites”, moreover they have the largest percentage of school leavers without any qualifications: “(...) Muslims have the lowest rate of employment of any religious group with only 47% of men and 24% of women in employment.” Muslims tend to be concentrated “at the lowest end of the job market. Many hold part-time, flexible, temporary jobs and are invisible in statistics.”

“The United Kingdom presents a rare example of educational data collection that specifically identifies students as Muslim. (...) In 2004 a third (33 per cent) of Muslims of working age in Great Britain had no qualifications – the highest proportion for any religious group. They are also the least likely to have degrees or equivalent qualifications (12 per cent)”.

In Germany “Muslim children are “being over-represented in the academic schools (Hauptschulen and special education) and under-represented in the schools for academic ‘achievers’ (the Realschulen and the Gymnasien, the latter being the gateway to university).”

As regards the workers, “(...) the sectors with the highest levels of unemployment are those with the highest proportion of Muslim immigrants” (for example 20% for the Turks, 11% for the Germans). “In Switzerland, permanent resident migrants are three times more likely to be unemployed than Swiss nationals. In Italy, (...) the majority (of Muslim workers) change or lose jobs frequently, leading to precariously employed (...).” As a consequence of the difficulties in securing employment in the formal sector, they become over-represented in the informal economy and are therefore employed by unscrupulous bosses who use clandestine workers for long hours and small pay.

“It’s not surprising, therefore that one can identify a significant rise in Muslim entrepreneurship in all of the 8 European countries’ studied. Muslim workers tend to ‘take advantage of social networks (e.g. family labour) and ethnic economies in the city’ (in other words, real social problems linked to the functioning of capitalism) and put the blame on (Muslim) “foreigners” and radical Muslims. Scapegoating Islam offers the possibility of delivering a so-called “explanation” and a simple “solution” to evils which affect all workers, whatever their origins or beliefs.

Muslims are supposedly “prone to espouse anti-Western values which lead many to condone so-called Islamic terrorism” - Muslims individuals as well as Muslim associations are constantly “invited” to dissociate themselves from jihadist groups, a pressure which becomes sometimes so unbearable that a few pupils expressed some provocative remarks in classroom discussions, in France, after the 17 jihadist executions of 7, 8 and 9 of January in Paris. The silly reactions of a tiny minority of very young pupils (one was 8 years old) were used and dramatised by the media, a manoeuvre which reinforced the dangerous equation Muslims – fundamentalists – terrorists.

Many Europeans explain that “Muslims threaten national security” (38% of British, 28% of Germans); “object to their own child marrying Muslim” (51% of British, 37% of Germans, 28% of Italians); “hold unfavourable opinion of Muslims” (23% of British, 38% of French and 30% of Germans); think that Muslims “do not respect other cultures” (37% of British, 42% of French, 48% of Germans, 60% of Italians and 42% of Dutch), etc.

Obviously, the questions of this international poll, as of many other polls and enquiries, are phrased in a certain way, and we know that the formulation strongly influences the answers. Most people who answer this kind of polls know little about Islam and have few Muslim friends or none (55% of...
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British, 61% of Germans, 67% of Italians and 70% of Spaniards possess no Muslim friends; they react in function of what mainstream TV programs show them everyday: images of bloody murders and attacks, violent demonstrations, war.

The accumulation of negative polls about Muslims also contributes to reinforce racist stereotypes which obviously we have to fight with our limited means. According to the survey (Sun and Daily Mail) as well as a more “respectable” daily (The Independent) regularly show a negative image of Muslims on all subjects: faith schools (which are a minority in the UK compared to Christian ones), madrassas, forced marriages, domestic violence, etc. Muslims are presented as “outside the nation” and Muslim men as dangerous predators for English women, etc.

In Norway, the Progress Party wages a permanent campaign against Islam; its sympathisers blame Muslims for the growth of criminality and consider “they” exploit social security benefits, “don’t contribute to national culture” and “should not be given the same rights”, but, strangely enough, xenophobic bigots do not dislike Muslim migrants more than migrants of general origin. Many leaders present them as a “fifth column that wants to change the core values and the political system in Norwegian society.”

Having pointed all this negative media propaganda against Muslims, one has also to recognise that in countries where “multiculturalism” is the official ideology (like Britain) the situation is maybe less bad than in countries where “multiculturalism” is looked at with suspicion (France, Germany). Even if “multiculturalism” is, in reality, a more or less subtle way to impose a universal capitalist pseudo-“culture” based on the maximisation of profit, technical domination and commodification of ideas, products and human beings; even if it does not enable deep and rich connections and interactions between different cultures (outside the academic elites), this propaganda give the illusion, to the opposed members of national or religious minorities (in this case Muslims), of being better regarding the dominant nation.

3) Muslim religious practices are severely criticised (while Christian and Jewish practices are considered as “normal” and “civilised”). This is shown by all the polemics generated by the desire to build new mosques, the right of women to wear a hijab at work or in public institutions, the question of halal food in schools, hospitals and prisons, the existence of prayer rooms in company premises, etc.

Right and left French politicians have been active in promoting laws against the hijab and burqa, but did not move a finger to guarantee the right for Muslims to have decent places to pray.

In Italy, Maurizio Gasparri, a former minister of Berlusconi

About the ambiguities of the “Islamophobia” concept

I tried not to use the word “Islamophobia” in this article and chose expressions like “anti-Muslim paranoia”, “anti-Arab”, “anti-African” and “anti-Muslim racism”, in line with what Ethan Hembroff, according to Solidarity (www.workersliberty.org/node/23237).

Among many other reasons, I prefer not to use the word “Islamophobia” because:  
• The phenomenon involved is not a simple phobia (fear) but a paranoia, therefore much more serious than a simple fear;
• This concept is manipulated by Islamists and the 57 States of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation to prevent any criticism both of political Islam and Islamic religion;
• It’s used by left militants and social scientists who refuse to criticise religion; for example, Clive D. Field considers the rejection of sharia courts in Britain an “Islamophobic” prejudice!

Another social scientist writes about Satanic Verses: “Little attention was ever given to the Muslims’ own perceptions and feelings of offence and hurt laying underneath the public demonstrations around the Rushdie Affair” as if Khomeini’s fatwa against Rushdie was a simple joke.

And in the same book, Ahe Sander writes: “The Swedes have to realise that Sweden is going to contain an increasing number of “unmeltable” individuals and groups, of which Muslim and Islamic ones are prime examples, and that every attempt to melt them down by force for casting in the traditional Swedish mould is going to be counterproductive in the long-run. It’s the sense that it will make them think more strongly around their religion and ethnicity, thereby only – from the point of view of the workers in the Swedish melting works – making the problem worse.”

Then, the author rightly criticises forced integration imposed on migrants, but at the same time he does not seem to understand that “Islam” is not a monolith and is divided into many schools of thought. In his essay, he describes in detail the most reactionary, anti-secular views of the Muslims he met in Sweden if they could represent all Muslim believers living in his country! He thinks one should let the most conservative “leaders” of Muslim communities maintain their own “collective traditions”, as if these “traditions” did not threaten individual freedoms of Swedish Muslim citizens themselves! And that’s what he calls a “fair balance between equity and freedom”.

In regard to imaginary “communities” whose self-proclaimed representatives want to impose a “traditional” law on their cultural/religious group, we can’t just look away and forget the necessity of defending democratic rights for everyone... including Muslim workers.

One can observe the same contradictions in Amnesty International’s report of April 2012: “States must make measures to protect women from being pressured or coerced by third parties to dress in certain ways, and in so far as social, cultural or religious norms prescribing dress codes are a reflection of discrimination against women, the state has a positive obligation to take steps to prevent such discrimination.”

One can’t innocently blame a community because it indoctrinates its members and disseminates a reactionary ideology! Such a criticism, from outside of a “Left” (which is always considered “racist” by its leaders ... We must therefore make a choice and take this risk or else... shut up."

However, to impose a general prohibition on religious and cultural symbols and dress purporting to address discrimination within a community is itself discriminatory, and compounds and reinforces the idea that discrimination can be legitimate. Moreover, such a prohibition negates the right to freedom of expression of those women who choose to wear religious and cultural symbols and dress.

In other words, Amnesty washes its hands and throws all its principles into the dustbin. It refuses to criticise “religious and cultural symbols and dress” and “religious and social norms” in the name of “freedom of expression”. In fact, very concretely, its position supports the AKP reactionary views concerning its own “collective traditions”, as if these “traditions” did not threaten individual freedoms of Muslims themselves! But let’s continue our reading: “This implies that state-imposed restrictions may be necessary in specific circumstances to protect women against pressure or coercion, including violence or threats of violence, by their families or communities, to force them into wearing certain religious and cultural symbols and dress.”

COMMUNITY

Once more, who can measure and decide if a “community” is imposing discrimination when it pushes its members to act or dress in a certain way? It’s actually the function and role of an efficient community leadership to exert strong pressure on its members. The adoption of this concept leads also more moderate academics to use dubious arguments, like Adam Sutcliffe who writes that Jews are “relatively affluent”, “disproportionately visible in politics, the professions and cultural industries, and their diverse voices are clearly heard in the media.”

It didn’t occur to this distinguished professor at King’s College London, that he could have written exactly the same superficial remark about the “Parisian gay lobby”; in fact, the French far right denounces the “homosexuals” who are “disproportionately visible in politics, the professions and cultural industries”, live in the wealthy Marais district, are well-introduced in the show business and media and belong to powerful networks which include Bertrand Delanoë, former Socialist mayor of Paris, and Jack Lang, former minister of Culture. Sutcliffe could have used the same kind of clichés about the so-called “disproportionate” influence of the Freemasons in French society.

We can be sure Adam Sutcliffe uses clichés, because, in one of the rare studies available about socio-demographic composition of French Jews (La population juive de France: socio-démographie et identité) de Doris Bensimon et Sergio Della Pergola, Editions du CNRS, 1986) the authors show that French Jews are not all “relatively affluent”: 21.4% are “managers in industry and commerce” (not big company heads but mostly small craftsmen and shop keepers); 32 % are white and blue collar workers; 18.4% are junior managers and 25.3% are senior managers and professionals.

And I’m sure the same complex class analysis could be made about Jewish communities in Britain or elsewhere if left intellectuals were not so lazy.
who started his career in the “post-fascist” MSI, declared in January 2009: “The pseudo-prayers in Milan and in front of the Colosseum have nothing to do with religion – they are threatening and intimidatory acts towards the Italian people. Those who take part should be identified by the police and possibly expelled from our country. People must not use prayer as a political weapon!”

A declaration which echoes the program of the Platform for Catalonia26: “The Islamic immigration, massive in Catalonia, threatens our European identity heritage (respect for personal and collective freedom, democracy as a mean to take decisions, Greco-Latin culture, Christian religion, languages of Catalonia or popular traditions).” Therefore it’s not surprising that local populations “held public protests opposing the opening of new places of worship, sometimes as soon as Muslim organisations made public their intention to seek a licence to do so”27.

In Switzerland, between 1968 and 2000, seven “popular initiatives” were organised around the restriction of foreigners’ rights and helped to spread xenophobic, and therefore anti-Muslim, ideas. In this context, the Swiss People’s Party of Christoph Blocher developed its nationalist program and was the driving force which successfully organised the “popular initiative”, which consists in collecting more than 100,000 signatures, and then provoked the anti-minaret referendum in 2009, obviously in the name of the defence of personal and collective freedom, democracy as a mean to take decisions.

And Switzerland became the first country in the world to include a ban on minarets in its Constitution, while there were only four minarets on the whole of its territory!

III. The growth of anti-Semitism in Europe

If one wants to measure the existence of anti-Semitism one can’t just rely on criminal statistics even if these numbers are appalling. For example, in Europe, anti-Semitic violent incidents oscillated around 150 per year in the 1970s and 1980s; since the 1990s, they reach between 500 and 1,000 per year. Anti-Semitism is growing, even if the left strongly denies it.

The statistical quantitative rise of anti-Semitic incidents corresponds also, at least in France, to a qualitative rise of barbarism: in 2012, when a French jihadist entered in a Jewish school and killed one by one three Jewish children, French anti-Semitism evidently entered a new phase. According to the Kantor Database for the Study of Contemporary Antisemitism and Racism “acts of violence (arson, weapon attacks, weaponless attacks, serious harassment) and vandalism perpetrated against Jewish individuals and Jewish private and community property worldwide” have considerably grown from 1989 to 2013: from 78 to 554 violent incidents with a peak of 1,118 in 200928.

To understand this phenomenon, one has to read the numerous testimonies (collected by the European Fundamental rights Agency – FRA – or NGOs) which describe how daily life has become difficult for European Jews since the last twenty years.

In France, for example, according to the SCPJ29: “In 2014, the number of anti-Semitic acts recorded on French soil has doubled. They increased to 851 versus 423 in 2013 (...). There were 241 violent acts in 2014 versus 105 in 2013. (...) 51 percent of racist acts committed in France in 2014 targeted Jews. (...) The 30-per cent increase in racist attacks committed in France in 2014 compared to 2013 comprises exclusively an increase in anti-Semitic acts. Indeed, racist acts, excluding anti-Semitic acts, that were recorded in 2014 decreased by 5 percent compared to 2013.”

In general, European Jews have the (fully justified) impression that the main media (not to speak about the Net, Facebook, YouTube, etc.) have a “pro-Jewish” activity and often implicitly or explicitly anti-Semitic orientation (caricatures of Israeli leaders published in the mainstream press: permanent comparisons between Nazism and Zionism, use of old Christian anti-Judaic clichés, etc.). This distrust towards the media is not the product of “Jewish paranoia” as leftists (including anti-Zionist Jews like the French UJEP which is mainly composed of... non-Jews despite its title) often say, but it obviously depends on each newspaper, radio station and television channel. If we take al-Jazeera English as an evaluation criterion, even the most critical programs on the BBC and Radio France Internationale will appear compliant towards Israel. But one has also to keep in mind that the 6,000 Jews and many associations consulted by the European Agency for Fundamental rights or the various Jewish community organisations are not “anti-Zionist”.

PERCEPTIONS

And what’s true about the Jewish perception of anti-Semitism also applies to the Muslim perception of so-called “Islamophobia” by Muslim community organisations funded or not by “Muslim” States which have their own agenda.

All community perceptions are biased, as regards discrimination, especially when such discrimination are not included in legislation and depend on hidden relations of power and force between the “autochthonous population” and foreign national, ethnic or religious minorities.

“On 21 February, 2014, the German daily Süddeutsche Zeitung published a caricature of Mark Zuckerberg, co-founder of Facebook, showing him as an octopus with a big hooked nose trying to control the internet. (...) The caricature of Zuckerberg is very similar to a Nazi caricature from 1938 depicting Winston Churchill as an octopus clapping the world. The caricaturist (...) apologised and explained he had’t been aware of the parallels to the antisemitic representation done by the Nazis”30.

“On 5 August 2012, the German daily Stuttgarter Zeitung published a caricature (...) of Israel’s Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, showing him poisoning the ‘dove of Middle East peace’31.

In Italy, “(...) a cartoon (...) appeared on the front page of the Italian newspaper La Stampa on 3 April 2002. This was during the second Palestinian Intifada, when the Israel Defence Forces were besieging the Church of Nativity in Bethlehem. The cartoon depicted a baby Jesus in a crèche. Seeing an Israeli tank, little Jesus asks, “Are they going to kill me for a second time?”

In Italy, about 100 websites propagating anti-Semitism have been listed, not to mention the chat forums and blogs which disseminate their references and texts on the major social networks.

In Hungary the fascist party Jobbik “does not try to hide its true face. During a demonstration in front of the Israeli Embassy in November 2012, the party leader, Gabor Vona said that ‘Israel operates the world’s largest concentration camp’32.

The daily El Mundo published in November 2012 an article by Antonio Gala claiming that Jews were “more a race (...) than a people” and comparing the Israeli government to the Nazis.

left anti-Zionism takes a more and more anti-Semitic direction as testified both by left and radical left analyses and political alliances with far-right Islamist groups (Muslim Brothers, Participation et Spiritualité Musulmane33, etc.) which lead to anti-Semitic slogans in “pro-Palestinian” demonstrations in Europe, every time the Israeli army attacks the Gaza strip, during the two intifadas, etc.

26. Ibid.
28. Quoted in Choice and prejudice... p. 17
29. The Platform for Catalonia is a small regional far right party, mainly anti-Muslim, which is slowly progressing (from 17 to 67 municipal councillors), even if it collected only 2.3% of the votes in 2011. It was warmly greeted by Marine Le Pen at that time, as she was and is following the same line aimed at getting strong local roots, with unfortunately a much greater success as shown by the latest local elections in France (1546 municipal councillors in 2014, and 62 departmental councillors in 2015).
30. Choice and Prejudice... p. 85
34. Antisemitism Worldwide 2013, General Analysis, p. 47.
35. Quoted in Brian Klug, “What do we mean when we say ‘anti-Semitism’? Echoes of shattering glass” (conference of 2013 available on the Net).
37. Participation et Spiritualité Musulmane (PSM) is a reactionary organisation which participated in the massive anti-gay marriage demonstrations organised by the Catholic Church, the far right and part of the right in 2013 and is linked to the Moroccan Islamist movement Al Ahd Wal Ihsane.
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According to a research made by the Technical University of Berlin, 60% of anti-Semitic messages, letters, and call-ins sent to the Israeli embassy in Berlin and to the Central Council of German Jews were sent by educated Germans, including university professors and priests, and only 3% came from right-wing extremists.

European national-populist or far right parties have liberalized the expression of xenophobic and racist feelings as well as anti-Semitic prejudices (with coded words or not — in the case of Holocaust mockery or denial).

In Hungary, Jobbik, the third largest party, gained 17% of the vote. It has a militia, the Hungarian Guard, which regularly attacks Roma and is inspired by the Hungarian Nazi Arrow Party which participated in the extermination of Hungarian 530,000 Jews. It uses anti-Semitism including blood libel, as one of their MPs (Zsolt Bárath) did in April 2012, without any intervention from the Chamber’s president.

In 2012, Marton Gyongyosi, a Jobbik MP, “called for the authorities to compile a national list of Hungarian Jews, especially those in Parliament and government, who represent what he described as a ‘national security risk’.”

The example of Golden Dawn in Greece is the most well-known: In June 2012, this fascist party won 18 seats in the Greek parliament. “On 7 February Golden Dawn MP Ioannis Lagos submitted an interpellation to the Greek Parliament questioning the country marking International Holocaust Remembrance Day on 27 January and the teaching of Holocaust in Greek schools. In mid May 2013 Golden Dawn lawmaker Papas re-affirmed his admiration for Hitler and national socialism during a session of the Greek Parliament. Later in the same week Greece’s parliament ejected a Golden Dawn lawmaker and shouts of ‘Heil Hitler’ were heard in the chamber. (...) Golden Dawn leader Nikos Michaloliakos, had publicly and repeatedly denied the Holocaust in Spring 2012, a few weeks before the elections. (...) In July 2013 GD played the Horst Wessel Lied, the anthem of the German Nazi party, during a charity food handout attended by more than 2,000 (after checking recipients’ identity cards to ensure that non-Greeks were excluded) (...).”

As noted by the ENAR: “There is a dichotomy in Hungary and Greece, which feature high levels of indigenous anti-Semitism and neo-Nazi activity, but lower levels of physical violence than countries such as France and Belgium, where anti-Semitic attacks is much less socially acceptable, but violence is more common.”

Jews tend to hide their religious symbols, no longer walk in certain districts, and even visit “Jewish” places, according to the European Union Agency for Fundamental rights. “A report published 2013 by the PRA showed that 49 percent of the Jews in Sweden don’t wear Jewish symbols, like a kippah or Star of David pendant, or even avoid going to Jewish community centers, synagogues or cemeteries for fear of anti-Semitic incidents. The European Union average is 20 percent, according to the report.”

In Germany, “63 percent of those polled in the FRA report on Jewish perception on anti-Semitism, avoid wearing, displaying or saying anything that might suggest they are Jews.”

In many countries, a significant fraction of the youth has left the State education system to join Jewish or even Catholic schools, because they fear being bullied or harassed at school because of their religious beliefs. In the United Kingdom, 60% of the Jewish youth study in faith schools. In France, the number of pupils studying in Jewish faith schools has exploded: 8,000 in 1978, 30,000 today, that is 26% of Jewish youth.

To be fair, one has to say that, at least in France, there is a revival of interest in Judaism. Partly thanks to the continuous of the left which has lost the sympathies of many Jews since the Six Days War in 1967; and partly related to the effects of the economic crisis, identity politics has considerably grown and influences all non believers and believers in Europe, including Muslims and Jews. Jews who, forty years ago, would not have been interested in Jewish religion are, like Muslims, rediscovering their “roots.” This phenomenon has reinforced conservative trends inside Jewish “communities”; therefore, the most obscurantist Jews don’t want to send their children to non religious schools. That may explain also why there are less Jews in state schools in France today.

If one compares social discriminations affecting Muslims and Jews in Europe, it’s obvious that Jews are less affected by overt, institutionalised, racism in employment and education than Muslims, given their century-old presence on the continent. As a Jewish students’ organisation told Amnesty International: “anti-Semitism in France does not primarily manifest itself through discrimination in employment or access to services but rather as verbal and physical attacks or threats against Jews, real or perceived.”

European Jews don’t need to learn the language as most migrants need to do, be they Muslims or not; they can help their children with their schoolwork and give them good advice for their education strategies (including leaving the state education sector for the private education sector); they know how to survive in a hostile or foreign society; they don’t lack temples to pray; their capacity of adaptation has been tested through centuries of struggles and persecutions; the European Union has included in its agenda the struggle against anti-Semitism and Holocaust denial for several decades (recognition of “Islamophobia” is much more recent).

Muslims born and educated in other continents have not yet acquired this vital experience, and it will take them a long time to get it, and to oblige European administrations to respect their basic human rights. Nevertheless, despite all these “advantages” (if one can call the fact of having survived centuries of bloody persecutions and to the Judeocide an “advantage”), Jews are still a target for social frustrations in all Europe.

As explained by Moshe Postone in an interview with Martin Thomas in “Solidarity”, anti-Semitism has a specific social function in capitalism — and also in anti-capitalist ideology and movements — a reality denied by many leftist intellectuals and far left or anarchist activists.

Even if many specialists and anti-racist militants claim that the old Christian anti-Judaic and racial anti-Semitism has almost disappeared and that the “new anti-Semitism” is just a regrettable but understandable reaction against Israeli war crimes, other social scientists have a more realistic and accurate view.

Unfortunately, they are generally labelled as “neo-cons” — which is often true when they defend everything that Israeli governments do!

8 Workers’ Liberty
The facts about anti-Semitism and anti-Muslim racism

Most European States don’t collect religious and/or ethnical statistics. Therefore the table included in this article does not provide a very accurate image of anti-Semitism and anti-Muslim racism. And as stated before, it does not show at all the weight of anti-working-class discrimination which affects Muslim workers and their children. It just gives a very rough idea of two evils, given the fact that, whether Muslim or Jew, an estimated 75% of the victims do not report to the police or even to their local association. And anyway only 3% of the claims are followed by a trial...

A comrade wrote me: “Concerning the statistics about anti-Semitic and Islamophobic acts, the problem is not only that of most of them are not reported but concerns also their definition. For example, in many statistics, police violence is not taken into account, let alone when it affects undocumented workers.

“When they are produced by State authorities, their numbers are always much lower than the data collected by Muslim anti-racist associations. That’s why, in my opinion, the counting of Islamophobic acts does not correspond to reality. And after the recent attacks in January 2015, in Paris, it will be even worse: many Muslim people have experienced, since January, at least a verbal assault, but they won’t report it, because it has become commonplace. And above all the fear is really installed in the minds: the fear of having more trouble if you react than if you shut your mouth.”

M. DINGUS

“Moreover, it’s very difficult to distinguish anti-Arab and anti-Muslim racism, both feeding each other and often fusing. My cousin applied for a job and had a very successful interview with the HR department. They told him that he was probably going to work for this company and he knew there was a vacancy because a friend of his works there.

“Yesterday, his friend told him the local manager is doing everything not to hire him because, I quote, “There is already one Jew in the service, I don’t want two.” I don’t think that this scumbag would have expressed his racist remark as clearly before January 2015, but as no employee will have the guts to report what they heard, it’s impossible to file a complaint against him. So besides the fact that all indicators are rising, statistics tell us very little about reality, let alone if one wants to compare the different forms of racism.

Only three States (Sweden, France and Austria) report on anti-Muslim crimes to the OSCE and ten (Austria, Czech Republic, France, Germany, Ireland, Moldova, Poland, Spain, Sweden and United Kingdom) about anti-Semitism. Statistics vary according to the sources, courts, police, state institutions, NGOs, etc.

We can draw three conclusions from this table:

1) Given the relationship between the number of Muslims and Jews in Europe, there are much more anti-Semitic than anti-Muslim “incidents.” This contradicts the general assumption of the left (and of many social scientists) that anti-Semitism is disappearing, has become a secondary phenomenon, and “Islamophobia” is the main racist threat in European societies. But obviously this table does not give any indication about social discriminations against Jews and Muslims; in this case, it’s quite obvious that Muslims are certainly much more victims of social and religious discriminations and of institutional racism than the Jews.

2) Contrary to the lies propagated by national-populist parties and fascist groups, “Muslims” (be they cultural or religious Muslims) are a small minority in Europe, between 5 and 10% of the population. There is no “Muslim invasion” or mythical “Eurabia” in progress.

3) Racist incidents are not only targeting Jews and “Muslims” but all non-European minorities. Roma are certainly the most hated minority in all Europe, as shown by all polls and inquiries. The fact that intolerance and prejudices are growing against all minorities is certainly not reassuring information, but when one talks about racial discrimination and exclusion (two concrete consequences of racism) one has always to keep in mind that all sorts of discriminations exist which have no ethnic, national or religious basis: massive discrimination and exclusion based on class are considered as “normal”, “inevitable” or “eternal” by most people, including by many workers and exploited. Discrimination and exclusion based on gender and sexual orientation are also fundamental and affect all ethnic, national and religious minorities and majorities.

Anti-racism is obviously an essential dimension of our struggle, but we must not reduce all social problems to racism, and their solution to the adoption of a (fully justified) empathetic attitude towards minorities, which is the mainstream politics in Europe today. The fight for equality and equity can only be efficiently led in a class perspective, based on the organisation of the exploited against all forms of social domination.

The fight for equality can’t be based only on moral, humanist values, because these values are celebrated in the frame of a big national, or even European, communion uniting all classes. This communion only perpetuates capitalist domination and exploitation.

Sources:

- European Monitoring Center on Racism and Xenophobia statistics
- UN data base
- Jews: American Jewish Year Book (the statistics quoted above include what is called the “core Jewish population” and not the “enlarged Jewish community”, a statistic concept which designates “those of Jewish parentage who may have adopted another religion or opted out of Judaism along with household members such as spouses and children who are not otherwise included”)
- German Jewish databank 2013
- Anti-Muslim hate crimes: CCIF, Tell Mama and OSCE 2013
- Yearbook of Muslims in Europe 2011
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IV. France: a pioneer of Anti-Semitism and anti-Muslim racism

France has always been very creative in building anti-Semitic and racist theories, and using both in internal and external political struggles.

Although Zeev Sternhell’s interpretation about the decisive role of French ideologues in the birth of fascism is very controversial, he has documented in detail the role of the French anti-Semitic far right and left from the 19th-century onwards.

From Édouard Drumont, exponent of a “national socialism” and historians like Hymppolite Taine and Ernest Renan who promoted the notion of race at the end of the 19th century, to the fascist ideologue Alain Soral (a self-proclaimed “national-socialist” very active on the Net as well as in real life) and popular stand-up comedian Dieudonné. From the anti-Judaic views expressed by Enlightenment thinkers like Voltaire and Diderot to 20th-century “enlightenment stars like Voltaire and Diderot to 20th-century novelists like Louis-Ferdinand Céline (also a pro-Nazi collaborator), Renaud Camus, present defender of the “Great Replacement” pseudo-theory (close to Eurabia ideologues like Bat Ye’or), France has produced an impressive number of influential anti-Semitic propagandists.

And as regards anti-Arab, anti-African racism or anti-Muslim racism, one can quote many famous names, from Enlightenment stars like Voltaire and Diderot to 20th-century novelists: Jean Raspail (in close contact with the National Front), Michel Houellebèque (who considered Islam “the most stupid religion in the world... until he read the Koran”) and Richard Miller (who wrote two essays to explain Anders Breivik’s murders in Oslo which, according to him, “are a desperate and despairing sign of how Europe underestimates the havoc of multiculturalism.” Breivik’s actions are “at best a pauper manifestation of the survival instinct of civilization.” “In this decadence, Breivik is no doubt what Norway deserved, and what awaits our societies which continue to blind themselves to better deny themselves.”).

France enjoys also an exceptional situation in Europe because it’s the country which hosts the biggest Jewish and Muslim “communities.”

Jews have been targeted as such by terrorist groups several times in France during the last 40 years:

- four people were killed and 46 wounded by a bomb put in front of the Copernic synagogue in Paris, on 3 October 1980, probably by the PLFP-SC of Wadie Haddad;
- seven children and two adults were killed by Mohamed Merah, a French islamo-terrorist, in a kosher supermarket, on the 9th of January 2015. Amedy Coulibaly, a French jihadist, killed 4 Jewish clients and threatened to kill more before he was himself shot by the cops.

One can add to this list a non political crime, but certainly of an anti-Semitic nature, despite the left’s denial49, the 23 days of torture and final death on the 13 February 2006 of Ilan Halimi, a seller in a phoneshop, kidnapped because his murderers thought the “Jews have money”. This murder was an important signal because it involved at least 20 persons, in a working class suburb, and young people of all origins, French, Portuguese, African, Iranian and North African. A real melting-pot of anti-Semites!

If we compare anti-Semitism and anti-Muslim racism in its most violent consequences (murders), there has been not any political group publicly promoting the killing of “Muslims” in France.

But, certain years, the number of racist murders targeting “Muslims” is not negligible despite the left’s denial. They are linked to police actions, what the cops call “blunder” crimes, for which it’s almost impossible to say if they are racist, xenophobic or religiously-motivated crimes.

This violent decade of Breivik was not labelled “Islamophobic” but as racist, because Islam was not the main target of the offenders, and, more important, because French authorities refused to admit such a thing as “anti-Muslim racism” or “Islamophobia”. “Islamophobia” could exist in the “Fatherland of the rights of Man.” It’s only since 2009 that the police distinguishes between anti-Muslim crimes and other hate crimes.

If we compare the numbers given by the French minister of Interior, the Jewish and Muslim organisations, it’s quite obvious that anti-Semitism and anti-Muslim racism are growing in France. Nevertheless, the number of anti-Semitic acts is much more important than anti-Muslim acts, given the fact that Jews are between four and ten times less numerous than “Muslims” in France.

According to the 2014 SCPJ report, anti-Semitic acts recorded in France have been on a rise from 1998 until today, with peaks at 974 anti-Semitic acts in 2004 and around 400/600 anti-Semitic acts in the more “quiet” years.

If we compare the SCPJ report with the 2014 CCIF report, we can see that, in the same period, racist and xenophobic acts and threats (which include those affecting “Muslims” without specifying them) have also steadily grown, for example there were 117 racist and xenophobic acts and threats in 1998 and 595 in 2004; 75 anti-Semitic threats and acts in 1998 and 970 in 2004.

V. Anti-Semitism and anti-Muslim racism as seen by the (radical) left

Anti-Semitism and anti-Muslim racism have developed in parallel. Usually (when the left deigns to admit its existence), it relates anti-Semitism to Israeli war crimes and anti-Muslim racism to the Iranian revolution of 1979 and the 9/11 attacks.50

Obviously both phenomenon have complex roots, which are also related to the attempts of European powers to dominate the rest of the world, from the medieval crusades to the colonial conquests and neo-colonial wars.

On both sides, the controversy is raging among social scientists often driven by a hidden political agenda. The most extreme “Zionists”, the proponents of the “clash of civilisations” theory and the internationalist jihads of al-Qaeda and Daesh, all share the same premise: religions run the world, and the war between them will never end.

Each community tries to put its case at the centre of public attention: Jews claim anti-Semitism is growing and Muslims that Islamophobia is growing.

This absurd dynamic tries to invite us to choose between one of these two evils to deny the existence of the other. Confronted to this catastrophic alternative, the European far left groups and of the counter-globalisation movement have been much more interested in denouncing anti-Muslim racism than in denouncing anti-Semitism.

This attitude is based on several weak arguments:

• Generally far left militants explain that anti-Semitism does not exist, is only a marginal phenomenon, limited to small far right groups (Golden Dawn in Greece, the German neo-Nazi, etc.). Or, like the Palestinian academic Joseph Massad they argue that the term is “anachronistic and ahistorical”51; “since today anti-Semitism’s major victims are Arabs and Muslims. “Anti-Semitism” 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”; “the transference of popular antisemitic animus from a Jew- ish to an Arab target was made smoothly, since the figure was essentially the same.”

The concept of an intense kinship between Jews and Muslims, is the desire to conceal the discrimina-
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More details are provided in this video in French: Cfr. www.dailymotion.com/videos/xqog5x_exreme-droite-europene-pro-islamiste-nouws

In 2014, she received the “struggle against Islamophobia” prize awarded by the Islamic Human rights Commission. See also “The Republic’s Natives (Les Indigènes de la République), the debate about foreign colonialism and its consequences” (June 2008) http://www.mondialisme.org/spip.php?arti


55. indigenes-republique.fr/dieuendre-through-the-prism-of-the-white-left-or-conceptualizing-a-domestic-internationalism/ (C L R James’ s quotation is at the very end.) My answer to Houria Bouteldja can be found (in French) here: “Mme Bouteldja falsifie C L R James au service d’un “antisémitisme progresif”... imaginaire” (Mrs. Bouteldja falsifies C L R James to honour an imaginary “progressive” anti-Semitism), mondialisme.org/spip.php?article2089.


The meaning of the Second World War in 1986.

Obviously, Ernest Mandel knew about the Holocaust and anti-Semitism from personal experience, but like many Trotskyists, or “Communist”, militants (specially when they had Jewish parents) he decided that fighting against capitalism, imperialism, colonialism and fascism was more vital than underlining the importance of the Holocaust.

Because this essential transmission work has not been done by the revolutionary left, and has been taken over, for opportunistic reasons, by American and European governments, we see now how the new generations of left militants lack a basic
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sensibility and knowledge of anti-Semitism. They think all this is “outdated” and don’t understand, for example, why the fascist “hymnour” of a stand-up comedian like Dieudonné and his “quenelles” (inverted Nazi salute) should be criti-
cised and we should have long ago have started demon-
strating against his shows.

Today, it’s very clear that, when the (radical) left prioritises the fight against “Islamophobia”, it tries in fact to evade the question of “global anti-Semitism” which today mixes vari-
ous forms of anti-Semitism in a lethal cocktail. This cocktail is very influential in the social media, because each form of anti-Semitism reinforces the other ones, thanks to the world-
wide confusion and disinformation generated by the global interconnection of all reactionary ideologues on the Web.

19th-century old Christian and Muslim anti-Judaism; 20th-century European anti-Zionism, which used the war anti-Semitism which used the pretext of Is-
lrael war crimes to revive old racist clichés. From Turkey to Belgium, from Latvia to Chile....

This definition is rejected by many left social scientists and militants. For example, the Marxist Barrie Levine\(^{57}\) explains that a social worker should be an “agitator” and link the struggle against all forms of racism – which is a very good proposal. But, as he denies the value of the working defini-
tion of Anti-Semitism, he refuses to envisage the limits of anti-Zionism and its potential, but not inevitable, anti-Semitic content. At the same time, as he is much more honest than many leftists, he very clearly describes how intellectuals who are preoccupied by struggling against racism and anti-Islam paranoia almost never mention anti-Semitism as if it was at the very bottom of their list of priorities – or even did not exist.

The so-called radical left must solve its internal contradic-
tions, its hesitations about anti-Semitism and set precise boundaries to its anti-Zionism, if not, it will be totally con-
taminated by the ideas of the far right, as it is already obvi-
ous on dozens of its websites, mailing lists and forums.

It’s never too late to recognise our errors and wage a clear fight against all forms of racism. For this we must understand their specificities, without negating the existence of any form of racism and without building an absurd hierarchy between them.

Sources used for this article

- Anti Defamation League
- Kantor Center
- CCIF — Annual Report 2014
- Organisation of Islamic Conference annual reports like the following:
- 2014 Report on Anti-Semitism in France Source of statistical data: Ministry of Interior and SPCJ
- EUMC (European Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia)

57. For more details see (in French): “Multiplicité des formes de l’ antisémitisme et antisémitisme mondialisé actuel” (Multiplicity of the forms taken by anti-Semitism and present global anti-Semitism) www.mondialisme.org/spip.php_article2128.

58. Seventy years later, one can still find sociologists – not to mention radical left militants — who believe, and want us to believe, that Jewish communities were mainly composed of bankers and big intern-
national traders (see for example Abdelfalla Hajat and Marwan Mohammed, Islamophobie. Comment les éclats de glace faisaient se rompre les glaces musulmanes [Islamophobia. How the French elites produce the Mus-
lim “problem”], chapter 11, “Antisemitism and Islamophobia”, p. 177-195, La découverte, 2013) as if these communities had not experienced any internal social differentiation. Hajat and Mohammed did not bother to read the work of recent specialists in Jewish history, such as the four volumes of La société juive à travers l'Histoire [Jewish society throughout history] (Fayard, 1992), investigations much less anti-
quated and outdated than those quoted as “pioneer references” (Abraham Leon, Hannah Arendt, Jules Isaac, and James Parkes). Some historical arguments against this schematic vision developed in the section on “Historical Research’s Progress” in “Limits of anti-Zionism n° 1: A criminal amalgam” www.mondialisme.org/spip.php_article2121. Unfortunately, A materialist conception of the Jewish ques-
tion, written by a Trotskyist militant, Abraham Leon, but hidden in an attic under Nazi occupation of Belgium, has little scientific and historical value, but remains a reference for many activists. Those who quote this book ignore (or “forget” to mention) that he wrote it when he was 25 years old, not in a com-
fortable, well-heated and well-furnished library or a study centre specialised in Jewish history.