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**ANTI-SEMITISM IN THE MUSLIM WORLD.
A CRITICAL REVIEW**

BY

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Berlin

Abstract

Current debates on anti-Semitism in the Muslim world, or as it is often put, 'in Islam' focus on a number of issues: the status of Jews in Islam with regard to both theory and practice; the impact of the Arab-Israeli conflict over Palestine; the adoption and adaptation of anti-Semitic motifs and stereotypes of European origin in nationalist and Islamist discourses; and the politics of memory and commemoration. Here as elsewhere, contextualization is required if we are to understand the meanings and functions of anti-Semitic attitudes and activities among specific audiences. But contextualization must not be used for apologetic purposes.

In Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies, there is today hardly a topic more sensitive and controversial than anti-Semitism in the Muslim world, or, as it is often put, in Islam. Scholars in the field have long hesitated to touch it, be it out of fear to be branded as enemies of Islam, or alternatively, as anti-Semites, be it because they have felt that the subject was not sufficiently well researched to warrant serious treatment. But specialists can hardly remain silent when others, frequently on the basis of scant information and limited insight, engage forcefully in the public debate, forging images and creating stereotypes that become the more difficult to critique the more solidly entrenched they are in the public mind. The debate is still largely a western one; for obvious reasons it resonates strongly within Germany. There is good reason, then, to introduce the theme with the purpose not only

* I would like to thank Alexander Flores, Stefan Reichmuth and Stefan Wild for their generous comments on an earlier draft of this paper as well as a number of useful references which I have not identified individually.

of exploring some of the issues at stake, but also of taking the debate beyond its present confines.

Fear of growing anti-Semitism among Middle Eastern and larger Muslim audiences is not entirely new, but has obtained added force with the outbreak of the Second Intifada in 2000 and the wave of Islamist violence before and after September 11, 2001.¹ In response to these developments, the European Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia (EUMC) in cooperation with the Berlin-based Center for Research on Antisemitism (*Zentrum für Antisemitismusforschung*) drafted a report which drew attention to anti-Jewish and anti-Semitic attitudes and activities among Muslims living in the European Union. In view of the sensitive findings and escalating tension in the Middle East, the EUMC subsequently decided not to publish the report. Rather, it was circulated online by a number of Jewish organizations and thus made available to a larger public.² Similar reports equally documented racist, anti-Jewish and anti-Semitic incidents in various EU member states. At the same time, anti-Jewish and anti-Semitic statements were recorded in the Middle East, notably in

¹ Out of the large and growing body of literature, see Sylvia G. Haim, "Arabic Anti-Semitic Literature: Some Preliminary Notes", *Journal of Jewish Social Studies* 17 (1955), 307-312; Michael Curtis (ed.), *Antisemitism in the Contemporary Arab World*, Boulder, London 1986; Bernard Lewis, *Semites and Anti-Semites. An Inquiry into Conflict and Prejudice*, New York 1986 (new ed. 1999) and *idem*, "Muslim anti-Semitism", *Middle East Quarterly*, 5, 1998, 1-8; Robert S. Wistrich (ed.), *Anti-Zionism and Antisemitism in the Contemporary World*, Houndsmills, London 1990; Michael Kiefer, *Antisemitismus in den islamischen Gesellschaften. Der Palästina-Konflikt und der Transfer des Feindbildes*, Düsseldorf 2002 (see also his contribution to this issue); Klaus Holz, *Die Gegenwart des Antisemitismus. Islamische, demokratische und antizionistische Judenfeindschaft*, Hamburg 2005; sowie Dirk Ansorge (ed.), *Antisemitismus in Europa und in der arabischen Welt. Ursachen und Wechselbeziehungen eines komplexen Phänomens*, Paderborn 2006. Part of the literature is openly polemical; see notably Matthias Küntzel, *Dжихад und Judenhaß. Über den neuen antijüdischen Krieg*, Freiburg 2003 and Robert S. Wistrich "The Old-New Anti-Semitism", *The National Interest*, 72 (2003), 59-70 as well as his *Muslim Anti-Semitism: A Clear and Present Danger*, The American Jewish Committee, 2002.

² Werner Bergmann and Juliane Wetzel, *Manifestations of anti-Semitism in the European Union. First Semester 2002. Synthesis Report*, Vienna 2003; see also Juliane Wetzel, "Neuer Antisemitismus oder Aktualisierung eines alten Phänomens? Eine Bestandsaufnahme", in: Hansjörg Schmid and Britta Frede-Wenger (eds.), *Neuer Antisemitismus? Eine Herausforderung für den interreligiösen Dialog*, Berlin 2006, 9-30 (esp. 9, n. 1); for a more aggressive approach, see Robert S. Wistrich, *European Anti-Semitism Reinvents Itself*, The American Jewish Committee, 2005.

Iran and the Arab world, and occasionally in other parts of the Muslim world, many of them framed in an Islamic idiom. Not surprisingly, public censure and critique from western sources provoked an apologetic response among Arabs and Muslims. Both have since fallen into a certain pattern: as one side attacks not just Muslims but Islam as such, the other asserts that Islam is entirely free from racism in general and anti-Semitism in particular, that Jews have always enjoyed peace and protection under Islam, and that Arabs being themselves Semites cannot possibly be anti-Semites (ignoring among other things that the Semitic race is itself a racist conception, and that not all Middle Easterners let alone all Muslims are Arabs).

Apologetics are never helpful. There can be no doubt that the attitudes and activities documented in Europe, the Middle East and beyond are real, that they involve Muslims of diverse origins and nationalities, and that they have to be addressed intellectually as well as politically. This is not an easy task. Existing data is difficult to interpret, and interpretation is highly contested. One core issue is contextualization which places individual statements and occurrences within a wider political context (first and foremost colonialism and the Arab-Israeli conflict), and the extent to which contextualization is used, or can be used, to downplay the phenomenon rather than to face it and fight against it at all levels. So far, debates have centred upon a number of issues: the status of Jews "in Islam", i.e., in the Qur'an, the Sunna of the Prophet and the normative Islamic tradition at large, as well as "under Islam", that is to say in societies ruled by Islam over the course of history (the two are not always clearly distinguished); the Arab-Israeli conflict and its impact on mutual perceptions; critique of Israeli politics, anti-Zionism and anti-Semitism; Arabs (Muslims) and the Holocaust / Shoah; Islam, Jihad and violence; political Islam and totalitarianism (as evidenced by the new polemical term of "Islamofascism").³ Even though they tend to speak

³ The latter is too recent to have seen much critical analysis yet; for its polemical use, see Wistrich, "Old-New Anti-Semitism" (he does not employ the term itself) and Henryk M. Broder, *Hurra, wir kapitulieren! Von der Lust am Einknicken*. Berlin 2006.

about Islam writ large and about Muslims around the globe, critics in actual fact focus on Europe and the Middle East; Islam in the U.S. does not seem to have been systematically covered yet. The scholarly literature, too, has focused on those Arab countries most deeply involved in the Arab-Israeli conflict. While generalizations abound, their empirical base is actually quite narrow.

I. Jews in Islam, Jews under Islam

The first thing that needs to be emphasized when dealing with the status of Jews in Islam and under Islam is the fact that in most instances, Jews were only one out of several non-Muslim communities concerned, and that specific policies and regulations were as a rule not directed at Jews as *Jews*, but rather applied to all non-Muslims living in the respective territory.⁴ The relevant literature is extensive, and it includes a fair number of sophisticated case-studies from the early modern and modern periods.⁵ For

⁴ This chapter is based on my article "Moving Out of Place: Non-Muslims in Middle Eastern Urban Societies, 1800-1914", which was commissioned several years ago for a collected volume whose publication I am awaiting with some impatience. See also my "Islam und Toleranz", *Blätter für deutsche und internationale Politik*, 50 (2005), 1119-1129. I have benefited greatly from reading Rainer Forst, *Toleranz im Konflikt. Geschichte, Gehalt und Gegenwart eines umstrittenen Begriffs*, Frankfurt am Main 2003, and from discussions with the fellows of Max-Weber-Kolleg, Erfurt, Germany, during my stay there in 2004-2005.

⁵ Out of the vast and growing literature, see Bruce Masters, *Christians and Jews in the Ottoman Arab World. The Roots of Sectarianism*, Cambridge 2001; Eliz Sanasarian, *Religious Minorities in Iran*, Cambridge 2000; Youssef Courbage and Philippe Fargues, *Christians and Jews under Islam*, London, New York 1997. For Jewish communities in the Middle East, see Shlomo Deshen and Walter P. Zenner (eds.), *Jews Among Muslims. Communities in the Precolonial Middle East*, Houndmills, London 1996 and *idem* (eds.), *Jewish Societies in the Middle East. Community, Culture and Authority*, Washington 1982; Harvey E. Goldberg (ed.), *Sephardi and Middle Eastern Jewries. History & Culture in the Modern Era*, Bloomington 1996; Bernard Lewis, *The Jews of Islam*, London 1984; Hayyim J. Cohen, *The Jews of the Middle East, 1860-1972*, Jerusalem 1973. Sub-regional studies include Norman A. Stillman, *The Jews of Arab Lands in Modern Times*, Philadelphia, New York 1991; Michel Abitbol (ed.), *Le judaïsme d'Afrique du Nord aux XIXe-XXe siècles*, Jerusalem 1980; Avigdor Levy (ed.), *The Jews of the Ottoman Empire*, Princeton 1994; Walter F. Weiker, *Ottomans, Turks and the Jewish Polity. A History of the Jews of Turkey*, Lanham MD 1992; Aron Rodrigue (ed.), *Ottoman and Turkish Jewry. Community and Leadership*, Bloomington 1992; Stanford J. Shaw, *The Jews of the Ottoman Empire and the Turkish Republic*, Houndmills, London 1991; Housman Sarshar (ed.), *Esther's*

this reason, the old debate of whether non-Muslims were generally oppressed under Islamic rule, "second-class citizens" suffering from Muslim fanaticism and oriental despotism, or whether, on the contrary, tolerance was the distinguishing mark of Islam and non-Muslims its prime beneficiaries, need not detain us long: neither the "black myth" nor the "white" one does justice to the complexities of the historical experience, which rather unsurprisingly was characterized by various shades of grey.⁶ More to the point are a number of other issues: the relevance of religion to social cohesion, stratification and interaction in Muslim societies (or to be more precise, societies under Islamic rule); the impact of religious and legal norms on social practice; and the relation of socio-religious distinctiveness to socio-political tension. Up to the twentieth century (and beyond), religious affiliation served as an important marker of group identity in Middle Eastern as well as in many other societies, and for this reason it mattered to social life and space. As in other cultures and societies, legal norms and social practices reflected power relations, and in these terms local non-Muslims most often formed the weaker part. While many outward signs of distinctiveness were thus adopted by other groups and strata of society, some were imposed on, or denied to, its weakest elements only, non-Muslims as well as subject Muslim groups,⁷ not to mention women of all communities. Still, distinctiveness does not equal tension or oppression.

Children. A Portrait of Iranian Jews, Beverly Hills, Philadelphia 2002.

⁶ See Mark R. Cohen, *Under Crescent & Cross. The Jews in the Middle Ages*, Princeton 1994, chs. 1 and 10; Masters, *Christians and Jews*, chs. 1 and 2, and the works on Ottoman Jewry, esp. Levy, Shaw and Weiker listed above, note 4. For the "black myth", see notably Bat Ye'or (pseud.), *The Dhimmi: Jews and Christians under Islam*, Rutherford NJ 1985 or Martin Gilbert, *The Jews of Arab Lands: Their History in Maps*, Oxford 1975. Both have had a marked influence on western perceptions of the status of Jews in Islam and are frequently quoted as evidence of deep-rooted Islamic fanaticism, anti-Judaism and indeed anti-Semitism. The "white myth" refers in particular to the "golden ages" of peaceful coexistence in Umayyad Spain, Fatimid Cairo, the heyday of Ottoman power in the sixteenth century, or Baghdad in the 1920s.

⁷ See, e.g., Fuad I. Khuri, *Imams and Emirs. State, Religion and Sects in Islam*, London, Beirut 1990, ch. 6, esp. 86-93 and Cohen, *Under Crescent & Cross*, ch. 6. For illustration, see Donald Quataert, "Clothing Laws, State, and Society in the Ottoman Empire, 1720-1829", *IJMES*, 29 (1997), 403-425.

Indeed, it has been argued that the very fact that ethnic and religious differences were as a rule clearly marked, and so much taken for granted, made it possible for people of different status and religion to mingle freely in the public sphere⁸—provided they kept their place.

The status and treatment of non-Muslims in Muslim societies has varied greatly over time and space. Islamic legal concepts and popular attitudes were partly based on Qur'anic references, many of them ambiguous and ostensibly inconsistent, reflecting shifting relations between the early community of Muslims and their non-Muslim neighbours, and allowing later commentators to select those passages that suited their own views.⁹ During the Muslim conquests of the seventh and eighth centuries C.E., actual practice responded to local conditions and accordingly varied considerably from one place to another. One principle concern seems to have been to draw a visible boundary between Muslims and non-Muslims, which could be done by way of dress codes, headgear, or hair styles, marking the person (Muslims as well as non-Muslims) rather than space. Islamic jurisprudence (*fiqh*), which was elaborated after the Muslims had established themselves as masters on former Christian, Zoroastrian, Buddhist and other territory, attempted to impose stricter limits on current practices.¹⁰ Following what were essentially theological criteria, Muslim lawyers distinguished between two categories of infidels

⁸ Abraham Marcus, *The Middle East on the Eve of Modernity: Aleppo in the Eighteenth Century*, New York 1989, 39–48, esp. 43.

⁹ See notably Yohanan Friedmann, *Tolerance and Coercion in Islam. Interfaith Relations in the Muslim Tradition*, Cambridge 2003 and Jane D. McAuliffe, *Qur'anic Christians. An Analysis of Classical and Modern Exegesis*, Cambridge 1991; also Adel Th. Khoury, *Christen unterm Halbmond. Religiöse Minderheiten unter der Herrschaft des Islams*, Freiburg 1994. R. Stephen Humphreys, *Islamic History. A Framework for Inquiry*, rev. ed., London, New York 1991, 255–273 takes a critical view of the approach adopted here that attempts to reconcile ostensibly contradictory passages by placing them in a historical context of which, admittedly, we know less than is commonly assumed. Cf. Marco Schöller, *Exegetisches Denken und Prophetenbiographie: eine quellenkritische Analyse der Sira-Überlieferung zu Muhammads Konflikt mit den Juden*, Wiesbaden 1998.

¹⁰ For the Sunni legal tradition, see Antoine Fattal, *Le Statut légal des non-musulmans en pays d'Islam*, Beirut 1958; 'Abd al-Karim Zaydan, *Ahkam al-dhimmiyyin wa-l-musta'min fi dār al-islām*, Beirut 1988.

(*kuffār*, sing. *kāfir*): first, the pagans or polytheists (*mushrikūn*), who worshipped more than one godhead and had not received a book of revelation, with whom there was to be no social intercourse, ranging from shared food to intermarriage, and who were to be fought until they either converted to Islam or were killed or enslaved; second, the “people of the book” (*ahl al-kitāb*), more precisely the Christians, the Jews, the ill-defined Sabeans and also the Zoroastrians (though their religious status remained contested), whose monotheistic faith was founded on a book of revelation and with whom social intercourse was licit.

In accordance with the Qur’ānic injunction, “(There shall be) no compulsion in religion” (*sūra* 2:256), the status of the “people of the book” was secured by a contract of protection (*dhimma*), which guaranteed their life, body, property and, with certain restrictions, also guaranteed their cult. Over time, other religious communities like the Buddhists, the Hindus or the Jaina in South and Southeast Asia, who did not qualify as “people of the book” in religious terms, were nonetheless granted protection and thus treated as *dhimmīs*. The so-called Pact of ‘Umar (wrongly attributed to the second caliph ‘Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb, r. 634-644 C.E.) laid down a number of restrictions on their movement and conduct regarding notably dress and hair styles, the use of arms and horses, public worship, the height of houses as well as the construction, extension and repair of churches, synagogues and temples, which served not only to physically identify the *dhimmīs* like any other group of society, but to mark them as social inferiors.¹¹ Dress codes, to comment on this particular element often referred to in the critical literature, were a common feature of pre-modern societies, European ones included; to compare them to the yellow badge imposed by the Nazis on Jews is both anachronistic and misleading. Protection was granted against

¹¹ See Cohen, *Under Crescent & Cross*, ch. 4 and *idem*, “What was the Pact of ‘Umar? A Literary-Historical Study”, *Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam*, 23 (1999), 100-157; Albrecht Noth, “Abgrenzungsprobleme zwischen Muslimen und Nicht-Muslimen. Die ‘Bedingungen ‘Umars (*aš-šurūt al-‘umariyya*)’ unter einem anderen Aspekt gesehen”, *Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam*, 9 (1987), 290-315.

the payment of tribute, dues and taxes of various kinds, including a poll or capitation tax (*jizya*, based on *sūra* 9:29), which was to be levied on all able-bodied free adult *dhimmī* males of sufficient means. The various schools of Islamic law varied considerably in their definition of *dhimmī* rights and obligations. (Imami) Shi'ī jurists differed from their Sunni counterparts in that they declared non-Muslims (if not all non-Shi'īs) to be ritually impure (*najis*), a classification that became particularly relevant to Iran after the Safavid conquest in 1501/2. It is important to remember that the concern with purity and impurity was shared by major non-Muslim groups of Iranian society, first and foremost the Jews and Zoroastrians, who were just as intent on defending communal boundaries as were the Shi'ī jurists.

Theory therefore was not uniform. What is more, practice frequently did not conform to normative prescriptions and popular attentions—it could be more lenient at times, but it could also be harsher. Government decisions were not necessarily implemented at the local level, and one ruler did not necessarily follow his predecessor's policies. The actual situation of the *dhimmīs* depended on a number of economic and political variables: their utility to local society or more particularly to its rulers; the economic and political circumstances prevailing within the individual territory, and its relationship with the major non-Muslim powers of the day, from the Crusaders and the Mongols to the European colonial powers. At the same time, basic legal and religious notions retained their normative force, affecting popular attitudes, and if at any given time non-Muslims overstepped the limits, this was condemned as a breach of the established code. Condemnation was usually framed in moral terms, accusing non-Muslims of “ostentation”, “arrogance” and “overbearing manners” (a feature especially relevant to attitudes towards Jews in the context of Israeli superiority over Arabs and Muslims).

Over time, non-Muslims became minorities in virtually all areas of the Middle East in demographic terms, though the processes of Islamization and Arabization are impossible to chart in detail. In return for submission to Muslim rule, they enjoyed considerable autonomy in the spheres of personal status and family law, reli-

gious cult and education, constituting largely self-contained units with their separate religious, legal, social, educational and charitable institutions. In the case of the Jews, local congregations (sing. *kohel*) constituted the unit most relevant to daily life and intercommunal relations. Communal autonomy was expressed most clearly in the Ottoman millet system (derived from the Turkish term for ethnic-religious groups or communities, *millet*, Arabic *milla*) as it had evolved by the nineteenth century.¹² It is important to note that communal autonomy did not necessarily result in segregation, as the popular image of the "ethnic mosaic" supposedly characteristic of Islamic society suggests: non-Muslims could very well be members of various cross-cutting units and associations, ranging from urban neighbourhoods to corporations or guilds. Communal ties were thus not necessarily exclusive, and communal boundaries were not watertight.

While in most parts of the Middle East there existed no forced segregation, professional specialization and residential concentration along ethnic and religious lines were very common. The former has been described as an "ethnic division of labour", in which non-Muslims specialized in certain economic roles and functions, some of which were regarded as lowly or ritually unclean by Muslims (the case of Yemeni Jews who were forced to clean the latrines and the waste is often cited; the Coptic "garbage people" in twentieth-century Cairo are another case in point).¹³ Again, patterns varied greatly from one location and one period to the other. Like minorities in other parts of the world, Jews and Christians were strongly represented in international trade and commerce; the Jewish and Armenian trading houses in Fatimid Egypt, Safavid Persia and the Ottoman Empire provide prominent ex-

¹² See Masters, *Christians and Jews*, chs. 1 and 2, esp. 61-67; for origins and definitions, see also Benjamin Braude, "Foundation Myths of the Millet System", in: *idem* and Bernard Lewis (eds.), *Christians and Jews in the Ottoman Empire. The functioning of a plural society*, New York 1982, vol. 1, 69-88. In Safavid and Qajar Iran, Christians, Jews and Zoroastrians equally enjoyed a large measure of communal autonomy.

¹³ The main references are A.J. Sussnitzki, "Ethnic Division of Labor", in: Charles Issawi (ed.), *The Economic History of the Middle East, 1800-1914*, Chicago 1966, 114-125 and Robert Brunschwig, "Métiers vils en Islam", *Stud. Isl.* 16 (1962), 21-50; see also Khuri, *Imams and Imams*, 91-93.

amples. This placed them among the richest segments of society, but it also rendered them vulnerable: wealthy but without an independent power base, they played a role similar to the European court Jews. The *dhimmi*s knew it, and they took care to act accordingly: they maintained a low profile, avoided ostentation, and cultivated good relations with the political elite which they were unable to join unless they converted to Islam. With regard to urban space, similar observations apply: Middle Eastern cities were characterized by a certain degree of spatial and residential segregation based on ethnicity, religion, status and occupation.¹⁴ Again, patterns varied greatly even within individual countries or regions. As a rule it was “neighbourhoods” formed around particular streets or even parts of streets, rather than well-defined and physically closed off “quarters” that mattered to daily life and social intercourse, and voluntary clustering rather than forced segregation, let alone ghettoization. All over the Middle East, Jewish quarters or neighbourhoods were most likely to be set apart from surrounding living areas, or enclosed by gates or even walls—not necessarily for security reasons but for practical ones, first and foremost to reduce the distance to the closest synagogue, bath or *kosher* butcher. The closed Jewish quarters or ghettos of early modern Morocco (known as *mellah*), Yemen and certain Iranian towns were the exception rather than the rule.¹⁵

Traditional notions of how non-Muslims ought to live and behave in a Muslim society were still largely in force when from the mid-nineteenth century onwards, the combined effects of socio-economic, legal, political and cultural change closely tied to Eu-

¹⁴ For a superb case study, see Ghislaine Alleaume and Philippe Fargues, “Voisinage et frontière. Résider au Caire”, in: Jocelyne Dakhli (ed.), *Urbanité arabe. Hommage à Bernard Lepetit*, Paris 1998, 77-112. On urban conviviality in the Ottoman Empire, see François Georgeon and Paul Dumont (eds.), *Vivre dans l'Empire ottoman. Sociabilités et relations intercommunautaires (XVIIe-XXe siècles)*, Paris 1997 or Masters, *Christians and Jews*, ch. 1.

¹⁵ See Ira Lapidus, *Muslim Cities in the Later Middle Ages*, student ed., Cambridge 1984, esp. 85-87; in addition to the titles cited above, n. 5, see also Daniel J. Schroeter, “Jewish Quarters in the Arab-Islamic Cities of the Ottoman Empire”, in: Levy (ed.), *The Jews*, 287-301 and Shlomo Deshen, *The Mellah Society: Jewish Community Life in Sherifian Morocco*, rev. ed., Chicago 1989.

ropean trade and influence began to transform the status, role and internal organization of non-Muslims, particularly within the Ottoman Empire. Change affected the various communities unevenly. Hardly ever was a community transformed as a whole. As a rule, it was individual Christians and Jews as well as their families, who benefited from increased educational and economic opportunities, gaining access to legal protection and privilege now offered by the European powers, first and foremost in the shape of titles of protection (sing. *berāt*) and under the so-called Capitulations (*imtiyāzāt*).¹⁶ Their successes and failures were then projected back on the communities they belonged to and were thought to represent. Yet it was not only individuals that came to enjoy foreign protection, but entire non-Muslim communities. Thus the Catholics (or Latin Christians) were protected by France, and the Greek (Rum) Orthodox by the Russian Tsar; no European power laid claim to formal protection of the Jews within the Ottoman Empire, though in many places, notably Palestine, they came under the protection of European consuls. (It was only the Balfour Declaration issued in November 1917 and applied in Palestine under the British mandate, i.e., after the fall of the Ottoman Empire, that promised British support for establishing a Jewish "national home" in the country.) In the Ottoman Empire, the legal innovations of the Tanzimat period (1839-1876) revised or modified certain provisions of Islamic law, culminating in the abolition of the poll tax (*jizya*) and the proclamation of legal equality between Muslims and non-Muslims. However, they did not abolish the millet system.¹⁷

¹⁶ See art. "Capitulations" (Linda T. Darling), in: John L. Esposito (ed.), *The Oxford Encyclopedia of the Modern Islamic World*, Oxford 1995, 1, 257-261 and Maurits van den Boogert, *The Capitulations and the Ottoman Legal System: Qadis, Courts and Berallis in the 18th Century*, Leiden 2005. For the ambiguities of legal status and identity, see Robert Ilbert, *Alexandrie 1830-1930*, Cairo 1996, 1, chs. 3 and 7.

¹⁷ See art. "Tanzimat" (Şerif Mardin), in: John L. Esposito (ed.), *The Oxford Encyclopedia of the Modern Islamic World*, Oxford 1995, 4, 183-186. The Turkish term "tanzimat" is best translated as "regulations". In the same period, the Iranian government improved the status of local non-Muslims without offering them legal emancipation; see Willem Floor, "Change and development in the judicial system of Qajar Iran (1800-1925)", in: Edmund Bosworth and Carole Hillenbrand (eds.), *Qajar Iran*, Ed.

Legal and political change did not immediately signal the end of traditional notions of superiority, submission and protection (*dhimma*), which for centuries had ruled relations between Muslims and non-Muslims. And yet, improved legal status and economic success filled non-Muslims with a new sense of confidence and security, and this was expressed in all kinds of ways. Many Muslims resented the change, particularly since it was so obviously related to European interference. In several instances, ill-defined resentment erupted in mass violence against local Christians (the waves of sectarian violence in Lebanon and Damascus in the 1840s and 1860, respectively, are documented best). Jews were not targeted in this context.¹⁸ Regardless of whether local non-Muslims were in fact affiliated with a foreign power, they were increasingly perceived as “local foreign minorities”. Colonial rule in its various guises reinforced this perception. The rise of Zionism, the consolidation of the Jewish “national home” in mandate Palestine, and the establishment of the state of Israel were fitted into the same pattern.

II. Stereotypes in the making

Following World War I, most of the former Arab provinces of the Ottoman Empire fell under European colonial rule, in the new guise of protectorates and mandates under the League of Nations. Even those Arab governments that were nominally independent were not entirely free in their interior politics, especially in what concerned their local non-Muslim minorities. Egypt is a case in point, where Britain retained extensive powers of in-

inburgh 1983, 113-147. Though the constitution of 1906 declared all Iranian citizens to be equal, Jews appear to have remained subject to some discriminatory legislation until 1926, when it was finally abolished under Reza Shah; cf. Daniel Tsadik, “The Legal Status of Religious Minorities: Imami Shi‘i Law and Iran’s Constitutional Revolution”, *ILS*, 10 (2003), 376-408 (405-408).

¹⁸ See notably Leila Tarazi Fawaz, *An Occasion for War. Civil Conflict in Lebanon and Damascus in 1860*, Berkeley, Los Angeles 1994 and Ussama Makdisi, *The Culture of Sectarianism. Community, History, and Violence in Nineteenth-Century Lebanon*, Berkeley, Los Angeles 2000.

tervention and explicitly reserved itself the right to "protect" the local minorities, in their majority Christian Copts, but also Jews. At a time of effervescent nationalism, European protection could not but compromise the latter's position. Lebanon, Syria and Iraq provide telling examples of the ensuing problems, too. The situation was different in the Maghreb countries which no longer had any Christian minorities, but large Jewish ones, and in the Arabian Peninsula, where only Yemen had a significant Jewish minority. Iran and Turkey require separate study. The focus, then, is quite narrow: we are not dealing with the Muslim world, or Islam, but with the Arab Near East. Three elements will be reviewed that ultimately were to affect the image and status of Jews: the spread of anti-Semitic motifs, the emergence of fascism in Europe, and mounting tension in Palestine. The three frequently interlinked and reinforced each other so that in many instances it is difficult if not outright impossible to keep them strictly separate.

1. Anti-semitism exported

In the scholarly literature there is general agreement that core features of Christian anti-Judaism and modern anti-Semitism entered the Middle East through contact with Europe, be it that visitors from the Middle East became acquainted with them during their stay in Europe, be it that Europeans brought them to their countries. Anti-Jewish and anti-Semitic materials, texts as well as images, in European languages were first disseminated in the early nineteenth century among local Latin and Uniate Christians. To understand the effect they had on this environment it is important to remember that competition, mistrust and religious prejudice did not only mark relations between Muslims and non-Muslims, but also among the various Christian churches, and between Christians and Jews. The series of ritual murder or "blood libel" accusations launched by local Christians (often actively supported by European consuls, teachers and missionaries) against local Jews in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, of which the so-called Damascus Affair of 1840 is the most

prominent one, serve to illustrate this point.¹⁹ Studies of Arabic poetry and belles-lettres in general suggest that Shakespeare's *Merchant of Venice* with the notorious character of Shylock played an important role in establishing the stereotype of the cruel and greedy Jew among Arab audiences.²⁰ One would assume that Shakespeare's status as one of the greatest writers in European literature ostensibly lent credit to the image this play transmitted. Research on the dissemination of European anti-Semitic motifs has focused on written sources, more specifically the *Protocols of the Elders of Zion* and Hitler's *Mein Kampf* and their Arabic translations. Little is known about the transmission of other anti-Semitic works in either their original languages or in translation. The extent to which anti-Semitic iconography as available through publications, posters, cartoons, caricatures, films or newsreels was circulated and received among Middle Eastern audiences prior to the Second World War remains to be explored (given the "iconic turn" in historiography, we may perhaps hope for more systematic study in the foreseeable future). We also lack in-depth studies of Middle Eastern languages and literatures other than Arabic, not to mention the Islamic world at large with its vast array of languages from Suaheli, Hindi and Punjabi to Urdu, Uzbek and Malay. To the extent that they exist, their findings have not been systematically integrated into the literature on anti-Judaism and anti-Semitism "in Islam".

The *Protocols of the Elders of Zion*, the notorious forgery claiming to document a conspiracy of Free Masons and Jews to take over the world, was first published in Russia in 1903 and after the Oc-

¹⁹ See Jonathan Frankel, *The Damascus Affair: 'Ritual Murder', Politics, and the Jews in 1840*, Cambridge 1997. For Egypt, see Jacob M. Landau, "Ritual Murder Accusations in Nineteenth-Century Egypt", in: *idem*, *Middle Eastern Themes. Papers in History and Politics*, London 1973, 99-142 and my *The Jews in Modern Egypt, 1914-1952*, London 1989, 60, 62, 81, 113, 225 and 228f.

²⁰ Stefan Wild, "Judentum, Christentum und Islam in der palästinensischen Poesie", *WI*, 23-24 (1984), 259-297; Adel al-Osta, *Die Juden in der palästinensischen Literatur zwischen 1913 und 1987*, Berlin 1993. For an overview of the relevant literary and visual stereotypes, see Julius H. Schoeps and Joachim Schlör (eds.), *Antisemitismus. Vorurteile und Mythen*, Frankfurt am Main 2000. See further Kiefer and Reichmuth in this issue.

tober Revolution of 1917 spread fast beyond Russian territories.²¹ They were translated into English and German in 1920. Significantly, the first Arabic translation seems to have been made in mandate Palestine by the Greek Orthodox editor of the nationalist paper *Filastīn*, ʿĪsā Daʿūd al-ʿĪsā (1878-1950), in 1921. The first attested Arabic translation appeared in January 1926 in the Catholic journal *Raqīb Saḥyūn* published in Jerusalem, followed by another translation in Egypt in 1927 or 1928. Interestingly, Stefan Wild to whom we owe several groundbreaking studies on the subject surmises that the fact that these were Christian publications curtailed their readership. But, then, major newspapers and journals were edited by Arab Christians, first and foremost *Filastīn* itself, without restricting their audience.²² In the 1930s, translations of *Mein Kampf* (often purged) began to circulate, English ones as early as 1933, French ones from 1938. (Partial) Arabic translations were first circulated in 1934, beginning with excerpts in the Lebanese press.²³ Incidentally, not all books entitled *Kifāhī* are actually translations of *Mein Kampf*, but rather studies of Hitler or biographies with excerpts from his speeches and writings.²⁴

To assess the relevance of these writings is not an easy task: with luck, we may be able to trace the exact date and place of publication, and possibly even discover the number of reprints

²¹ Stefan Wild, "Die arabische Rezeption der ‚Protokolle der Weisen von Zion‘", in: Rainer Brunner et al. (eds.), *Islamstudien ohne Ende. Festschrift für Werner Ende zum 65. Geburtstag*, Würzburg 2002, 517-528. Interestingly, one of the main witnesses (ʿAjjāj Nuwaihīd) claims that up to World War I, it was not permitted to mention the *Protocols* (which suggests that they were already known among certain audiences); *ibid.*, n. 12. On the *Protocols*, see Norman Cohn, *Warrant for Genocide*, London 1967; Jeffrey L. Sammons (ed.), *Die Protokolle der Weisen von Zion*, Göttingen 1998.

²² See Ami Ayalon, *The Press in the Arab Middle East: A History*, Oxford 1995 and his *Reading Palestine. Printing and Literacy, 1900-1948*, Austin 2004.

²³ Stefan Wild, "„Mein Kampf“ in arabischer Übersetzung", *WI*, 9 (1964), 207-211 and *idem*, "National Socialism in the Arab Near East between 1933 and 1939", *WI*, 25 (1985), 126-173 (147-170). For Egypt, see Edmond Cao-Van-Hoa, "Der Feind meines Feindes...". *Darstellungen des nationalsozialistischen Deutschland in ägyptischen Schriften*, Frankfurt am Main 1990, 78, 104-105. For a broader overview, see Michael Kiefer in this issue.

²⁴ Cao-Van-Hoa, "Der Feind", 105 n. 8.

and revised editions with the number of copies published. But to establish their actual readership, reception and impact is notoriously difficult. Not surprisingly, the reception of anti-Semitic materials among Middle Eastern audiences remains controversial.²⁵ In-depth studies of interwar Egypt (including notably the research of Israel Gershoni and Edmond Cao-Van-Hoa) indicate that their impact was very limited even among nationalist circles firmly opposed to the British colonial presence.²⁶ Studies of the Jewish minority in Egypt confirm this impression.²⁷ The judgement has to be modified with regard to Islamist circles, notably the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood, whose leader Ḥasan al-Bannā (1906-1949) was attracted by fascist notions of unity and strong leadership, though he strongly condemned racism (*al-ʿunsuriyya*) as contrary to Islam.²⁸ In the 1940s, the Muslim Brothers engaged in propaganda and assaults on local Jews as the alleged fifth column of Zionism that were informed by Islamic anti-Jewish references combined with European anti-Semitic stereotypes. They were also among the first to support Palestinian resistance against the British and the Zionists, starting with the Arab uprising of 1936 to 1939 (more on this below).²⁹ One factor needs

²⁵ Thus Bernard Lewis, *Semites and Anti-Semites*, 256 speaks of the great impact European anti-Semitic literature had in the Arab Middle East; Edward W. Said, *The Politics of Dispossession. The Struggle for Palestinian Self-Determination 1969-1994*, London 1995, 337-340, contradicts him; cf. Wild, "Die arabische Rezeption der ‚Protokolle der Weisen von Zion‘", 518.

²⁶ Interestingly, Edmond Cao-Van-Hoa refers to the *Protocols* only once ("Der Feind", 151 n. 22), when in 1948 an author tells his readers that they are in fact a forgery.

²⁷ See my *The Jews in Modern Egypt*; Michael M. Laskier, *The Jews of Egypt, 1920-1970: In the midst of Zionism, Anti-Semitism, and the Middle East Conflict*, New York 1992.

²⁸ See notably *Majmūʿat al-rasāʾil li-l-imām al-shahīd Ḥasan al-Bannā*, reprint, Cairo; Charles Wendell (trans.), *Five Tracts of Ḥasan al-Bannā' (1906-1949). A selection from the Majmūʿat (sic) Rasāʾil al-Imām al-Shahīd Ḥasan al-Bannā'*, Los Angeles 1978. Their involvement in Palestine is richly attested; for studies in English, see Thomas Mayer, *Egypt and the Palestine Question, 1936-1945*, Berlin 1983; Abd Al-Fatah Muhammad El-Awaisi, *The Muslim Brotherhood and the Palestine Question 1918-1947*, London, New York 1998 (based on his earlier study in Arabic). For a broader perspective, see Bashoer M. Nafi, *Arabism, Islamism and the Palestine Question 1908-1941. A Political History*, Reading 1998.

²⁹ See Cao-Van-Hoa, "Der Feind", 35-37, 40, 48f; for an early critique of Nazism from an Islamic point of view, cf. *ibid.*, 68-86, 97 and 98 n. 14. This contrasts strongly with Kuntzel's views as expressed in his *Djihad und Judentum*, where (repeatedly re-

to be explicitly stated: while there existed isolated instances of anti-Semitism among intellectuals and political activists, no Arab government adopted any anti-Jewish or anti-Semitic policies, legal or otherwise, throughout the interwar period.

2. *The Fascist attraction*

Relations between individual Middle Eastern powers, political activists and Nazi Germany have been studied fairly intensively from both the German and the local angles.³⁰ Again, the focus has been on the Arab countries from Morocco to Iraq. Iran and Turkey have been less well covered and are usually not considered in the relevant literature.³¹ As has often been stated, Arab sympathies with Germany both under Wilhelm II and under Hitler (the Weimar Republic is less relevant in this context) were largely premised on Germany's perceived competition with, and antagonism towards, Britain and France as the principal colonial pow-

ferring to my own study on the Jews in twentieth-century Egypt) he portrays Hasan al-Bannā as the principal agent of anti-Semitism in Egypt and beyond; see also the contribution of Alexander Flores to this issue.

³⁰ For an excellent introduction, see Gerhard Höpp, Peter Wien and René Wildangel (eds.), *Blind für die Geschichte? Arabische Begegnungen mit dem Nationalsozialismus*, Berlin 2004. Also Francis Nicosia, "Arab Nationalism and National Socialist Germany, 1933-1945: Ideological and Strategic Incompatibility", *IJMES*, 12 (1980), 351-372; Stefan Wild, "National Socialism in the Arab Near East", 126-173; Fritz Stepapat, "Das Jahr 1933 und seine Folgen für die arabischen Länder des Vorderen Orients", in: Gerhard Schulz (ed.), *Die Große Krise der dreißiger Jahre. Vom Niedergang der Weltwirtschaft zum Zweiten Weltkrieg*, Göttingen 1985, 261-278; Basheer M. Nafi, "The Arabs and the Axis: 1933-1940", *Arab Studies Quarterly*, 19 (1997), 1-24. For German Middle Eastern politics and propaganda, see Heinz Tillmann, *Deutschlands Außenpolitik im Zweiten Weltkrieg*, (East) Berlin 1965; Bernd Philipp Schröder, *Deutschland und der Mittlere Osten im Zweiten Weltkrieg*, Göttingen 1975; see also the memoirs of Yūnus al-Bahrī, *Hunā barlīn. Hayyī al-'arab*, Beirut n.d. and Fritz Grobba, *Männer und Mächte im Orient. 25 Jahre diplomatischer Tätigkeit im Orient*, Göttingen 1967.

³¹ For Iran, see, e.g., Yair P. Hirschfeld, *Deutschland und Iran im Spielfeld der Mächte. Internationale Beziehungen unter Reza Shah 1912-1941*, Düsseldorf 1980. Tuvia Friling, "Between Friendly and Hostile Neutrality: Turkey and the Jews during World War II", in: Mirna Rozen (ed.), *The Last Ottoman Century and Beyond. The Jews in Turkey and the Balkans 1808-1945*, Tel Aviv 2002, 309-423 focuses on Turkish relations with the Palestinian Yishuv in the period of Nazi persecution and the mass flight of German Jews to Palestine. I have not undertaken any systematic research including the relevant literature in Persian or Turkish.

ers in the Middle East (“my enemy’s enemy is my friend”). It was thus primarily based on political or strategic considerations rather than ideological affinity. For obvious reasons, Italy, which had annexed Libya in 1911/12, brutally subjected the hinterland in the course of the 1920s and early 1930s, and invaded Abyssinia (Ethiopia) in 1935, held less attraction for Arab nationalists and Islamic activists fighting against colonialism.³² And yet, more was involved than mere power politics: in the 1930s and 1940s, sympathies with Germany often went hand in hand with admiration for elements of fascist ideology, organization and symbolic politics—first and foremost the emphasis on unity, discipline, strength and power, on a national rebirth brought about by a youthful avant-garde and directed by a strong leader, who placed the common good above individual interest. Translated into an Arab context, especially a Syrian or Iraqi one, this also involved the critique of confessionalism and sectarianism as stumbling blocks on the way to political unity and social cohesion under the auspices of Arab nationalism (by the same token, Zionism was denounced as the expression of Jewish nationalism challenging the Arab nation from both within and without). In the eyes of many, fascism and National Socialism stood for modernity, for dynamism, for sheer energy and will-power, all highly attractive to nationalist thinkers and activists faced with colonial domination.

In the majority of instances, fascination with fascist ideas (and elements of fascist politics, not all of them symbolic) did not stretch to include racism and anti-Semitism.³³ Case studies of paramilitary

³² See notably Juliette Bessis, *La Méditerranée fasciste. L'Italie mussolinienne et la Tunisie*, Paris 1981; Renzo de Felice, *Il fascismo e l'Oriente*, Bologna 1988.

³³ In addition to Wild, “National Socialism in the Arab Near East”, see also Christoph Schumann, “Symbolische Aneignungen. Antūn Saʿādas Radikálnationalismus in der Epoche des Faschismus”, in: Höpp, Wien, Wildangel (eds.), *Blind für die Geschichte?*, 155–189, esp. 157, 171–173, 175, 178–180. Israel Gershoni, one of the best experts on twentieth-century Egyptian political thought, has dealt extensively with the reception of both Italian fascism and German National Socialism in Egypt; see his *Or ha-tsef: mitsrayyim ve-ha-fashizm, 1922–1937*, Tel Aviv 1999; *Beyond Anti-Semitism: Egyptian responses to German Nazism and Italian fascism in the 1930s*, European University Working Papers 32 (2001) and “‘Der verfolgte Jude’. Al-Hilals Reaktionen auf den Antisemitismus in Europa und Hitlers Machtergreifung”, in: Höpp, Wien, Wildangel (eds.), *Blind für die Geschichte?*, 39–72, esp. 41; see also Cao-Van-Hoa, „Der

youth movements such as Young Egypt (*Miṣr al-Fatāṭ*) in Egypt, the Christian Phalanges (*Katā'ib*) in Lebanon or the Syrian Social Nationalist Party and its founder, Anṭūn Sa'āda (1904-1949), serve to illustrate this point.⁵⁴ In-depth studies of interwar Iraq and the anti-British movement under Rashīd 'Alī al-Kailānī (or Gailānī) of spring 1941 come up with more ambiguous results: if Baghdad in the 1920s is widely remembered as one of those "golden eras" of Muslim-Jewish coexistence, it was Baghdad that witnessed one of the first massacres of Jews in the modern Middle East (known as the Baghdad *farhūd*). The killings occurred under the eyes of the Kailānī government and therefore classify as a pogrom.⁵⁵ Studies of the Maghreb countries under Vichy rule highlight the limited impact of anti-Jewish and anti-Semitic policies enacted by the Vichy authorities; they also shed some light on local Arab and Berber reactions to these policies.⁵⁶ Arab anti-

Feind", esp. 77. For the Muslim Brothers, see above, n. 28. For case studies of Egyptian Jewry, see my *The Jews in Modern Egypt*, 128-139, 255-258 and Laskier, *The Jews of Egypt*, 55-72. For the German presence and propaganda in interwar Egypt, see also Albrecht Fieß, *Die deutsche Gemeinde in Ägypten von 1919-1939*, Hamburg 1996, esp. 94-123 and Mahmoud Kassim, *Die diplomatischen Beziehungen Deutschlands zu Ägypten 1919-1936*, Hamburg 2000, esp. 289-373.

⁵⁴ For Egypt, see James P. Jankowski, *Egypt's Young Rebels: "Young Egypt", 1933-1952*, Stanford 1975 and Israel Gershoni cited above, n. 32; for the Levant, see Milos Mendel and Zdenek Müller, "Fascist Tendencies in the Levant in the 1930s and 1940s", *Archiv Orientalni*, 55, 1989, 1-17; John P. Entelis, *Pluralism and Party Transformation in Lebanon. Al-Kata'ib 1936-1970*, Leiden 1974; Labib Zuwiyya Yamak, *The Syrian Social Nationalist Party. An Ideological Analysis*, Cambridge MA 1966; Philip S. Khoury, *Syria and the French Mandate. The Politics of Arab Nationalism 1920-1945*, London 1987, 395-433; Christoph Schumann, *Radikalnationalismus in Syrien und Libanon. Politische Sozialisation und Elitenbildung, 1930-1958*, Hamburg 2001 and *idem*, "Symbolische Aneignungen".

⁵⁵ See Peter Wien, "'Neue Generation' und Führersehnsucht. Generationenkonflikt und totalitäre Tendenzen im Irak der dreißiger Jahre", in: Höpp, Wien, Wildangel (eds.), *Blind für die Geschichte?*, 73-114. Also Reeva S. Simon, *Iraq Between the Two World Wars: The Creation and Implementation of a National Ideology*, New York 1986; Walid M.S. Hamdi, *Rashid Ali al-Gailani and the Nationalist Movement in Iraq 1939-1941*, London 1987; Renate Dieterich, "Rašīd 'Alī al-Kailānī in Berlin—ein irakischer Nationalist in NS-Deutschland", in: Peter Heine (ed.), *Al Rafidayn. Jahrbuch zu Geschichte und Kultur des modernen Iraq*, 3, Würzburg 1995, 47-79.

⁵⁶ Michel Abitbol, *Les Juifs d'Afrique du Nord sous Vichy*, Paris 1983 serves as a good introduction; see also Stefano Fabei, *La politica maghrebina del Terzo Reich*, Parma 1989 and Janaa Baida, „Das Bild des Nationalsozialismus in der Presse Marokkos.“ in: Höpp, Wien, Wildangel (eds.), *Blind für die Geschichte?*, 19-38.

Fascism still merits closer study.³⁷ Taken together, the available evidence suggests that to the extent that they existed, anti-Jewish and anti-Semitic attitudes and even more so physical attacks on local Jews and Jewish property were mostly related to the mounting conflict between (Zionist) Jews and Arabs in Palestine.

3. *Conflict in Palestine*

Palestine takes special place in the present context, not only because the mandate period (1920-1948) witnessed the gradual consolidation of a Jewish "national home" under Zionist auspices, a development watched with growing anxiety in the Arab and the Muslim world at large, but also because of the high profile of the mufti of Jerusalem, Ḥājj Amīn al-Ḥusainī (c. 1895-1974).³⁸ Amīn al-Ḥusainī's sympathies with fascist Italy and Nazi Germany before and after his dismissal from office as president of the Supreme Muslim Council and his flight from Jerusalem in 1937 are amply documented, as is his active involvement in the German war effort during his stay in Berlin from 1941 to 1945. A comparison with other Nazi collaborators in Europe and beyond (Subhas Chandra Bose in India has been named) might be instructive in this context. There can be no doubt about the mufti's anti-Jewish and anti-Semitic attitudes. All serious biographers insist that he called on the Axis powers and their European allies to prevent the emigration of European Jews to Palestine (which he saw as an immediate threat to Palestinian national interest), but that he did not actively participate in the extermination of Jews, nor did he visit any extermination camps.³⁹ The mufti's collabora-

³⁷ See 'Abdallāh Ḥannā, *al-Ḥaraka al-munāhidā li-l-faḥḥiyya fī sūriyā wa-lubnān 1933-1945*, Beirut 1975.

³⁸ See Alexander Flores in this issue; also Alexander Schölch, "Das Dritte Reich, die zionistische Bewegung und der Palästina-Konflikt", *Vierteljahreshefte für Zeitgeschichte*, 1 (1982), 646-674; Francis R. Nicosia, *The Third Reich and the Palestine Question*, Austin 1985; 'Abd al-Rahmān 'Abd al-Ghanī, *Almāniyā al-nāziyya wa-filastīn 1933-1945*, Beirut 1995 as well as Ralf Balke, *Hakenkreuz im Heiligen Land: Die NSDAP-Landesgruppe Palästina*, Erfurt 2001.

³⁹ For a critical evaluation of the relevant literature, see Gerhard Höpp, "Der Gefangene im Dreieck. Zum Bild Amin al-Husseinis in Wissenschaft und Publizistik seit 1941. Ein bio-bibliographischer Abriss", in: Rainer Zimmer-Winkel (ed.), *Time*

tion with Nazi Germany has of course to be seen in the context of Arab opposition against the Zionist project, Jewish immigration and the consolidation of the Jewish Yishuv under Zionist leadership. Yet contextualization cannot entail justification: his anti-Zionist stance took on a decidedly anti-Semitic colouring, which was later to compromise the Palestinian national movement as a whole, if not Palestinian society at large—partly because even after the fall of the Third Reich his known involvement with Nazi Germany did not discredit him in the eyes of most Arab nationalists in Palestine and beyond. What remains to be examined is his role in Palestinian and Arab politics after he fled the country in 1937. It is true that during the late 1920s and the 1930s, especially during the Arab revolt starting in 1936, Amīn al-Husainī emerged as the most prominent Palestinian Arab leader and it is equally true that in order to enhance his position vis-à-vis the Nazis, he claimed to speak for Arab Palestine, if not the wider Arab world. But his self-aggrandizing claim should not be taken for reality: he was not identical with the nationalist movement, let alone with Palestinian society, which need to be studied separately.⁴⁰ If Arabs have been accused of idolizing their leaders, critical scholarship must be careful not to take the man to represent the nation.

At the core of most controversies over Arab (and Muslim) attitudes to Jews and Israel lies the difficult distinction between Jews

umstrittene Figur: Hadj Amin al-Husseini, Mufti von Jerusalem, Trier 1999, 5-23. For the most important contributions, see Klaus Gensicke, *Der Mufti von Jerusalem, Amin el-Husseini, und die Nationalsozialisten*, Frankfurt am Main 1988; Philip Mattar, *The Mufti of Jerusalem. al-Hajj Amin al-Husayni and the Palestinian National Movement*, New York 1988 (2nd rev. ed. 1992), esp. 148; Zvi Elpeleg, *The Grand Mufti. Haj Amin al-Hussaini, Founder of the Palestinian National Movement*, London 1993 and Gerhard Höpp (ed.), *Mufti-Papiere. Briefe, Memoranden, Reden und Aufrufe Amin al-Hussainis aus dem Exil, 1940-1945*, Berlin 2001; for his involvement in the Nazi war effort, notably the 13. Waffen-Gebirgs-Division der SS 'Handschar' (kroatische No. 1), see also Cao-Van-Hoa, "Der Feind", 64, n. 9.

⁴⁰ In addition to the titles given above, see René Wildangel, "Der größte Feind der Menschheit". Der Nationalsozialismus in der arabischen öffentlichen Meinung in Palästina während des Zweiten Weltkrieges", in: Höpp, Wien, Wildangel (eds.), *Blind für die Geschichte?*, 115-154.

and Zionists, and by implication between anti-Zionism, anti-Judaism and anti-Semitism. Up to 1948, the distinction between Jews and Zionists was made by some Arab writers and political activists, especially among the left, but not by all, or at least not consistently. Examples range from Naguib Azoury (d. 1916), who in 1905 published one of the first books against what he called “The Jewish Threat” (*Le péril juif*), to later nationalist and Islamist activists and to peasant rebels in the Palestinian countryside.⁴¹ The distinction was all the more difficult to uphold as the Zionists themselves claimed to represent the Jewish people, aiming to create a *Jewish* state or national home, not a *Zionist* one; while their most prominent international body was indeed called the World Zionist Organization, the institutions most active and efficient within Palestine were the Jewish Agency and the Jewish National Fund. The Zionist movement appealed to all Jews to migrate to Palestine, to establish a Jewish (or strictly speaking a Hebrew) society and economy there, and to fight for Jewish (Hebrew) labour in the country. Hence it cannot come as a surprise that others did not consistently apply a distinction that leading Zionists themselves took great pains to discredit and disclaim. Studies of Arab literature—mostly poetry, novels and theatre plays—published in Palestine in the interwar period show significant variety, ranging from authors meticulously distinguishing between Jews and Zionists, and even Jews of Arab, Middle Eastern and European backgrounds, to others, who never did so, or did not do so consistently.⁴² Daily interactions at the workplace, in the street, and in the marketplace were infinitely more nuanced and more ambiguous than the written sources would suggest.⁴³ As always one must beware of

⁴¹ See again Alexander Flores in this issue; also Ilan Pappé, “Understanding the Enemy: A Comparative Analysis of Palestinian Islamist and Nationalist Leaflets, 1920s–1980s,” in: Wistrich (ed.), *Anti-Zionism*, 87–107; Gudrun Krämer, *Geschichte Palästinas*, 5th ed., Munich 2006, chs. 9–12, esp. 313–316; for Azoury, see Wild, “Die arabische Rezeption der ‚Protokolle der Weisen von Zion‘”, 525.

⁴² Stefan Wild, “Judentum, Christentum und Islam”; al-Osta, *Die Juden in der palästinensischen Literatur*, esp. 235–241.

⁴³ For an important case study, see Deborah S. Bernstein, *Constructing Boundaries. Jewish and Arab Workers in Mandatory Palestine*, Albany NY 2000; with a different ap-

generalization and acknowledge the lack of neatly defined categories and sharply drawn boundaries, allowing for more interaction on the ground than is often assumed, with all the possibilities for positive encounters that this entailed. Still, we know that encounters were not all positive. Arab resistance to the Zionist project and the British mandate was not confined to Zionist and British institutions, but included assaults on individual Jews, Jewish establishments and Jewish neighbourhoods regardless of the latter's political views and affiliations, as the riots of 1920, 1921, 1929 and the revolt of 1936-1939 amply demonstrated, during which Zionist and anti-Zionist Jews were indiscriminately attacked by an Arab "mob".

The creation of the state of Israel in May 1948, the traumatic defeat of the Arab armies in their first war against Israel, and the mass flight and expulsion of Palestinians constituted a watershed in Palestinian and Arab history, generally known as *al-nakba*, "the catastrophe". In the Arab world, defeat produced a distinctive genre of literature, *adab al-nakba*, much of it self-critical in character, written to probe, analyse and understand its cause(s) and meaning(s) for Arab politics, culture and society. The subsequent series of military coups brought about changes at the national and regional levels which deeply affected the overall cultural and political climate. Arab nationalism spearheaded by Nasser and the Ba'ath parties in Syria and Iraq was by definition anti-imperialist and anti-Zionist in character, and at the time intent upon destroying the state of Israel (or "Zionist entity", respectively). Arab attitudes towards Jews could not but be influenced by the quest for national liberation from western colonial control (which affected both Christian and Jewish minorities in the Arab world) and political confrontation with Israel (which tended to single out the Jews as the alleged fifth column of Zionism and the state of Israel). In 1951, even before the Free Officers' coup of July 1952, the first Arabic translation of the *Protocols of*

proach and focus, see also Susanne Enderwitz, *Unsere Situation schuf unsere Erinnerungen. Palästinensische Autobiographien zwischen 1967 und 2000*, Wiesbaden 2002.

the Elders of Zion by a Muslim author was published in Cairo with a preface by the prominent Egyptian writer ‘Abbās Maḥmūd al-‘Aqqād (1889-1964).⁴⁴ At a time when the *Protocols* were thoroughly discredited in Europe, they began to be widely circulated in the Arab Middle East. Numerous translations of *Mein Kampf* were to follow over the coming decades. (And again, translations into other languages spoken in the Muslim world as well as their circulation, reception and political impact remain to be systematically researched.)

A growing number of anti-Jewish and anti-Semitic publications, many of them with gory covers modelled on European anti-Semitic visual motifs, contributed towards a gradual demonization of the Jew(s) as immoral, greedy, perfidious and treacherous, a corrupting element within society, and a global force seeking to dominate the world. The undeniable influence of international Jewish organizations in realizing the declared aim of Zionism, i.e., the establishment in Arab Palestine of a national home or state for the Jews, and their staunch support for the state of Israel, facilitated the spread of conspirational views of history and the alleged Jewish role in it. The *Protocols of the Elders of Zion* postulated just such a conspiracy. Hence their continued attraction and the temptation to explain Jewish success and Arab impotence with a Jewish world conspiracy assisted by western colonialism. The failure to clearly distinguish between Jews and Zionists, and between individuals and groups of Jews and Zionists espousing different views and policies, also made it difficult to distinguish anti-Zionism from anti-Judaism. Two elements were new in this context: the fact that some of the anti-Semitic materials were published and distributed with government support, especially in Nasserist Egypt,⁴⁵ and the growing involvement of Islamic authors and

⁴⁴ Muḥammad Khalifa al-Tūnisi, a journalist and former member of Young Egypt; cf. Wild, "Die arabische Rezeption der ‚Protokolle der Weisen von Zion‘", 519-521; Lewis, *Semites and Anti-Semites*, 208, 218.

⁴⁵ See Kiefer, *Antisemitismus in den islamischen Gesellschaften* and his contribution to this issue. For overviews of the post-World War II literature, see also Haim, "Arabic Anti-Semitic Literature"; Yehoshafat Harkabi, *Arab Attitudes to Israel*, Jerusalem 1972; Rivka Yadin, *An Arrogant Oppressive Spirit. Anti-Zionism as Anti-Judaism in Egypt*,

movements who gave a distinctly Islamic tinge to the (negative) image of the Jew(s). Arab defeat in the June War of 1967 brought about more changes in the regional political and cultural map: the Israeli conquest of the Gaza Strip and the West Bank including Jerusalem and the Temple Mount with al-Aqsa Mosque and the Dome of the Rock, the gradual decline of Arab nationalism, and the rise of political Islam.

III. Islamizing anti-Semitism

Islamic authors (not all of them Islamists as commonly defined) moved and still move in what Stefan Wild described as the “grey zone between Qur’anic exegesis, theology of history and political propaganda”.⁴⁶ They could draw on a repertory of religious polemics directed against non-Muslims, be they Christians, Jews, Zoroastrians, Hindus or other, which had accumulated over the ages (just as Christians, Jews, Zoroastrians, Hindus and others had developed their own polemical literature against Islam and the Muslims). Jews occupied a distinctive place in these polemics, though not a unique one. The Qur’an and Sunna contain a number of references to their religious and moral deficiencies, as well as their opposition to Muhammad as prophet and leader of the Medinan community (*umma*). Some designated them as enemies of Islam on both religious and political grounds—a dangerous combination in the context of confrontation with the state of Israel. Yet contrary to what some reviewers of the modern literature make us believe, the Qur’an did not portray the Jews solely in negative terms, and what is more, the charge of treason was of no practical import for many centuries of Muslim-Jewish coexistence.⁴⁷ Matters changed with the rise of Zionism, the es-

Oxford 1989; Yossef Bodansky, *Islamic Anti-Semitism as a Political Instrument*, Houston, Shaarei Tikva 1999; Jan Goldberg, “A Lesson from Egypt on the Origins of Modern Anti-Semitism in the Middle East”, *Kirchliche Zeitgeschichte / Contemporary Church History*, 16 (2003), 127-148 (138-140). Lewis, “Muslim Anti-Semitism”, 2, 4, refers briefly to reprints of the *Protocols* in the Islamic Republic of Iran.

⁴⁶ Wild, “Die arabische Rezeption der ‘Protokolle der Weisen von Zion’”, 524.

⁴⁷ See the relevant entries in the *EQ*, esp. art. “Jews and Judaism” (Uri Rubin), vol.

tablishment of the state of Israel, and its repeated victories over Arab ("Muslim") armies in the twentieth century. These developments changed the frame of reference for Muslim authors writing with the explicit aim of presenting the *Islamic* position on Judaism and the Jews. If therefore Ronald Nettle speaks of "Islamic archetypes of Jews and Judaism" shaped by the Medinan experience, which created a "fixed portrait of the Jews",⁴⁸ he ignores this element of change, and of innovation. Change is highlighted by those observers who insist on the need to contextualize the portrait—without downplaying its negative and essentialist character, let alone justifying it as an expression of legitimate self-defence in the face of a superior enemy.

As far as the authors are concerned, two types can be distinguished in the relevant literature, an Islamic and an Islamist one. Among the former, two books published shortly before and after the Arab defeat in the 1967 June War stand out: a monograph entitled *The Children of Israel in the Qurʾān and Sunna* (*Banū Isrāʾīl fī al-qurʾān wa al-sunna*) published by an Azharī shaykh, Muḥammad Sayyid al-Ṭantāwī (b. 1928), in 1966,⁴⁹ and the proceedings of a conference held by al-Azhar's Academy of Religious Research in Rajab 1388 / September 1968.⁵⁰ Al-Ṭantāwī's book

3, 21-34; also Friedmann, *Tolerance and Coercion*; to find the relevant Qurʾānic references, consult Muḥammad Fuʾād ʿAbd al-Bāqī, *al-Muʾjam al-mufahras li-alfāz al-qurʾān al-karīm*, Kairo 1987. See further Johan Bouman, *Der Koran und die Juden. Die Geschichte einer Tragödie*, Darmstadt 1990; Camilla Adang, *Muslim Writers on Judaism and the Hebrew Bible. From Ibn Rabban to Ibn Hazm*, Leiden 1996; Hava Lazarus-Yafeh (ed.), *Muslim Authors on Jews and Judaism. The Jews Among Their Muslim Neighbours*, Jerusalem 1996; Uri Rubin, *Between Bible and Qurʾān. The Children of Israel and the Islamic Self-Image*, Princeton 1999.

⁴⁸ Ronald L. Nettle, "Islamic Archetypes of the Jews: Then and Now", in: Wistrich (ed.), *Anti-Zionism*, 63-73 (64); see also his *Past Trials & Present Tribulations. A Muslim Fundamentalist's View of the Jews*, Oxford 1987.

⁴⁹ See notably Suha Taji-Farouki, "A Contemporary Construction of the Jews in the Qurʾān: A Review of Muḥammad Sayyid Tantawi's *Banū Isrāʾīl fī al-Qurʾān wa al-Sunna* and ʿAfīf ʿAbd al-Fattāh Tabbara's *Al-Yahūd fī al-Qurʾān*", in: Ronald L. Nettle and Suha Taji-Farouki (eds.), *Muslim-Jewish Encounters. Intellectual Traditions and Modern Politics*, Amsterdam 1998, 15-37 and Wolfgang Driesch, *Islam, Judentum und Israel. Der jüdische Anspruch auf das Heilige Land aus muslimischer Perspektive*, Hamburg 2003; also Michael Kiefer in this issue.

⁵⁰ D.F. Green (ed.), *Arabische Theologen über die Juden und Israel. Auszüge aus den Akten der vierten Konferenz der Akademie für islamische Forschung*, Genua 1976.

might not have obtained the publicity it eventually received had he not subsequently risen to highest office in the Egyptian religious establishment, acting as mufti of the republic from 1986 to 1996 and as rector of al-Azhar (*shaykh al-Azhar*) from 1996. Religious scholars, journalists and activists affiliated with the Meccan-based Muslim World League (*rābitat al-‘ālam al-islāmī*) issued a number of books and articles denouncing the Jews, or rather world Jewry, as the enemies of Islam and human society at large.⁵¹ At the same time, Islamist thinkers and activists also incorporated new elements in their portrayal of the Jews, and these too were clearly shaped by the Arab-Israeli conflict over Palestine. Sayyid Qutb’s booklet *Our Struggle with the Jews (Ma‘rakatunā ma‘a al-yahūd)*, published in Cairo in the early 1950s, ranges among the best-known writings in this genre, partly because of the fame its author achieved as one of the first martyrs of the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood, executed by the Nasserist government in 1966.⁵² Prominent preachers like Yūsuf al-Qaradāwī (b. 1926), a former member of the Muslim Brotherhood with an international audience reaching far beyond the Middle East, as it were straddle the ground between Islamic and Islamist positions, popularizing current “Islamic” notions of the Jew(s).⁵³

The image they paint is starkly negative and clearly inspired by the conspirational worldview of the *Protocols of the Elders of Zion*. The Hamās Charter published in 1988, shortly after the outbreak of the First Intifada and the creation of Hamās itself, serves as evidence of this trend. Hamās leaflets speak a similar language.⁵⁴

⁵¹ See Reinhard Schulze, *Islamischer Internationalismus im 20. Jahrhundert. Untersuchungen zur Geschichte der islamischen Weltliga*, Leiden 1990, ch. 3, esp. 397-408.

⁵² For an important, albeit problematic study because he tends to use Christian metaphors to describe Qutb’s argument, see Neutler, *Past Trials & Present Tribulations*.

⁵³ See, e.g., his booklets *Ghair al-muslimīn fī al-majtama‘ al-islāmī*, 4th ed., Beirut 1985 and *al-Islām wa al-‘unf*, Cairo 2005; for background information, see my “Drawing Boundaries. Yūsuf al-Qaradāwī on Apostasy”, in: Gudrun Krämer and Sabine Schmidtke (eds.), *Speaking for Islam. Religious Authorities in Muslim Societies*, Leiden 2006, 181-217.

⁵⁴ The Arabic version is available online; English translation. “The Charter of the Islamic Resistance Movement”, *Journal of Palestine Studies*, 22 (1993), 122-134. See Esther Webman, *Anti-Semitic Motifs in the Ideology of Hizballah and Hamas*, Tel Aviv 1994; for more sophisticated readings, see Andrea Nüsse, *Muslim Palestine: The Ideology of*

Still, attacks on the Jews, or world Jewry, have to be seen as part of a larger picture in which Islam is pitted against powerful enemies: following World War II, these were western imperialism (perceived as a continuation of the Christian crusades), Zionism and world Jewry, and atheist communism (which at the same time stood for moral depravity). The unholy alliance of these three epitomized the forces of darkness, or indeed the axis of evil as seen from an Islamic point of view. After the demise of the Soviet Union and the decline of communism as a global force, crusading imperialism carried on by the Christians in collusion with Zionist world Jewry still remained to be confronted. Apocalyptic visions of the kind propagated by the Saudi Islamist Safar al-Ḥawālī belong in the same context.⁵⁵ Floating more freely in an ill-defined "Islamic" environment, there are depictions of Jews (and Christians) as apes and pigs, animals with a very negative image in the Islamic tradition, and not only the Islamic one. Ostensibly based on Qur'ānic references, they actually distort their meaning: in *sūra* 5:60, the Qur'ān states that God cursed the sinners among the people of the book (that is Jews and Christians) and transformed them into apes, pigs and idolators; according to *sūras* 2:65 and 7:166, he commanded those among the children of Israel who violated the sabbath to transform themselves into hideous apes. What the Qur'ān targets, then, are the *sinners among* the Jews and Christians, not the Jews and Christians as such. Characteristically, Qur'ānic exegetes did not always respect this line, and neither do present-day polemicists.⁵⁶ For all its unpleasant character (if this is not too weak a term), this motif of interreligious polemics underscores once again that Jews are not always singled out, but treated as part of a wider group of non-Muslims.

Critical studies of anti-Semitism in the Muslim world have large-

Hamas, Amsterdam 1998; Pappé, "Understanding the Enemy", 97-105 and the contributions of Jean-François Legrain, including his *Les Voix du soulèvement palestinien, 1987-1988*, Cairo 1991.

⁵⁵ See the article by Stefan Reichmuth in this issue.

⁵⁶ Uri Rubin, "Apes, pigs, and the Islamic identity", *Israel Oriental Studies*, 107 (1997), 89-105; Michael Cook, "Ibn Qutayba and the monkeys", *Stud. Isl.*, 89 (1999), 43-74.

ly focused on written materials, including not just books and articles, but also the cyberspace. As indicated above, the iconography has perhaps not been given sufficient attention. Actual policies adopted by governments and Islamist activists have not been systematically studied either, even though it does of course make a difference whether anti-Jewish and anti-Semitic motifs are translated into practical politics, or whether this is not the case. Islamists clearly differ in their set of priorities. For militant Islamist groups in Egypt such as *al-Takfir wa al-Hijra* or the *Jamā'at Islāmiyya*, liberation from un-Islamic rule at home always took precedence over the liberation of Muslim lands abroad, including Palestine.⁵⁷ Although Usāma bin Lādin, al-Qā'ida and their affiliates count among the most vociferous Islamist activists propagating Jihad against the Jews and the Crusaders, they do not engage in the fight against Israel, at least not in any direct manner.⁵⁸ For obvious reasons, the same does not hold true for the Islamic movements in Palestine and Lebanon.

IV. Remembering the Holocaust

After decades of conflict, basic features of the debate on anti-Semitism in the Muslim world seem to have been firmly established, and most of them point to the Arab-Israeli conflict over Palestine. Concepts of collective memory and the politics of commemoration play a major part in this context. Historical memory is for the most part local and specific. European perceptions of anti-Semitism, and more particularly German ones, are shaped by their own experience and the memories attached to them. Christian anti-Judaism and modern anti-Semitism culminating in the

⁵⁷ See, e.g., W.M. Abdalnasser, *The Islamic Movement in Egypt. Perceptions of international relations, 1967-1981*, London, New York 1994.

⁵⁸ This is not the place to go into Islamist terrorism in general and al-Qā'ida in particular; for the *Jabha islāmiyya al-'ālamīyya li-qitāl al-yahūd wa al-sālibīyin*, "founded" by Usāma bin Lādin in 1998, see, e.g., Rohan Gunaratna, *Inside Al Qaeda: Global Network of Terror*, London 2002 and several studies by Guido Steinberg, notably his *Der nahe und der ferne Feind. Die Netzwerke des islamistischen Terrors*, Munich 2005.

Holocaust / Shoah provide the major reference point. The same applies to Israel.⁵⁹ But the Middle Eastern and the Muslim experience (to the extent that the latter is a meaningful concept) are different. There is no reason why the stock images of Christian anti-Judaism should figure in them prominently, and why the Holocaust / Shoah should be constitutive to their historical narratives and concepts of collective identity.⁶⁰

Both western and Israeli observers tend to interpret Arab, Middle Eastern and Muslim attitudes, statements and activities in the light of the European experience. Mutual accusations of past collusion with Nazism, and present ideological and political affinity to it, have become very much part of the polemical exchange, or mutual denigration. In western political discourse including Israel, comparisons of Middle Eastern political figures with Hitler have become increasingly frequent; Ḥājj Amīn al-Jūsainī, Nasser, Arafat and Saddam Husain are among the best known instances.⁶¹

⁵⁹ Out of a large body of literature, see Yael Zerubavel, *Recovered Roots. Collective Memory and the Making of Israeli National Tradition*, Chicago, London 1995; Moshe Zuckermann, *Zweierlei Holocaust. Der Holocaust in den politischen Kulturen Israels und Deutschlands*, Göttingen 1998; Aleida Assmann and Ute Frevert (eds.), *Geschichtsvergessenheit—Geschichtsversessenheit. Zum Umgang mit deutschen Vergangenheiten nach 1945*, Stuttgart 1999; Konrad Jarausch and Martin Sabrow (eds.), *Verletztes Gedächtnis. Erinnerungskultur und Zeitgeschichte im Konflikt*, Frankfurt am Main, New York 2002; Dan Diner, "Gedächtniszeiten". *Über jüdische und andere Geschichte*, Munich 2003. For a broader theoretical framework, see also John R. Gillis (ed.), *Commemorations: The Politics of National Identity*, Princeton 1994. For a different perspective, stressing the plurality of "memories", oral as well as written, and the interconnectedness of "lived memory" and "learned history", see Jocelyne Dakhlia, *L'Oubli de la cité*, Paris 1990 and her article "New Approaches in the History of Memory? A French Model", in: Angelika Neuwirth and Andreas Pflusch (eds.), *Crisis and Memory in Islamic Societies*, Beirut, Würzburg 2001, 59-74.

⁶⁰ Karin Jøggerst, *Getrennte Welten—getrennte Geschichte(n)? Zur politischen Bedeutung von Erinnerungskultur im israelisch-palästinensischen Konflikt*, Münster 2002 and *idem*, "Vergegenwärtigte Vergangenheit(en). Die Rezeption der Shoah und Nakba im israelisch-palästinensischen Konflikt", in: Höpp, Wien, Wildangel (eds.), *Blind für die Geschichte?*, 295-334; Juliane Hammer, "Homeland Palestine. Lost in the catastrophe of 1948 and recreated in memories and art", in: Neuwirth and Pflusch (eds.), *Crisis and Memory*, 453-481; for poetry and literature, see al-Osta, *Die Juden* as well as Birgit Embalo, Angelika Neuwirth and Friederike Pannewick (eds.), *Kulturelle Selbstbehauptung der Palästinenser. Survey der Modernen Palästinensischen Dichtung*, Beirut, Würzburg 2001, esp. chs. 1 and 2.

⁶¹ Cao-Van-Hoa, "Der Feind", 55-58 and ch. IX: "The functional use of Nazi anal-

The newly invented term of Islamo-Fascism points in the same direction.⁶² Links of Islamist groups to right-wing extremists in the west, virtual as well as practical, have been documented, but still require closer analysis as to their actual significance.⁶³ Among certain circles, any critique of Zionism and Israel is identified with anti-Semitism with the obvious aim of discrediting it as inherently illegitimate.⁶⁴ Arabs (many of them secular nationalists) often retort by accusing Zionism of collaboration with the Nazis (the reference here is to the Haavara Agreement concluded with Nazi Germany in 1933 to facilitate Jewish emigration to Palestine and the transfer of Jewish property there),⁶⁵ identifying Zionism with racism, if not Nazism, and denouncing Israeli policies as fascist and racist.⁶⁶

Western and Israeli authors call on Arabs and Muslims to finally take account of the Shoah and to acknowledge its relevance to Jewish identity and history, rather than denying its scope and impact. For many Arabs and Palestinians to acknowledge the Shoah is to acknowledge the legitimacy of the state of Israel, posing a dilemma similar to the one faced by Arab Palestinians after World War I, when for them to recognize the Balfour Declaration im-

ogy", esp., 140, 144; Höpp, Wien, Wildangel (eds.), *Blind für die Geschichte?*, 10; for the function of this type of polemical discourse, see also Antony Lerman, "Fictive Anti-Zionism: Third World, Arab and Muslim Variations", in: Wistrich (ed.), *Anti-Zionism*, 121-138.

⁶² Cf. above, n. 3.

⁶³ See notably the work of Juliane Wetzel (see above, n. 2).

⁶⁴ In addition to the titles already cited (esp. notes 1 and 60), see Moshe Zuckermann (ed.), *Antisemitismus—Antizionismus—Israelkritik*, Göttingen 2005.

⁶⁵ See Schölch, "Das Dritte Reich"; also Werner Feilchenfeld, Dolf Michaelis and Ludwig Pinner, *Haavara-Transfer nach Palästina und Einwanderung deutscher Juden 1933-1939*, Tübingen 1972; Edwin Black, *The Transfer Agreement. The Untold Story of the Secret Agreement between the Third Reich and Jewish Palestine*, New York 1984.

⁶⁶ See, e.g., Edmond Cao-Van-Hoa, "Zionismus und Nationalsozialismus—Vergleiche bei arabischen Autoren", *WI*, 27 (1987), 250-260. The relevant publications of 'Abd al-Wahhāb al-Masīrī (El-Messiri), a former professor of English Literature in Cairo, would merit special attention; see, e.g., his *al-Sahyūniyya wa al-nāziyya wa nihāyat al-tārīkh. ru'ya hadariyya jadida*, Cairo 1997 and *Mausū'at al-yahūd wa al-yahūdiyya wa al-sahyūniyya. namudhaj tafsi'rī jadid*, Cairo 2002. For a brief introduction, see Omar Kamil, "Arabische Stimmen zur modernen jüdischen Geschichte", *Simon-Dubnow-Institut für jüdische Geschichte und Kultur an der Universität Leipzig, Bulletin* 7/2005, Leipzig 2006, 31-40 (33-35).

plied recognizing the British mandate. Certain western authors such as Roger Garaudy and David Irving who at some point denied the Holocaust either partly or in its entirety, continue to enjoy considerable popularity in the Middle East and possibly the Islamic world at large (again, there is no reliable empirical data to either prove or disprove this assumption with regard to the larger context).⁶⁷ There are those who argue that though the *Protocols of the Elders of Zion* be a forgery, they still tell the truth about Jewish designs and the character of Zionism and the state of Israel.⁶⁸ A number of Arab intellectuals, journalists and political activists starting with Edward Said, Azmi Bishara, Josef Samaha, Hazim Saghiyeh and Saleh Bashir (all of them critical of political Islam and the Islamist movement) have begun to face the problem and to publicly discuss the Holocaust as a fact relevant to both Jewish and Arab-Palestinian history and identity.⁶⁹ Still, many others wonder why they should concern themselves with a crime which was after all not theirs, and of which they

⁶⁷ Rainer Zimmer-Winkel (ed.), *Die Araber und die Shoah. Über die Schwierigkeiten dieser Konjunktion*, Trier 2000; Götz Nordbruch, *Re-Interpreting History: Perceptions of Nazism in Egyptian Media*, Florence 2002; *idem*, "Geschichte im Konflikt. Der Nationalsozialismus als Thema aktueller Debatten in der ägyptischen Öffentlichkeit", in: Höpp, Wien, Wildangel (eds.), *Blind für die Geschichte?*, 269-294; also Goldberg, "A Lesson from Egypt", 132f.

⁶⁸ See, e.g., Wild, "Die arabische Rezeption der Protokolle der Weisen von Zion", 523. For the notorious TV series *Horseman without a Horse (Fāris bi-lā jawād)* based in part on the *Protocols*, which was shown in Egypt and other Arab countries during Ramadan 2002, see Kiefer in this issue. MEMRI reported extensively on the series and the debates it provoked. Accordingly, the Egyptian Organization of Human Rights condemned the series as racist; Usāma al-Bāz, close confidant of president Husni Mubārak, warned against anti-Semitism and called on the Egyptian public to distinguish between Judaism as a faith and Zionism as a political ideology; cf. Goldberg, "A Lesson from Egypt", 128-131, 146f.

⁶⁹ See Kamil, "Arabische Stimmen", 33-40. Azmi Bishara, "Die Araber und der Holocaust—Die Problematisierung einer Konjunktion", in: Rolf Steininger (ed.), *Der Umgang mit dem Holocaust. Europa—USA—Israel*, Vienna 1994, 407-429 and *idem*, "Die Araber und die Shoah—Die Problematisierung einer Konjunktion," in: Zimmer-Winkel (ed.), *Die Araber und die Shoah*, 9-33. The paper was first given at a conference held in Innsbruck, Austria, in 1992/93, and subsequently published in German and Hebrew (*Z'manim* 53, 1995, 54-71), but not in Arabic; cf. Nordbruch, "Geschichte im Konflikt", 270. Saleh Bashir and Hazem Saghiyeh, "Universalizing the Holocaust," *Palestine-Israel Journal of Politics, Economics and Culture*, 5 (1998-99) 3-4, 90-97, London, originally published in *al-Hayat*, 18 December 1997.

are themselves victims, if indirectly so. Even more denounce what they perceive as Jewish and Israeli exploitation of the Holocaust to extort support from western countries (rightly) plagued by a guilty conscience, and to silence criticism of Israeli politics.

V. Looking ahead

As even this short survey will have shown, the ground still to be covered is vast if we are to move beyond present perceptions, assumptions and mutual recriminations. Empirical research and careful analysis alone will of course not be able to resolve the conflicts and to clear the charged atmosphere, but they will at least help to put the discussion on a sounder footing. If it has repeatedly been stated that both scientific research and the general debates centre heavily upon the Arab Near East, the same is true of the articles written for this issue: Michael Kiefer, who has already contributed a major study on the issue (published in German in 2002), focuses on the gradual Islamization of anti-Semitic motifs and stereotypes in the Arab Middle East since the 1970s. Given the heated debates over whether anti-Semitism constitutes a core element of Islam firmly rooted in the Qur'ān (reflecting in many ways essentialist assumptions about the character of the Jews as defined by the Bible), or whether it has to be seen as the product of a specific historical juncture, and hence should be described as "Islamized", not as "Islamic", his argument is of special interest. Alexander Flores, an expert on modern Palestinian history and one of the few scholars in the field to have dealt with the sensitive issues of anti-Zionism, anti-Judaism and anti-Semitism for a number of years, offers a detailed analysis of the Palestinian case, which, as has been remarked more than once, is of crucial importance in the present context. Stefan Reichmuth, who comes to the topic from the wider field of Islamic studies, offers a fascinating insight into a genre that has so far received little attention in the present context: Islamist apocalyptic writing. The parallels he draws to Christian, more particularly evangelical apocalyptic literature are of special interest. We very much regret that an Arab colleague who was to contribute

a critical essay on contemporary Arab views of the Jews unfortunately had to withdraw at the last minute for reasons unrelated to the present issue.

To delve deeply into a subject means to realize how much remains to be done. In the present case, this is truer than ever. We can only invite others to widen the scope and depth of enquiry and to seek knowledge, if need be as far as China.