INTRODUCTION
Distorted faces of modernity

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The chapters included in this collection are based on the special issue of *European Societies* on ‘Antisemitism, Racism, and Islamophobia’, which we edited in 2012. This in turn was based on a selection of papers presented at various meetings of the European Sociological Association Research Network 31 on ‘Ethnic Relations, Racism and Antisemitism’. The selected papers share a common focus on contemporary debates around antisemitism and explore relations between antisemitism, Islamophobia and other forms of racism. This publication comes at a time of significant change in Europe, expressed quantitatively in the number, frequency and intensity of antisemitic incidents and qualitatively in the development of new social forms of antisemitism. We are also witnessing the emergence of new political and legal responses to antisemitism, some of which have provoked intense debate in the public sphere.

1. The term ‘Islamophobia’ is contested. Its critics point out, with good reason, that it can be misused to tar the critique of religious fundamentalisms with the brush of anti-immigrant or Orientalist racism. We use the term, alongside alternatives such as ‘anti-Muslim racism’, since it is by now the internationally most widely recognised way of referring to the stereotyping of and discrimination against Muslims. It seems obvious, though, that not all criticisms of specific Islamist movements and politics are racist or Islamophobic.

2. This introduction was written before the murderous attacks on customers of a kosher supermarket and on journalists of the satirical magazine *Charlie Hebdo* in Paris 7-9 January 2015, on an unarmed guard protecting a Bat Mitzvah party in a synagogue and on the audience of a free-speech event in Copenhagen on 14-15 February. These recent events demonstrate the growing urgency of the issues discussed in this volume.

3. We are thinking, for example, of NGOs like the Community Security Trust in the UK that has tracked antisemitic incidents and discourses since 1995, of inter-governamental bodies like the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR), which has organised conferences on antisemitism since 2003 and appointed a Senior
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This volume aims to help counteract the tendency in sociology to dissociate antisemitism from other forms of racism. This is not to say that racism, antisemitism and Islamophobia are all reducible to one indistinguishable and common ‘prejudice’ and do not have their own distinct origins, functions and qualities. There is, for example, something quite specific about antisemitic conspiracy theories that project onto ‘the Jews’ a malign power to control the world in their own interests. However, it is to say that antisemitism, Islamophobia and other racisms have connected histories and that sociology and social theory should recognize the ties that bind them together. Too often in contemporary sociology do racism and antisemitism appear dissociated, and critiques of either are treated as occupying different or even opposed universes. One sign of this disconnection lies in the charge that to combat the ‘new antisemitism’ is at once to downplay other racisms or even to tar other collectivities – e.g., Muslims, Arabs, immigrants, the Left – with the brush of antisemitism; the converse notion is that concern with anti-Muslim racism necessarily implies downplaying antisemitism and the oppression of women, gays and lesbians whenever it is perpetrated by Muslims.

Our contention is that in the social and human sciences we need to address the connectedness of different forms of racism and group stereotyping, including antisemitism, and explore the reasons why the sense of connectedness that once helped to shape sociology – and that we find, say, in the work of Du Bois in the 1940s – has been difficult to reconstruct.

Representative on Combating Anti-Semitism in 2009, of parliamentary bodies like the All-Party Parliamentary Group against Antisemitism, which conducted an Inquiry into Anti-Semitism in the UK in 2005–6, and of the European Union Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia (EUMC), and its successor body, the EU Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA), which have issued a number of contested reports into antisemitism (2003, 2005, and 2013) and produced in 2005 a ‘working definition of antisemitism’.


5. In the UK antisemitism used to be largely invisible in studies of ‘race relations’ as attention was turned, understandably, to the social disadvantages and discriminations imposed on Black immigrants and their descendants. More recently there has been a universalising turn, shifting the definition of the problem from an engagement with specific forms of racial discrimination to a focus on inequality in general, in which antisemitism as such still remains largely invisible. Thus the Equalities and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) took over the mandate for three previously separate strands – gender equality, race relations and the rights of disabled people – and assumed responsibility for rights connected with age, religion and sexuality. The Equality Act of 2010 replaced nine previously separate strands of anti-discrimination legislation. See Ippolito, B. (2011) Equality: The New Legal Framework (Oxford: Hart); and Swery, A. (2014) ‘Political responses to contemporary antisemitism in Britain: Towards the reversal of a tradition of neglect’, Working Paper, University of Lancaster.
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in the present period. The task facing the current study of antisemitism is to revive one of the motifs of the sociological tradition, the formation of a universalistic critique of modern capitalist society, rather than blame the pathologies of capitalism on particular personal agents - in the case of antisemitism on 'the Jews'. This project contrasts with tendencies toward both 'methodological separatism' and 'universalistic homogenisation' in its attempt to explore the specificities and the connectedness of racism and antisemitism conceptually, historically and socially.

Among the reasons that have made this connective enterprise increasingly difficult in recent decades would appear to be a 'competition of victimhood', that is, a sense that social and scholarly engagement with one particular form of group stereotyping and discrimination will detract from an engagement with all the others in a putative zero-sum game of social memory, research and recognition. In some cases and contexts, this assumed antagonism is further escalated by reductive perceptions of racialised social and political conflicts both in the Middle East and in the West. Furthermore, phenomena like the growing antisemitism among some black nationalists and Muslims and growing anti-Arab racism in parts of Israeli society complicate black-and-white dichotomies of victims and perpetrators and should motivate us to abandon any generalising perceptions of 'victimising' or 'victimised' groups. They pose a twofold challenge neither to ignore these phenomena for the sake of a political correctness that ultimately makes itself complicit with prejudice and violence, nor to condone new, concealed forms of racism and antisemitism, which are often expressed under the cover of political criticism or the critique of religion and which typically imagine their victims as the real racists.


7. Cornell West has argued against such a formation of opposing camps that the growth of antisemitism within the ranks of some black activists compromises the prospects of effectively combating even anti-black racism: 'if we fall prey to antisemitism, then the principled attempt to combat racism forfeits much of its credibility' (Race Matters, New York: Vintage Books, 1994, p. 110). Recalling that in 1964 two young Jewish civil rights activists, alongside their black comrades, were lynched by Ku Klux Klan members, West acknowledges that there was no 'golden age' in which blacks and Jews were free of friction but maintains there was a 'better age' of empathy and alliances (ibid., p. 104).


8. See Alipio 'Antisemitism in France' and Webman 'Discourses on antisemitism and Islamophobia in Arab media' in this collection.
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Antisemitism is a complex social phenomenon. Like other forms of racism, it is able to persist across time-periods and borders. It is endowed with powers of mutation and metamorphosis. It has deep roots in the realm of the symbolic — in myths, language and collective memory — but it is also grounded in the social structures and experiences of capitalist society. It may exploit the historically produced peculiarities of Jewish identity. It may take advantage of the objectionable practices of individual Jews to construct the phantasy of ‘the Jew’, or it may simply project onto ‘the Jews’ entirely illusory properties that have nothing to do with the actions or diverse cultural characteristics of Jewish people.

Today new forms of antisemitism co-exist on the one hand with traditional forms of religious hatred of Judaism and racial or cultural hatred of Jewishness, and on the other hand with new forms of racism and Islamophobia. In the case of antisemitism the new meets the old when blood libel myths and notions of an overwhelming, global, secret Jewish power to control financial markets and world politics find an echo in contemporary tropes, such as that of Jewish control of international banks and Jewish responsibility for the financial crisis, the power of the ‘Israel lobby’ to control American military might and foreign policy, the exceptional cruelty of the Israeli military including its alleged propensity for targeted child murder, or the allegation that Israeli relief efforts in Haiti only served the harvesting and trading of organs.10

Achieving consensus on the antisemitic character of such ideas can be extraordinarily difficult for a number of reasons. Such discourses may start from empirical observations before blowing them out of proportion, interpreting them through the lens of sinister conspiracy theories, displacing them from their historical context and removing any comparative element. We can see such mechanisms at play in antisemitic representations of the role of Jewish bankers and Wall Street traders of Jewish lobby organisations like the American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC) and of Israel Defence Force (IDF) actions. It is certainly possible to criticise Israeli settlement and occupation policies, attacks against Israeli Arabs,

9. See Achinger "Threats to modernity; threats of modernity" in this collection.

or actions of the IDF in the recent Gaza intervention without being antisemitic—such criticisms are forcefully voiced both inside and outside Israel, by Jews and non-Jews alike, without attracting any such charge. Yet, all too frequently, critical analysis has been superseded by Manichean thinking, in which the entire state of Israel is depicted as radically evil. What was noteworthy about events in the Middle East in 2014, for example, was not that Israel was criticized for killing some 2,000 civilians and Hamas fighters, but that the Syrian regime’s killing of close to 200,000 civilians and opposition fighters just across the border, including some 2,400 Palestinians, did not also provoke popular outrage in the streets of London, Paris or Berlin. It is not plausible to explain these radically different perceptions and responses by reference to the unique character of Israeli actions. There is a surplus beyond the factual data.

The notion of a uniquely parasitical Jewish financial class, or a uniquely powerful Zionist lobby, or a uniquely cruel Israeli army reflects a distorted world view, to be found in parts of the Left as well as the Right, that is projected onto the empirical phenomena. In these discourses, antisemitic prejudice can even appear progressive, as resistance against the powerful, and on this basis it can break into mainstream liberal, radical and anti-imperialist discourses. Sometimes antisemitic representations lose all connection with reality, as in the case of the alleged quest of Israeli aid workers for body parts in Haiti, and one would have to laugh at such bizarre theories were it not for the real harm they can do. In recent months, the overlap between certain forms of antizionism and open antisemitism has also been vividly displayed in many European countries in attacks on Jewish communities and individuals held responsible for the actions of the Israeli government during the 2014 Gaza conflict. The distinctive character of these attacks is not just due to their intensity but also to the fact that their targets were no longer described in code as ‘Zionists’—as in former such crises, where the presumably diverse political positions of the attacked could likewise not be known to the attackers—but quite openly as ‘Jews’.

Antisemitic representations have deep cultural roots in European society, in religious hatred of Judaism and racial hatred of Jewishness, but they

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have also served as markers of wider sets of political problems. Modern antisemitism was never just a theory about ‘the Jews’; it was a distorted theory of modern, capitalist society as a whole and its inner workings. Moreover, debates on the emancipation of Jews were model cases for the question of how modern society should deal with issues of legal universalism, secularism, civil rights and the protection of minorities. We suggest that the same issues are at stake in the politics of antisemitism today. We should not ignore, for example, the ties that bind deployment of antisemitic representations in debates on national conflicts in the Middle East to wider political discourses, which see the world exclusively in terms of dualities like imperialism and anti-imperialism, power and resistance; which render invisible the histories, internal power structures and social contradictions of the societies in question; and which misrecognise the effects of global capitalism as an American, Jewish or ‘Western’ cabal. A dualistic perspective that simply pits ‘the West’ against ‘the rest’ is always in danger of perceiving authoritarian nationalist regimes and fundamentalist movements as ‘emancipatory’ for no other reason than that of their perceived opposition to the US and/or to Israel, regardless of their own oppressive character. All cases in point must of course be explored and discussed, but they may include failures within the metropolitan Left to show solidarity with the Iraqi opposition under Sadam or with the Iranian ‘Green Revolution’ of 2009–10, or conversely uncritical enthusiasm for slogans like ‘We are all Hezbollah’ and ‘Support Hamas’, in spite of the oppressive actions and reactionary ideologies of these movements.\(^\text{14}\)

The boundaries of what constitutes antisemitism remain hotly disputed. Overt forms of antisemitism are manifest in hate speech and physical attacks directed at Jews and Jewish institutions and in Holocaust denial. Practices and ideologies whose antisemitic character is more strongly contested include identifications of ‘Israel’ or ‘the Israelis’ with apartheid or Nazism; campaigns which seek exclusion of members of Israeli academic institutions, alone among academics worldwide, from the global academic community; support for political and religious movements that ignores or rationalises antisemitism within them; and emphatic and categorical denial of the very possibility of antisemitism in relation to any and all criticism of Israel. The dividing lines between legitimate and illegitimate political positions, and the specific functions of antisemitism in making this distinction, could be the subject of many further discussions.\(^\text{15}\)

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14. This kind of analysis of antisemitism runs from Marx’s ‘On the Jewish question’ via the work of the Frankfurt School and George L. Mosse to the contemporary work of Detlev Claassen, Thomas Harty, Klaus Holz, Meishe Pastone, Marcel Stöchter, Reinhard Rürup and others.

15. Earlier examples might include widespread uncritical support for the regimes of Nasser in Egypt or Baath in Iraq and Syria, in spite of the fact that these regimes brutally oppressed or killed their domestic Left wing and communist opposition.
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are all fiercely disputed, but it should be recognised that there is a dividing
line and that the difficulties encountered in identifying the new antisemitism
may be paralleled by those encountered in identifying other forms of new
racism. These difficulties should act as a stimulus to develop, not discount,
the task of understanding new forms of racism and antisemitism conceptu-
ally and empirically.

What precisely is 'new' about the 'new antisemitism' is itself disputed,
but the core observation concerns the growth of a form of antisemitism that
a) is mediated through criticism of Israel as a country and Zionism
as a world-wide ideology, b) is expressed in the name of universal values
and c) emphatically denies that it is antisemitic. There is now a growing
current of theory and research in Europe and elsewhere designed to map,
analyse and combat contemporary forms of antisemitism and to undertake
the difficult task of linking it with the study of other forms of racism.16 The
body of thought that sometimes goes under the title of 'new antisemitism
theory' is intellectually and politically diverse, but within this larger project
sociology and social theory should be able to play a vital role in deconstruc-
ting ideological positions, advancing reflexive and critical methodologies,
and shaping the critique of antisemitism from a universalistic and cosmo-
opolitan point of view.

This project requires that we confront countervailing tendencies both in
new antisemitism theory and in sociology and social theory, which threaten
to obstruct its realisation. A limiting tendency in strands of new antisemitism
theory is to combat antisemitism from what we might call a Jewish nationalist
or particularistic point of view that is unable or unwilling to make connec-
tions with other forms of racism. A limiting tendency in sociology and social
theory is to treat antisemitism as always already in the past: for example, as
a product of modernity according to postmodernists, as a product of ethnic
nationalism according to postnationalists and as a product of methodological
nationalism according to cosmopolitans. Corresponding to what we might
term the 'past-ification' of antisemitism is the tendency to presuppose
that antisemitism was delegitimised and marginalised in Europe by the
experience of the Holocaust and by the reconstruction of Europe as a
transnational polity based on an inclusive human rights culture.

There is ample evidence, however, to suggest that across Europe the
antisemitism that fed into the Holocaust did not simply vanish after the
defeat of Naziism. More up-to-date variants may even invert old patterns:

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Opinion (Plymouth: Rowman and Littlefield); Judken, J. (2008) 'So what's new?
Rethinking the "new antisemitism" in a global age', Patterns of Prejudice, 42, 4–5,
pp. 531–560.
whilst in the past Jews were condemned in the name of organic nativity as ‘rootless cosmopolitans’, they may now be condemned in the name of postnational values as ‘timeless anti-cosmopolitans’. While engaged with Europe’s colonial crimes plays a relatively minor role in public discourse, Israel is frequently treated as the epitome of a colonial state in so of obvious differences from European colonialism, including the fact that many of its founders were themselves refugees from European racial persecution and genocide. Forms of Jewish nationalism, for example Zionism, should be as open to criticism as other forms of nationalism, but there something deeply troubling in blaming Zionism for an exclusivity that overlooked in the case of other nationalisms or in turning Zionism into a projection screen for the sins of an allegedly enlightened and cosmopolis Europe. The assertion that antisemitism is entirely a problem of the past does not just obscure an understanding of present-day antisemitism. In even more problematic turn, it can feed into the idea that such concerns today cannot be taken at face value and mask a more sinister agenda, notably that of deflecting criticism of Israel. Such attempts to delegitimize worries about antisemitism as disingenuous can themselves become part of a fantasy of Jewish power.

17. The history of antisemitism cannot be understood without recognising the contradictions of Enlightenment: that while it generally supported Jewish emancipation, some writers – sometimes the same ones – also fostered the idea of the ‘Jewish question’, which meant in effect the question of what was to be done about the alleged harm ‘these Jews’ inflicted on humanity. While it is commonly recognised that many nationalisms of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries saw the Jews as an obstacle to the progress of the nation, what tends to be forgotten is that within influential variants of Enlightenment universalism there lurked the idea that ‘the Jews’ were an obstacle to the progress of humanity in general. On the historical dialectic between universalism and particularism in antisemitism and Holocaust memory see Postone, M. (in press) ‘The dualisms of capital: a modernity: Reflections on history, the Holocaust, and antisemitism’, in Jack Jacobs (ed.) Jews and the Left (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press). For a historical overview of the dialectic of universalism and particularism, see Fine, R. (2014) ‘Two faces of universalism: Jewish emancipation and the Jewish question’, Jewish Journal of Sociology, 56: 1-2, pp. 29-47.

Let us consider one example. Günter Grass, a celebrated German liberal novelist, was criticised in large parts of the German press for his poem ‘Was gesagt werden muss’ [‘What must be said’]. Most of his German critics did not claim Grass’ poem was antisemitic and some explicitly declared this allegation overblown. However, they expressed various concerns about the text. Grass was criticised for his claims that Israel was threatening not a conventional attack on Iranian nuclear plants but a nuclear attack that could ‘extinguish the Iranian people’ (‘das iranische Volk auslöschen’) – a turn of phrase usually associated with the Holocaust, that Israel was threatening world peace while Ahmadinejad (the then President of Iran) was merely a ‘Mandlheid’ (a ‘goat hero’, somebody who brags but does not act), and that an Iranian nuclear bomb was a ‘mere legend’. Grass was criticised as self-aggrandising for his claim that he felt driven to break a silence imposed by the threat of being called antisemitic, although he had only recently broken his own silence about having been drafted as a member of the Waffen-SS. Furthermore, the German newspapers at the time were full of criticisms of the Netanyahu government and of warnings against an Israeli attack on Iranian nuclear installations, without any of these criticisms attracting the charge of antisemitism. A key point for many of his critics was that Grass explicitly presented Israelis as the new Nazis and Germans as victims of Israel. His evocation of an unspecified ‘us’ as future victims of Israel’s planned nuclear genocide – ‘survivors’ (‘Überlebende’) who will be at most footnote (‘allenfalls Fußnoten’) – and his portrayal of Germans as cowed into silence by Israel were cases in point. 19

What makes this event most remarkable, though, is neither Grass’ poem nor the published criticisms, but the disconnect between the actual political, press and television debate on the one hand, and the reaction among parts of the German population and the reception of the debate in the international press on the other hand. Ironically, the ham-fisted reaction of the Netanyahu government, barring Grass from ever entering the country, was one of the few responses that might have momentarily helped to lend plausibility to Grass’ self-presentation. 20 Only a handful of Grass’ many political and media critics in Germany, though, charged him with reproducing antisemitic patterns, and in no case with reference to his

19. This account is based on a survey of 33 reports, editorials and comments in the leading German broadsheets, representing the political spectrum from conservative to left-liberal, *Die Welt, Die Zeit, Frankfurter Allgemeine, Frankfurter Rundschau, Süddeutsche Zeitung* and *Tageszeitung*, published between 14 and 26 April 2012.

objections against Israeli government policies and politics. Nonetheless, a flood of letters to the editor and readers’ comments in German newspapers’ online commentary sections alleged that Grass was being hounded as a supposed antisemite for no other reason than that he had dared to criticise Israel. This reaction reveals a widespread resentment among parts of the population against imagined Israeli or Jewish power that also resonated in Grass’ theatrical gesture of breaking a supposed taboo with his ‘last drop of ink’.

Much of the coverage in the international press, for example in The Guardian and The New York Times, also struggled to do justice to the key points of the debate. Although the majority of The Guardian articles mentioned important points of criticism of Grass’ poem at least in passing, a translation of the poem published in The Guardian on 5 April reduced it to less than half its original length and omitted the most problematic passages without any indication that this was the case. This made it considerably harder for an English-language reader to see the German debate as anything but a knee-jerk reaction to Grass’ criticism of Israeli politics. 22

21. This charge was most forcefully articulated by Henryk M. Broder, whose ‘Günter Grass – nicht ganz dicht, aber ein Dichter’ (Die Welt, 4 April 2012) is quoted in many reports on the debate. The charge of employing antisemitic tropes arose primarily in relation to Grass’ counterfactual claim that any criticism of Israel is silenced with the charge of antisemitism (e.g., Weppl, G. (2012) ‘Günter Grass’ seltsames Verhältnis zu den Fakten’, Die Welt, 4 April; Vorkötter, U. (2012) ‘Günter Grass – Dichter und Maschinen’, Frankfurter Rundschau, 4 April; and the Parliamentary Secretary and Human Rights Speaker of the Green Party, Volker Beck, quoted in Ehrenstein, C. (2012) ‘Günter Grass verwehrt Ohrfeige und Wirkung’, Die Welt, 5 April). It also arose in relation to Grass’ victim-perpetrator reversal with reference to Germany and Israel (e.g., Jaffe, J. (2012) ‘Der Antisemitismus will raus’, Die Zeit, 4 April). For evidence that criticism of Israel was in fact widespread in German political discourse without automatically attracting charges of antisemitism, see e.g., Vorkötter 2012; Knöpfels, D. (2012) ‘Alle gleichgeschaltet außer Günter Grass’, Tagesspiegel, 7 April. In the German debate, the trope that Israel – or even ‘the Jews’ as an imagined international collective – has the power to control German discourse by invoking the Holocaust is sometimes described as a core feature of so-called ‘secondary antisemitism’ or ‘antisemitism after Auschwitz’.

22. A more thorough engagement was offered by Kudliček, H. (2012) ‘Günter Grass and changing German attitudes towards Israel’, the guardian.com, 5 April, an article that was, however, only published in the paper’s online section Comment is free.

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Similarly, the first article on the topic in *The New York Times* opened with the lines:

A new poem by the German Nobel laureate Günter Grass depicting Israel’s undeclared nuclear might as a threat to world peace drew wide condemnation from Jewish groups and commentators in Germany on Wednesday, showing the strength of enduring taboos in German public discourse about Israel more than six decades after the Holocaust.  

In keeping with a beginning that introduces condemnation of Grass as evidence of enduring ‘taboos’ against criticising Israel due to German feelings of guilt, the article focuses almost exclusively on criticisms of the poem’s presentation of the Iranian-Israeli conflict, making no mention of other points of contention outlined above, such as Grass’ perpetrator-victim reversal. The presentation of the debate put the main focus on criticisms of Grass by Israeli and German Jews, rather than presenting the conflict as most importantly one between different parts of German society. To take a more demagogical example, the British Marxist Tariq Ali, in an article in *Counterpunch* (10 April 2012), dispenses with any reference to the actual debate when condemning the ‘disgusting attacks on Günter Grass’. Behind them, he sees the conviction on the part of the German ‘elite and a layer of the population’ that ‘all Germans are guilty for eternity for the crimes of the Third Reich. Behind this thinking is the Zionist and Zionophile argument that the crime against the Jews of Europe was unique in the annals of history’. According to Ali, Zionist control of German discourse prevents Germans from recognising the crimes of Israel and its noxious influence on American foreign policy in the Middle East. Here, the projection has come full circle and concerns over antisemitism, ‘old’ and ‘new’, are only perceived as further proof of ‘Zionist and Zionophile’ power and cunning.

Debate around Grass’ poem may serve to illustrate some of the difficulties we encounter in understanding contemporary antisemitism. The view that Grass’ poem was merely labelled ‘antisemitic’ in order to immunise Israel against criticism demonstrably does not do justice to a social conversation that has more to do with Germany’s relation to its past than with Israel. We find that the apparent closeness of the topic of European antisemitism to debates on the Middle East can introduce a friend-or-foe way of thinking inimical to differentiated social analysis. Concern with contemporary antisemitism is often perceived simply as affirmative of...

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present-day power relations, especially the influence and power of Israel, and more broadly the status quo of global capitalism. However, as the study of modern society since Marx, Simmel, Durkheim and the Frankfurt School has shown, antisemitism should be a concern for any critical consciousness keen to avoid conspiracy theories and essentialist explanations in its understanding of modern capitalism. The critique of antisemitism is in fact a vital part of sociology and social theory more generally. The task we face today is thus not simply to condemn antisemitism and racism in all its forms, but to develop our understanding of their specificities, connections and origins, the better to confront them.

We wish to offer our thanks to our contributors and express our regret that there are many other contributors in the Network whose work we were not able to include. We wish to pay tribute in particular to the initiatives of Claudine Attias-Donfut (CNAW, Paris) in forming the European network from which this collection evolved, and of David Hirsh (University of London) for his astute confrontations with contemporary antisemitism which have done much to inform and enrich academic work in this area. The papers we have been able to include are as follows:

Glynis Cousin (University of Wolverhampton) and Robert Fine (University of Warwick) explore the social, intellectual and political processes that have led to disconnections between the study of racism and antisemitism and have given rise to what they call 'methodological separatism' within sociology and social theory. They argue for a connected sociology and humanising perspective that deconstruct this ideological schism.

Veronique Altglas (Queen's University, Belfast) discusses the resurgence of antisemitism in France in relation both to continuities of the French antisemitic tradition and to its contemporary transformations in relation to colonial heritage and communitarian rivalries. She argues that the antisemitism that characterises the 'antizionist' politics of the comedian Dieudonné and the Black supremacist movement Tribu KA should be understood not only in terms of ideological convergence between the radical Left and fundamentalist Islam, but also – and more traditionally – as a way of making sense of social inequalities and exclusions.

Christine Achinger (University of Warwick) uses literary studies to access the social imaginary in order to analyse interrelations and differences between antisemitism and anti-Slavic racism and their complementary functions for a particular image of capitalist modernity. Employing Gustav Freytag's influential novel Debil and Credit as a prism to study nineteenth-century German discourse during a time of accelerating social change, she argues that the categories developed in this comparison remain illuminating for an investigation of relations of antisemitism and anti-Muslim racism today.
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Alejandro Baer (University of Minnesota) and Paula López develop a qualitative approach, based on group-based discussion, to explain why Spain is among the Western countries with the most negative views of Jews. The study identifies in different socio-economic and ideological milieus a range of stereotypical discourses in Spain on Jews, Judaism and the Arab-Israeli conflict. They argue that, in spite of secularisation in Spanish society, religion still plays a major role in explaining the persistence and resurgence of a generally normalised antisemitism.

Dario Padovan (University of Turin) and Alfredo Alètti (University of Ferrara) study the distribution of antisemitism and Islamophobia and their respective correlation with ethnocentric, authoritarian and atomic attitudes among a representative sample of Italian citizens. Through a quantitative analysis they demonstrate the fear of the future and socio-economic uncertainties that underlie the growth of these attitudes.

Esther Weisman (Tel Aviv University) explores relations between antisemitism and Islamophobia in Arab newspapers in the wake of the Second Intifada and 9/11 and then in response to the Danish cartoon crisis of 2006 and the Swiss referendum on building minarets in 2009. She argues that while competition of victimhood dominates this relation, the space exists for a more dialogic relation that is open to addressing both forms of exclusion together.

Philip Spencer (Kingston University) traces the failures of Marxists and the Left in general to engage adequately with antisemitism and the Holocaust before, during and after the Second World War. He links the tendency of the Left to minimise the significance of antisemitism to a class perspective that had difficulty not only in understanding issues of racism, but also in breaking from the perception of Jews as capitalists and in taking antisemites at their word. He contrasts this hegemonic tendency with the more reflective approaches that slowly evolved among more receptive activists and thinkers, such as Leon Trotsky, Rosa Luxemburg, Theodor Adorno and Max Horkheimer.
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Edited by
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