

## THE “NEW ANTI-SEMITISM” ACCORDING TO ANDRÉ GLUCKSMANN AS A POLITICAL PROBLEM

**Professor Nicolae IUGA, PhD.**

Vasile Goldiș Western University of Arad, Romania  
Department of Social Sciences  
Email: nicolaeiuga@yahoo.com

**Professor Laurențiu BATIN, PhD.**

Vasile Goldiș Western University of Arad, Romania  
Department of Social Sciences  
Email: nicolaeiuga@yahoo.com

### **Abstract:**

*In its evolution, the anti-Semitism phenomenon implies several historical sequences, which can be distinguished after their ideological content: the religious anti-Semitism specific to the Mid Ages, the economical anti-Semitism of the modern age, the racial and nationalist anti-Semitism specific to the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and the politically driven anti-Semitism which manifested itself in the post-war and contemporary period.*

*In the given text, we analyze the vision of the contemporary French philosopher André Glucksmann (b. 1937) in regard to what was named the New anti-Semitism. This form of anti-Semitism is derived both from the left and right wing contemporary politics, from the radical Islamism as well as from the liberal Western society. Glucksmann can be attributed the merit for emphasizing how the different nationalist movements of anti - globalization, anti - Americanism and anti-Zionism can be at the same time masked forms of anti-Semitism, and how some normal critics regarding the politics of*

*Israel as a country can easily degenerate into making them appear as some sort of evil entities.*

**Key words:** *the new anti-Semitism, André Glucksmann, anti-globalization, anti-Zionism, anti-Americanism, Israel.*

**JEL Classification:** Z00

In order to emphasize the origins of this very complex and delicate attitude, a brief history lesson is in order. Generally speaking, anti - Semitism designates a hostile political and social attitude towards Jews, for the sole fact of being who they are. The term was launched in the German expression journalism towards the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century; more precisely it is considered that the first to have ever used the term would have been the journalist Wilhelm Marr, the author of an anti - Semitism propaganda brochure, printed in 1879. Anti - Semitism has its origins in the Mid Ages and in a certain specific Unitarian imaginary. There were stringent concerns and

prejudices according to which the Jews were thought to have poisoned the wells, practiced ritual killing (of Christian children, in order to prepare their ritual bread), practiced various forms of witchcraft etc. As time passed by, the phantasmagoric medieval accusations were abandoned, but the anti – Semitism remained. The perennial anti – Semitism includes stereotypical opinions and prejudices, which can start with something as simple as discrimination, and go as far as isolation (a ghetto type isolation), oppression and physical violence [1].

The Jewish people have always been a minority which clearly differentiated itself from the nations with which it coexisted, through its religious beliefs, culture and way of life. The Christians from the European nations have always had an ambivalent attitude towards the Jews. There have been periods of cordial relations, of appreciation and even solidarity with the Jews. However, there have also been periodically outbursts of hatred and violence towards this people which goes to show the ambivalent attitude embedded throughout the ages in the popular Christianity and folklore.

It is generally considered that European modernity makes its debut at the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. The French Revolution, which began in 1789, brought along to the world the new ideals of liberty, equality and fraternity amongst all citizens, regulations which had the status of principles. But in detail, things are a bit more complicated. As far as the Jews were concerned, in France, during the Revolution, there lived approximately forty thousand Jews, divided into two large communities, Sephardic in the south – west of France and Ashkenazi in Alsacia [2]. The Sephardic community, numbering less than ten thousand souls, was comprised of refugee Jews from Spain and Portugal. They were very well integrated Jews in the French society, who benefited from all the rights and privileges of a corporation of merchants [3]. The Ashkenazi Jews from Alsace hailed from the German states and had kept their way of life from Germany, namely autonomy regarding the judicial, social, religious and educational issues. The professions of the Ashkenazi Jews from Alsace were limited to peddlers and money lenders, more specifically loaning money with interest, “this latter occupation bringing upon them the envy of the peasants as well as that of the workers’ guilds [4]”.

*The Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen*, given in the beginning of the Revolution, on the 26<sup>th</sup> of August 1789, proclaimed the equality of all citizens in front of the law, regardless of their religious confession, without however making explicit referrals to the Jews. Consequently, what has since been named “the Jewish problem” has been brought to debate within the National Assembly. Several points of view could be heard here, such as: (a) the Jews should be granted citizenship rights, being considered a national minority; (b) they should not be given rights as a national minority, but each should receive rights as an individual, becoming a citizen of France; (c) the Ashkenazi Jews should not be given French citizens’ rights because, due to their mercantile occupations, they would attract the wrath of the ones from Alsace. Unfortunately, in the end, this last point of view prevailed, namely that if citizenship rights would be granted to the Ashkenazi Jews, this will have as a consequence uprisings within the ranks of the peasants and the French craftsmen as well as mass murders in Alsace [5]. Therefore, in the end, the Sephardic Jews from France became citizens with full rights and the Ashkenazi Jews did not receive any. Their status was later established, in September 1971, by the promulgation of some special laws, which offered the Sephardic the opportunity to swear an oath as a French citizen, but by doing this forfeiting their privileges inherited through tradition, consisting in autonomous tribunals and administrations. At the same time, a law was adopted against the usury practiced by Jews.

A more durable solution, based on new juridical foundations, was achieved by Napoleon Bonaparte, who had become emperor of the French people, according to the Civil code from 1804. The emperor made some research first; he summoned a meeting of the Jewish eminent figures, whom he asked to answer a set of questions [6] as follows: (a) what is the Jewish people’s attitude towards bigamy, divorce and mixed marriages? (b) Are Jews willing to live by French law? (c) Who appoints the rabbis, what are their prerogatives and are their prerogatives established by law or by tradition? (d) Can Jews practice any profession? (e) Does the Jewish law allow usury only with non – Jews, or Jews included? Etc. After a period of deliberation, the eminent Jewish figures formulated answers which, on one hand, expressed the interest of every

category of Jews, both Sephardic and Ashkenazi, and on the other hand could please the Emperor. The answers were the following: (a) Judaism is a religion, and the rabbi is only a spiritual leader, renouncing his previous role of arbiter in juridical and legislative issues; (b) Jews will submit to the authority of the French state, acknowledging the prevalence of civil laws over the religious ones.; (c) The Jews acknowledge the principle of equality in rights of the non – Jewish French citizens in regard to Jewish laws. In year 1807, Emperor Napoleon summoned a second Great Assembly of rabbis, to which he restored the ancient title of Sanhedrin, the name of the Judaic Supreme Court which functioned in Jerusalem between the centuries II B.C. – I A.D; the Assembly also had to confirm from a religious point of view the above enunciated answers. Later on, during the Restoration, the French Parliament confirmed the emancipation of the Jews from France, and it was never questioned again, except during the Second World War [7].

A century after the French Revolution, towards the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the first racist concepts appeared, in the current sense of the word. Racism claimed, with scientific airs, that human beings can be divided in different races, with different physical traits, but also with different intellectual and moral particularities, associated to the physical ones, therefore leading to the existence of a hierarchy system of superior and inferior races. Racism, combined with the traditional aversion, religious culture towards the Jews, are elements which lead to the birth of the modern concept of anti – Semitism [8].

The anti – Semitism reached its peak in the Nazi ideology. The Nazi ideology, like the communist one (including Marxism), undertook an ample project to reshape the entire history of humanity. The Nazi ideology rewrote humanity's history as being struggle between races from a biological point of view, just like the communist ideology previously rewrote history as being a perpetual struggle between antagonistic social classes. "Hitler did nothing but replace the class with the race [9]". The Arian, superior race was about to dominate the other races and physically eliminate the Jews.

In the beginning of the modern age, the flow of things in the world seemed to indicate that the medieval type aversion and prejudices towards the Jews would gradually fade away, as the principles of the Enlightenment would be consolidated.

However, this proved to be an illusion. Moreover, the old grudges regarding the mercantile activity of the Jews and the hostility feelings towards them became, towards the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, a political attitude, it became a hatred in the *glucksmannian* sense, a systematic and theorized hatred, used as a tool to create political organizations and parties [10], the term of anti – Semitism being born in this period as well. The case of Germany is eloquent. Here, towards the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century we can distinguish the journalistic anti – Semitism of Wilhelm Marr and Teodor Fritsch, but also the political anti – Semitism of Otto Bockel (1859 – 1923), a populist German politician who won an independent seat as a Member of Parliament in the Reichstag, in 1887, based on an anti – Semitic platform and one that supported the small peasant households, an outspoken adversary both to the Jews as well as to the great German capitalists. Bockel's political activity and his published pamphlets will represent an important source of inspiration for Nazism.

The emergence of racism, alongside nationalism and anti – liberalism, changes the data of the problem and the anti – Semitic conceptions. If the medieval and modern anti – Semitism saw the religious conversion of the Jews as being something possible and part of the solution to the problem, the racist anti – Semitism from the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century rejects the solution of conversion and assimilation through conversion, because for the racist the moral and physical features are hereditary, thus permanent. The solution is no longer the conversion and assimilation of the Jews, but their social exclusion, their banishment to the ghettos and finally their physical elimination.

The non-German anti-Semitism from the Holocaust period must be viewed from various points of view, with specific differences, from country to country. Starting with the year 1933, Nazi Germany extends the frontiers of the Third Reich by consecutive annexations, after which it occupies other countries through military power or it lures them in its area of influence, it imposes its dominance in the occupied countries and its influence in the allied ones. Like the former USSR, who "exported" revolution, Nazi Germany also tried to impose its own racial and anti – Semitic ideology to others. "The export of Nazi ideology did not benefit however from an authentic success" [11]. In some cases, the Nazi anti – Semitism did nothing but catalyze the

already existent local anti – Semitisms in different Eastern – European countries, anti – Semitisms preponderantly of an economic nature, but lacking the idea of the physical elimination of the Jews. In Poland and Hungary the idea of deporting Jews to “work camps” in Germany seemed “acceptable”.

Currently there is talk about “the New anti – Semitism” (in French “Nouvel antisémitisme”), a concept according to which a new form of anti – Semitism is developing at the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup>, therefore in the immediate contemporary time, simultaneously emerging both from the left and right side of the political table, as well as from the fundamentalist Islam, manifested as an opposition towards Zionism and the country of Israel. The concept shows that the majority who claim that they do nothing else but criticize Israel, through different individuals or organizations, manage to achieve, in fact, a demonization of it. The adepts of the concept claim that anti – Zionism, anti – Americanism and anti – globalization are, in fact, disguised forms of anti – Semitism [12]. The critics of the concept claim that it mixes anti – Zionism with anti – Semitism, too narrowly defined as a legitimate criticism of Israel and to loosely defined as a demonization of it, and that it trivializes and exploits the significance of anti – Semitism to the point where all debate is nullified [13].

The French philosopher Pierre André Taguieff does not utilize as much the term of anti – Semitism, but rather the one of “Judeo-phobia” [14] and he considers that the first wave of Judeo-phobia manifested itself in the Arab world and in the influence area of the former USSR, after the six days war from 1967. Several authors (Jacques Givet, Leon Poliakov, Robert Wistrich and others) had started, after that war, to talk about a new anti – Semitism, with roots in anti – Zionism, of the fact that Zionism is identified with Nazism and of the belief that the Zionists have collaborated with the Nazis during the Second World War. The new anti–Semitism groups the Muslim partisans who desire the disintegration of Israel, who export everywhere in the world their hatred towards Israel in particular, and Jews in general, stirring unrest into the peoples’ hearts with concern regarding a Jewish conspiracy meant to control the world finances. Taguieff estimates that the classic anti–Semitism, based on racism and nationalism, has been replaced with a new form of anti–Semitism, paradoxically based on anti–racism and

anti–nationalism. Zionism is identified with racism and the way of preserving the Jewish traditions with extreme nationalism. This new anti–Semitism, also preached by intellectuals of Jewish origin, Noam Chomsky, Roger Garaudy or Norman Finkelstein, utilizes arguments that either deny the Holocaust or either express doubts regarding the number of victims, going as far as claiming that there is an “industry of the Holocaust”, that the Holocaust is invoked to obtain compensations or to dismantle any critic regarding the Jews [15]. It is a discourse that borrows anti–American, anti–imperialist and anti–globalization attitudes and elements.

In conclusion, there is a classic anti–Semitism, which consists of discriminating Jews as individuals or communities, and a new anti–Semitism, which consist of discriminating Jews because they are represented by Israel. Brian Klug, a researcher at Oxford University, elaborated in the year 2006 an expert report, at the request of an investigation commission of the British Parliament, regarding anti – Semitism in the United Kingdom. According to Brian Klug, the classic anti–Semitism can be defined as a European image which defines the Jews as a special people, not so much due to their customs and traditions but rather by a perception regarding their collective character nature. Thus, the Jews are perceived as being arrogant, secretive, cunning, always trying to obtain profit. They are loyal only to themselves, regardless of their whereabouts, they form a state within a state, they have a mysterious power, they control the banks and the media, they are capable of determining governments to start a war if it serves their purposes etc. These are the images of Jews in Europe, passed down from generation to generation. It is very difficult; Klug continues, to determine and to measure the concept of “new anti – Semitism”, because the markers used by the governments to detect the discriminations in the every-day life refer to homes, health, education or getting a job, markers which can show only the discriminations against persons. Having these markers as a starting point, it is difficult to demonstrate that the new anti–Semitism is a valid concept [16]. When we mix together the anti–Zionism with the anti–Semitism, we can no longer recognize the real phenomenon of anti – Semitism, and when we see anti–Semitism everywhere we look, it means that it no longer is anywhere.

The French historian Bernard Lewis considers that the new anti-Semitism is an existing social phenomenon [17] and that there are a total of three “waves” or historical forms of anti-Semitism. These would be (a) the religious anti-Semitism, developed in the Mid Ages; (b) the religious anti-Semitism, specific to the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century; and (c) the new anti-Semitism or the contemporary ideological anti-Semitism. This third wave is associated with the Arab countries and has its starting point in the founding of the state of Israel, in the two wars from 1948 and 1967, but which manifested itself more virulently after the beginning of the second Intifadah, in September 2000.

In Europe, the Agency of Fundamental Rights of the European Union noticed a development of anti – Semitic incidents in France, Germany, Great Britain, Belgium and the Netherlands, in the interval July 2003 and December 2004. In September 2004, the European Commission against racism and intolerance, a commission part of the Council of Europe, asked its members to check whether anti-Semitism is well covered by the laws against racism. In 2005, the above mentioned agency also provided a standard definition for anti-Semitism, according to which data can be collected regarding the phenomenon. According to that operational definition, anti-Semitism is a certain perception regarding the Jews, which can be expressed as hatred towards them. Three forms are taken into consideration, such as: (a) Denying the Jewish people their right to auto-determination, by stating that Israel is in its essence a racist country; (b) Applying a double standard, demanding of Israel a behavior that is not required for other democratic countries; (c) The utilization of symbols and images which are attributed to classic anti-Semitism, to characterize Israel and its people. (d) Making comparisons between the politics of today’s Israel and that of Nazi Germany; (e) considering that the Jews are collectively responsible for the actions of Israel [18].

André Glucksmann, along with his opinions regarding the contemporary anti – Semitism, must be viewed and placed in this framework of ideas. Glucksmann starts by showing that Jews can be a target for justified critics also, that not every criticism can be labeled as anti – Semitism. Israel is a democratic country, where the leaders are elected and consequently they are subject to all

sorts of critics. Sometimes, the Israeli voters mercilessly contest their ephemeral representatives [19]. Expressing disagreement, on an internal or international level, “with one option or another, at the moment dominant in the Israeli opinion, cannot be labeled as anti-Semitic, anti-Jewish or ideo-phobic under any circumstances [20]”. On the other hand, there is however unsettling signals of overcriticism, of explicit anti-Semitism, manifested not within the country of Israel, but outside its borders.

In the year 2003, the European Commission ordered a relative poll regarding this issue, including among other things the following question: “Which of the current countries you think is the greatest threat for world peace?”. The results were published in November the same year, and they were surprising. Israel is situated on the first place, 59% of the people questioned thought that this state is the biggest threat to world peace, surpassing Iran, North Korea and the USA, which only 53% of the people thought to be a danger to be the greatest threat. Russia and China are at the end of the list, gathering only 22% of the affirmative answers [21]. It’s a very curious thing the way in which the international public opinion is formed. Russia did not allow Chechnya’s independence and fought a long and bloody war against the small Caucasian republic, a war in which 300 000 Chechens died, approximately between a fifth and a quarter of the country’s population. All these aside, Russia is perceived as being a major threat to world peace by only 22% of Europe’s population. Likewise China, who intends to reclaim Taiwan through force of arms, is not perceived as an important threat to world peace. India, another country with over a billion inhabitants, is in conflict with Pakistan for over a half of century, both countries being nuclear powerhouses – no danger to world peace is perceived here either. However, in regard to the small state of Israel – yes, here is where the main threat to world peace lies. Making such comparisons shows us that international opinions concerning world peace become a debatable issue. The French publication *Le Monde* comments as follows: there is a ground for legitimate criticism towards the policy of a government, whichever it may be, especially towards the Israeli government, but this ground of legitimate criticism is surpassed, “when a discourse of systematic and unilateral demonization is being practiced, concerning Israel. This rhetoric implies that such a state is a criminal

one. One can easily slide from the criticism of a government to asking question whether or not a country should exist (...). This anti-Israeli impulse also sustains a new form of anti – Semitism” [22]. In conclusion, the problem and the dangerous facet of the issue is precisely this “seemingly unperceivable” and illicit transition from the legitimate criticism of some actions of the state of Israel to a new type of a generally anti – Judaic attitude, to a new anti – Semitism. The real and immediate effect is the increase in the number of aggressions against Jews as Jews, outside the borders of Israel.

There is also a certain solution, imagined today in relation to what is nowadays called the “new anti – Semitism”, namely the suppression of the state of war in Israel and a part of the Arab world. May it “be peace” now – claim some – and then the contemporary anti – Semitism will cease to exist. But – Glucksmann notes – there are a lot of inter – Muslim conflicts all over the world, without any connection to Israel. In Sudan, in the Darfur region war has been raging for several years now, without any connection to Israel, a war in which the white Muslims massacre the black ones. Then there also were or still are civil wars in Yemen, Liban, Algeria. There was a 10 year war between Iran and Iraq and so on. Thus, Glucksmann concludes that it’s more about a traditional hatred against the Jew, which precedes the Arabian – Israeli conflicts, about that “ancient hatred clothed in a new robe, which makes it unrecognizable for a while [23]”.

According to Glucksmann, there are three sources which generate three types of anti – Semitism in contemporary France. (a) Currently, 10% of France’s population hales from Morocco, Algeria or Tunisia and are Muslims. This does not take the stage first when it comes to anti – Semitic manifestations, but can ally itself at any time with other currents. (b) There is a left winged anti – Semitism, embedded in the traditional anti – Zionism. It can be encountered across the universities’ campuses, not only in France, initially manifested as compassion towards the Palestinian refugees. The Palestinian ends up on being looked upon as a representative of “all the oppressions of the planet, a spearhead in the fight against imperialism and globalization” [24]. The measures taken by the Israeli government against some Palestinian citizens, from within or outside the borders of Israel, are labeled as being fascist measures, which leads to reopening the debate

whether the state of Israel should or shouldn’t exist. (c) There is also a right winged anti – Semitism, manifested within the traditional and conservative circles from France. The reaction that a French ambassador stationed in London had, during the beginning of the Iraqi war in 2003, can be considered can be considered a manifestation of the above mentioned anti – Semitism. In a discussion that had a certain background, the ambassador in question rhetorically asked: “Why the world must be put in danger by a Third World War, because of these people?” – referring to the Jews [25].

All these forms of anti – Semitism, in different degrees, manifested themselves simultaneously in the context of the USA invading Iraq. At that time, in France and Europe concerns were voiced that the USA and Israel are not abiding by the international law. It came down to people claiming that Bush, Sharon and Hitler are the same. An anti – Americanism wave was formed then which lead to a supplementary fueling of the anti – Semitism. Another problem arose in this context. It was said the in the Near East it would even be possible to have what was named “a second holocaust” [26], in the event that Iran or any other country hostile to Israel would end up having nuclear armament. Rafsandjani, the former president of Iran, even calculated publicly during a speech in December 2001, the cost in human lives of a regionally limited nuclear war. In order to kill, through means of a nuclear attack, all of Israel’s population, Iran would be exposed to losing three times as many people [27]. Losing 15 million people out of a total of 70 million, Iran would survive without problems, but the Jews from the Near East would be wiped out, and the state of Israel would virtually vanish with them. Therefore the hypothesis of a “second holocaust” seems a conceivable one. Being faced with such a threat, the solution would be that the European Jews or the ones with ancestors in Europe be moved there. Either way, nowadays, Europe is a region with a low birth rate, with a local population in decline that is assaulted by Islamic immigrants, from Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia and even Pakistan. Wouldn’t Europe rather take back its Jews? Wouldn’t the Jews be better assimilated, more competent and more civilized than other nations pressing at the borders of Europe? However, André Glucksmann views things skeptically and does not believe it to be a realist solution. He shares the opinion of those who think that this

vision does not fit with the psychological reality of today's Europe [28].

Some pressing and alarming issues remain unsolved. One of them refers to the main reason of anti – Semitism. More precisely, where does this reason lie, in the Jew or in the anti – Semite? André Glucksmann settles the issue and states that: “The key to anti – Semitism is the anti – Semite, not the Jew” [29]. We can no longer talk of argumentation or casuistry here, for we would fall into a vicious circle and in a lawyer-type argumentation, where both points of view could be indefinitely supported. We could utter all the accusations brought against the Jews over time, magical – religious accusations, phantasmagoric or mercantile accusations, as well as we could utter all the arguments in their favor. So Glucksmann states flat out “the anti – Semites and only they are the reason of the anti – Semitism” [30]. The representation of the Jew which took shape with the passing of time is a historical prejudice which precedes individual experiences. This previous perception takes place when Christianity appears. Starting with the moment in which the conscience that a New Testament exists appears, one that fulfils the Old one, the mere persistence of a community that believes only in the Old Testament is something that is disturbing and upsetting.

Then Europe became a continent subject to an accelerated process of laicization, therefore the hatred towards a Jew was no longer justified. But another takes form. Jews are some sort of weird apartheid people, who travel between states and fill up the pores of the European societies [31]. At the same time, they contribute to the unification of the populations and their cultural and economic consolidation. We are not talking about mere manifestations of smuggling and vagrancy, but the cornerstone for a world market is being set. The nation – states are worried that they can no longer control the world market, the multinational companies and the circulation of capital. The movement of capital and goods disturbs the state affairs and, at the same time, entails the transnational circulation of ideas, inventions, models and morals. All these evade the control of the states, threaten the cohesion within the nations and make room for cosmopolitanism. A new anti-Jewish prejudice arises: the commerce and money are in the hands of the Jews, so the Jews are or can become a national threat. The Jew is at the same time a curse and a blessing, a banker and a pariah,

but just as he is now he “incarnates the failure nation – state's demands” [32].

It has been said sometimes that the Jews did not have an important role in the European history, that great European events such as the Renaissance or the French Revolution were accomplished without their contribution [33]. On the other hand it cannot be denied that they played a key role in setting the cornerstone for European unification and for the processes specific to globalization. The philosopher Hannah Arendt writes with remarkable clarity: “One of the most important aspects of the Jewish history remains the fact that the Jews took an active role in the European history precisely because they were an intra – European element and not a national one, in a world in which only nations existed. This role was more durable and essential than their function as bankers of the states [34].

The theory of race and supposed superiority of one over the others has been long since abandoned as being a scientifically false one. Despite all these, the hatred against the Jew, explicit or camouflaged, is present again. Why? Glucksmann also asks himself – rhetorically of course – is it because the Palestinians are “in a stance of self defense”? [35] It is true that Palestinians assert themselves as being oppressed, offended, impoverished and humiliated, but does this give them the right to resort to suicidal attempts, in which innocent people are randomly killed? In relation to a conflict, especially a lengthy one, as the one in the Middle East, there can be two types of approaches: an ideological approach and a rational one. In the meaning suggested by Glucksmann, the ideological approach of the conflict is the one that is related to the reasons: whose fault is it? What problem started the war? Who started it? This type of approach does nothing but inflame a situation already riddled with conflict, instead of solving it. The other approach, the rational one, changes the perspective, in the sense that it poses questions from an upstream – type perspective, rather than a downstream one [36]. Instead of asking what the reason that got us here is, the rational approach looks for solutions to exit the conflict riddled situation. Instead of obstinately turning towards the past, it tries to prefigure the future of a possible peaceful cohabitation.

In the end, André Glucksmann is amazed by the difference between the international public opinion, when it comes to condemning attacks

against innocent civilians. There are huge differences when it comes down to evaluating the casualties and the guilty parties. Jews have always been found infinitely more responsible than any other nation on earth. The death of five thousand civilians in Bagdad in a single day is under the “diverse” section, whereas a bombardment that kills 28 Palestinians in Cana, Israel, is considered a crime against humanity [37]. In Darfur two hundred thousand people were killed, and in the war between Israel and the Hezbollah guerillas from Liban, in the year 2006, a thousand people died, that’s two hundred times less people. However, the international reaction is inverted. The dead from Darfur do not matter for the westerners’ conscience, because we’re talking about Muslims who were killed by other Muslims. And it does not matter that the Russian army, the army of a Christian country, killed between a fifth and a quarter of Cechnya’s population. Glucksmann’s conclusion is that only a Palestinian killed by an Israeli should stir up the world’s indignation.

It’s a geo-political problem, but an ill intentioned geopolitics—claims Glucksmann – the idea according to which the conflict in the Middle East is the center of the worldwide chaos and the key to world peace. Some legitimate doubts arise. Nothing bad would have happened in the area without the Israeli – Arab conflict? Wouldn’t there have been an Islamic revolution and massacres in Iran? Wouldn’t there have took place the bloody dictatorship of the Baas party in Iraq and Syria? Wouldn’t there have taken place the war between Iran and Iraq, which had over a million dead? Wouldn’t there have been terrorist, fundamentalist – Islamic, fanatic political regimes in Algeria and Afghanistan? Taking into consideration all these questions, the exact opposite of this geopolitical representation seems more plausible, namely that an Israeli – Palestinian – Arab peace treaty in the Jordan area would have been fatally fragile and volatile, as long as there are hotbeds of intra – Arab and intra – Muslim war, based on religious fanaticism and fundamentalism.

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