The Islamization of European Jew-Hatred

By Andrew G. Bostom
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On Thursday, September 7, 2006, as first reported by the Times of London this past Saturday (9/2/06), an All-Party Parliamentary Enquiry into Antisemitism is expected to issue its finding that anti-Jewish violence has become endemic in Britain, both on the streets and university campuses. A major surge of attacks has accompanied—and followed—the recent conflict between Hezbollah and Israel. According to the Times, “The report will call for urgent action from the Government, the police and educational establishments”.

However, in referring to the preponderance of the actual attackers, the Times provided only this vague allusion, “Muslims are over-represented,” seemingly oblivious to its own earlier poll whose results were published on February 7, 2006. These data revealed the twisted justification for such violent bigotry: 37 per cent of British Muslims believe the Jewish community in Britain is a legitimate target “as part of the ongoing struggle for ‘justice’ in the Middle East.”

A subsequent (9/5/06) report on the Parliamentary Enquiry in the Jerusalem Post was more forthcoming, and stated explicitly that “Islamic extremists” were responsible for “inciting hatred towards Jews”. As the Jerusalem Post also noted, the Parliamentary Enquiry’s results are consistent with data recently published in The Journal of Conflict Resolution by Yale University biostatistician Dr. Edward H. Kaplan, and Dr. Charles A. Small of the Yale Institute for the Study of Global Antisemitism.

Drs. Kaplan and Small examined the views of 5004 Europeans, roughly 500 individuals sampled from each of 10 European Union countries (Austria, Belgium, Denmark, France, Germany, Italy, The Netherlands, Spain, Switzerland, and the United Kingdom). The authors main publicized results confirmed their (rather commonsensical) a priori hypothesis: anti-Israel sentiments strongly and independently predicted the likelihood that an individual was Antisemitic in a graded manner, i.e., the more anti-Israel (on a scale of zero to 4), the more a person was likely to be Antisemitic.

But perhaps an even more striking finding in light of the burgeoning Jew hatred now evident in Europe’s Muslim communities, has until now received much less attention: in a controlled comparison to European Christians (as the “referent” group), European Muslims were nearly eightfold (i.e., 800%) more likely to be overtly Antisemitic. Furthermore, in light of the Pew Global Attitudes Project data on Muslim attitudes toward Jews in Islamic countries, the Yale study likely underestimated the extent of Antisemitism amongst Europe’s Muslim communities, had more poorly educated, less acclimated European Muslims been sampled. Pew’s survey previously indicated,
In the Muslim world, attitudes toward Jews remain starkly negative, including virtually unanimously unfavorable ratings of 98% in Jordan and 97% in Egypt. Muslims living in Western countries have a more moderate view of Jews - still more negative than positive, but not nearly by the lopsided margins that prevail in Muslim countries.

What is to account for the clear “Islamization” of European Antisemitism? Might this phenomenon be related to the much maligned descriptive term “Eurabia”? Indeed, the use of the term “Eurabia,” as noted by Bat Ye’or in her seminal 2005 study, “Eurabia-The Euro-Arab Axis” was first introduced, triumphantly, in the mid-1970s, as the title of a journal produced by the Association for Franco-Arab Solidarity, and published in Geneva, Paris, and London. The articles and editorials in this publication called for common Euro-Arab positions, at every level – social, economic, and commercial – and were contingent upon the fundamental political condition of European support for the Arab (and non-Arab) Muslim umma’s jihad against Israel. These concrete proposals were not the musings of isolated theorists – they in fact represented policy decisions conceived in conjunction with, and actualized by, European state leaders, their ministers of foreign affairs, and European Parliamentarians.

Nearly 2 ½ years ago, Bat Ye’or summarized the bitter harvest Western Europe was reaping from the sociopolitical and cultural changes it had sown by implementing this Eurabian vision:

Arab and Islamic anti-Israeli propaganda, barely disguised in academic and cultural packaging… imposed in universities, the press, and cultural centers. …Israel[’s] usurped history and identity are projected onto the Palestinians…part of a global movement that is transforming Europe into a new continent of dhimmitude within a worldwide strategy of jihad and da’wa, the latter being the pacific method of Islamization…this policy has promoted European dhimmitude and rabid Judeophobia.

And rabid Judeophobia is an apt characterization which applies not only to the current “Hezbollah/Israel conflict-related” upsurge in attacks by European Muslims on Jews. Ten months ago, during a November 14, 2005 presentation at The Center for Immigration Studies, in Washington, D.C., Stephen Steinlight, former director of education at the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Council, and subsequently director of national affairs at the American Jewish Committee, cited data demonstrating that Muslim youths, or more appropriately, youthful Muslim thugs, engaged in an average of 12 attacks per day on Parisian Jews, “putting the figures…close to [those] during the days of the Weimar Republic.”

The clear excess virulence of the Antisemitism in Europe’s Muslim versus Christian populations, combined with the evidence that globally, Muslims in Islamic countries exhibit even more fanatical Jew hatred than their European co-religionists, defies the “conventional wisdom” regarding the ultimate origins of Muslim Jew hatred in Western Europe, and beyond. This very flawed construct—that Muslim Jew hatred is merely a loose amalgam of re-cycled medieval Christian Judeophobic motifs, calumnies from the Czarist Russia “Protocols of the Elders of Zion”, and standard Nazi propaganda—ignores both empirical contemporary observations, and primary, uniquely Islamic components of Jew hatred, both past and present. When the late 23 year-old Parisian Jew Ilan Halimi was being tortured to death, his Muslim torturers, as Nidra Poller wrote in the Wall Street Journal “…phoned the family on several occasions and made them listen to the recitation of verses from the Koran, while Ilan's tortured screams could be heard in the background.”. Ilan Halimi’s torturers/murderers did not invoke any non-Islamic sources of anti-Jewish hate, only the Koran.

For the Muslim masses, basic Islamic education in the Koran, hadith (the putative words and deeds of the Muslim prophet Muhammad, as recorded by pious transmitters), and sira (earliest Muslim biographies of
Muhammad) may create an immutable superstructure of Jew hatred on to which non-Muslim sources of Jew hatred are easily grafted. Examples of this archetypal Jew hatred from the sacred Islamic texts, sira, and main early Sunni historiographical accounts, include: Koranic verses labeling Jews as malevolent enemies of Islam (5:82), and disobedient slayers of their own prophets who suffered justifiable abasement (2:61), including, for some, transformation into apes and swine (5:60); or the more profoundly hateful narratives (in the hadith, sira, and early histories, for example by Tabari) which maintain that the perfidious Jews fomented sectarian strife in early Islam by promoting heresies—including Shi’ism itself—that threatened the unity of the Muslim community (umma), and the canonical hadith (Sahih Muslim Book 026, Number 5431) that the Jews caused Muhammad’s protracted, excruciating death from poisoning. As the scholar Georges Vajda observed, these archetypes, in turn justify Muslim animus towards the Jews, and the admonition to at best, “subject [the Jews] to Muslim domination”, as dhimmis, treated “with contempt”, under “humiliating arrangements”.

These hateful motifs remain vibrant and normative in the Muslim community. Muhammad Sayyid Tantawi, since 1996, Grand Imam of Al-Azhar University (the most prestigious center of Muslim learning in Sunni Islam) wrote these words in his 700 page dissertation rationalizing Muslim Jew hatred, Banu Isra’il fi al-Qur'an wa al-Sunna [Jews in the Koran and the Traditions], originally published in the 1970s, and then re-issued in 1986:

[The] Koran describes the Jews with their own particular degenerate characteristics, i.e. killing the prophets of Allah, corrupting His words by putting them in the wrong places, consuming the people’s wealth frivolously, refusal to distance themselves from the evil they do, and other ugly characteristics caused by their deep-rooted lasciviousness…only a minority of the Jews keep their word…. [All] Jews are not the same. The good ones become Muslims, the bad ones do not.

These are the expressed, “carefully researched” views on Jews held by the nearest Muslim equivalent to a Pope, who represents 90% of the world’s Muslims. And Sheikh Tantawi has not mollified such hatemongering beliefs since becoming the Grand Imam of Al-Azhar as his statements on the Jews as “enemies of Allah, descendants of apes and pigs”, the legitimacy of homicide bombing of Jews, or “dialogue” with Jews (just below), make clear.

…anyone who avoids meeting with the enemies in order to counter their dubious claims and stick fingers into their eyes, is a coward. My stance stems from Allah’s book [the Koran], more than one-third of which deals with the Jews…[I] wrote a dissertation dealing with them [the Jews], all their false claims and their punishment by Allah. I still believe in everything written in that dissertation.

The release of the All-Party Parliamentary Enquiry into Antisemitism serves as a clarion call to confront this ugly, burgeoning problem which threatens the very fabric of British, and Western European society. Given the primacy of Muslim Jew hatred within this overall phenomenon—motivated by uniquely Islamic religious archetypes of Jews—Muslims must begin the formal process of examining and reforming the anti-Jewish dogmas contained in their own foundational texts.

Nostre Aetate rejected key elements of the ancient anti-Jewish
tradition. ‘The Jews’ were not guilty of the crucifixion, had not been
renounced by God, were not under a wandering curse, and their
covenantal bond with God endured.

These pronouncements and teachings of the Roman Catholic Church’s
Second Vatican Council issued in 1965, provide a modern paradigm which
the Muslim clerical hierarchy—Sunni, from Mecca and Cairo, Shi’ite, from
Qom and Najaf—must embrace, if the scourge of Islamic Jew hatred is to
be eradicated, within Europe, and across the globe.

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