

# How Eric Hazan and Alain Badiou despise and hide the achievements of a century-old debate on Zionism and left antisemitism (2012)

[The two authors wrote a 64-page “book”, with large characters, entitled *L’antisémitisme partout. Aujourd’hui en France* (Antisemitism everywhere, today in France) and published by La Fabrique, a company owned by Eric Hazan in 2012? It was translated by Verso in 2013, jointly with two additional contributions of Shlomo Sand and Ivan Segré, under the title *Reflections about antisemitism*, in 2013, and this time the four contributions reached the size of a book: 256 pages. I will not deal here with Segré’s and Sand’s articles, just with the French text of Badiou and Hazan.]

Anti-Zionism is sometimes a respectable ideology, when it is based on sound historical arguments defended by activists or intellectuals who do not concentrate their attacks on insignificant reactionary scarecrows or windmills<sup>1</sup>. In his preface to a collection of essays on left-wing anti-Zionism, *Rebels Against Zion. Studies on the Jewish Left Anti-Zionism* (2011)<sup>2</sup>, August Grabski adopts Todd Endelman’s definition about the difference between a non-antisemitic and an antisemitic anti-Zionism. For this British historian, legitimate anti-Zionist criticism of Israel becomes antisemitic and therefore illegitimate in the following circumstances:

"1 *When it questions the legitimacy of the Jewish state but no other state and the legitimacy of Jewish nationalism, but no other nationalism, either in the Middle East or elsewhere.*

2. *When it denies to the Jewish state, but no other state, the right to express the character of the majority of its citizens (that is to be Jewish as France is French).*

3. *When it demonizes the Jewish state, turning the Arab-Israeli conflict into a morality play, a problem that Jews, and Jews alone, created and for which Jews, and Jews alone, are responsible.*

4. *When it expresses an obsessive, exclusive and disproportionate concern for the shortcomings<sup>3</sup> of the Israelis and the suffering of the Palestinians – to the point that a conflict between two small peoples is transformed into a cosmic, Manichean struggle between the forces of Good and Evil".* August Grabski adds: "*When criticism of Israel crosses any of these lines and becomes an obsessive narrative of fantasies and fears, that is when we are dealing solely with an antisemitic notions."*

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<sup>1</sup> For example, Elias Sanbar and Farouk Mardam-Bey's *Etre arabe* (published by Éditions Sindbad) is a worthwhile read; it exposes the lies of Zionist propaganda (here without quotation marks, because the authors know what they're talking about) since the beginning of the 20th century, and of Israeli propaganda since 1948, even if I don't share their admiration for Nasser or their harmful illusions about the virtues of Arab nationalism. Readers will even enjoy some of the good books published by... La Fabrique.

<sup>2</sup> Several articles of this book are available on academia.edu.

<sup>3</sup> This consensual and neutral term is particularly inaccurate to describe Israeli colonial practices and the constant violation of the most elementary rights of the Palestinians.

Hazan and Badiou, for example, could have used such a definition as a starting point to analyse it, to question it, to propose a new one, etc., in short, to raise the level of the debate. As far as we are concerned, point 2 supports a nationalist reasoning, reactionary in every respect, but the other three points could be used to sketch out a definition of left antisemitism.

Unfortunately, there are no new arguments or reasoning to be found in Hazan and Badiou's 64-page article in French. The text deliberately ignores the achievements of almost a century of discussion within socialist, communist and far-left organisations, as well as within the anarchist movement, on the subject of Zionism and antisemitism. Thereby they contribute to the ignorance of the new generations. In the absence of time, patience and easily accessible political references, there is a danger that the youth will spontaneously place their trust in these elders who are supposed to be sources of scholarship, "essential Marxist thinkers of the 21st century" and exemplary "anti-imperialist" activists.

#### **A pamphlet that offers yet another version of conspiracy theories**

According to the Badiou-Hazan tandem, if, after the creation of the State of Israel, 900,000 Jews left the "Arab-Muslim" countries where they had lived for centuries, it was only because of the Mossad attacks on "synagogues" (how many? when? where? the authors do not specify and do not cite their sources) in the Arab countries. The discriminatory "dhimmi"<sup>4</sup> status imposed on the Jews (and Christians) for centuries; the recycling of many former Nazis into the police apparatus in Egypt and Syria; the anti-Jewish demonstrations organised in the 1940s and 1950s and the anti-Jewish laws passed by the "Arab" regimes after their independence; the

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<sup>4</sup> Cf. Yves Coleman «Géopolitique de l'islam et dhimmis juifs» (2007) <https://nfnf.eu/spip.php?article163>. This status was based on the very violent criticism of the Jews in the Qu'ran. Jews are considered traitors to the divine message and responsible for the murder of one of the Prophets recognised by Islam (Jesus Christ); moreover, not all the Jewish tribes accepted Muhammad's military rule, giving rise to anti-Jewish verses regularly used by the most anti-Semitic Muslims.

On the Islamic website (<http://www.islamophile.org/spip/Le-Coran-est-il-antisemite.html>), a certain "Dr. Muzammil Siddiqi" responds to this kind of criticism as follows: "*The Qur'an rather criticizes the Jews who turned away from the authentic divine message [which, he does not specify, allowing thus for all interpretations, Y.C.] and it rebukes those who mocked and ridiculed the Prophet Muhammad (...)* [in fact, these skeptics were the Jewish tribes who refused the dictates of the military-religious leader Muhammad, Y.C.]. *These criticisms of the Jews are similar to those found in other scriptures, including the Bible [criticisms which are precisely at the root of Western Christian antisemitism, Y.C.] Such specific criticism has never been interpreted by the great scholars of the Qu'ran as incitement to hatred of the Jewish people. They should therefore not be confused with antisemitism.*"

Considering the dissemination of the Protocol of the Elders of Zion in "Arab-Muslim" countries; the close alliance between Nazi Germany and the Grand Mufti of Jerusalem; Ahmadinejad's statements and the organization of a Holocaust denial congress in Iran, etc., the "great scholars of the Koran" have hardly been "understood" by Muslims over the centuries, any more than the Popes were "understood" by Catholics, or Luther by Protestants, or Buddha by Hindus...

If the "message of love" of religions is regularly transformed into words and acts of hatred committed by their followers, perhaps we should ask ourselves why...

Doctor Muzammil Siddiqi gives us part of the answer, since he writes, in all innocence: "*the Qu'ran does not condemn the Semitic race*", and then denies the idea that the Qu'ran contains any "*curse on a people, simply because of their race*". Clearly, this gentleman still believes in racial theory, the ideological basis of anti-Semitism and racism.

creation of a state that was supposed to offer a haven of peace for Jews from all over the world (we know today that this is not true, but we can understand the hopes raised by the birth of Israel, especially as it was accompanied by mythological tales about the kibbutz structure and their economic prosperity); all these phenomena had no influence on their departure... The mass exodus of Jews from the Middle East, the Near East and North Africa is attributed solely to the joint maneuvers of the Mossad and the CIA...

That's a bit of a tall story, but apparently the authors think that the average anti-Zionist is not very picky about the level of arguments presented to him...

Let's be clear: there are indeed Jewish lobbies (the American AIPAC), networks (the French CRIF), secret services (the Israeli Mossad), international associations (the Bnai Brith organised into lodges, like Freemasonry), etc. We could also add the Jewish community radio stations which, in France, give a voice to the most obtuse, obscurantist and reactionary "members of the community." It is astonishing (but in a way rather salutary) that their aberrant or scandalous comments go unnoticed by the antisemites and that they do not exploit them further. All these media, lobbies, services and groups were (and still are) propaganda tools for "Zionism," in other words for the Israeli state today.

This is exactly what the self-proclaimed "national socialist" Alain Soral advocates in his disgusting book *Comprendre l'Empire* (Understanding the Empire), in which he avoids writing "the Jews" on every page, but manages to make his readers understand who are the real 'Masters of the World', according to his racist, antisemitic and paranoid mind.

**Unlike Soral, our two heralds of "white"<sup>5</sup> anti-Zionism are not antisemites.**

At the same time, they borrow from antisemitism one of its favourite themes, that of the international Jewish conspiracy (the word "Jewish" being replaced here by "Zionist" to which the word "American" is added, for good measure, ). They want to give credence at all costs to the idea of an Israeli-American-Zionist conspiracy which supposedly **dates back to the aftermath of the 9/11**, and has a strong media following. The media supposedly condemn antizionists or try to silence them, when they are not taken to court to pay heavy fines. Hazan and Badiou know very well, however, that there is always a risk of finding badly disguised antisemites behind the proponents of (capitalist, Bolshevik, Zionist, etc.) conspiracy theories.

But our two intellectuals don't care.

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<sup>5</sup> It is extremely harmful to classify people according to their pseudo-"races" (even if they are presented as "subjective" [?] races, as claimed today's by postmodern ideologists or their friends of the P.I.R.). It's more relevant to look at their social function in the relations of production, and their class and political positions. But since these are the pseudo-concepts used by Hazan and Badiou, it's worth reminding them of the undeniable "*whiteness*" they share with the "*white*" petty-bourgeoisie and bourgeoisie, to which they pretend not to belong and which they denounce by blowing hot air.

What's more, the reactionary or "progressive" positions of individuals are in no way dependent on the color of their skin, as Barack Obama, Condoleeza Rice, and Colin Powell can testify.

Finally, when one considers that Richard Nixon and "white" American big business were the first to reclaim the slogan of Black Power (cf. *Race, Reform and Rebellion. The Second Reconstruction in Black America, 1945-1990*, by Maiming Marable) and that some of the radical black nationalist leaders of the 60's and 70's became fervent defenders of free enterprise, we may have some doubts about the positive effects, for the class struggle, of the importation of these concepts into the European political and intellectual field by militants who are certainly revolted and sincere, but extremely ill-informed; ambitious academics in search of new professorships ; and politicians in search of votes and positions.

One dressed in his Maoist-Stalinist “philosopher” toga, the darling of “Marxist” intellectuals orphaned by “real socialism” (in other words, nostalgic for totalitarian state capitalism), the other in his Gallic, chic, “white” editor’s garb, our two polemicists have no qualms about using the conspiracy argument.

In a way, this is not surprising; we know that the Russian and Chinese regimes, which they idolized (until his forties for Hazan and until his later 80s for Badiou), have always described their internal opponents as “traitors”, “spies”, individuals who have “sold out” to America, revisionism, Zionism, when it wasn’t “Hitler and the Mikado”!

Conspiracy theories and the habit of treating their political opponents on the left as traitors, cops, snitches or spies are part of their Stalinist political education: these methods of "discussion" flourished as soon as the Bolshevik party took power and found itself in charge of the "Soviet" state, police and armed forces. The situation only worsened when Stalin, as General Secretary of the Party, succeeded in eliminating all opposition within the Russian Communist Party between 1924 and 1928, and used the Communist International to set up an international spy network in the service of Russian power. The process did not stop at the borders of the USSR and the clandestine maneuvers of the Russian secret services: the Stalinist bureaucrats taught all the members of the Communist International to defame (and sometimes murder) their opponents (like during the Spanish Civil War), relying in particular on conspiracy theories.

And even their opponents (the Trotskyists) were sometimes tainted.

The “Varga affair,” fabricated by the Trotskyist OCI, an organization in which Mélenchon, Cambadélis, Jospin (three leaders of the Socialist Party, including one former Prime minister and one former minister) and some other current social-patriots were "formed," is a good illustration of this. But how many mini-trials based on the Stalinist model have been fabricated against individuals or small tendencies within far left and ultra-left grouplets? Stalinism has spread its poison for generations, including among the 68ers, post-68-ers, “autonomists”, etc.

#### **Fighting against windmills and “Germano-Pratine”<sup>6</sup> garden gnomes**

Hazan and Badiou’s pamphlet amounts to a flat settling of scores with a few individuals who occupy an insignificant place in the discussions of left and far-left activists: Alain Finkielkraut, Bernard Henri-Lévy, Claude Lanzmann, Eric Marty, Jean Birnbaum, Robert Redeker, André Glucksmann, Pierre André-Taguieff and Jacques-Alain Millner.

It is unlikely that more than 1% of left or far-left activists have read the works of these individuals. At best, they may have skimmed a few of their articles in *Le Monde* or *Libération*, or listened to them for a few minutes on the radio or television, but it is clear that they have never paid much attention to their media rantings, which often coincide so closely with the diatribes of the right (cf. A. Finkielkraut, R. Redeker, B. Henri-Lévy) – even if the works of some of them (Eric Marty, Jean Birnbaum and Pierre-André Taguieff) are worth reading, despite their flaws.

A subject such as the antisemitism "on the left" (to use the superficial expression of the historian Michel Dreyfus) or rather, such as the antisemitism of the left, deserves a serious book that does not only target a few conservative or moderate scarecrows despised by left and far-left activists. Above all, it deserves a vision that goes beyond the Franco-French framework in which French “radical” intellectuals remain confined.

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<sup>6</sup> « Germano-Pratine » does not refer to Germans but to the district of Saint-Germain-des-Prés, in central Paris, famous for its leftwing intellectuals, trendy cafés and numerous publishing houses after the Second World War, and today only hosting expensive fashion shops, banks and the elitist School of Political Sciences which forms the French political and administrative top strata.

### **Left antisemitism**

We are still waiting for the historian who will put into perspective (and take into account the context and the specific debates of each period) the positions of the anarchists, the left and the far left, the trade unions, the workers' movement, on the so-called "Jewish question", "Zionism", anti-Zionism, etc., over the last century.

We don't need a confused polemicist like P.A. Taguieff, who dishonestly compiles and slices up hundreds of quotations, makes unacceptable amalgamations and mixes intelligent remarks with senseless accusations.

We have no use for a (too) hasty historian like Michel Dreyfus, who botches up what looks very much like a commissioned work (*L'antisémitisme à gauche. Histoire d'un paradoxe*, La découverte, 2011) to reassure the left and far left, so that they can continue to sleep soundly, and with a clear conscience.

We need a researcher, or better a team of patient and methodical researchers, who can convey to us the depth of the debates, the importance of the specific problems and the numerous difficulties raised by the so-called<sup>7</sup> "Jewish question," Zionism and the existence of the State of Israel, in France and throughout the world.

The work has been cleared up a little in two recent collections of articles. The first book is a collection of contributions by moderate and outright reactionary academics, covering many aspects of the history of (left and right) anti-Zionist antisemitism, including at the top of the US military (yes, the Gallic, chic, "anti-Zionists" will probably have a heart attack reading this book...): *Antisemitism and Anti-Zionism in Historical Perspective: Convergence and Divergence*, edited by the anticommunist historian Jeffrey Herf (Routledge, 2006).

The second book – *Rebels against Zion. Studies on the Jewish Left Antizionism* (2011), edited by August Grabski – brings together contributions from a number of academics, as well as left-wing activists close to the Israeli CP, Fatah and the Trotskyists.

### **Lenin, Stalin and left-wing anti-Zionism**

If you are a little more rigorous and serious about this subject than the Badiou-Hazan duo, you can also download and read online Asmund Borgen Gjerde's thesis<sup>8</sup> *Reinterpreting Soviet 'Antizionism'. An analysis of 'antizionist' texts published in the Soviet Union (1967-1972)*, the first chapters of which trace the ambiguities of the Bolsheviks with regard to the so-called "Jewish question" and Zionism, in order to explain how antisemitism in the USSR did not emerge on ideologically virgin soil, and did not suddenly appear at the time of the Six-Day War (even if 1967 marked a break with the past, linked in particular to major changes among Russian Jews), whatever the (neo)Stalinists, (post)Trotskyists, Leninists and (post)Maoists of all stripes may think. This work<sup>9</sup> is also interesting in that it is based on a number of unpublished archives, at least for the 1960s.

Asmund Borgen Gjerde explains how Lenin, in his relentless fight against the Bund before 1917, while denouncing pogroms, antisemitism, the crimes of the Black Hundred, anti-Jewish discrimination, etc., always defended the idea that antisemitism was a vestige of feudalism, that could only mobilise backward peasants. He refused to admit that antisemitism was also

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<sup>7</sup> « So-called » Jewish question, because as Dany Trom (*La promesse et l'obstacle. La gauche radicale et le problème juif*, Cerf 2007 ) has underlined, it's not a question to which Jews can think and answer. More precisely, it's a **problem** for non Jews who see the existence of Jews as antiquated, trouble-making, disturbing, etc..

<sup>8</sup> [https://www.academia.edu/36425434/\\_MA\\_thesis\\_Reinterpreting\\_Soviet\\_Anti\\_Zionism](https://www.academia.edu/36425434/_MA_thesis_Reinterpreting_Soviet_Anti_Zionism)

<sup>9</sup> Since my article was written in 2012, at least another useful book has been published both in English and in French : Brendan MacGeever, *Antisemitism and the Russian Revolution*, Cambridge University Press, 2019.

widespread in the ranks of the Russian working class – something for which he was criticised by the Bund.

As everyone knows, or rather should know, this denial of working-class antisemitism was a constant among his successors, or disciples, Trotskyists, Stalinists, Maoists and ultra-leftists. For them, antisemitism (and often racism too, but that's another discussion) is an ideology that exists virtually only in the ranks of the petty-bourgeoisie (peasants, small shopkeepers, artisans, etc., all social strata supposedly doomed to disappear by History and by the inexorable evolution of capitalism).

This undoubtedly explains why the Western left, far left and ultra-left have always been so slow to react to antisemitism, from the Dreyfus Affair to the January 2015 Kosher supermarket attack (4 deaths, 9 injured) and the murders of Ilan Halimi (2006), Sarah Halimi (2017) and Muriel Knoll (2018), without forgetting the slow and timid reactions in front of the arrests and deportations of Jews, and Judaeocide, during the Second World War. For these militants, antisemitism was (and often still is) no more than a marginal phenomenon, affecting only the petty bourgeoisie and the bourgeoisie: those who propagate it (the capitalist media and the ruling classes), those who are infected by it (the "middle classes") and those who are its victims (the usurers of the Middle Ages, the officer Dreyfus in the 19th century, the Jewish shopkeepers, artisans, bankers, and capitalists in the 20th and 21st centuries and so on ). And these Marxists have quietly ignored the social realities, the class contradictions within the Jewish communities, in particular the existence of a Jewish proletariat...

Asmund Borgen Gjerde also points out that Lenin oscillates between two images of the Jew:

- the bad Jew (bourgeois, reactionary, nationalist, "clericalist," manipulated by the rabbis and the Jewish bourgeoisie, attached to his religious, cultural, and ethnic traditions, who wants to perpetuate the "spirit of the ghetto" and considers antisemitism eternal – and is therefore a Zionist);

- and the good Jew (proletarian, internationalist, universalist, acculturated, even assimilated, and anxious to distance himself from his Jewish "roots," roots which he sees as a limitation, even as an unbearable identitarian prison – and therefore anti-Zionist).

He also detects a contradiction in Lenin, a contradiction which partly explains the theoretical confusion that prevails among today's left-wing anti-Zionists: sometimes Vladimir Ilich considers the Jews to be a nation (but only those who speak Yiddish, as Hebrew is, for Lenin, the language of religious obscurantism and bourgeois nationalism); sometimes he denies them the status of a nation. This position is linked to his particularly mechanical conception of the alleged "dual nature" of national cultures: according to Lenin, national cultures have a "reactionary" dimension (the bourgeois culture, in this case, Zionism and Judaism) and a "revolutionary" dimension (the culture of the proletariat, in this case, that of proletarians and internationalist Jewish socialist intellectuals).

It was under Stalin, according to Asmund Borgen Gjerde, and from the 1930s onwards, that Soviet propaganda began to equate Zionism not only with an agent of imperialism in Palestine (cf. the statements of the Communist International during the 1929 pogroms in Palestine, which emphasised the "positive" (!) aspects of the Arab masses' rebellion against British imperialism), but also with fascism and Nazism. Long before the Second World War (and **long before 9/11 !!**) Soviet newspapers published cartoons showing rabbis brandishing weapons and wearing prayer shawls emblazoned with swastikas.

A book published in the USSR as early as 1946 defended the thesis (now so widespread in anti-Zionist circles that it has become a worrisome banality) that the "Zionists" had borrowed the concept of the "superior race" from fascism. This echoes another theme that has become commonplace in today's left-wing anti-Zionist propaganda, and which is based on a complete misunderstanding: the assimilation between the religious notion of a "chosen people" and the

fascist notion of a superior race, which makes it possible to compare Judaism and Nazism, or Zionism and Fascism.

But the worm (or at least the deadly ambiguity of left-wing anti-Zionism) was in the fruit long before that, because in 1921, during the lifetime of Saint Lenin and Saint Trotsky, street shows were staged with an "educational" aim, in the form of trials that ended with a symbolic death sentence against the Jewish religion. 21<sup>st</sup>-century left-wing Jews and anti-Zionists didn't invent anything !!! The propaganda arsenal created by the *Yevsekstii* drew on antisemitic stereotypes. (The *Yevsekstii* were the Jewish sections of the Russian Communist-Bolshevik Party, created in 1918 and responsible for spreading the revolutionary message among the Jewish masses in Yiddish.) The publications of these atheist Jewish Communists featured caricatures of Jews with long noses, thick lips, big ears, beards, and unkempt hair. Being Jewish, these communists thought they could use this kind of weapon to fight Jewish nationalism, Zionism, and the Jewish religion, without any consequences. For them, the end justified the means. This tradition that has been "religiously" preserved among left-wing anti-Zionists to this day.

This article is not the right place to develop such a hypothesis in detail, but we can at least say here that this binary Leninist vision of the Jews, this indecision about the existence of a "Jewish national question", and this underestimation of antisemitism among Jewish Leninists and Stalinists of all kind, has marked, with nuances and transformations, the whole history of left-wing anti-Zionism, from Lenin to groups such as the UJFP (Union of French Jews for Peace) or Michel Warshawski<sup>10</sup>, for example, not forgetting the UJRE, the Union of Jews for Resistance and Mutual Aid (if one consults the archives of its organ *La Presse nouvelle*, one sees that it took the French Jewish Stalinists and CPers many years to admit the existence of antisemitism in the USSR and in the people's democracies, and this not without many contortions).

In any case, if one day a historian of political ideas and practices takes on this complex task, let us hope that he (or she) will know that the debates on left antisemitism **did not begin after the 9/11 attacks**, as our Gallic, chic, anti-Zionist duo claims....

**A debate that has nothing to do with the 9/11 attacks !**

Even if he does not deign to go back as far as the pamphlet entitled "Antisemitism and Zionism" (1900) published by the *Étudiants socialistes révolutionnaires internationalistes de Paris* (anarchists), or if he ignores the exchange of letters between Reginald Reynolds and Emma Goldman in 1937 in *Spain and the World*<sup>11</sup>, and studies only the debates of the last thirty years, this historian will, for example, be interested in

– the *Anti-Deutsch* (literally Anti-Germans) who launched this debate in Germany and Austria since **1989**, so **TWELVE years before 9/11**. Their later reactionary involution should not obscure the fact that they originally came from the German far left and claimed to be followers of the Frankfurt School Marxism;

– the Trotskyists of the Alliance for Workers Liberty, who took a stand about certain forms of antisemitic antizionism as early as **1985**;

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<sup>10</sup> Israeli courageous militant, journalist and author of *Towards an open Tomb: the Crisis of Israeli Society* (2004), *On the Border* (2005) and, with Gilbert Achcar, *33 Day War: Israel's War on Hezbollah in Lebanon and Its Consequences* (2015).

<sup>11</sup> For example here : <https://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/goldman/works/1938/on-zionism.html> but there are other texts here : <https://libcom.org/article/spain-and-world-newspaper>

- left-wing British anti-Zionists such as Steve Cohen, who wrote a book (*That's Funny You Don't Look Anti-Semitic An anti-racist analysis of left anti-semitism*) on the subject<sup>12</sup> as early as 1984;

- the libertarian communists of the Dutch group De Fabel van de illegaal (now Doorbraak) who led this debate in the no global movement from 1998 onwards and tried (unsuccessfully) to extend it to other countries, which is why they left the movement<sup>13</sup>.

And this list is certainly not exhaustive.

The day the left and the far left in France will take into account the international dimension of the political issues they address, they might stop their pointless diatribes against media pundits and puppets. Let's be fair: they sometimes try to raise themselves to the "global" level, but it's only to rehash the most hackneyed ideas of Stalinist geopolitics about "progressive" states and the American-Zionist Axis of Evil!

Their aim is to strengthen the "alter-imperialist" camp, i.e. Russia, China, Iran and Venezuela. As the GARAP group writes in its article on what they "sub-fascism"<sup>14</sup>, "*within the advanced countries, alter-imperialism relays both the expansionist (economic, commercial, diplomatic, territorial and military) ambitions of nation-states recently elevated to the rank of regional powers, and the steely rhetoric of their politico-military garrisons implanted in their spheres of influence*".

Hazan and Badiou's article is all the more indecent for the fact that these two intellectuals, who have no historical memory but are not devoid of gall and cynicism, accuse those who do not think like them of being "Stalinists" and "supporters of the State."

#### **Hoist with their own petard**

Alain Badiou is not afraid to defend Mao-Tse-tung, the bloodthirsty, megalomaniac statesman who ruled his country with an iron fist for almost thirty years. Mao was the great organiser of labour camps, shootings, and planned famines, and was also the architect of one of the greatest anti-proletarian mobilisations in history (the misnamed "Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution").

As for Éric Hazan (born in 1936), we're still waiting to find out why he supported the French Stalinist Party until 1956, and why he had such illusions about Russian Stalinism or the Algerian FLN, which also built a classic authoritarian and corrupt state, despite its initial rhetoric of "self-management." Hazan is still nostalgic for the pre-1956 Communist Party. The same party that negotiated the republication of its daily (*L'Humanité*) in June 1940 with Otto Abetz; a party that proposed to the dictator Marshal Pétain (through the intermediary of the imprisoned CP deputy François Billoux!) to testify against the Socialist Party leader Léon Blum in the Riom trial; a party that denounced de Gaulle as an "agent of British imperialism" before the German attack on the USSR; a party that, subsequently, put the French general on a pedestal; a party that advocated National Union and the "To each his own Kraut" policy; a party that rehabilitated Joan of Arc, that icon of the Catholic far right; a party that rejected all revolutionary propaganda to incite German soldiers to turn their weapons against their officers (which a few Trotskyist militants did, risking their lives, and were eventually shot or deported by the Nazis, or liquidated by the Stalinists); a party that forced the FTP maquisards, full of illusions about their beloved organisation, to surrender their weapons or to join the armed forces after the Liberation, even if this meant that they would later find themselves in Indochina killing Vietnamese peasants and workers; a party that called French workers to roll up their sleeves ("Strikes are the weapon of the trusts" said the French CP) immediately after the Liberation, to the great benefit of the

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<sup>12</sup> <https://www.workersliberty.org/files/2020-11/thatsfunny.pdf>

<sup>13</sup> <https://www.doorbraak.eu/category/translations/english/>

<sup>14</sup> [https://npnf.eu/IMG/pdf/36-37\\_confusion.pdf](https://npnf.eu/IMG/pdf/36-37_confusion.pdf)

French bosses; and a party that supported the implementation of the programme of the National Council of the Resistance (the programme of a state that fiercely repressed strikes)...

It's ridiculous to see Badiou and Hazan denouncing the term "Hitlero-Trotskyist," even though they were supporters of it for part of their political life, without engaging in the slightest self-critical reflection for their past positions. This expression can be found in the writings of Mao, whom Alain Badiou reveres, and in the texts of the French CP, to which Éric Hazan belonged at the height of the Stalinist period.

### **"Arab-Muslims", a term invented by the cops?!**

It is also incongruous to claim that the term "Arab-Muslims" (which can be disputed, but for more subtle reasons than those put forward by the authors) originated with the police, when during the last thirty years (to quote only these three decades) dozens of books or university articles have appeared on "*Le fait colonial, l'histoire de France et le monde arabo-musulman*", "*Le don et l'anti-économique dans la société arabo-musulmane*", "*L'Encyclopédisme arabo-musulman*", "*La philosophie et la sagesse dans la pensée arabo-musulmane*", "*Le défi de la philosophie en terre arabo-musulmane*", "*L'influence des études urbaines dans le champ de la recherche doctorale française sur l'aire arabo-musulmane*", "*L'initiation à la musique arabo-musulmane*", "*L'imaginaire arabo-musulman*", and so on.

Are Muslim psychoanalyst Malek Chebel, historians like Benjamin Stora and Gilles Keppel, the Association des travailleurs marocains de France, the Institut de recherche sur le monde arabe et musulman, etc., all influenced by post-2001 Gallic police thinking?

### **"Blacks of France and Palestine**

As for their claim that the "Blacks of France" identify with Palestine, an assertion taken from the racist discourse of the Parti des Indigènes de la République<sup>15</sup>, if it reflects their desire for a union between "Blacks" (?), "Arabs" (?), "Muslims" (?) and "Whites" of all social classes to celebrate a new national union, we are still waiting for proof.

The majority of "Blacks in France are not (contrary to what Hazan and Badiou write) the sons of Malian or Senegalese workers who recently arrived on "French" soil, but West Indians, and I doubt that Gallic, chic, anti-Zionism is their main preoccupation! And if, by some misfortune, this pernicious ideology were to become dominant thanks to the deleterious influence of people like the antisemitic far right comedian Dieudonné, the racist Tribu Ka or Mouvement des damnés de l'impérialisme, and other far right scoundrels, there would be no reason to rejoice, even if you were a supporter of the policies of... the P.I.R.<sup>16</sup> like Éric Hazan.

**Yves Coleman**, *Ni patrie ni frontières*, (5/3/2012)

P.S. Thanks to Charles, Jean-Pierre, and Thomas for their helpful comments and criticisms!

### **Short additional bibliography (including post-2012 sources)**

\* On the Antideutsch, see in particular:

- "Communism, anti-German criticism and Israel. An interview with Stephan Grigat" by Jens M., <https://www.cafecritique.priv.at/interviewIN.html>
- "Towards a critique of anti-German communism" by Raphael Schlembach, , which traces the history of this current, <https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/30609049.pdf>

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<sup>15</sup>

Cf. [https://www.academia.edu/21908234/Antiracism\\_and\\_class\\_struggle\\_dialogue\\_around\\_the\\_PIR\\_Parti\\_des\\_Indig%C3%A8nes\\_de\\_la\\_R%C3%A9publique](https://www.academia.edu/21908234/Antiracism_and_class_struggle_dialogue_around_the_PIR_Parti_des_Indig%C3%A8nes_de_la_R%C3%A9publique)

<sup>16</sup> Idem.

- "The Anti-Germans - The Pro-Israel German Left" by Simon Erlanger (<https://jcpa.org/article/the-anti-germans-the-pro-israel-german-left/>), which focuses more on the Anti-Deutsch's positions on Israel and contains some very useful information, including for those who defend an "anti-Zionist" point of view.

\* Many texts that can be found on the AWL's website, which has been sounding the alarm on the issue of left-wing anti-Semitism **for almost forty years now** : <https://www.workersliberty.org/left-antisemitism>.

And finally, let's mention two books recently written by militants of the AWL : Daniel Randall, *Confronting Antisemitism on the Left: Arguments for Socialists* (2021) and Camilla Bassi *Outcast: How Jews Were Banished From the Anti-Racist Imagination* (2023).