



Hating Jews for Allah

Pervasive anti-Semitism in the Muslim world is a telltale symptom of an underlying societal, cultural and religious malaise
By Tibor Krausz



Anti-Israel Muslim demonstrators march after Friday prayers in Amman, November 28

female Jewish columnist, at the satirical magazine *Charlie Hebdo* in Paris, their accomplice Amedy Coulibaly took scores of hostages in a kosher grocery in the city's Jewish district. He went on to execute four Jewish men and wound another four people before being shot dead by security forces. During the siege Coulibaly called a French TV station to stress his Islamist credentials and explain he'd targeted Jews "to defend oppressed Muslims, especially in Palestine."

In Jerusalem, such mass murderers would receive a hero's welcome from at least some local Arabs. Palestinian preacher Sheikh Omar Abu Sara has endorsed the terror group's agenda and called openly for the murder of Jews. Speaking inside Jerusalem's holiest Muslim site al-Aqsa Mosque, in a sermon translated and distributed November 28 on the Internet by MEMRI, the Washington-based Middle East Media Research Institute, he dubbed Jews "the masters of all vile traits," citing Koranic verses in justification.

"I say to the Jews loud and clear: The time for your slaughter has come," the portly, luxuriantly bearded preacher proclaimed to his audience, which included young Palestinian boys. "Oh Allah, hasten the day for the slaughter of the Jews." To which, his dozens of listeners responded, "Amen!"

Meanwhile, over in Spain, Sheikh Saleheeldine al-Moussaoui, the imam of a municipality near Madrid, waxed similarly homicidal in a recent Friday sermon. "The Jews are by nature treacherous and war-mongering," the imam told his congregants. "Oh Allah, destroy the plundering Jews. Oh Allah, the most merciful, do not spare a single one of them."

And so it goes: another day, another full-throated call for the massacre of Jews. The demonizing of Jews and murderous incitement against them are so commonplace in Arab and Muslim communities worldwide — from Palestine to Pakistan — that nary a day passes without another hate-filled public rant. In newspapers, mosques and schools, Jews are routinely decried and depicted as evil schemers whose mission is to hound,

harm, persecute and dispossess righteous Muslims. Hackneyed old anti-Semitic tropes proliferate with a dreary predictability of themes from Holocaust denial to claims of congenital Jewish perfidy to the portrayal of Israeli Jews as psychopathic murderers.

A RANDOM sample: "Israel is a sort of Torah whore, a state led by a fascist neo-Nazi government which practices apartheid against the sole and original owners of the land." That's according to the prominent Lebanese journalist Jihad Al-Khazin writing last May in the influential London-based pan-Arab daily *Al-Hayat*.

"Newspapers across the Arab and Muslim world continue to feature anti-Semitic caricatures and themes with demonic depictions of Jews and many promoting age-old global Jewish conspiracy theories, including control of international governments, obsession with money and the use of animal imagery — snakes, octopuses, and vultures — to portray Israel and Jews as sinister predators," notes the US-based Anti-Defamation League (ADL) in its latest report on the anti-Jewish contents of Arab-language media.

None of this surprises observers of Arab media content about Jews. "A tertiary cause of Arab/Muslim anti-Semitism is indoctrination," notes Mitchell Bard, a Jewish American foreign policy analyst and author of "Death to the Infidels: Radical Islam's War against the Jews." "Is it any surprise that Muslims hate people who are regularly said [in their media] to kill children and use their blood for matzo or drop poison candy from the sky so that Palestinian children in Gaza will pick it up and eat it?"

And it would be unwise to dismiss such relentless incitement as mere rhetorical flourish, insists Raphael Israeli, a professor of Islamic, Middle Eastern and Chinese history at Jerusalem's Hebrew University. "We should take the incitement very seriously," he tells *The Jerusalem Report*. "The first step toward eliminating an enemy is to dehumanize him."

Last July, during Israel's Operation Protective Edge in Gaza, the French Jewish organization CRIF reported attacks on eight synagogues in just one week, including a place of worship besieged and firebombed by a large mob chanting "Death to the Jews" in the

IN SYRIA, Iraq, and the rest of the Arab world, Jews are rather thin on the ground having fled or been expelled in decades past. That, as far as the stalwarts of the Islamic State (IS) extremist movement are concerned, is rather a pity — they would love to lay their hands on some Jews in order to murder them.

Undaunted, the terror group has reached out to its followers and sympathizers across Europe, calling on them to hunt down and kill Jews there. And, if those dastardly Jews think they will find refuge in Israel, they should think again. "The flag of the caliphate will rise over Jerusalem," IS has warned. "With Allah's blessing we will put an end to the Jewish state."

On January 9, a self-declared IS supporter responded to the call. Following two French-Arab Islamists' murder of 12 people, including an elderly Jewish cartoonist and a

Paris suburb of Sarcelles. Across Germany, mobs of Hamas supporters staged vocal rallies, chanting “Hamas, Hamas, Jews to the gas,” while imam Abu Bilal Ismail in Berlin beseeched Allah to “count the Zionist Jews and kill them to the very last one.”

SEVERAL JEWS were attacked and beaten from Germany to the UK. They included an Orthodox teenager in Berlin; an elderly man in Hamburg; a boy in London, and a rabbi in Gateshead. Meanwhile, in early December, a young Jewish woman was robbed and brutally raped by, reportedly, three Muslim men from North Africa who broke into her apartment in a Paris suburb, in what police labeled an “anti-Semitic crime.” A few weeks prior, an elderly Jewish man was viciously assaulted in the same suburb, as were two Jewish teens last May on their way home from synagogue.

From Holland to Germany, from France to Sweden, synagogues have been fire-bombed, Jewish cemeteries desecrated and visibly Jewish individuals harassed and set upon. Entire Muslim-majority districts of major European cities have become “no-go” zones, “where Jews dare not travel,” according to *The New York Times*.

“I’ve never felt so uncomfortable being a Jew in the UK as I’ve felt in the last 12 months,” BBC Television’s director Danny Cohen admitted in an interview in December with Israel’s Channel 2. “You’ve seen the number of attacks rise. You’ve seen murders in France. You’ve seen murders in Belgium. It’s been pretty grim, actually.” He questioned whether Europe remains viable as a “long-term home” for Jews.

“Europe is becoming a lot less hospitable to Jews,” agrees Neil J. Kressel, a professor of psychology at William Paterson University in New Jersey and author of “The Sons of Pigs and Apes: Muslim Antisemitism and the Conspiracy of Silence.” “There are places where a Jew cannot wear a kippa in public.”

What’s largely fanning the flames of resurgent anti-Semitism isn’t far-right extremism, as in the past, but militant Islamic Jew hatred, whose reach has gone global. A lot of that hatred, the American historian Daniel Pipes believes, is driven by a sense of failure.

“Islam was historically a religion of success, as manifested by its rapid conquests and cultural achievements,” Pipes, an expert on Islam and a well-known commentator on the Middle East, tells *The Report*. “For the

past two centuries, however, Muslims have endured failures. After experimenting with both Western liberalism and Western illiberalism, they have now turned to a version of their own religious and cultural heritage in an effort to become strong again.”

Muslims’ anti-Jewish animus is also driven by the humiliation many of them feel at having been bested by a formerly subjugated people, the Jews, who now have their own thriving state on what was once Muslim land, Kressel notes. “Jews were tolerated in the Muslim world as long as they occupied a subordinate position,” he explains to *The Report*. “With the emergence of Israel as a free, independent and successful state, at a time when the Muslim world has been down, the disconnect between the traditional Muslim image of the Jew [as an underdog] and the modern reality has become too great. This has fed anger and hostility.”

The numbers of people who dislike Jews, he adds, “are disturbingly high in most Muslim-majority countries.”

IN NEWSPAPERS, MOSQUES AND SCHOOLS, JEWS ARE ROUTINELY DECRIED AND DEPICTED AS EVIL SCHEMERS WHO HOUND, HARM, PERSECUTE AND DISPOSSESS RIGHTEOUS MUSLIMS

In fact, across the Middle East, Arab Muslims who do not harbor anti-Semitic views appear to be a small minority. According to a recent ADL survey, the vast majority of Arab Muslims harbor anti-Jewish views, adding up to hundreds of millions of people: 93 percent of Palestinians; 92 percent of Iraqis; 88 percent of Yemenis; 87 percent of Libyans and Algerians; 81 percent of Jordanians; 78 percent of Lebanese and so on. The country in the region with the lowest rate of anti-Semitism, according to the ADL, is Iran with 56 percent. By contrast, in Poland, the most anti-Semitic country in

Eastern Europe, 45 percent of people have it in for the Jews.

Pipes argues that we shouldn’t read too much into such statistics. “Every indication suggests that Jew hatred is very widespread among Muslims,” he concedes. “But it also appears to be fairly superficial, more an import from Christians than something indigenous to Islam, which tends toward disdain rather than hatred. This makes me hopeful that it can be undone about as quickly as it began,” he adds. “Muslim anti-Jewish animus results from specific historical circumstances – a combination of Muslim decline and the emergence of Israel – and will likely subside when Muslims once again find success.”

MANY OTHER scholars and policymakers, too, have insisted that widespread Muslim antagonism toward Israel and the West has been a response to humiliation and injustice. In a speech to American Muslim leaders at the White House last October, US Secretary of State John Kerry made just that point, arguing that even IS’s shocking brutality in Iraq and Syria is fundamentally driven not by a pernicious Islamist ideology that finds support in the Koran and the *hadiths*, but by legitimate Muslim grievances against Israel.

“The truth is,” Kerry opined, referring to the views of Arab leaders he had met across the Middle East, “[the lack of] peace between Israel and the Palestinians [is] a cause of recruitment [for militant Islamism] and of street anger and agitation... And people need to understand the connection of that. And it has something to do with humiliation and denial and absence of dignity.”

Other commentators will have none of that argument. “It’s pure nonsense,” Prof. Israeli insists. It’s not the lack of a peace accord between Israelis and Palestinians that is fueling Islamist violence and Jew hatred around the world, he argues. Rather, it’s the other way around: There is no peace because most Muslims have been unable to reconcile themselves to the existence of a Jewish state in the Middle East out of theological and ideological reasons.

“The conflict, as we see it today, is an extension of the conflict as it emerged out of a long history of Arab-Muslim majority persecution of the stunted Jewish minority, grounded in Koran-based theocratic bigotry toward all non-Muslims,” agrees Michael Lumish, a Jewish American historian who lives in San Francisco and writes regularly about the Middle East. “The reason that the



COURTESY MEMRI, MIDDLE EAST MEDIA RESEARCH INSTITUTE

Palestinian Sheikh Omar Abu Sara, preaching inside al-Aqsa Mosque calls openly for the murder of Jews in a video clip published in November

conflict goes on is not out of some alleged historical injustice against Arabs by Jews, but because of rank and long-standing Arab bigotry against Jews.”

“Muslim anti-Semitism is fueled by Islam’s innate antipathy to the other — in this case, Jews,” Raymond Ibrahim, an American Middle East specialist and author with Egyptian Coptic Christian roots, likewise argues. “The wide-scale persecution of Christians [across the Arab Middle East] demonstrates that Jews are damned, regardless of whether Israel exists or not.”

Ibrahim, the author of “Crucified Again: Exposing Islam’s New War on Christians,” tells The Report, “There are no land disputes between Muslims and Christians, the latter of whom are ostracized minorities who have no authority over Muslims, the way Israel does, and yet they’re still routinely persecuted, their churches burned, their women and children enslaved. Why? Because they’re ‘infidels.’

“And so are Jews, but this also explains why Muslim angst for Jews is more severe than for Christians,” he goes on. “If outnumbered minorities who merely wish to worship in church in peace are persecuted, one can imagine the hate for Jews, who are in po-

sitions of authority over Arabs, the Palestinians.”

Outbursts of virulent Jew hatred are nothing new in Islamic cultures, which were at times accommodating, at times hostile to Jews.

**WE SHOULD TAKE THE
INCITEMENT VERY
SERIOUSLY – THE
FIRST STEP TOWARD
ELIMINATING AN ENEMY
IS TO DEHUMANIZE HIM**

“Do not consider that killing them [the Jews] is treachery. Nay, it would be treachery to leave them scoffing.” So wrote the Muslim jurist and poet Abu Ishaq al-Elbiri in 1066, nine centuries before the creation of Israel and decades before the First Crusade. Al-Elbiri was inciting the faithful in Granada in Muslim-ruled Andalusia (in southern Spain) against local Jews. In the ensuing

pogrom, thousands of Jews were massacred.

THE HISTORY of Islam, though often credited as a golden age for Jews, is littered with anti-Jewish pogroms and persecutions. While much of today’s Muslim Jew-hatred has derived its source material from old Christian calumnies, such as medieval blood libels and “The Protocols of the Elders of Zion,” it also draws heavily on Islamic traditions. The Koran labels Jews “the most intense people in animosity toward Muslims,” dwells at length on their perfidy and repeatedly likens them to “apes and pigs.”

The religion’s founder, who is held in Islamic tradition to have been the perfect man whose conduct needs to be emulated by all good Muslims, set a terrible precedent for dealing with the Jews. After courting them in vain for their support, Mohammed turned on the Jews of Arabia, executing all the male members of the Qurayza tribe and enslaving their women. The Jews of Khaybar, a trading oasis north of Medina, did not fare better, either. In 628, Mohammed led a raid against them in search of booty, killing scores of Jews.

During anti-Israel rallies in the West, pro-Palestinian Muslim protesters love to chant the threat “*Khaybar, Khaybar, ya Ya-*

Jewish World

hud, jaish Muhammad, saya'ud!" (Remember Khaybar, oh Jew, the army of Mohammed is returning!). Hamas's charter, a virulent tract of anti-Semitic invective, quotes a famous *hadith* that records Mohammed explaining, "[Redemption] will not come until Muslims fight the Jews and kill them."

"The religious element is very prominent in Islamic Jew hatred," explains Israeli, the author of a new book on Muslim anti-Semitism, "Hatred, Lies, and Violence in the World of Islam." "It goes all the way back to the Prophet Mohammed, whose derogatory views of Jews became enshrined in the Koran and Islamic tradition. Because these pejorative views are in the Koran, which Muslims believe to be the [literal and eternal] word of God, they believe them to be true."

"Muslims have also borrowed wholesale from European Christian anti-Semitism," he adds. "The old blood libels and conspiracy theories about Jewish world domination are now part and parcel of Muslim anti-Semitism. Most Muslims can't even distinguish between these two sources, believing the latter to be authentic Islamic teachings too."

IDEAS HAVE consequences, and some Muslims act on the inflammatory rhetoric by setting out to murder Jews, seemingly selecting their victims at random regardless of age, gender or political affiliation. Last May, Mehdi Nemmouche, a French-Algerian Muslim, opened fire at visitors inside Brussels' Jewish Museum, killing four people. In March 2012, Mohammed Merah, another French-Algerian Muslim, executed four Jews at point-blank range at the Ozar Hatorah day school in Toulouse. His victims included three children, who were just three, six and eight.

In 2008, during coordinated terror attacks against high-profile targets in Mumbai, Pakistani Islamists singled out the city's small Chabad House, where they proceeded to murder Rabbi Gavriel Holtzberg and his pregnant wife, Rivka, along with four other hostages they had taken. Two years earlier, a gang of Muslim immigrants kidnapped Ilan Halimi, a 23-year-old Jewish mobile-phone salesman in Paris, holding him captive for 24 days in hopes of ransom, during which period they tortured him viciously while taunting him for being Jewish and reciting passages from the Koran as his mother listened on the phone. Halimi died of his injuries.

Far from being denounced (save for perfunctory official condemnations), the murderers of Jews are often embraced as heroes



or celebrated as "martyrs." Merah has been openly lionized by some French Muslims. On November 26, a week after two Palestinian Arabs ambushed Jewish worshipers with meat cleavers inside a synagogue in the west Jerusalem neighborhood of Har Nof, murdering four rabbis and a Druse police officer before being shot dead, Jordanian MPs held a moment of silence for the two "martyrs."

The editor of a Canadian Arab newspaper was similarly delighted by the terror attack. In the November 28 issue of *Meshwar*, an Arab-language publication in Ontario, the editor, Nazih Khatatba, a board member of the local Palestine House, praised the attackers for their "courageous and qualitative" operation by "fighters who sacrifice their life in battle."

The results of polls conducted in early December by the Palestinian Center for Policy and Survey Research in Gaza and the West Bank make for chilling reading. According to the PSR, Palestinians expressed overwhelming support for acts of terror against Israelis with more than three-quarters (77 percent) supporting rocket attacks by Hamas against Israelis.

Even more of them (80 percent) embraced

the murderous tactics of individual Palestinians stabbing Israeli Jews to death and running them over in cars — tactics that have recently taken the lives of a dozen Israeli Jews, including that of a three-month-old baby. In late December, a Palestinian training video surfaced on the Internet, instructing would-be jihadists how best to stab Jews.

And Arab children aren't immune, either, to their society's culture of hate and violence. Hamas, for one, has long been cultivating a cult of martyrdom among young Palestinians, regularly holding paramilitary camps for boys and inculcating in children the terrorist group's militantly revanchist ideology in Gaza's schools. During a children's program broadcast on Hamas's al-Aqsa TV on December 5, a young boy Abd Al-Rahim Al-Zarad was called upon by a girl in a headscarf, who acted as presenter, to "give a message to the enemy."

That the boy duly did. "Oh sons of Zion, oh the most evil of creatures, oh barbaric apes," he recited with childish zeal. "I do not dread barbarism as long as I have my holy book and as long as my arms can throw stones."

Even in tranquil Belgium, a recent survey of several elementary schools in Brussels



This video frame released on Islamist social networks shows a man claiming to be Amedy Coulibaly, who killed four Jewish hostages in a kosher supermarket in Paris, January 9

common “root-causes” argument often seem willing to consider any plausible cause – from poverty to Israeli brutality to US-meddling in the Middle East – for Muslim bigotry and Islamic terrorism, except one: a homegrown ideology of supremacism fueled by traditional Islamic beliefs.

“It’s a mainstay of progressive Western thinking that all cultures and religions are equal, that multiculturalism works, etc.,” Ibrahim says. “But if they actually pointed to the true root causes of Islamic violence – the plain teachings of Islam themselves – that entire edifice of multiculturalism would crumble down, taking with it many other aspects of the preferred narrative” – that Muslims are always somehow victims and so rightfully angry.

“It’s the usual Western hypocrisy of blaming the Jews,” Israeli says, his voice rising in indignation. “We had nonstop incitement in the Arab world against us long before we’d occupied any territory in the West Bank. We’ve evacuated from Gaza, yet the incitement there hasn’t ceased. In Morocco, where I was born (in 1935), there had been massacres of Jews before Israel was even created.”

The issue of Palestine is peripheral at best to the daily lives of most Arabs and Muslims, yet the Palestinian-Israeli conflict has taken on a central role in everyday discourse, acquiring an obsessive, almost religious, importance for many, even in countries as far afield as Pakistan. They continue to view the Jewish state as an abomination, a historical aberration that needs to be righted, a crime against Islam and the *ummah*, the global community of Muslims.

Yet, even if we accept the “Palestine is the root cause of Muslim violence” argument, we’ll still have to wonder why non-Muslims who have experienced similar, or worse, “humiliation and denial and absence of dignity” (in the words of John Kerry), such as Tibetans at the hand of China, have not resorted to mass terrorism and why their plight hasn’t attracted a remotely similar level of interest, much less served as a lightning rod for global terrorism.

“All the slanders about Jews are repeated day and night in all the Arab countries,” Is-

raeli notes. “They’re repeated in Egypt and Jordan, countries with which Israel is supposedly at peace, and they are equally repeated in countries even without any Jews. That should give us pause for thought.”

Yet, point out the double standards or argue that Islamist bigotry and violence might – just might – be driven by authentic Islamic teachings and homegrown cultural pathologies, and you risk being instantly labeled an “Islamophobe” and “racist.”

In the end, pervasive Jew hatred in the Muslim world should concern even those who are no friends of the Jewish state because it’s a telltale symptom of an underlying societal, cultural and religious malaise. Rabid anti-Semitism, when held collectively, as it was in Nazi Germany, is a dangerous ideological atavism that retards genuine insight into what ails a culture and society, thereby preventing honest assessments of those problems.

THE PALESTINIAN-ISRAELI CONFLICT HAS ACQUIRED AN OBSESSIVE, ALMOST RELIGIOUS, IMPORTANCE FOR MANY, EVEN IN COUNTRIES AS FAR AFIELD AS PAKISTAN

“Jews are just the canary in the coal mine,” Bard insists. “Radical Muslims have no tolerance for Christians or Hindus or any other non-Muslims, either. In fact, as we see in Iraq and Syria, they will not hesitate to attack fellow Muslims who do not interpret the Koran in the same way they do. Islamists see Israel as just a speed bump on the way to reconquering northern Africa and Europe. They do not hide their goal of dominating the world to impose their extremist brand of Islam.”

As for Jews, they’re justified in feeling concerned. “We’re reminded of the situation in the Germany of the 1930s with ceaseless demonization, boycotts and growing violence,” Israeli says. “We must not fall asleep. We must stay alert. And we must not accommodate incitement by staying silent about it.” ■

found that half of Muslim children in first and second grade harbored anti-Jewish views. Among high school students, Muslims were seven times as likely as their peers to dislike Jews.

“The most depressing part is the willingness of so many Muslim parents to teach their children to hate Jews so these small children often imbibe the hostility before having a chance to learn much of anything else,” Kressel observes.

Yet in the face of the unrelenting demonization of Jews and their state by Muslims, the Western media and intellectual elite have remained largely silent. The unspoken assumption seems to be that once Israel stops occupying Palestinian land in the West Bank and lifts the blockade on Gaza, all the incitement against Jews across the Arab/Muslim world will magically disappear.

“I THINK academics and human rights activists are too often driven by a misguided progressive ideology,” Kressel says. “I also think there is an unwillingness to take seriously violations of human rights when they come from countries viewed as non-Western and disadvantaged.”

Commentators who subscribe to the