

ISLAM AS JUDAISM GONE MAD: REFLECTIONS ON HEGEL

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When Wilhelm Dohm argued in the eighteenth century for giving civil rights to Jews, he described them as “unfortunate Asiatic refugees.”¹ The sentiment that the Jews are orientals, the cousins of the Arabs, was once taken for granted by everyone, but the decades of Arab-Jewish hostility in the Middle East have obscured it almost to a point of forgetting. In recent years I have been one of the people working on rescuing it from oblivion. In a 2001 paper in *Jewish Studies* on Moorish style synagogues I argued, based on contemporary sources, that nineteenth and early twentieth century Jews constructed these buildings out of pride at being Semites, the orientals of Europe, more than just an affinity with Jewish Spain under the Moors. I also published an article called “Benjamin Disraeli: Romantic Orientalist” in the *Comparative Studies of Society and History*, in 2005. A more general survey of the issue is the volume, *Orientalism and the Jews*, which I co-edited with Derek Penslar and which appeared likewise in 2005. I have, of course, not been alone. Back in 1978 Edward Said noted in his *Orientalism*, though only cursorily, the kinship between anti-Semitism and Islamophobia. A partial list of other recent authors who have paid attention to the joint construction of Jew and Muslim in western cultural history must include Nina Bermann, Jacques Derrida, Martin Kramer, Susannah Heschel, Jonathan Hess, and James Pasto. The year 2005 appears as a landmark in this field, because it is then that not only the above-mentioned *Orientalism and the Jews* appeared, but also Gil Anidjar's *The Jew, the Arab: A History of the Enemy* and Yaron Peleg's *Orientalism and the Hebrew Imagination*. And even more recently, Ronen Omer-Sherman most recently edited a special issue of *Shofar* (2006) devoted to “Jewish Orientalism.” These publications are the ones dealing with the double figure of Jew and Muslim in general, but there are many others addressing more specific themes.² The growing outcrop of work on German orientalism, for example, has never ignored the double figure of the Jew and Muslim in the imagination of the German-speaking realm, where it is simply too obvious to be overlooked.

The paper I am presenting to you here is a report on my ongoing investigation of the joint construction of Jew and Muslim in the thought of Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel. To Hegel and to all his contemporaries Judaism and Islam were both typical religions of the western Orient, forming a transition from the more purely oriental religions of India and China to the Christian West.³ However, while Hegel treats Judaism in great detail and in a number of contexts, he deals with Islam only briefly and somewhat sporadically. Hegel's views on Judaism can in fact be comfortably summarized, as in Yirmiyahu Yovel's definitive work on the subject,⁴ with next to no reference to Islam. But the reverse is not true. Hegel's Islam cannot be understood without Hegel's Judaism, because, as I will argue here, he thinks of Islam as only a late mutation of the Jewish religious principle. To Hegel the Jewish mission was exhausted with the incarnation of Christ. Judaism should have disappeared at that point. But not only did it not disappear; its religious principle even produced a delayed reaction, an anomalous upsurge of *Begeisterung*, a belated swan song of energy, and that was Islam. It is its anomalous nature as Judaism-come-late that prevents Hegel from considering Islam more fully and extensively in his overarching history of peoples and religions.

When the Jewish spirit rose again in the form of Islam, it did so in a historical context different from that of ancient Israel. It was indeed, that specific historical context that caused it to rise. For Islam rose in a dialectical relation with a force that had not been there earlier, and that was western Christianity, politically organized in its medieval forms, which Hegel considered to be unambiguously barbaric. In comparison, Hegel suggested, Islam was a brilliant civilization. Moreover, like Christianity, Islam threw off Jewish particularism, the insistence that God has chosen one nation over the rest. For this reason, some Muslim writers suggest that Hegel was an admirer of Islam. In *Europe and Islam*, Hichem Djait describes Hegel's "profoundly true and remarkably poetic" vision of Islam as transcending the "particularity of the Jewish God, instantly taking the high ground of universality, thereby purifying and liberating human intelligence."⁵ But those are Djait's words, not Hegel's. We will soon see that while it was true that Hegel thought Jewish particularism to be a defect of Judaism, he thought that universalism in its Muslim form was not something better, but something much worse.

Two Important Hegelian Conceptions: Abstract vs. Concrete Spirit; and Weltgeist vs. Volksgeist

A summary of Hegel's monumental work, let alone a detailed consideration of it, is beyond the scope of this article. The complexities include the differences between the Hegel of the early years at Jena, for example, and the mature Hegel in Berlin. And Hegel's love of paradox, encoded in his dialectical method, has resulted in a style of writing where it is difficult to pin him down to unambiguous, one-dimensional propositions. (A well-known anecdote claims that Hegel once said, "Only one man has understood me, and even he has not.") Yet for the purposes of this paper one can probably agree on just two important contrasts in Hegel's thought. Both have to do with his central conception of the Spirit or *Geist* as a historical force. The first contrast is that of the *abstract* Spirit versus the *concrete*. The second contrast differentiates the Spirit as existing in a universal form valid for all peoples, or *Weltgeist*, and specific forms associated with particular peoples or regions, or *Volksgeister*.

So let's start with the abstract and concrete Spirit. The development goes from the first appearance of the Spirit *in contrast with* the concrete world to its final recognition as interpenetrating the concrete world. It is important to note that the concrete spirit does not cancel out the abstract. Instead, it sublates or supersedes (*hebt auf*) the abstract-concrete opposition, uniting both as aspects of *Geist*. The historical process here follows a pattern that Robert M. Wallace has recognized as typical for Hegel: abstracting first, then particularizing, and finally "maintaining identity through the particularizing."⁶ The first step, abstracting the Spirit from Nature, Hegel considered in the 1827 *Lectures on the Philosophy of History* to be the unique achievement of Judaism within the broader religious landscape of the Orient:

While among the Phoenician people the Spiritual was still limited by Nature, in the case of the Jews we find it entirely purified; - the pure product of Thought.

Self-conception appears in the field of consciousness, and the Spiritual develops itself in sharp contrast to Nature and to union with it.⁷

Hegel continues by suggesting that this achievement separated Judaism from the other religions of the Orient; but since, as I show elsewhere in this paper, he identifies Jewish with Arab-Muslim religion he might have included Islam here as well. At any rate, abstracting Spirit from Nature, though the highest degree of religious development in the Orient, was only a first step in the self-realization of the Spirit – the motor, in Hegel's scheme, of human history. It required a new, second-level particularization, and that is manifested in Christianity in the Trinity, the incarnation of Christ representing the beginning of the Spirit's becoming concrete.

The concretization process then still had to undergo a lengthy third step culminating in Protestant Christianity (or perhaps, as some readers of Hegel suggest, the process is still going on). At last then the Spiritual would develop not only in contrast to Nature but also in “union with it.”

Ultimately, Hegel turned to the Orient with the same goal as his friend the poet Hölderlin, or the English poet Coleridge. These poets’ objective was, Emily Shaffer has shown, to reinvent Protestant Christianity in the face of the challenge posed to it by the discovery of oriental scriptures and the related relativization of Bible scholarship.⁸ Theirs was, she writes, “a new apologetics of free-thinking theism which was to salvage Christianity until very nearly the end of the Victorian era.”⁹ In such apologetics, the Orient and not only its Jewish version served as the Mother of true religiosity.

Hegel was not the first, only the most explicit, thinker to characterize Judaism as an oriental religion of the Sublime, that is, a religion that is awed by the radical objective transcendence of God over the comparative insignificance of subjective human existence.¹⁰ The first time the word “orientalism” was used in English appears to have been the *Essay on Pope’s Odyssey* published in 1726, by Joseph Spence (1699-1768). This is how one of Spence’s characters comments on a sentence from Homer:

“Of the sun being perished out of Heaven, and of darkness rushing over the Earth!” (...) This whole prophetic vision ... is the *True Sublime*; and in particular, gives us an higher *Orientalism* than we meet with in any other part of Homer’s writings.

Note that the association of sublimity is not only with the Hebrew Bible but with the Orient as a whole. The same attitude is fundamental to Robert Lowth’s lectures, *On the Sacred Poetry of the Hebrews*, published in 1753, where Lowth helps himself to Arabic examples to illustrate some of his enthusiastic views about Hebrew. Johann Gottfried Herder begins his own more famous *Spirit of Hebrew Poetry* (1782-83) by suggesting that “Everyone knows Bishop Lowth’s beautiful and widely praised book, *De sacra poesi Hebraeorum*.”¹¹ The fascination with the sublimity of oriental poetry, as it was seen, in the Bible certainly helped to propel the concept of the Sublime itself to the foreground of philosophical reflection. We see important debates about sublimity in Edmund Burke and, with more of a direct relevance for Hegel, Immanuel Kant. In Hegel’s version, the concept of sublimity expresses “the attempt to express the infinite, without finding in the sphere of phenomena an object which proves adequate for this representation.”¹² Old Testament Judaism expresses a purely negative Sublime. Its concept of the world is that of a sphere radically alienated from its Creator.

The smallness of Man and the World compared to the Creator engenders in the follower of the Religion of the Sublime the attitudes of a slave towards his master. Man exists, in such a religion, only to serve the Creator.¹³ In this immature stage of religiosity, the worshipper does not recognize (unlike the observer of a sublime mountain in Kant) that the external Sublimity is but an index of the internal greatness of Man.¹⁴ The Spirit does not yet recognize itself as concrete, as indwelling in the World; it is entirely outside of it; it is the Spirit in the abstract.

Like mainstream Protestant thinkers of his period, Hegel considered the Jewish Bible to be the theater where “Jehovah” appears mainly as a jealous Master, contrasting with the humble, compassionate character of Christ. However, he expands this notion to apply not only to Jewish but also what he calls “Arab” religion. He suggests that the proposition that there is only one God and “he is a jealous God who will have no other gods before him” is “the great thesis of the Jewish, of overall Arab religion of the western Orient and Africa.”¹⁵ Notice that Hegel speaks here of “Arab,” not “Islamic” religion, but like to his contemporaries these terms were probably

synonymous to him. He would have been using “Arabic” as a synonym of “Semitic,” a usage that occurs most notably, though some decades later, in Benjamin Disraeli’s fiction.¹⁶ We see here, though perhaps not quite fully worked out, the defining assumption of the “higher criticism” school of biblical scholarship, that the Bible was a Semitic oriental, and not just strictly a Jewish, document. At any rate, Hegel was clear that Islam owed its character to the Arabs, and as far as religious principle is concerned “Arab” and “Muslim” were one and the same thing. Other examples where Hegel identifies Jews with Arabs *or* Muslims include the following passage: “Now the fear of the Lord is, doubtless, the beginning, but only the beginning, of wisdom. To look at God in this light, as the Lord, and the Lord alone, is especially characteristic of Judaism and also of Mohammedanism.”¹⁷ His position on both the Muslim-Jewish equation and on the character of Muslim-Jewish religion is particularly clear in his evaluation of Spinoza:

The charge will be seen to be unfounded if we remember that his system, instead of denying God, rather recognises that he alone really is. Nor can it be maintained that the God of Spinoza, although he is described as alone true, is not the true God, and therefore as good as no God. If that were a just charge, it would only prove that all other systems, where speculation has not gone beyond a subordinate stage of the idea - that the Jews and Mohammedans who know God only as the Lord - and that even the many Christians for whom God is merely the most high, unknowable, and transcendent being, are as much atheists as Spinoza. *(ibid-\$151)

Or consider when in the *Philosophy of Religion* he speaks of “Judaism or Islam, where God is comprehended only under the abstract category of the one”¹⁸

Let us now take a little deeper look at what Hegel has said specifically about Islam. Writers have puzzled about the placement of the only extant passage where Hegel deals with in Islam in more than just a few paragraphs. In the *Philosophy of History*, there is a section on Islam and it is placed in the part dealing with the “Germanic World.” At first this seems odd. Yet in terms of Hegel’s goal its placement is quite logical. Hegel wanted to contrast the brutish Germanic world and its medieval quasi-empire with the splendid Oriental empire of Islam. As I’ve said, the *Germanen* were a crude lot in the early Middle Ages. Hegel says that “Their religion had no profundity; and the same may be said of their *ideas of law*. Murder was not regarded or punished as a crime ...” (Sirbee, 352) But the “extravagance of passion” and “barbarous harshness and cruelty” of medieval Europe, which contrasts so spectacularly with the much more civilized world of Islam at the time, should not be misread as a permanent defect; on the contrary, its rough medieval state would eventually turn out to be a foundation of Germanic Europe’s progress. For this barbaric age is a period of germination, an exertion of slow, patient labor, the *Arbeit* that will eventually lead to genuine human freedom. We see in this period, says Hegel, “the *European* world forming itself anew – the nations taking firm root there, to produce a world of free reality expanded and developed in every direction. We behold them beginning their work by bringing all social relations under the form of *particularity* ...”¹⁹ In other words, Europe was engaged in a long-term process, the *Arbeit* of developing distinct national spirits. The philosopher is here making a familiar association between Germany and hard work.²⁰ The killing, raping, and pillaging of the medieval Germans was only the superficial manifestation of a deeper process whereby the hard-working spirit becomes concrete at long last in Hegel’s nineteenth century. The flighty orientals, in contrast, took the easy path and created a brilliant empire almost instantaneously. But the result of such hasty work was not the ultimate realization of the Spirit in the concrete, but rather the more easily concocted oriental product, the familiar

“Spirit in the abstract.” The Islamic version of the Spirit was “produced rapidly, even suddenly, in the first half of the seventh century.”²¹ It bypassed the necessary labor of developing particular *Volksgeister*. And this takes us to the second important concept I promised to discuss in Hegel, his contrast between the universal Spirit and its particular, national varieties. That contrast is related to the first concept, of an abstract versus a concrete *Geist*.

Hegel is the philosopher who introduced the term *Volksgeist* into the German language. It is the German equivalent of Montesquieu’s *esprit générale de peuples*.²² The expression combines *Geist* or Spirit with *Volk*, which could mean “people,” “nation,” or ethnic group. *Weltgeist* or “world spirit” and is related to *Volksgeist* in somewhat the same manner as the abstract Spirit is related to the concrete. *Weltgeist* is an abstraction that is only manifested in specific objective examples, and these for Hegel include National or Ethnic Spirits, *Volksgeister*. I have argued elsewhere that the *Volksgeist* is the German ancestor of the American anthropological concept of *culture*.²³ This suggestion will now, I see, have to be refined. The Orient did not, strictly speaking, have a *Volksgeist* in the Hegelian scheme. It could not, because the oriental principle had the *Geist* as an undifferentiated abstract One. Different oriental peoples had a different understanding of *Geist*, it is true, but none of them saw it differentiated into particular national varieties in the different *Völker*. *Volksgeist* strictly speaking exists only where the World Spirit has particularized into National Spirits. It was this necessary particularization that Islam skipped in its rush but not the Christian Germans with their patient if at first barbaric *Arbeit*.

Really, Islam was, then, nothing but a reaction to the medieval West’s labor. Hegel’s dialectical method takes a characteristic twist here. The development of nations and related historical events in the West were a move towards the Particular so, Hegel suggests, “a movement in the opposite direction had to appear for the integration of the Whole” (*mußte zur Integration der Ganzen die entgegengesetzte Richtung auftreten*).²⁴ The travails of medieval Europe, in other words, sparked a reaction in the Orient, and it was a reaction by Arabs, the oriental relatives of the Jews,²⁵ who would naturally draw on the Jewish-oriental predilection for the undifferentiated abstract Spirit.

Hegel writes that their universalism enabled Muslims to dream, like Christians, of universal Empire. This, at least on the political level, was in fact what engendered the revival of the Jewish principle in the form of Islam. But Islam, understandably given the abstract character of that Jewish principle, developed in the opposite direction to the particularizing development of Europe’s Christian *Volksgeister*. Islam continued to radically separate the abstract Spirit or God from the mundane existence of nature, society, and the subjective mind. And the fact that it got rid of Jewish particularism purified the Jewish separation of abstract and concrete which remained at Islam’s core: Islam became more, not less, Jewish than the Jews. Consequently, the worldly Muslim Empire would be radically divorced from the moral character of the abstract Spirit. It would be radically un-spiritual. The sad result was a fanatical psychology and unstable, violence-based regimes that lacked real politics: a resurgence with a vengeance of “oriental despotism.”

Valuation of Islam and Judaism

Hegel thought that the end of Jewish particularism was necessary for the Spirit’s rise to its higher, Christian phase. He considered the destruction of the Temple and the Judean commonwealth to be an act that liberated, in Michel Hulin’s words, “the Jewish principle from its attachment to Locality and made possible the advent of Christianity.”²⁶ But where

universalism in its *Muslim* form was concerned, it was to Hegel no liberation. For if Christianity was the fruitful and lasting sequel to Judaism, Islam was its sterile and temporary resurgence, a brief burst of brilliance followed by centuries of dark decay. Ultimately, as far as Hegel was concerned, Islam developed not the promising aspects of Judaism but rather its nightmarish, destructive potential, inherent in the “fact” that Judaism imagined its world as devoid of the concrete presence of God. Islam to Hegel was Judaism gone mad.

The “hamper” that Jewish particularism posed for Islam had actually been, Hegel thought, a sort of safety feature. Without it, Islam was able to rush headlong into the fanaticism that is the logical conclusion of a religion that opposes the divine One to all that is in the world. In Islam, “inasmuch as only this One has value and becomes realized, it follows that all differences are destroyed, and that is what constitutes fanaticism.”²⁷ “*Allah* has not [has no longer – *hat nicht mehr*] the affirmative, limited aim of the Judaic God.” In fact, since in Islam the “worship of the One” is the only fixed thing in the world and “all national and caste distinctions vanish” (Hegel writes that Islam frees itself not just of the national particularism of Judaism but also of the caste particularism of Hinduism), the Muslim wants to remove himself from all particularity and destroy any barriers between himself and the Infinite. The Muslim even goes so far as to desire to end the separation from the Infinite that arises from “corporeal limitation.” He offers to his God his own corporeal demise: “... the highest merit is to die for the Faith. He who perishes for it in battle, is sure of Paradise.”²⁸ And to complete the familiar ring that such Islamophobic passages have to us today, let us note that the topic of terror is not absent here, though it is taken in a very different political context by Hegel. Hegel was a disappointed former partisan of the French Revolution. “*La religion est la terreur*,” he proposes, “is the principle in this case [meaning Islam], as with Robespierre [i twas] *la liberté est la terreur*.”²⁹

Sociopolitical dimension

Fanatical enthusiasm, *Begeisterung*, did get the Muslims, though only for a while, a glorious political arrangement, the Caliphate, an Islamic empire that was the superior rival of the West. The Jews never had such political success. Indeed, Gil Anidjar summarizes the difference between the Jew and the Arab/Muslim in western thought as essentially that between the “theological enemy” and “the political enemy.” As far as Hegel is concerned, the contrast is valid, but only in terms of empirical history. In terms of the underlying *Geist*, it does not apply. It is much the same *Geist*, the abstract *Geist*, that produced both the Jew and the Muslim.

How much the Jewish (meaning to Hegel, the Old Testament) spirit is isomorphic with the Arab-Islamic one, even with respect to politics, is shown in the way Hegel discusses the opposition in the Orient between the State and the Family. Here as elsewhere Islam evidences the “Jewish” principle taken to the extreme. Edward Said wrote that in the western conception the Arab is seen as having no politics, only family. He associated that prejudice with the image of the Arab family as a human breeding ground.³⁰ But that prejudice was of great antiquity, and about the Orient in general rather than just about the Arabs. Alain Grosrichard traces it back to Aristotle, who wrote about the East “as if the Asiatic peoples were unfit to accede to a *political* regime, and had to be confined eternally to domestic relationships.” He then proceeds to show how profoundly long-eighteenth-century readings of Aristotle influenced the modern western image of oriental political organization.³¹ Though he does not mention Hegel in this respect, the German philosopher fits the pattern perfectly. Even nationality, such as it is in the Orient, he says, is really family-like (*familienhaftig*): “The Oriental has family-like nationality at its

foundations.”³² This is not specifically a Muslim or Arab trait. On the contrary, it is well entrenched among the Jews. In Judaism, so Hegel,

...the *Family* has inherent value; for the worship of Jehovah is attached to the Family, and it is consequently viewed as a substantial existence. But the State is an Institution not consonant with the Judaistic principle. (...) The Family became a great nation; through the conquest of Canaan, it took a whole country into possession; and erected a Temple for the entire people, in Jerusalem. But properly speaking no *political* union existed.³³

Now as far as Hegel is concerned among Muslims political union is not more, but less evident. In fact in the specific Islamic example we see the oriental lack of politics taken to a monstrous conclusion, where even familial organization does not seem to matter much: “... although nationality, natural associations, family connections, homeland, etc., remain (limited connections, stable relationships are permitted), the service of the One logically involves the unlimitedness and instability of all subsistence,” i.e. even of family structure.³⁴

The combination of enthusiasm for the abstract and lack of concern for the concrete has, for Hegel, sociological implications. In the Muslim world, to him,

... conquest leads to sovereignty and wealth, and to a union of individuals. But all this is only contingent and built on sand; it is to-day, and to-morrow is not. With all the passionate interest he shows, the Mahometan is really indifferent to this social fabric, and rushes on in the ceaseless whirl of fortune.

The ephemeral nature of power among Muslims was a well-worn theme in the West at the time. In Hegel, we read that “The ruler who loves his slave glorifies the object of his love by laying at his feet all his magnificence; but on the other hand he will sacrifice him just as recklessly.”³⁵ And again:

The leading features of Mahometanism involve this – that in actual existence nothing can become fixed, but that everything is destined to expand itself in activity and life in the boundless amplitude of the world, so that the worship of the One remains the only bond by which the whole is capable of uniting. In this expansion, this active energy, all limits, all national and caste distinctions vanish; no particular race, political claim of birth or possession is regarded – only *man as believer*.

Islamic realms did exist but they rose and fell to be replaced by others “for on the basis presented by Universality nothing is firm.” (360). As social distinctions were unstable, a remarkable spirit of equality did exist among the Muslims, at least “at first,” in the early caliphate when the rulers

still maintained entire that simplicity and plainness which characterized the Arabs of the desert ...and which distinguished no distinction of station or culture. The meanest Saracen, the most significant old woman approached the Caliph as his equals. Unreflecting naïveté does not stand in need of culture, and in virtue of the freedom of his Spirit, each one sustains a relation of equality to the ruler. (359)

There is a parallel here between the relationship of the One all-powerful God to his creatures who are all equally his subjects. But once again, what may appear as a sign of modern liberties in Islam turns out to be a deceptive mirage. The Caliph’s subjects are just essentially an undifferentiated mass. This is not the kind of equality of creation that inspires political freedom, as when the American constitution justifies the people’s right to shake off “absolute Despotism” by first stating that “all men are created equal.” For at this stage, the stage of the abstract Spirit,

men are not free. If men were created equal it is that they were all created slaves. Hegel adds, in order to make sure we do not succumb to the impression that this was real equality: "Still, the Caliphs had the right to have anyone executed at their whim."³⁶

Conclusion: Anti-Semitism and Orientalism

It's not that Judaism was that different. The Jews, too, were fanatics, as far as Hegel is concerned: he called the Jewish attachment to remaining a separate religious group "hard-necked fanaticism."³⁷ And certainly, as we have seen, nor was Judaism any more capable than Islam of producing social organization that deserved the name "political." As far as the character of oriental despotism is concerned, its fundamental principle is completely identical with the essence of Judaism: "The overall command in Judaism is fear before the absolute master;" I have the duty to "see myself as nothing, to know myself as absolutely dependent: A slavish consciousness before the master."³⁸ It is true that in Hegel only the Muslims, not the Jews, were capable of building a potentially universal empire, an enterprise from which the Jews were "hampered" (*behaftet*)³⁹ by their insistence on being the one Chosen People. But that aside, the Muslim empire was built of the same spiritual stuff as the Jewish, or better, Judeo-Muslim religion of the Sublime.

"Read the incomparable, Shylock and Othello,"⁴⁰ Anidjar advises, meaning the Jew and the Muslim. But the Jew and the Moor of Europe, and not only of Venice, were not in any way incomparable in the western mind before the mid-twentieth century. At that time, the idea of the Jews as an oriental people, which had among other Jews been proudly held by some of the early Zionists, was laid to rest as the result of bloody conflict in the Middle East. If as Derrida and Anidjar suggest the Jew and the Muslim combined in an "explosive" mixture, the explosion came not from the fusion of incompatible semiotic elements as much as from the fission of what was once, including in Hegel, thought of as a single element.

In the pre-explosion, seventh to twentieth century conjoint image of the Muslim and the Jew lies, I am sure, some of the answer to a very major and very puzzling coincidence. Islamophobia and political anti-Semitism matured together at the end of the nineteenth century, as Hannah Arendt and Edward Said, among others, noted.⁴¹ The coupling of Islamophobia and anti-Semitism was mostly implicit, but it could also be stated explicitly, as in the pamphlet by Adolf Wahrmund, an Austrian orientalist, who suggested in ***** that

In Africa the nomads have been pushed back into the desert from North and South: the new Congo State and the German colonies mean cutting off the nomads and Islam from the South, in Central Asia Russia has laid its fist upon the Touranian nomadic tribes ...; even the Turkish nomads of Asia Minor will soon have their practices stopped by the West; but among us, in the realm of Christian German statehood, the Semitic-Pharisaic nomad lays down the law.⁴²

You can see from this quote that more was at play here than metaphysics. There were economic, political, and military reasons for the joint growth of Islamophobia and anti-Semitism, which have been explored, though none too conclusively, by a number of scholars. In terms of the history of ideas, however, the answer might well have to be sought somewhere close to the ideas expressed by, and drawn upon, by Hegel.

As I have said, in Hegelian historiography once a particular stage of the *Geist's* journey is exhausted, the folks who were associated with that *Geist* have nowhere to go and should disappear as a *Volk*. With the arrival of Christ, the world-historical function of Judaism was over. Similarly, once the post-mortem spasm of the Jewish principle known as the *hijrah* and the

Caliphate was over, Islam should have disappeared as well. So the Jew and Muslim *both of them and together* were seen as the deadwood of pre-modern, pre-state, familial fanaticism. These specters of the past haunted the developing sense of the Christian Western people, Germans included, that *they* were now the chosen people rather than the Jews, and that *their* empire now rightly actualized the “principle of expansion” that Hegel had attributed to Islam.

As Anidjar showed, one trope of the Muslim in Europe was that of the resigned loser, the defeated person whose only heroism is that he has totally accepted his fate. In Auschwitz, the figures who sat dejected, oblivious to their surroundings, or walked silently into the electric fences were called “Muslims.” Anidjar suggests that this figure of the slavishly resigned Muslim comes from Hegel’s image of the Muslim and Jew. But we have seen how in Hegel the slaves easily become fanatics; we’ve seen how little it takes for them to be filled with a threatening *Begeisterung*, how the nameless shadows become a menacing mob.

Slavoj Žižek surprised many of us when he suggested that the “fundamental fantasy” of contemporary mass culture was the “fantasy of the return of the living dead: the fantasy of a person who does not want to stay dead but returns again and again to pose a threat to the living.”^{43,44} The improperly buried undead have the uncanny ability to spook us out of our confidently constructed self-image. In earlier modernity, the zombie that threatened the Christian West used to be mainly the Jews. Now it’s the Muslims. Said lamented that the Arabs now remain the only Semites. When Samuel Huntington came out with his best selling and worst hated book, *Clash of Civilizations*, all people of good will were quick to point out that such a clash, between Judeo-Christianity and Islam, does not exist. But clearly what we meant was that it *should* not exist in *reality*. The fact that it does exist as a forceful *idea* is evidenced by the Huntington book and its sales figures. In the meantime, many of us who are Jews probably took secret satisfaction in the fact that we are on the right side of this imagined conflict. The clash of civilizations seems to have been redefined forever, with us Jews ending up on the Christian side, when for centuries we were reckoned, as in Hegel, much more with the Muslims. The realignment may be permanent, supported as it seems to be by some pretty big guns. (Right now modified American Boeing and Lockheed planes may be fighting for Israel against Syrian-Iranian Fajr rockets. I will not say anything about Katyushas.) It may make no practical difference, for example, if in the hearts of the George Bushes the Jews have really become honorary Christians at last, or if it is just that once again westernized Asiatics have been unleashed against real ones. That is, if the BBC correspondent Max Frei is correct when he says that “The Israelis are viewed by Washington in the same way as the Serbian armies were once seen by the Habsburgs in Vienna - a ruthless battering ram to smite the sworn enemies on the edge of empire.”⁴⁵ I leave you with your own thoughts on that as you remember that in the deeper western tradition – whose Hegelian version I have just sketched – Islam is not the opponent of Judaism, but merely Judaism gone mad.

¹ * ref.

² There is interesting relevant work by Susannah Heschel, Jonathan Hess, Paolo Horta, James Pasto, to mention just a few.

³ Hulin *

⁴ * ref.

⁵ P. 80-1*

⁶ Wallace, *Hegel's Philosophy*, 276.

⁷ *Sirbee 195, cf. Lasson. In 1831 Hegel admitted, however, that other oriental religions, including those of India, have also identified the abstract Spirit.⁷ Hulin’s remark that “the God of

the Israelites no longer has anything Oriental in him” is therefore true of the 1827 lectures but not of the ones of 1831.

⁸ * ref *Kubla Khan*

⁹ * p. 63

¹⁰ * Hegel’s def. of sublimity – see 071006 version.

¹¹ “Jedermann ist der Bischof Lowths schönes und allgepriesenes Buch de sacra poesi Hebraeorum bekannt.” First line of H’s *Vom Geist der Ebraeischen Poesie*. Smend ed. vol. 5 *Schriften zum alten Testament*, 663. PT 2351 A1 1985 * BS1405 .H45 1833a V.1

¹² (Yovel 64)*

¹³ (Yovel 64)*

¹⁴ (Yovel 68)*

15 That, in any case, is the most literal translation; the German reads *großer Satz der jüdischen, überhaupt arabischen Religion des westlichen Morgenlandes und Afrikas*. Peter C. Hodgson translates it as “the great thesis of Jewish and of Arab religion generally ([the religion of] the Near East and Africa. ...) the eastern Orient.

¹⁶ Ref* Disraeli article.

¹⁷ (Encyclopedia-Logic-§112).

18 Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel and Peter Crafts Hodgson, *Lectures on the Philosophy of Religion*, 3 vols., vol. 2 (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987), 156. Emphasis added.

¹⁹ Sibree, 355*

²⁰ Ref* on Hegel and Arbeit.

²¹ (355)

²² *L’Esprit des lois*. * <http://etext.virginia.edu/cgi-local/DHI/dhi.cgi?id=dv4-66k>

²³ If we were to get technical about this, the *Weltgeist* might be identified with the Absolute Spirit and the *Volksgeister* with Objective Spirit. Ref* J Hist Ideas *

24 * 1922:789. This passage does not duplicate the Sirbee version, which is less clear on the subject.

²⁵ * ref rep?

²⁶ * Hulin, 133.

²⁷ * (1922:790)

²⁸ * (357)

²⁹ * (358)

³⁰ Ref *

³¹ Grosrichard, * 11?

³² * Lasson, 535, cf. Sirbee 226, where most of this is missing.

³³ * Sirbee, 197, emphasis original. See also *Phil of Rel* vol. 2, 284-5 and, for a discussion, Yovel, 79-80.

34 Hegel and Hodgson, *Philosophy of Religion*, 158. Emphasis* original. In a later edition of the *Lectures*, we find that “Fanaticism is found among the Jews, but only where their possessions or their religion come under attack, and only then because this single purpose of theirs is utterly exclusive and admits of no mediation, no sharing, no fusion with anything else.” (Hegel and Hodgson, *Philosophy of Religion*, 438.)

³⁵ * (358)

³⁶ * (1922:796)

³⁷ * Yovel, 94, not referenced there.

³⁸ * (Hodgson et al. *Lectures in the Phil of Rel* (1984-7), vol 2, 443.?)

³⁹ * 356

⁴⁰ Gil Anidjar, “Introduction: ‘Once More, Once More’: Derrida, the Arab, the Jew,” in Derrida, *Acts of Religion*, 11.

⁴¹ * ref

⁴² Adolf Wahrmund, *Das Gesetz des Nomadenthums und die heutige Judenherrschaft* (Karlsruhe and Leipzig, H. Reuther, 1887), 234.

⁴³ Slavoj Žižek *Looking Awry: An Introduction to Jacques Lacan through Popular Culture* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1992), 22.

⁴⁴ To W.J.T. Mitchell, it is the dinosaur. Ref*

⁴⁵ "Washington Diary: The Big Brother G8," <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/americas/5201628.stm>, accessed July 21, 2006.