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Dorian Bell, *Globalizing Race: Antisemitism and Empire in French and European Culture*. Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 2018. vii + 368 pp. Notes, bibliography, and index. \$99.95 U.S. (cl). ISBN 978-0-8101-3689-2; \$39.95 U.S. (pb). ISBN 978-0-8101-3688-5; \$39.95 U.S. (eb). ISBN 978-0-8101-3690-8.

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Bell's *Globalizing Race* has some of the best features of comparative literature and race theory. It juxtaposes key authors (like Émile Zola and Édouard Drumont) with lesser known exemplars (like the Marquis de Morès and Melchior de Vogüé), while showing how debates from the late nineteenth century helped to establish prominent narratives in the present. With unnecessarily convoluted digressions into the dark woods of speculative reflection that make the book dense and difficult, it also has some of the worst features of comparative literature and contemporary theory. While these bogged thickets are ultimately illuminating, they limit the appeal of the book. Bell could have written it to speak to more than the initiated because *Globalizing Race* sparkles with insight and exciting turns of phrase. If you make your way through his arguments, they are astute regarding race and anti-Semitism, making this an important contribution to a growing body of scholarship linking anti-Semitism and imperialism.[1]

The book opens with a discussion of Mohammed Merah, the terrorist who murdered several French army soldiers before mowing down a rabbi and three children at the Ozar Hatorah Jewish day school in Toulouse in March 2012. Bell treats Merah as a paradigm case of “postcolonial antisemitism”—a terrific phrase for encapsulating what some have termed “the new anti-Semitism”—illustrating a major point: that post-Holocaust Europe is also postcolonial Europe and that “the histories of antisemitism and empire are entwined” (p. 4). In doing so, Bell enters a growing historiography that links discussions of anti-Semitism with colonial racism, and Judeophobia with Islamophobia.[2] This scholarship builds on the theories introduced by Hannah Arendt, Frantz Fanon, Albert Memmi, and Jean-Paul Sartre, among others, to make its case.

The introduction lays out two key points. First, Bell insists that the discourse around “postcolonial antisemitism” was generated by the overlapped discourses about Jews and empire in the nineteenth century. As such, it is an example of what David Theo Goldberg has termed “racial relationality” (p. 7). Bell dubs his other main point “*racial scalarity*.” This is about how modern anti-Semitism allowed race thinking “to toggle between the governing fictions of nation and empire,” as well as the global and the local (p. 9). The concept of “racial scalarity” is

the core claim behind the title, *Globalizing Race*. As such, it is a contribution to the varied arguments about the underlying drivers of anti-Semitism in the modern age.

Bell's first chapter is about Arendt's discussion of Jews and empire. A key conversation among a new generation of Arendt's commentators concerns her "boomerang thesis": "Arendt famously suggests that a bureaucratically administered racism honed in the nineteenth- and early twentieth-century imperial periphery produced 'boomerang effects' on the European continent—including the Nazi disaster" (pp. 38-39). His contribution to this discussion is to insist that what propels this argument is Arendt's "displacement thesis," as Bell labels it. This is Arendt's claim that modern anti-Semitism emerged at precisely the moment when Jewish capital was no longer required by developing nation-states as their empires expanded. Tossed amidst the mass of those becoming ever-more superfluous as a result of the fluctuations of modern capital development, Jews were abandoned by the states that had previously protected them. In highlighting this point, Bell flips the script on a number of Arendt's critics who insist that she echoes anti-Semitic and racist stereotypes in her writing: "Arendt surely savored reversing the argument by anti-Semites that Jews engendered imperialism into the argument that imperialism engendered anti-Semitism" (p. 52).

The trope of the Jew as colonial conspirator in the nineteenth century is the focus of chapter two. In discussing it, Bell glosses the Damascus blood libel of 1840 and how it led to the creation of the Alliance israélite universelle (AIU) in 1860—the self-help organization founded by Adolphe Crémieux to protect Jews' rights around the world. The AIU was a convenient target for anti-Semites like Alphonse Toussenel, and more importantly Édouard Drumont, who spread conspiracy theories about a secret plot to establish Jewish global domination. Bell underlines the colonial dimensions of these claims.

The heart of the chapter explicates how Drumont turned the 1870 Crémieux decree into a symbol of Jewish control over the mechanisms of power. One of the six decrees in Crémieux's Algerian constitution of October 24, 1870 included citizenship for the 35,000 Jews of Algeria. In its wake, Bell traces how a number of anti-Semites trumpeted the claim that Jews from the colonial periphery were slowly strangling France. By the 1880s, the Third Republic was involved in excursions into Indochina, Madagascar, and Tunisia. The latter generated another round of anti-Semitic texts that each developed the argument that Jews conspiring from the colonies were controlling France. Bell discusses works by Georges Meynié, Henri Rochefort, Camille Pelletan, August Chirac, and Guy de Maupassant.

According to Bell, the anti-Semitic discovery of North African Jewry enabled the convergence of three things: evidence that financial and political manipulation was coordinated by Jews across the globe; the claim that in the "primitive" provinces, unassimilated Jews were engaged in wide-ranging crimes; and an enduring image of "deep-seated racial antipathy of Arabs for their Jewish neighbors" (p. 108) that scholars like Maud Mandel and Ethan B. Katz have problematized. Drumont's massive 1886 bestseller, *La France juive*, was most enduring in knitting together these claims.

The Marquis de Morès, an agitator in the anti-Semitic movement around Drumont, is the focus of chapter three. Described by the historian Robert Byrnes as a progenitor of fascism, Morès would be eulogized by Drumont and Maurice Barrès for having sacrificed his life while attempting to cross the Sahara to team up with Bahr al-Ghazal to resist the British in the

Sudan. Morès thus became a symbol of a new nationalism that unified socialism and nationalism that these patron saints of anti-Semitism advocated.

What is new in Bell's interpretation of this new nationalism is his attention to the "interconnected temporal, spatial, and imperial valences" (p. 143) central to it. Drumont, Morès, and Barrès represented a "radical conservatism," a construct coined by Ernst Nolte that Bell develops. "Radical conservatism" melds together a conservative, counterrevolutionary tradition going back to Joseph de Maistre and Louis de Bonald, but retools it for modernity by promising a France purged of the divisions and conflicts that Jews embodied. Morès thus symbolized "the Carlylean hero, the man on horseback, the autocratic savior and populist leader" all in one (p. 158). The category of "radical conservatism" also contains two conceptions of time—one retrograde and the other progressive—that Bell reflects upon in relation to Walter Benjamin, Benedict Anderson, and Jacques Derrida's speculations about nation and time.

A different antinomy is assessed in chapter four: how French nationalists subscribed to a theory of social decline and degeneration but nonetheless used theories of positivism, materialism, and determinism to make their arguments. To make the case, Bell focuses on anti-Semitic novelist Melchior de Vogüé, indicating once again how anti-Semitism and imperialism interact in his writing. As Bell puts it, "The more anti-Semites racialized the Jew, the more they lent credence to a materialist, positivist, and deterministic current of thought that had helped codify racial thinking but that remained antipodal to the religious idealism to which so many antisemites subscribed" (p. 198). If historians like Nolte, and most famously Zeev Sternhell, have maintained that the origins of French fascism are found in figures like Maurras and Barrès who brought together ultranationalism and socialism, Bell instead underlines the significance of thinkers like Vogüé who combined anti-Semitism and imperialism (p. 202).

Always setting his case studies against theoretical arguments, Bell here takes up Horkheimer and Adorno's *Dialectic of Enlightenment*. Circling around this set of reference points to develop his claims about racial relationality and scalarity, Bell writes, "Continental antisemitism and colonial domination therefore worked intimately together, in the regenerative imperial circuit envisioned by Vogüé, to produce an ominous new national logic. That logic took Jewish degeneration as a pretext for the linked projects of constant internal *and* external war. National Socialism would not do something dissimilar" (pp. 215-216).

If most of the book concerns racist writers, chapter five offers a really interesting account of Zola's, Nietzsche's, and Marx's anti-anti-Semitism, considering "these authors' oft-discussed pronouncements about Jews and antisemitism within their lesser-noted relation to empire" (p. 227). In the case of Zola, Bell tacks between his well-known interventions surrounding the Dreyfus Affair and the lesser-known backdrop of the Fashoda Affair and other crises in colonial Africa. He shows how Zola sought respite for the troubled Republic, under assault by anti-Semitism, Catholicism, and xenophobic nationalism, in terms borrowed from the civilizing mission in Africa. He thus reveals how "anti-antisemitism emerged in tandem with this imperial, supranational outlook as a potent rhetorical tool for anyone who, like Zola, sought in the nineteenth century to think beyond the nation" (p. 246).

The chapter then returns to the frame of the book as a whole: contemporary discussions of Islamic anti-Semitism, alongside the debate about whether Muslims are the "new Jews," the

new Other to Europe. Bell glides through reflections on the matter by Giorgio Agamben, Jean-François Lyotard, Jean-Claude Milner, and Étienne Balibar on the one hand, and the “new anti-Semitism” theories of Pierre-André Taguieff, Shmuel Trigano, and Alain Finkielkraut on the other hand. One part of this discussion is about whether the cause of both Judeophobia and Islamophobia is internal or external to France, and another is about how anti-Semitism is instrumentalized in larger discussions about the French Republic. Bell suggests that “Islam, in this regard, represents less the fittingly supranational other of a postnational Europe than a magnet for displaced European anxieties about reconciling potentially incompatible national and supranational sovereignties, cultures, and interests” (p. 279).

Bell concludes with a call “[t]o decolonize certain influential tendencies in European anti-antisemitism,” calling for “a new anti-antisemitism unburdened by accumulated biases inherited from the colonial encounter” (pp. 281, 282). Given the deep cultural history that his book plumbs, Bell contributes to this undertaking by showing how modern anti-Semitism and imperial racism were entangled from the outset. Thus, we have to think about them together if we are going to fight racism.

NOTES

[1] The preponderant position among scholars is now not to hyphenate anti-Semitism. Bell follows this position, but without remarking on it. Many that do not do so claim that hyphenating the term gives credence to the notion that “Semitism,” “Semite,” or “Semitic,” refers to a real group of people—“the Semites”—who were once characterized as a race. But as importantly, scholars who reject the hyphen claim that for antisemites, “Semites” just stands for Jews, who are the sole object of contempt or hatred for “antisemites.” This argument is either tautological or ahistorical as Bell’s work shows quite emphatically. Additionally, many of the same scholars who advocate for this orthography claim that Judeophobia is unique in its persistence, key tropes, and consequences, differing essentially from Islamophobia, or other forms of racism. I urge a reconsideration of this position in “Introduction: Rethinking Anti-Semitism,” *American Historical Review* 123, no. 4 (October 2018): 1122–1138. Drawing upon a significant body of scholarship, I show that for much of European history, the representations and fates of Jews and Muslims were entangled in complicated ways. Moreover, today Judeophobia and Islamophobia are inextricably bound together. One cannot understand the one without the other. As such, I urged the hyphenation of “anti-Semitism.” The orthographic question of whether to hyphenate antisemitism has always been both epistemological and political. To hyphenate “anti-Semitism” *consciously* today—by drawing attention to the hyphen as signifying an entangled history—points to the historical intersections and interactions between Jews and Muslims, while nonetheless remarking upon the myth of “the Semite” that underpins the origins of the term. It also rebuffs the assertion made by those who refuse to hyphenate anti-Semitism because they insist on the unique targeting of Jews. The choice to hyphenate is particularly significant in a political frame where Jews and Muslims are often figured as perpetual enemies, despite the historical scholarship that shows otherwise. Bell’s work is part of the scholarship that demonstrates this assumption is false. Nonetheless, since he did not hyphenate “antisemitism” I have maintained his orthography throughout. This discrepancy should underscore that this is an issue that scholars now need to reconsider.

[2] See for example, Michael Rothberg, *Multidirectional Memory: Remembering the Holocaust in*

the Age of Decolonization (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2009); Bryan Cheyette, *Diasporas of the Mind: Jewish and Postcolonial Writing and the Nightmare of History* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2013); Maud Mandel, *Muslims and Jews in France: History of a Conflict* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2014); Kimberly Arkin, *Rhinestones, Religion, and the Republic: Fashioning Jewishness in France* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2014); Ethan B. Katz, *The Burdens of Brotherhood: Jews and Muslims from North Africa to France* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2015); James Renton and Ben Gidley, eds., *Antisemitism and Islamophobia in Europe: A Shared Story?* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017); Paul A. Silverstein, *Postcolonial France: Race, Islam and the Future of the Republic* (London: Pluto Press, 2018); Ethan B. Katz, "An Imperial Entanglement: Anti-Semitism, Islamophobia, and Colonialism," *American Historical Review* 123, no. 4 (October 2018): 1190-1209; Ethan B. Katz and Jonathan Judaken, eds. *Jewish History* Special Issue, "Jews and Muslims in France Before and After *Charlie Hebdo* and Hyper Cacher" 32, no. 1 (November 2018).

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