

GLOBALIZATION, ANTI-GLOBALIZATION AND ANTI-SEMITISM A conspiracy theory approach

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Abstract

The national anxieties regarding foreign elements are usual responses to globalization. Occasionally these anxieties are feeding the resurgence of old aversions on different regimes, doctrines or ethnic groups-like the Jews. Also, the anti-globalization movement is a favorable platform for exposing anti-Semitic views. Although efforts have been made to combat the contemporary anti-Semitism, the Jews in Europe are still concerned about the online hate speeches and conspiratorial speculations. In this article we try to explain anti-Semitism by appealing to the European Jewish history, emphasizing the fact that in crisis situations the Jewish people have repeatedly been targets of the conspiracy theory.

Keywords: Jews, anti-Semitism, Globalization, anti-Globalization, human capital.

1. Introduction

Anti-Semitism² is an old, persistent problem with many faces. Its main sources are: religion, ethno-nationalism, racism and economic competition. All these backgrounds host various speculative theories that frequently invoke the “Jewish threat” or the subversive plans to rule the world. Every plan to conquer the world contains the idea of the unique authority; therefore, in the social consciousness it has been formed the idea of several forces competing for that authority. The absolute authority is universal, requiring unity and uniformity –very much alike the globalization ideology.

As conspiracy theorists see in globalization a goal of some powerful groups to achieve global political and economic power, once again, the Jews become the target of severe allegations that stem in secular preconceptions (e.g. the Jewish financial oligarchy). Therefore, along with the accelerating globalization and the recent financial crisis, the anti-Semitic sentiments continue to grow.

From the very beginning we sustain that anti-Semitism is a crippled doctrine because it emphasizes unprofessional interpretations of religion and race. Our

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² The word “anti-Semite” is frequently used to describe the aversion to Jews. The term is a misnomer because the Arabs are also Semites.

scientific interest for this unscientific paradigm binds to its actuality and persistence and, of course, to the related conspiracy theories occurring in key-moments of human history (like the global financial crisis, globalization and the New World Order, etc.). Today's anti-Semitism includes all the features of its old forms and it gains new meanings in the context of an interconnected global economy. To better understand it we need to focus on the history of the Jewish economic activity along with the economic anti-Semitism.

2. Facts and Trends

In March 2012 a study of the Anti-Defamation League (ADL), entitled *Attitudes toward Jews in Ten European Countries* shows that significant percentages of European respondents believe in some of the most malicious anti-Semitic stereotypes. The data indicate that many people continue to question the loyalty of the Jewish citizens. Also high levels of those surveyed believe that "Jews have too much power in the business world" or "in the international financial markets". A comparison with a similar survey in 2009 indicates that, over the past few years, the level of anti-Semitism increased most dramatically in Hungary (6%), the United Kingdom (7%) and Spain (5%) (ADL, 2012).

A report of the Kantor Center for the Study of Contemporary European Jewry in 2012 shows that global anti-Semitism increased by 30 percent over the previous year (2011). The main concern was on the accentuation of violence and vandalism against the Jews (especially in France, the United States, The United Kingdom and Canada). According to a following report of the same source, the year 2013 was a difficult one in the perspective of the last decade, because anti-Semitism "continued to infiltrate into the mainstream from the extreme left and right fringes, its manifestations being no longer incidental", hence becoming an almost daily phenomenon. The major conclusion of the analysis is that anti-Semitism is on the rise due to the increase in visual and verbal expressions, insults, abusive language and behavior, threats and harassments. Furthermore, the real situation could be more severe compared to the reported one, since there are verbal or physical attacks not reflected in the collected data (Moshe Kantor Database, 2013).

In November 2013 the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA) released a report based on a survey on Jewish people's experiences and perceptions of anti-Semitism, hate crime and discrimination. The survey was conducted in Belgium, France, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Latvia, Sweden, the United Kingdom and Romania, countries that host over 90% of Europe's Jewish population. The aim was to collect data on the exposure to anti-Semitic acts against the Jewish community, such as the vandalism of Jewish sites or the anti-Semitic messages in the broadcast media or on the internet. According to FRA, three quarters of the surveyed individuals report an increase of anti-Semitism in the past five years; 46% of the respondents are concerned about the verbal aggression or the

public harassment related to their ethnicity, while 33% are afraid of physical attacks. However, for the Jewish respondents the anti-Semitic comments on the Internet have a major importance, because the online abuses and hate speeches are concrete evidence of the rising anti-Semitism in recent years (FRA, 2013).

In May 2014, according to the largest worldwide survey of anti-Semitic attitudes provided by ADL, more than a quarter of the world is anti-Semitic. The Index score of Anti-Semitism (26%) represents the percentage of polled adults worldwide, who answered "probably true" to the tested anti-Semitic stereotypes: Jews are more loyal to Israel than to the countries they live in; Jews have too much power in international financial markets; Jews have too much control over global affairs; Jews think they are better than other people; Jews have too much control over the global media; Jews are responsible for most of the world's wars; Jews have too much power in the business world; Jews don't care what happens to anyone but their own kind; People hate Jews because of the way Jews behave; Jews have too much control over the United States government; Jews still talk too much about what happened to them in the Holocaust (ADL, 2014).

According to ADL's calculations, the index of anti-Semitism for each region is: 74% in the Middle East and North Africa 36% in Eastern Europe, 24% in Western Europe, 23 % in Sub-Saharan Africa, 22% in Asia and 19% in the Americas. In Eastern Europe, the countries with the highest level of anti-Semitism are: Poland, Bulgaria, Serbia and Hungary (over 40%), while in Western Europe Greece seems to be the most anti-Semitic European country, with an index of 69%, followed by France, Spain and Belgium which have lower rates (28%-37%).

We think that the given situation is not new but old and well entrenched. As a new feature, nowadays anti-Semitism is perpetuated by the main communication channels: the media and the Internet. Conspiracy theories and other propaganda elements are easily circulating through the virtual environment, where everyone has the right to anonymously comment and to support hate speeches. To prohibit the online submission of opinions is to prohibit the freedom of speech, this being the reason why the anti-Semitic rhetoric seems impossible to annihilate.

Also, in the anti-globalization movement, anti-Semitism easily finds its place, being a palliative for a wide range of nationalist or xenophobic disorders or just being an expression of people's confidence in Jewish conspiracy theories. Concrete examples of anti-Semitic manifestations within the anti-globalization movement can be identified:

- *at the factual level:* (1) the symbols of Judaism and Israel are denigrated in the context of anti-globalization manifestations (e.g. 2002-Washington, D.C or 2003- Porto Alegre) which occur during important meetings of institutions like: the World Economic Forum, the World Trade Organization, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) or the World Bank;

(2) the Israeli-Palestinian conflict continues to catalyze anti-Semitism among the Muslim population in several countries; (3) the criticism on Israel's policy in the public speeches.

- *at the virtual level*: thousands of websites, blogs and publications continue to claim the Jewish conspiracy for global control, having as source of inspiration "classic" anti-Semitic works like: "The international Jew" by Henry Ford, "My Struggle" by Hitler or the document entitled "The Protocols of the Learned Elders of Zion".

It is obvious that the means of globalization have exacerbated the anti-Semitic feelings, while the anti-globalization movement constitutes a suitable platform for exposing anti-Semitic views. In fact, anti-globalization and anti-Semitism are overlapping and reinforcing each other, even if the anti-globalization movement is not itself anti-Semitic.

3. The Jewish Conspiracy Theory and Its Origins

In the globalization era the myth of the "rich and greedy Jew" continues to be a constant theme in the conspiracy rhetoric. On a simple search on the Internet we can find a wide range of theories, speculating that the Jews are controlling the business world, the banks, the Freemasonry or the global organizations. However, the "supreme" Jewish conspiracy theory refers to the establishment of an Universal Republic under the leadership of the Jewish plutocracy (Theodoru, 1996: 2) through economic globalization and the abolition of nation state.

All Jewish conspiracy theories are subject to old anti-Semitic patterns. The popular stereotypes and fears about the Jewish power have ancient roots, while the Jewish conspiracy theory is initiated during the Enlightenment and it is later developed due to widespread unscientific writings that have maintained or reactivated the social aversion to Jews.

The idea of a Jewish cabal emerges successfully in a time of social chaos: *The French Revolution*, when several pamphlets were published on the subject of a Masonic or Illuminati conspiracy. The demonization of the Enlightenment in France is mainly supported by the Jesuit Augustin Barruel, in his work, "Memoirs Illustrating the History of Jacobinism" (1797-1798). Later he falsified a letter that presumed confidential information on all sects and secret societies of the world, including the "Jewish sect"- an international cult whose power is based on gold. This fake, widely distributed in Europe and the United States for the next hundred years, will be used as evidence to show that the Masonry is secretly managed by Jews (Blumenfeld, 2005).

In the fictional literature, Goedesche Hermann contributed to the Jewish conspiracy myth by "The Jewish Cemetery in Prague"- a chapter in his novel "Biarritz" (1868), where he described the centennial meeting of the Council of the 12 Tribes

of Israel. The topic of the midnight meeting is a long-term plan for world domination (through purchasing agricultural lands, transforming craftsmen into industrial workers, occupying high public functions, controlling the media, etc.). Many elements of the speech are plagiarized from the satire "Dialogue in Hell between Machiavelli and Montesquieu" (1864), written by Maurice Joly, the anti-Bonapartist lawyer.

The ideas from Goedesche's fiction will be re-edited in "The Protocols of The Learned Elders of Zion" (1897-1903), a document fabricated by the Russian secret police for justifying the following pogroms (1903-1906). The famous document presents a plan for world domination through controlling the finance, the media, religion and politics. Later the "Protocols" will be assigned to Freemasonry (van Helsing, 1997:25).

In another context, the Jewish global conspiracy theory was enhanced by the writings of some important economists, like Karl Marx or Werner Sombart. Marx sustained the thesis of a subversive connection between Jews and capitalism in his work, "The Jewish Problem" (1843); he believed that the greed and the lust for money are specific to Judaism and the Jews, which actually created the money system (Marx, 1844). Sombart will develop some of Marx anti-Semitic ideas in his work "The Jews and Modern Capitalism" (1911). The author's effort is biased by ideology and racism. Although he considers the Jews as people of an extreme intellectuality, he disapproves their behavior and practices in the business sector (Sombart, 1911). Like Marx, Sombart sees in capitalism a Jewish product.

In the early twentieth century anti-Semitism has a new design, based on racism and its assumptions of the biological legitimacy of the supreme race. Adolf Hitler, which previously read "The Protocols", writes "My Struggle" (1925). As a proponent of social Darwinism, the author exposes the thesis of a superior race (Arian) - the depositary of human civilization-drawing attention on the dangers of interbreeding with other inferior races, like the Jewish one. For Hitler, the moral, politic or economic decadence is an effect of blood impurity. Through generalization and ideological bias, Hitler details a characterization of the Jewish people, emphasizing those features that support the Nazi anti-Semitism: the strong instinct for preservation of the Jews, which advocate for equality and freedom while hiding their machinations; the lack of idealism and of their own civilization-their intellectual faculties being founded by foreign civilizations; the monopolization of finance and trade; the dream of universal domination; the use of Freemasonry for controlling the ruling class and the political circles; the control of the press in order to manipulate the public; the dualism of the Jews- as partisans of the bourgeoisie or of the working class (Hitler, 1925), etc. The supreme conspiracy imagined by Hitler is the economic and political conquest of the world through the Jewish universal internationalism and the capitalist exploitation of the human race.

If the medieval and pre-modern anti-Semitism was opened to the conversion of the Jews and their assimilation, racist anti-Semitism was focusing on their total rejection, considering that the Jewish features are genetic, therefore immutable. Henry Ford also promoted the idea of superior vs. inferior races. He combined a set of anti-Semitic pamphlets in the volume entitled: “The International Jew- the World’s Foremost Problem” (1920), a work that constituted an important source of inspiration for Hitler. Ford believed that money and the banking system are Jewish inventions – like capitalism, the market for goods or the economic science: “the whole science of economics, conservative and radical, capitalistic and anarchistic, is of Jewish origin” (Ford, 1920). Therefore, he was convinced that the international Jewish bankers are behind all wars.

In Romania, the book of Professor Nicolae Paulescu, entitled “The Hospital, the Koran, the Talmud, the Cahal and Freemasonry” (1913) had a similar impact like the one registered at the international level by the aforementioned anti-Semitic works. According to the author, in the Diaspora, the Jewish state hid and survived within the host-societies by taking the shape of the “Cahal”. The Cahal is an organization of Talmudic inspiration, built on the “chosen people” dogma, according to which the Jews are not allowed to merge with other nations - they must only lead them. However, the Cahal is not just a political-religious institution but also a political and economic authority. Most of its resources serve for two purposes: (1) to corrupt the officials of the Christian state; (2) to help the Jewish cooperative societies (the *Havre*), especially those of small artisans and traders (Paulescu, 1913:81-82).

In 1924 Paulescu submitted a deposition to The Jury Court in Bucharest, where he claimed the existence of a global conspiracy of occult forces that aim to remove the state right to sovereignty and to create a European Israel in the Carpathian- Ponto-Danubian area. This hypothesis will be retrieved by the writer Radu Theodoru, who published “Romania as a prey” (1996), believing that “a large part of the humanity dramatically lives in the age of the maximum virulence of the Jewish imperialism, whose aim is to establish an Universal Republic under the leadership of the Judaic plutocracy”(Theodoru, op cit:6).

According to Theodoru there is a perfectly staged historical program, whereby the Jews are using a variety of tools and methods, from the psychological to the economic ones, in order to master and use three Western countries – England, France and The United States. Through the dissolution of the nation states and their federalization, Judaism will achieve the supreme leadership of the world, forming the Universal Republic, whose structures were skillfully built after World War II (the United Nations, the International Monetary Fund, the European Community, NATO, and the World Bank).

In the same vein, the contemporary writer David Duke proves to be a major supporter of the Jewish conspiracy theory. In his work “Jewish Supremacy. My Awakening to the Jewish Question” (2002) he asserts that the policies of Israel and

also a representative part of the world Jewry still embrace the radical feeling of supremacy (to other races or people); the Jewish supremacy agenda is opposing the host-countries interests and is subordinated to the “divide et impera” principle, requiring the abolition of ethnic homogeneity and solidarity within the host-nations (Duke, 2002).

The American professor Kevin Macdonald wrote several books inspired by the ideas of his anti-Semitic ancestors, arguing that Judaism is a particularly successful “group evolutionary strategy” that allows Jews to benefit at the expense of non-Jews. In Macdonald’s vision, the key-features of the Jewish people are: ethnocentrism, intelligence, psychological intensity, and aggressiveness, all these producing effective groups able to have powerful, transformative effects on the peoples they live among (MacDonald, 2004:3). MacDonald sees the biological Jewish intelligence as a tool for attaining wealth, successfully competing for resources and transforming the non-Jewish society in accordance to the Jewish interests. The author is convinced that the Jewish groups were always elitist and powerful and that paradoxically the Jewish small minority have been central to major events in the human history.

Over time, the Jewish conspiracy theory became more complex and stronger through adjusting old patterns to new situations- a fact that cannot happen to any minority but to a resilient, prospering one. In her doctoral thesis about the Jewish Conspiracy Theory, Barbara Jayne John concluded that:

The survival of the Conspiracy Theory depends on the belief that Jews are conspirators by nature, so that when time and reason ends one charge, there is a means for another to take its place [...] The Conspiracy Theory has proved consistently strong enough and adaptable enough to survive. It was able to create enough suspicion, to adapt to any charge, even when those charges [...], were directly opposed to one another. As time went by, the accusation that Jews were conspirators by nature came to form the backbone of anti-Semitism. Without it anti-Semitism would be a series of unrelated and unconnected charges and ideas (John, 1996: 282).

The Jewish prominence in the economic sector and the high degree of representation in key positions- despite the lower population in the host-countries are not scientifically explained but automatically attributed to the secret intention for world domination. This oversimplified explanation is due to the intense popularization of the anti-Semitic literature through the online environment, to the detriment of the authentic historical explanation that is found only in specialized works, yet unknown to the ordinary public.

4. Globalization and Anti-Semitism- A Parallel Story

The conspiracy theory and its associated charges against the Jews are strictly bounded to the history of anti-Semitism. The first phase of anti-Semitism is initiated by Christianity and continued by Islam (the religious phase); the second phase, that overlaps “modern” racism, is specific to the nineteenth century and culminates with the Nazi genocide. The Nazi propaganda proved to be the most powerful instrument of hatred that has ever been invented. Because of the virulence and abnegation of the anti-Semitic speech, all the unreasonable accusations needed very little evidence to support them. A third phase is represented by the current global anti-Semitism that is gathering all the previous features of the phenomenon along with some new features, those of a “crisis” society, marked by the negative consequences of globalization.

Everywhere in the world, the nationalists or the extreme rightists are enemies of globalization and in their view the Jews are behind this trend. On the other hand, the connection between the Jews and globalization cannot be neglected; therefore many truths regarding the Jewish contribution to globalization are unscientifically altered by *wrong interpretations* or by *the intent of defamation*. In order to combat these errors we need to focus on exposing the logical reasons why the Jews are considered key-players in the globalization process, by referring to important moments of the economic history and to the essential features of the Jewish human capital.

For a better understanding of the evolution and the consistency of today’s anti-Semitism an insight into the history of the phenomenon is useful. Also, the conjunctures on which Jews are linked to the globalization process are worth mentioning, in order to distinguish between speculation and historical truth. For emphasizing the relationship between the Diaspora Jewish history and the proto and modern globalization we consider the period when most Jews have lived in the Diaspora, finding that they were “more capable of organizing the exile rather than the kingdom. Since they were deprived of territorial responsibilities and they were mixed with other people, they felt freer” (Brailean et al., 2012: 109).

Globalization is a concept successfully assimilated by the Jews traveling the globe for centuries, adapting their habits to other nationalities and enriching them with their own know-how and culture. In this context, Ira Rifkin quotes a World Jewish Congress paper that notes:

Jews have always supported globalization...Jewish existence in the Diaspora has been based for hundreds of years on globalization, and in many periods it has been the Jews who supported and spread the concept. In reliance on their ability to build international ties connecting different Diaspora communities, the Jews have always promoted globalization, and have served as its agents (Rifkin, 2012).

We can see that *the first connection* of the Jews to the globalization process is *transnationalism*, given by their condition as travellers or hosted people by foreign nations. This condition has ensured the future orientation of the Jewish activity and, sadly, their persecution as “dangerous” strangers. By transnationalism we refer to the “exchanges of information, money and resources – as well as regular travel and communication – that members of a diaspora may undertake with others in the homeland or elsewhere within the globalized ethnic community” (Vervotec, 2000). The Jewish people were one of the few diasporas that developed transnationalism. Also, due to the geographical dispersal and to the impact with a plurality of cultures (Hellenistic, Asian, Egyptian, Babylonian, European, American) we could say that the Jews were among the first global if not “globalized” people (Stem, 2012:165).

A second connection to the globalization process relates to the creation of *international social networks* - in trade and finance, most of the Jewish performances being noticed in the economic sector. During the Middle Ages the Jews became important actors in the European economic life; the early modern Jewish merchants succeeded to create economic networks stretching from India to the New World, while others were specializing in industry, banking operations and capital investment. By referring to the *Marranos* in 15th century Spain, which wrote a remarkable chapter in the economic history, Perry and Schweitzer wrote that, although the Jews were geographically dispersed, the common culture, and the kinship ties enabled them to build up an “efficient, close-knit, cosmopolitan trading network, a kind of common market that afforded them credit, protection, hospitality, local political news and market information” (Perry and Schweitzer, 2002:129).

Perry and Schweitzer also identify two major factors that contributed to the Jewish economic prominence:

(1) The fact that the early medieval Europe (500–1050) was mostly agrarian and economically backward in comparison to the Byzantine and Islamic civilizations and ancient Rome; Business and financial operations were primitive until the Jews, which were “a protected minority on all shores of the Mediterranean, could, as it were, float a plank and have a large share of the meager trade of the early Middle Ages.”(121)

(2) The ascetic and anti-commercial ethic of the Christian world was opposing to the merchant's function that was considered morally suspect. Also, “usury” or interest taking was prohibited by the Church, only Jewish moneylending being tolerated.

Although the lending money with interest is forbidden by the Torah, the Jews practiced it because of their social marginalization and the restrictions to occupy other professions. The negative image of the Jews probably expanded from their position as creditors or tax collectors, which created many unpleasant situations for

the debtors from the host-country. The “Shylock” image of some of the Jews (Shakespeare’s character in “*The Merchant of Venice*”) came from their condition as usurers, since they represented the interface of the monopolistic royal loans. The fact that they also represented an exploited class was simply *ignored* by the ruled society.

In addition, a fiercely exploited element by the conspiracy theories is the interpretation of the divine Jewish law that says: “You shall not charge interest on anything you lend to a fellow-countryman, money or food or anything else on which interest can be charged. You may charge interest on a loan to a foreigner but not on a loan to a fellow-countryman” (Deuteronomy 23:19–20 cited in: Millet, 1991:101); the clearly stated exception for the foreigners raises the problem of a willful double discrimination (racial and religious) of the non-Jewish people. The fact that many Jews had to survive and to adapt to a hostile society by making many compromises is also neglected in the acceptance of this theory.

A third connection to the globalization process is the Jewish adherence to free-market and capitalism, in terms of doctrine and entrepreneurship. According to Muller, “Jews have been a conspicuous presence in the history of capitalism, both as symbol and as reality” (Muller, 2010:1). The history of commerce in modern times was highly influenced by Jewish traders, than they also contributed to the formation of corporate capitalism, the main economic force behind contemporary globalization. The economist Milton Friedman stated that Jews succeeded in those countries in which competitive capitalism had the greatest scope (Holland, Britain, the United States or Germany before Hitler), and in the absence of the totalitarian state “so that there were always some market elements, some activities open to them to enter. In particular, the fragmented political structure and the numerous separate sovereignties meant that international trade and finance in particular escaped close control, which is why Jews were so prominent in this area” (Friedman, 1988). The Jews suffered the most where the free market doctrine was defied (Germany and Soviet Russia).

Furthermore, Nicolas Bechter points out the fact that the Jews were targets of the hatred because they were the visible elements of the economic process. The impossibility to understand the abstract domination of the value and the capitalist production have focused attention on the circulation sphere, where the Jews were highly involved. Therefore, the author argues that the historic position of the Jews within the European economic system sadly involves the role of scapegoats for the discontent with capitalism (Bechter, 2013:33).

The fourth connection to globalization is the history of money and banking. Since biblical times the Jews understood that wealth is a way to serve God, to be worthy for Him. They perceived money not as a goal but as an instrument of producing wealth. Beyond their medieval work as moneylenders the Jews wrote an important

page in the history of modern banking, contributing to the European industrialization. Since the “Rothschild era” the Jewish banks were always targets of the financial conspiracy debate. Similarly to The Great Depression of '29-'33, the financial crisis in 2007 was also surrounded by the “Jewish blame” paranoid speeches. For the conspiracy advocates, Jewish banks as Lehman Brothers or Goldman Sachs contributed to the financial collapse; once again a simplistic explanation of a greater and more complex process, given by the error of ethnic attribution.

The fifth connection to globalization is the presence and authority of some international and supranational organizations, like: The Israelite Universal Alliance (*l'Alliance Israélite Universelle*), that safeguards the universal human rights and the education; B'nai B'rith – a fraternity with many lodges – present at the founding of the United Nations, playing an active role ever since, advocating for Israel and human rights at the United Nations and other international organizations (B'nai B'rith International, n.d); The World Jewish Congress, that represents Jewish communities and organizations in 100 countries around the world, advocating on their behalf towards governments, parliaments, international organizations and other faiths (The World Jewish Congress, n.d). All these organizations and others alike are devoted to the eradication of anti-Semitism that occurs for various reasons in the world.

5. The Jewish Human Capital

The conspiratorial hypothesis of the Jewish world domination is strictly based on speculations, old stereotypes, racism (a fragile doctrine) and a widely popularized unscientific literature. Any objective evidence was never brought in order to support the existence of a Jewish plot. Globalization, the international trade and the global finance are important topics that can be associated with the Jewish economic activity, the Jewish networking, the Jewish transnationalism or even with the universal values of Judaism. We can find many common points to the global vocation of the Jews and the process of globalization; nevertheless there is a remarkable difference between causing and contributing to a process. The bad intentions in promoting such a great process as globalization can be attributed to various entities: imperialistic states, multinational firms, supranational organizations serving the interests of the most powerful states, secret societies, wealthy people associations, etc. Thereby the Jews become a target of a common tendency: the one of blaming someone.

We consider that an important response to the conspiratorial hypothesis is the performance of the Jewish human capital. The high degree of representation of the Jews in important positions (compared to the small community in the host-countries) is often misinterpreted. Since the Talmudic times, Jewish thinking has been extremely productive, with countless representatives devoted to regulate and

explain economic issues. It seems that the Jews are very skillful in achieving and managing wealth and also in the theoretical sector. Beginning with the classical period, there are many Jewish economists who consolidated and revolutionized science - most of them Nobel Prize laureates (39% of recipients) (JINFO.ORG, n.d).

To quote Muller on this ground, the main question arising is: “*Why do Jews succeed?*” It is essential to identify the main factors that led to the economic vocation of the Jews. Firstly, the economic specialization of the Jews and their predilection for the free market economy cannot be seen separated from Judaism. Religion affects the object, the manner and circumstances of the human activity; in other words, the economic behavior is significantly influenced by the religious principles. The Jewish economic rules and values were developed on the ethical and moral ground of religion. In this regard, two major works represent the foundation of Jewish faith and practice: the Torah- the divine law- revealed to Moses by God, and the Talmud - the interpretation of the law- compiled by the rabbinical wisdom. Generally, Judaism is supporting private charity, limited government and laissez-faire capitalism (Calance, 2012).

Also, Judaism contributed to the Jewish culture and education. The distinctive characteristic of the Jews was *literacy*- provided by the compulsory education for children and the reading of the Torah, Mishnah, and Talmud. Over time, literacy became a strength point that led to the choice of certain professions. Secondly, a key-factor that led to the economic specialization of the Jews is their deprivation of the right to own land, a fact that led to moving into urban occupations (Botticini and Eckstein, 2002).

In addition to these ideas, the history professor J.Z Muller explains that the commercial experience (the knowledge of buying, selling, and calculating advantage) passed through generations and, therefore, has been constantly improved (Muller, 2010). On the other hand, a theory of Simon Kuznets (1960) shows that the economic structure of the Jews is the result of an endogenous choice. The fact that most of the Jews were engaged in trade and finance and living in cities where these occupations were available, constitutes an endogenous choice, given by the noneconomic goal of maintaining cohesion and group identity, in other words for surviving as a distinctive group within the host-population (Botticini and Eckstein, op.cit:6).

Jewish conspiracy theories continue to confer a negative connotation to those particular Jewish aptitudes that led to success, invoking hidden plans and the “chosen people” complex. Kevin MacDonald believes that anti-Semitism is a “rational” response of the non-Jewish looking to counteract Jewish successes; that the expulsions and persecutions of the Jews were defensive reactions to the economic and political domination. In fact, we believe that the Jewish creditors or

competitors were never welcomed among the domestic agents – a natural response of self-preservation; if those economic agents were Sumerian, the resentment on their activity would have been identical.

From another point of view, Ludwig von Mises showed that all the nationalisms and the rejection were fueled by the envy and the resentment against those who had succeeded in the arena of free market opportunity and happened to be Jewish or of Jewish ancestry. Above the anger of the defeated competitors it was state's interventionism that turned against the Jewish minorities (Ebeling, 2000:13).

In his analysis over anti-Semitism, the philosopher Jean-Paul Sartre emphasized that the anti-Semitic view is a result of the passion to hate and of the fear of oneself. This fear is specific to the human condition and it refuses a man's own liberty. The anti-Semite is "a man who feels afraid of himself, of his conscience, his freedom, his instincts, his responsibilities, his loneliness, afraid of change, society and the world; everything except the Jews. (...) Anti-Semitism, in a word, it is the fear of the human condition" (Sartre, 1946:18-19). For Sartre, the hatred toward Jews is strongly connected to the individual's personal failings and it is not based on facts and experiences but to an abstract perception of Jews. This kind of antipathy in times of stress is psychologically explained as: "a projection of the frustration of the modern anonymous masses and the consequences of this frustration on an object outside their circle. The Jew is the available scapegoat and meets these basically paranoid needs" (Spengler, 2003).

Spread all over the world, the Jews were truly cosmopolitan, literate businessmen, inevitably accused of hoarding the national welfare, playing the scapegoat role whenever the situation became critical for the host societies. The Jewish community can be seen in two different ways: (1) as a depository of concrete features, revealed by the activity of its elite representatives or (2) as a target for various human fears that create imaginary enemies. The negative effects of globalization, including the identity confusion, urges to the second way of perceiving the Jews.

6. Conclusion

The connection between the Jews and globalization is undeniable. The modern history of the Jews and the history of globalization are overlapping and, at some point, they are interdependent. Despite their positive contribution, it is the transnational calling of the Jews, the ease of their integration in the foreign societies and the conquest of the most important areas of human activity that were answered with fear, envy rejection and, finally, strong anti-Semitic views.

The hatred was constantly reiterated from the Middle Ages to our days, taking multiple shapes: religious, nationalist, racial, economic. If the Jews would have not reveal their exceptional qualities (including the strong ethnical cohesion), they would have been ignored or tolerated, or, at least they would not have been so hated. A mediocre ethnic group cannot capture too much attention and, probably, it will integrate until dissolution.

This article tried to show that nowadays anti-Semitism is different only by the temporal dimension and the propagation paths; its consistency is like a snowball, always capturing a new layer of irrational hatred on the eternal grounds of *difference* - of any kind (cultural, religious, ethnical, economic). Therefore, today's anti-Semitism reiterates the pattern of old stereotypes whose strength remained intact and which can lead to violence and defamatory speeches - as the global reports annually show. Also, associating the Jews with the globalization discontents is a natural tendency in the anti-globalization rhetoric.

The anti-Semitic speech continues to be very strong, although its origins are ancient. It is important to identify the cause of people's reticence and social preconceptions on Jews, verbally and factually. This is why, in this article, we proposed an overview on the anti-Semitic *conspiracy theory* that continues to maintain the tense situation, mainly through the Internet. We consider that a scientific response to all defamatory accusations against the Jews is necessary – our paper constitutes a modest step in achieving this goal. In the future, a popularization of the objective view on the Jewish history and influence is needed.

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