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8 March, 2014

Article 1.	The Washington Post **Will America heed the wake-up call of Ukraine?** Condoleezza Rice
Article 2.	The Washington Post **Assad taking advantage of U.S.-Russia split over Ukraine** Liz Sly
Article 3.	NYT **Why Russia Can't Afford another Cold War** James B. Stewart
Article 4.	The National Interest **Iran Deal: Keeping Israel On Board** Shai Feldman, Oren Setter
Article 5.	Foreign Policy in Focus **A New World Order?** Tom Engelhardt
Article 6.	Foreign Affairs **Yarmouk and the Palestinian-Israeli Peace Negotiations**

	Hussein Ibish
Article 7.	The New York Review of Books **Imaginary Jews** Michael Walzer

Article 1.

The Washington Post

Will America heed the wake-up call of Ukraine?

Condoleezza Rice

March 8 -- “Meet Viktor Yanu-kovych, who is running for the presidency of Ukraine.” Vladimir Putin and I were standing in his office at the presidential dacha in late 2004 when Yanu-kovych suddenly appeared from a back room. Putin wanted me to get the point. He’s my man, Ukraine is ours — and don’t forget it.

The “Ukrainian problem” has been brewing for some time between the West and Russia. Since Ukraine’s Orange Revolution, the United States and Europe have tried to convince Russia that the vast territory should not be a pawn in a great-power conflict but rather an independent nation that could chart

its own course. Putin has never seen it that way. For him, Kiev's movement toward the West is an affront to Russia in a zero-sum game for the loyalty of former territories of the empire. The invasion and possible annexation of Crimea on trumped-up concerns for its Russian-speaking population is his answer to us.

The immediate concern must be to show Russia that further moves will not be tolerated and that Ukraine's territorial integrity is sacrosanct. Diplomatic isolation, asset freezes and travel bans against oligarchs are appropriate. The announcement of air defense exercises with the Baltic states and the movement of a U.S. destroyer to the Black Sea bolster our allies, as does economic help for Ukraine's embattled leaders, who must put aside their internal divisions and govern their country.

The longer-term task is to answer Putin's statement about Europe's post-Cold War future. He is saying that Ukraine will never be free to make its own choices — a message meant to reverberate in Eastern Europe and the Baltic states — and that Russia has special interests it will pursue at all costs. For Putin, the Cold War ended "tragically." He will turn the clock back as far as intimidation through military power, economic leverage and Western inaction will allow.

After Russia invaded Georgia in 2008, the United States sent ships into the Black Sea, airlifted Georgian military forces from Iraq back to their home bases and sent humanitarian aid. Russia was denied its ultimate goal of overthrowing the democratically elected government, an admission made to me by the Russian foreign minister. The United States and Europe could agree on only a few actions to isolate Russia politically.

But even those modest steps did not hold. Despite Russia's continued occupation of Abkhazia and South Ossetia, the diplomatic isolation waned and then the Obama administration's "reset" led to an abrupt revision of plans to deploy missile defense components in the Czech Republic and Poland. Talk of Ukraine and Georgia's future in NATO ceased. Moscow cheered.

This time has to be different. Putin is playing for the long haul, cleverly exploiting every opening he sees. So must we, practicing strategic patience if he is to be stopped. Moscow is not immune from pressure. This is not 1968, and Russia is not the Soviet Union. The Russians need foreign investment; oligarchs like traveling to Paris and London, and there are plenty of ill-gotten gains stored in bank accounts abroad; the syndicate that runs Russia cannot tolerate lower oil prices; neither can the Kremlin's budget, which sustains subsidies toward constituencies that support Putin. Soon, North America's bounty of oil and gas will swamp Moscow's capacity. Authorizing the Keystone XL pipeline and championing natural gas exports would signal that we intend to do precisely that. And Europe should finally diversify its energy supply and develop pipelines that do not run through Russia.

Many of Russia's most productive people, particularly its well-educated youth, are alienated from the Kremlin. They know that their country should not be only an extractive industries giant. They want political and economic freedoms and the ability to innovate and create in today's knowledge-based economy. We should reach out to Russian youth, especially students and young professionals, many of whom are studying in U.S. universities and working in Western firms. Democratic forces in

Russia need to hear American support for their ambitions. They, not Putin, are Russia's future.

Most important, the United States must restore its standing in the international community, which has been eroded by too many extended hands of friendship to our adversaries, sometimes at the expense of our friends. Continued inaction in Syria, which has strengthened Moscow's hand in the Middle East, and signs that we are desperate for a nuclear agreement with Iran cannot be separated from Putin's recent actions. Radically declining U.S. defense budgets signal that we no longer have the will or intention to sustain global order, as does talk of withdrawal from Afghanistan whether the security situation warrants it or not. We must not fail, as we did in Iraq, to leave behind a residual presence. Anything less than the military's requirement for 10,000 troops will say that we are not serious about helping to stabilize that country.

The notion that the United States could step back, lower its voice about democracy and human rights and let others lead assumed that the space we abandoned would be filled by democratic allies, friendly states and the amorphous "norms of the international community." Instead, we have seen the vacuum being filled by extremists such as al-Qaeda reborn in Iraq and Syria; by dictators like Bashar al-Assad, who, with the support of Iran and Russia, murders his own people; by nationalist rhetoric and actions by Beijing that have prompted nationalist responses from our ally Japan; and by the likes of Vladimir Putin, who understands that hard power still matters.

These global developments have not happened in response to a muscular U.S. foreign policy: Countries are not trying to

"balance" American power. They have come due to signals that we are exhausted and disinterested. The events in Ukraine should be a wake-up call to those on both sides of the aisle who believe that the United States should eschew the responsibilities of leadership. If it is not heeded, dictators and extremists across the globe will be emboldened. And we will pay a price as our interests and our values are trampled in their wake.

Condoleezza Rice was secretary of state from 2005 to 2009.

Article 2.

The Washington Post

Assad taking advantage of U.S.-Russia split over Ukraine

Liz Sly

March 7 -- Beirut — Syrian President Bashar al-Assad is taking advantage of the rift between Russia and the United States over Ukraine to press ahead with plans to crush the rebellion against his rule and secure his reelection for another seven-year term, unencumbered by pressure to compromise with his opponents.

The collapse last month of peace talks in Geneva, jointly sponsored by Russia and the United States, had already eroded

the slim prospects that a negotiated settlement to the Syrian war might be possible. With backers of the peace process now at odds over the outcome of the popular uprising in Ukraine, Assad feels newly confident that his efforts to restore his government's authority won't be met soon with any significant challenge from the international community, according to analysts and people familiar with the thinking of the regime.

Russian President Vladimir Putin's defiant response to the toppling of Ukrainian President Viktor Yanukovych has further reinforced Assad's conviction that he can continue to count on Russia's unwavering support against the armed rebellion challenging his rule, said Salem Zahran, a Damascus-based journalist and analyst with close ties to the Syrian regime.

"The regime believes the Russians now have a new and stronger reason to keep Assad in power and support him, especially after the experience of Libya, and now Ukraine," he said. "In addition, the regime believes that any conflict in the world which distracts the attention of the Americans is a factor which eases pressure on Syria."

On Friday, tensions between Moscow and Washington showed no sign of abating, with Putin angrily rejecting the Obama administration's attempt to bring about a withdrawal of Russian troops from Crimea by imposing sanctions."Russia cannot ignore calls for help, and it acts accordingly, in full compliance with international law," Putin said in a statement.

The Syrian war is only one of a number of contentious issues in the Middle East that expose the vulnerability of U.S. interests to a revival of Cold War-era tensions with Russia such as those

that have surfaced in Ukraine. The nuclear accord with Iran and the Israeli-Palestinian peace talks, both of which rank higher on the Obama administration's foreign policy agenda than Syria, are also dependent to an extent on Moscow's cooperation.

In a less-noted development in recent months, newly ambivalent U.S. allies such as Egypt and Iraq have been quietly concluding significant arms deals with Moscow, largely spurred by concerns that the Obama administration's reluctance to become embroiled in the messy outcomes of the Arab Spring means that Washington can no longer be counted on as a reliable source of support.

Most Arab countries have remained silent on the Ukraine crisis, and some could well move further into Russia's orbit should Washington be seen to be wavering, said Theodore Karasik of the Dubai-based Institute for Near East and Gulf Military Analysis.

"They see Russia as a major current and future partner in the region, because in their perspective, the U.S. is retreating," he said.

It is in Syria, however, where strains between the United States and Russia are likely to have the most immediate impact. For most of the three years since the Syrian uprising began, the Obama administration's Syria policy has been predicated on the assumption that Russia would be a willing partner in efforts to persuade Assad to relinquish power.

That policy, perhaps unlikely ever to have worked, has now been exposed as unrealistic, said Amr Al Azm, a professor of history at Shawnee State University in Ohio. Putin's defense of

Yanukovych means “three years of Syrian diplomacy has gone down the toilet,” he said. “It’s a huge failure for the White House.”

Even if the Russians had ever been inclined to collaborate with the United States on a solution for Syria, “they’ll be unlikely to do so now, because they won’t want to hand Obama a victory,” said Andrew Tabler of the Washington Institute for Near East Affairs.

Two other areas of U.S.-Russia cooperation in Syria will now also be put to the test: last summer’s agreement to destroy Syria’s arsenal of chemical weapons, and the recent U.N. resolution calling on Syria to facilitate the delivery of humanitarian aid and halt attacks such as the deadly barrel bombings that have claimed hundreds of lives in the past two months.

There are no indications that Assad is in a hurry to comply with either. Syria has already missed two deadlines for the removal of chemical weapons, and officials at the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons indicated this week that it is likely to miss a third, on March 15. The barrel bombings have continued unabated, and there has been no discernible progress toward relieving the crippling sieges of rebel-held towns, which have put thousands of people at risk of starvation.

Instead, Assad is stepping up preparations for a presidential election due to be held in June under the terms of the current constitution. Though no date has been set and Assad has not officially announced his candidacy, Syrian government officials have repeatedly stressed that the election will go ahead, that Assad will run and that he expects to win.

A suggestion made before the Geneva talks opened in January that Syria would permit international monitoring was dismissed as unnecessary this week by Assad adviser Buthaina Shaaban in an interview with a Lebanese television network. “We have credibility and we don’t accept any interference,” she said, stressing that the election would go ahead on schedule.

Intense discussions are underway in Damascus, people familiar with government thinking say, over ways to create legitimacy for the election at a time when many parts of the country have fallen under rebel control, large swaths have been depopulated by violence and more than 2 million citizens are refugees. The government is hoping to persuade at least one candidate to run against Assad, though none has yet emerged.

In the absence of serious political reforms such as those it was hoped the Geneva talks would produce, the chances are good that Assad will repeat the 97 percent victory he won the last time elections were held, in 2007, said Tabler, who witnessed that poll while living in Damascus. “It was farcical,” he said.

The preparations coincide with slow but steady gains on the battlefield by forces loyal to Assad, including advances in the northern province of Aleppo, which was once regarded as having slipped far beyond the reach of the government. The advances have been aided by significant support from Russia, which has sustained a steady supply of arms to the Syrian military — routed mainly through the Ukrainian port of Odessa.

A significant shift in U.S. policy in favor of more robust support to the rebels could yet tilt the balance of power on the ground, analysts say. But it is more likely that Washington’s attention

will be further diverted from Syria while Russia sustains its steadfast support for Assad, said Salman Shaikh of the Brookings Doha Center in Qatar.

“Putin sees the world as one big chessboard on which he can play two or three moves at the same time. I am not sure the West can do that,” he said. “I don’t see the Russians backing off their support for Assad, and I think Assad will continue to do what he has always wanted to do, which is to win militarily.”

Suzan Haidamous contributed to this report.

Article 3.

NYT

Why Russia Can’t Afford another Cold War

James B. Stewart

March 7, 2014 -- Russian troops pour over a border. An autocratic Russian leader blames the United States and unspecified “radicals and nationalists” for meddling. A puppet leader pledges fealty to Moscow.

It’s no wonder the crisis in Ukraine this week drew comparisons to Hungary in 1956 and Czechoslovakia in 1968 or that a chorus

of pundits proclaimed the re-emergence of the Cold War.

But there's at least one major difference between then and now: Moscow has a stock market.

Under the autocratic grip of President Vladimir Putin, Russia may be a democracy in name only, but the gyrations of the Moscow stock exchange provided a minute-by-minute referendum on his military and diplomatic actions. On Monday, the Russian stock market index, the RTSI, fell more than 12 percent, in what a Russian official called panic selling. The plunge wiped out nearly $60 billion in asset value — more than the exorbitant cost of the Sochi Olympics. The ruble plunged on currency markets, forcing the Russian central bank to raise interest rates by one and a half percentage points to defend the currency.

Mr. Putin "seems to have stopped a potential invasion of Eastern Ukraine because the RTS index slumped by 12 percent" on Monday, said Anders Aslund, a senior fellow at the Peterson Institute for International Economics in Washington.

On Tuesday, as soon as Mr. Putin said he saw no need for further Russian military intervention, the Russian market rebounded by 6 percent. With tensions on the rise once more on Friday, the Russian market may again gyrate when it opens on Monday.

Mr. Putin seems to be "following the old Soviet playbook," in Ukraine, Strobe Talbott, an expert on the history of the Cold War, told me this week. "But back then, there was no concern about what would happen to the Soviet stock market. If, in fact, Putin is cooling his jets and might even blink, it's probably

because of rising concern about the price Russia would have to pay." Mr. Talbott is the president of the Brookings Institution, a former ambassador at large who oversaw the breakup of the former Soviet Union during the Clinton administration and the author of "The Russia Hand."

Russia is far more exposed to market fluctuations than many countries, since it owns a majority stake in a number of the country's largest companies. Gazprom, the energy concern that is Russia's largest company by market capitalization, is majority-owned by the Russian Federation. At the same time, Gazprom's shares are listed on the London stock exchange and are traded over the counter as American depositary receipts in the United States as well as on the Berlin and Paris exchanges. Over half of its shareholders are American, according to J. P. Morgan Securities. And the custodian bank for its depository receipts is the Bank of New York Mellon.

Many Russian companies and banks are fully integrated into the global financial system. This week, Glencore Xstrata, the mining giant based in Switzerland, was in the middle of a roughly $1 billion debt-to-equity refinancing deal with the Russian oil company Russneft. Glencore said it expected to complete the deal despite the crisis. Glencore's revenue last year was substantially larger than the entire gross domestic product of Ukraine, which was $176 billion, according to the World Bank.

The old Soviet Union, in stark contrast, was all but impervious to foreign economic or business pressure, thanks in part to an ideological commitment to self-sufficiency. As recently as 1985, foreign trade amounted to just 4 percent of the country's gross domestic product, and nearly all that was with the communist

satellite countries of Eastern Europe. But the Soviet Union's economic insularity and resulting economic stagnation was a major cause of the Soviet Union's collapse. According to Mr. Talbott, the Soviet Union's president at the time, Mikhail Gorbachev, was heavily influenced by Soviet economists and other academics who warned that by the turn of the century in 2000, the Soviet economy would be smaller than South Korea's if it did not introduce major economic reforms and participate in the global economy.

To attract investment capital, Mr. Gorbachev created the Moscow stock exchange in 1990 and issued an order permitting Soviet citizens to own and trade stocks, bonds and other securities for the first time since the 1917 Bolshevik revolution. (Before then, Russia had a flourishing stock exchange in St. Petersburg, established by order of Peter the Great. It was housed in an elegant neoclassical building directly across the waterfront from the Winter Palace. As a symbol of wealth and capitalism, it was one of the earliest casualties of the revolution.)

Even before this week's gyrations, the Russian stock market index had dropped near 8 percent last year, and it and the Russian economy have been suffering from low commodity prices and investor concerns about the Federal Reserve's tapering of bond purchases — factors of little significance during the Cold War.

By contrast, today "Russia is too weak and vulnerable economically to go to war," Mr. Aslund said. "The Kremlin's fundamental mistake has been to ignore its economic weakness and dependence on Europe. Almost half of Russia's exports go to Europe, and three-quarters of its total exports consist of oil

and gas. The energy boom is over, and Europe can turn the tables on Russia after its prior gas supply cuts in 2006 and 2009. Europe can replace this gas with liquefied natural gas, gas from Norway and shale gas. If the European Union sanctioned Russia's gas supply to Europe, Russia would lose $100 billion or one-fifth of its export revenues, and the Russian economy would be in rampant crisis."

Mr. Putin may be "living in another world," as the German chancellor, Angela Merkel, put it this week, but surely even he recognizes that the world has changed drastically since 1956 or 1968. He has no doubt been getting an earful from his wealthy oligarch friends, many of whom run Russia's largest companies and have stashed their personal assets in places like London and New York. The oligarchs "would not dare to challenge him," a prominent Russian economist told me. (He asked not to be named for fear of retribution.) "But they would say something like they would have to lay off workers and reduce tax payments."

During the Cold War, there were few, if any, Russian billionaires. Today, there are 111, according to Forbes magazine's latest rankings, and Russia ranks third in the number of billionaires, behind the United States and China. The economist noted that the billionaire Russian elite — who are pretty much synonymous with Mr. Putin's friends and allies — are the ones who would be severely affected by visa bans, which were imposed by President Obama on Thursday. Other penalties might include asset freezes. Many Russian oligarchs have real estate and other assets in Europe and the United States, like the Central Park West penthouse a trust set up by the Russian tycoon Dmitry Rybolovlev bought for $88 million. "This is what

may have already forced Putin to retreat," the Russian economist said.

And while the Cold War was a global contest between Marxism and capitalism, there is today "no real ideological component to the conflict except that Putin has become the personification of rejecting the West as a model," Mr. Talbott said. "He wants to promote a Eurasian community dominated by Moscow, but that's not an ideology. Russia's economy may be an example of crony capitalism, but it is capitalism. There's not even a shadow of Marxism-Leninism now." What brought down the old Soviet Union and ended the Cold War "was the economic imperative to make Russia into a modern, efficient, normal state, a player in the international economy, not because of military power but because of a strong economy," Mr. Talbott continued. But "to have a modern economy, you need the rule of law and a free press." Mr. Putin, he said, "isn't advancing Russia's progress." The Russian economist agreed. "The pre-2008 social compact was that Putin would rule Russia while Russians would see growing incomes," he said. "Now, the growth has stalled, and he needs ideology, coupled with propaganda and repressions. Apparently, the Soviet restoration is the only ideology he can come up with." Russia does have uniquely strong ties to Ukraine. "Of all the former provinces of the old Soviet Union, it's the most painful to have lost and the one many Russians would most want to have back," Mr. Talbott said. "The ties between Kiev and Moscow go back over 300 years. Ukraine is the heart of Russian culture." With Russian troops entrenched in the Crimean peninsula and some Russian Ukrainians clamoring for annexation, there may be little the United States or its allies can do to restore the status quo. "Containment, in a muted and

modified way, will once again be the strategy of the West and the mission of NATO," Mr. Talbott predicted. But not another Cold War, which is surely a good thing. "A propaganda war is completely feasible," the Russian economist said. "The recent events were completely irrational, angering the West for no reason. This is what is most scary, especially for businesses. Instead of reforming the stagnating economy, Putin scared everybody for no reason and with no gain in sight. So it is hard to predict his next actions. But I think a real Cold War is unlikely."

Article 4.

The National Interest

Iran Deal: Keeping Israel On Board

Shai Feldman, Oren Setter

March 8, 2014 -- The recent launching by the P5+1 of negotiations of a comprehensive deal with Iran regarding its nuclear program poses serious dilemmas for both the U.S. and Israel given the enormous stakes involved. For the U.S., the formal goal is to be [4]verifiably assured that Iran's nuclear program is peaceful. In reality, America's goal is to prevent Iran's nuclear program from reaching a point where the U.S. would have no choice but to decide between "bombing and the bomb"—that is, between attacking Iran's nuclear installations or "living with an Iranian bomb." In turn, this decision point can

only be avoided by restoring a significant "breakout time" for Iran's nuclear effort. Yet, restoring such "breakout time" does not exclude the possibility that Iran would be permitted to have a 'small, discrete, limited' uranium-enrichment program.

For Israel, the stakes in these negotiations are even higher—it sees itself as the primary target of a future Iranian nuclear force and regards such a capability as an existential threat. Israel stresses that an agreement with Tehran must therefore "dismantle the Iranian ability to either produce or launch a nuclear weapon." Israeli prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu argued that this can only be achieved if Iran would have "zero enrichment, zero centrifuges, zero plutonium, and […] an end to ICBM development."

These very high but different stakes and divergent goals present Washington and Jerusalem with a first-order alliance-management problem. The Obama administration is fully cognizant of Israel's concerns and greater stakes in the nuclear talks. It is also aware that influential circles in Washington may have even greater sensitivity and sympathy for Israel's worries. Especially important is the U.S. Congress, whose approval of any agreement reached with Iran will be crucial. This is because almost all that Iran seeks to achieve in any agreement reached—namely, significant sanctions relief—cannot be implemented without the Congress's consent. For the Obama administration, therefore, the Israeli-alliance-management challenge has an important U.S. domestic dimension as well.

Given that for Israel the stakes involved in a comprehensive deal with Iran would be far greater than those associated with the interim agreement negotiated last fall, the Israeli government

can be expected to mobilize its friends and wage a far more effective campaign against a comprehensive deal that it would judge as endangering the security and survival of the Jewish state. So what in this context is America's Israeli dilemma? It is: how to alleviate Israel's concerns about the recently launched talks by making it a "silent" partner to the talks without providing it a veto power over the outcome of these negotiations.

Clearly, the U.S. worries that if Israel would be fully briefed on every development in the talks, it would have multiple opportunities to derail them should it conclude that the result would allow Iran's nuclear program to survive. Conversely, if Israel was excluded from important negotiation venues—as was apparently the case when Deputy Secretary of State William Burns conducted secret nuclear talks with Iran in Oman last fall—it would be very difficult to win acceptance of the talks' results from Israel and its friends in the U.S.

No less challenging is the dilemma that the negotiations for a comprehensive deal with Iran pose for Israel. On the one hand, Israel sees itself as the guardian of the "ideal deal" in which Iran truly loses its capacity to break out to a nuclear weapon. On the other hand, given that an agreement that leaves Iran with "zero enrichment, zero centrifuges, zero plutonium, and […] an end to ICBM development" is viewed by Washington as unrealistic, Israel would need to convey its ideas, considerations and trade-offs to the negotiations process, where difficult decisions may have to be taken if a mutually acceptable agreement that restores a significant "breakout time" is to be achieved.

What turns this into a unique dilemma is Israel's unusual role in

these negotiations: while it is a major stakeholder in the outcome of the process, it is not a formal member of the negotiations team. Thus Israel's influence on the actual agreement can only be indirect, requiring it to consider carefully how every move it might make will affect the negotiation table.

Under such circumstances, what are Israel's options? The first is for Israel to hold on to its current line, insisting on the "ideal deal" as the only solution to the Iranian nuclear issue. The merits of this approach are two-fold: first, and obvious, is that it reflects accurately what Israel sees as the 'correct' solution to Iran's nuclear program. Second, and more important, it would send a clear and unambiguous signal to the P5+1 leaders and negotiators that this is the yardstick against which any comprehensive agreement with Iran will be measured. In this scenario, Israel would hope that its position would serve as a 'lighthouse' to this six-captained ship navigating in troubled waters.

Yet continuing to insist on the 'ideal solution' as the only acceptable approach also has some downsides: First, Israel may be seen not as a 'lighthouse' but rather as an 'anchor'—a deadweight preventing the ship from making any progress. Should the talks fail, this may result in Israel being blamed for the failure. Second, adopting such a stance would limit Israel's ability to influence the details of the negotiated agreement. Israel would still be able raise its concerns with the members of the P5+1 but it would be limited in the extent to which it would be able to bring ideas to the table without undercutting its formal position.

A second option available to Israel is to adopt a more flexible

stance, for example by accepting that the talks would result in a limited Iranian enrichment program. On the positive side, this option will portray Israel in a more reasonable light, and more importantly, it will allow it to assume a more substantial—though still indirect—role in affecting the "devilish" details of the negotiated agreement.

Opponents of this option will argue that it will result in a slippery slope, with Israel's new red line quickly becoming the new baseline for the talks. Given that all negotiations are associated with considerable pressures to reach a deal—and, therefore, with pressures to compromise so that a deal can be reached—the new baseline may well result in an outcome worse than that anticipated in the event that Israel would stubbornly insist on nothing short of the "ideal deal."

Given these conflicting considerations, can the U.S. and Israel maintain their informal alliance while maximizing the odds that the talks recently launched would produce an optimal comprehensive nuclear deal with Iran? The key here seems to be the ability and willingness of Washington and Jerusalem to prenegotiate a "code of conduct" possibly consisting of four elements: First, a U.S.-Israel agreed timeframe for testing Iran's willingness to reach a deal limiting its nuclear program. Second, an understanding that during the agreed timeframe for the talks, Israel, while adhering to its public stance favoring the "ideal deal" would refrain from undermining the negotiations by waging a public campaign against the talks. Third, that during the same timeframe the Israeli national-security community will be fully briefed regarding the details of the talks, and more importantly, will be provided multiple opportunities to share its possible concerns and to offer its ideas about the ways in which

difficult issues in the talks can be best addressed. Fourth, and in parallel, the U.S. and Israel will create one or more Track-II channels for conversations among both sides' non-official experts and former government officials. In these totally deniable frameworks, the two sides will be able to explore ideas and possible compromises that may be deemed too sensitive even for secret-yet-official talks.

The stakes involved for the U.S. and Israel in the recently launched efforts to reach a comprehensive deal with Iran regarding its nuclear program are enormous. Yet their stakes and priorities in these talks are not identical, presenting Washington and Jerusalem with a serious alliance management problem. The four-element "code of conduct' proposed here would allow the U.S. and Israel to maintain their close ties while the P-5+1 led by the U.S. productively negotiate with Iran.

Shai Feldman is Director of the Crown Center for Middle East Studies at Brandeis University. Oren Setter is a Research Fellow at the Harvard Kennedy School's Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs.

Article 5.

Foreign Policy in Focus

A New World Order?

Tom Engelhardt

March 7, 2014 -- There is, it seems, something new under the sun.

Geopolitically speaking, when it comes to war and the imperial principle, we may be in uncharted territory. Take a look around and you'll see a world at the boiling point. From Ukraine to Syria, South Sudan to Thailand, Libya to Bosnia, Turkey to Venezuela, citizen protest (left and right) is sparking not just disorganization, but what looks like, to coin a word, de-organization at a global level. Increasingly, the unitary status of states, large and small, old and new, is being called into question. Civil war, violence, and internecine struggles of various sorts are visibly on the rise. In many cases, outside countries are involved and yet in each instance state power seems to be draining away to no other state's gain. So here's one question: Where exactly is power located on this planet of ours right now? There is, of course, a single waning superpower that has in this new century sent its military into action globally, aggressively, repeatedly — and disastrously. And yet these actions have failed to reinforce the imperial system of organizing and garrisoning the planet that it put in place at the end of World War II; nor has it proven capable of organizing a new global system for a new century. In fact, everywhere it's touched militarily, local and regional chaos have followed. In the meantime, its own political system has grown gargantuan and unwieldy; its electoral process has been overwhelmed by vast flows of money from the wealthy 1 percent; and its governing system is visibly troubled, if not dysfunctional. Its rich are ever richer, its poor ever poorer, and its middle class in decline. Its military, the largest by many multiples on the planet,

is nonetheless beginning to cut back. Around the world, allies, client states, and enemies are paying ever less attention to its wishes and desires, often without serious penalty. It has the classic look of a great power in decline and in another moment it might be easy enough to predict that, though far wealthier than its Cold War superpower adversary, it has simply been heading for the graveyard more slowly but no less surely. Such a prediction would, however, be unwise. Never since the modern era began has a waning power so lacked serious competition or been essentially without enemies. Whether in decline or not, the United States — these days being hailed as "the new Saudi Arabia" in terms of its frackable energy wealth — is visibly in no danger of losing its status as the planet's only imperial power.

What, then, of power itself? Are we still in some strange way — to bring back the long forgotten Bush-era phrase — in a unipolar moment? Or is power, as it was briefly fashionable to say, increasingly multipolar? Or is it helter-skelter-polar? Or on a planet whose temperatures are rising, droughts growing more severe, and future food prices threatening to soar (meaning yet more protest, violence, and disruption), are there even "poles" any more?

Here, in any case, is a reality of the initial years of the twenty-first century: for the first time in at least a half a millennium, the imperial principle seems to be ebbing, and yet the only imperial power, increasingly incapable of organizing the world, isn't going down.

If you survey our planet, the situation is remarkably unsettled and confusing. But at least two things stand out, and whatever

you make of them, they could be the real news of the first decades of this century. Both are right before our eyes, yet largely unseen. First, the imperial principle and the great power competition to which it has been wedded are on the wane. Second and no less startling, war (global, intrastate, anti-insurgent), which convulsed the twentieth century, seems to be waning as well. What in the world does it all mean?

A Scarcity of Great Powers

Let's start with the imperial part of the equation. From the moment the Europeans dispatched their cannon-bearing wooden ships on a violent exploration and conquest of the globe, there has never been a moment when one or more empires weren't rising as others waned, or when at least two and sometimes several "great powers" weren't competing for ways to divide the planetary spoils and organize, encroach upon, or take over spheres of influence. In the wake of World War II, with the British Empire essentially penniless and the German, Japanese, and Italian versions of empire crushed, only two great powers were left. They more or less divided the planet unequally between them. Of the two, the United States was significantly wealthier and more powerful. In 1991, after a nearly half-century-long Cold War in which those superpowers at least once came to the edge of a nuclear exchange, and blood was spilled in copious amounts on "the peripheries" in "limited war," the last of the conflicts of that era — in Afghanistan — helped take down the Soviet Union. When its army limped home from what its leader referred to as "the bleeding wound" and its economy imploded, the USSR unexpectedly — and surprisingly peacefully — disappeared.

Which, of course, left one. The superest of all powers of any time — or so many in Washington came to believe. There had never, they were convinced, been anything like it. One hyperpower, one planet: that was to be the formula. Talk of a "peace dividend" disappeared quickly enough and, with the U.S. military financially and technologically dominant and no longer worried about a war that might quite literally end all wars, a new era seemed to begin.

There had, of course, been an ongoing "arms race" between great powers since at least the end of the nineteenth century. Now, at a moment when it should logically have been over, the U.S. instead launched an arms race of one to ensure that no other military would ever be capable of challenging its forces. (Who knew then that those same forces would be laid low by ragtag crews of insurgents with small arms, homemade roadside bombs, and their own bodies as their weapons?) As the new century dawned, a crew led by George W. Bush and Dick Cheney ascended to power in Washington. They were the first administration ever largely born of a think tank (with the ambitious name Project for a New American Century). Long before 9/11 gave them their opportunity to set the American military loose on the planet, they were already dreaming of an all-American imperium that would outshine the British or Roman empires.

Of course, who doesn't know what happened next? Though they imagined organizing a Pax Americana in the Middle East and then on a planetary scale, theirs didn't turn out to be an organizational vision at all. They got bogged down in Afghanistan, destabilizing neighboring Pakistan. They got bogged down in Iraq, having punched a hole through the heart

of the planet's oil heartlands and set off a Sunni-Shiite regional civil war, whose casualty lists continue to stagger the imagination. In the process, they never came close to their dream of bringing Tehran to its knees, no less establishing even the most rudimentary version of that Pax Americana. They were an imperial whirlwind, but every move they made proved disastrous. In effect, they lent a hand to the de-imperialization of the planet. By the time they were done and the Obama years were upon us, Latin America was no longer an American "backyard"; much of the Middle East was a basketcase (but not an American one); Africa, into which Washington continues to move military forces, was beginning to destabilize; Europe, for the first time since the era of French President Charles de Gaulle, seemed ready to say "no" to American wishes (and was angry as hell). And yet power, seeping out of the American system, seemed to be coagulating nowhere. Russian President Vladimir Putin has played a remarkably clever hand. From his role in brokering a Syrian deal with Washington to the hosting of the Olympics and a winning medal count in Sochi, he's given his country the look of a great power. In reality, however, it remains a relatively ramshackle state, a vestige of the Soviet era still, as in Ukraine, fighting a rearguard action against history (and the inheritors of the Cold War mantle, the U.S. and the European Union).

The EU is an economic powerhouse, but in austerity-gripped disarray. While distinctly a great economic force, it is not in any functional sense a great power. China is certainly the enemy of choice both for Washington and the American public. And it is visibly a rising power, which has been putting ever more money into building a regional military. Still, it isn't fighting and its

economic and environmental problems are staggering enough, along with its food and energy needs, that any future imperial destiny seems elusive at best. Its leadership, while more bullish in the Pacific, is clearly in no mood to take on imperial tasks. (Japan is similarly an economic power with a chip on its shoulder, putting money into creating a more expansive military, but an actual imperial repeat performance seems beyond unlikely.) There was a time when it was believed that as a group the so-called BRICS countries — Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa (and some added Turkey) — would be the collective powerhouse of a future multi-polar planet. But that was before the Brazilian, South African, Indian, and Turkish economies stopped looking so rosy. In the end, the U.S. aside, great powers remain scarcer than hen's teeth.

War: Missing in Action

Now, let's move on to an even more striking and largely unremarked upon characteristic of these years. If you take one country — or possibly two — out of the mix, war between states or between major powers and insurgencies has largely ceased to exist.

Admittedly, every rule has its exceptions and from full-scale colonial-style wars (Iraq, Afghanistan) to small-scale conflicts mainly involving drones or air power (Yemen, Somalia, Libya), the United States has seemingly made traditional war its own in the early years of this century. Nonetheless, the Iraq War ended ignominiously in 2011 and the Afghan War seems to be limping to something close to an end in a slow-motion withdrawal this year. In addition, Secretary of Defense Chuck Hagel has just announced the Pentagon's intention to cut its boots-on-the-

ground contingent significantly in the years to come, a sign that future conflicts are far less likely to involve full-scale invasions and occupations on the Eurasian land mass.

Possible exception number two: Israel launched a 34-day war against Hezbollah in Lebanon in 2006 and a significant three-week military incursion into the Gaza Strip in 2008-2009 (though none of this added up to anything like the wars that country fought in the previous century). Otherwise when it comes to war — that is, to sending armies across national boundaries or, in nineteenth-century style, to distant lands to conquer and "pacify" — we're left with almost nothing. It's true that the last war of the previous century between Ethiopia and neighboring Eritrea straggled six months into this one. There was as well the 2008 Russian incursion into Georgia (a straggler from the unraveling of the Soviet Union). Dubbed the "five-day war," it proved a minor affair (if you didn't happen to be Georgian). There was also a dismal U.S.-supported Ethiopian invasion of Somalia in 2006 (and a Kenyan invasion of that mess of a country but not exactly state in 2011). As for more traditional imperial-style wars, you can count them on one hand, possibly one finger: the 2013 French intervention in Mali (after a disastrous U.S./NATO air-powered intervention in Libya destabilized it). France has also sent its troops elsewhere in Africa, most recently into the Central African Republic, but these were at best micro-versions of nineteenth-century colonial wars. Turkey has from time to time struck across its border into Iraq as part of an internal conflict with its Kurdish population. In Asia, other than rising tensions and a couple of ships almost bumping on the high seas, the closest you can get to war in this century was a minor border clash in April 2001 between India

and Bangladesh. Now, the above might look like a sizeable enough list until you consider the record for the second half of the twentieth century in Asia alone: The Korean War (1950-1953), a month-long border war between China and India in 1962, the French and American wars in Vietnam (1946-1975), the Vietnamese invasion of Cambodia in 1978; China's invasion of Vietnam in 1979; and Indian-Pakistani wars in 1965, 1971, and 1999. (The Bangladeshi war of independence in 1971 was essentially a civil war.) And that, of course, leaves out the carnage of the first 50 years of a century that began with a foreign intervention in the Boxer Rebellion in 1900 and the Russo-Japanese War of 1904-1905 and ended with the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. In fact, judged by almost any standard from just about any period in the previous two centuries, war is now missing in action, which is indeed something new under the sun.

Driving With the Lights Off

So an imperial era is on the wane, war in absentia, and no rising great power contenders on the horizon. Historically speaking, that's a remarkable scorecard in an otherwise appalling world. Of course, the lack of old-style war hardly means no violence. In the 14th year of this new century, the scorecard on internal strife and civil war, often with external involvement, has been awful to behold: Yemen (with the involvement of the Saudis and the Americans), Syria (with the involvement of the Russians, the Saudis, the Qataris, the Iranians, Hezbollah, the Iraqis, the Turks, and the Americans), and so on. The record, including the Congo (numerous outside parties), South Sudan, Darfur, India (a Maoist insurgency), Nigeria (Islamic extremists), and so on, couldn't be grimmer. Moreover, 14 years at the beginning of a

century is a rather small sampling. Just think of 1914 and the great war that followed. Before the present Ukrainian crisis is over, for instance, Russian troops could again cross a border in force (as in 2008) along the still fraying edges of the former Soviet Union. It's also possible (though developments seem to be leading in quite a different direction) that either the Israelis or the Americans could still launch an attack on Iran's nuclear facilities, increasing the chaos and violence in the Middle East. Similarly, an incident in the edgy Pacific might trigger an unexpected conflict between Japan and China. (Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe recently compared this moment in Asia to the eve of World War I in Europe and his country and China to England and Germany.) And of course there are the "resource wars" expected on an increasingly devastated planet.

Still, for the moment no rising empire and no states fighting each other. So who knows? Maybe we are off the beaten path of history and in terra incognita. Perhaps this is a road we've never been down before, an actual new world order. If so, we're driving it with our headlights off, the wind whipping up, and the rain pouring down on a planet that may itself, in climate terms, be heading for uncharted territory.

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Article 6.

Foreign Affairs

Yarmouk and the Palestinian-Israeli Peace Negotiations

Hussein Ibish

March 7, 2014 -- There is little by way of human cruelty that has not been visited on the people of the Levant over the past century. Iraqis, Israelis, Lebanese, Palestinians, and Syrians have all faced massacres, terrorism, bombings, and any number of other atrocities, including what are probably the only two uses of chemical weapons since World War II. But calculated starvation -- the deliberate policy of withholding food from suffering, ordinary people on a mass scale -- has very little history in the region. And that makes the situation in the Yarmouk camp just outside Damascus, where 18,000 Palestinian refugees are slowly and deliberately being starved by the Syrian dictatorship, all the more horrifying.

The Palestinians trapped there can do little to alleviate their plight. And humanitarian efforts by the United Nations and the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) have so far been thwarted by pro-regime forces. But the Palestinian leadership and people should recognize that Yarmouk has urgent, if indirect, implications for the ongoing Palestinian-Israeli peace negotiations.

Every Arab state has tried, at one time or another, to manipulate the Palestinian issue for its own purposes. But the Assad family's Baathist regime in Syria has been uniquely hostile to the mainstream Palestinian national movement. It has shown time and again that its official commitment to the Palestinian cause is a smokescreen for its own interests. It has never really accepted the idea that Palestine, or Lebanon for that matter, is a separate entity from a greater Syria, which it still aspires to create. And its primary concern has been to ensure as much Palestinian subservience as possible to the Damascus dictatorship's ideology and interests.

Syria has always been ready to use force to keep Palestinians in check. It made war against the Palestinians in Lebanon during the 1970s and 1980s, most notably in the siege of Tel al-Zaatar refugee camp, which is the closest analogy to today's crisis in Yarmouk. And although it poses as a bastion of "resistance," Syria has consistently avoided confronting Israel directly, even when provoked. Syria has repeatedly endured attacks from Israel without direct response and sometimes without complaint. If it stands up to Israel at all, it does so through proxies and almost always at the expense of others. Its support for Hezbollah has come at a great cost to Lebanon; its support for Palestinian proxy splinter groups as well as Hamas has come at a great cost to Palestine. The Palestinian residents of Gaza suffered heavily from the catastrophic Syrian-backed war between Hamas and Israel in 2008 and 2009.

The ongoing atrocities in Yarmouk are only the latest example of the Syrian regime's manipulations. In the early stages of Syria's uprising, one of the regime's opening gambits was to distract the public's attention by cynically twisting the

Palestinian cause. On June 6, 2011 -- the anniversary of the 1967 war between Arab states and Israel, referred to by Arabs as Naksa Day -- Syrian President Bashar al-Assad had hundreds of Palestinians, many of them from Yarmouk, bussed to the demilitarized zone in the Golan Heights region that borders Israel. They were encouraged, unarmed, to confront Israeli occupation forces, which predictably opened fire on protesters, killing 23 of them. It was a cold-blooded instance of political theater and a cynical exercise in human sacrifice.

Palestinians in Yarmouk were outraged -- at least as much at Assad as at Israel. When they protested en masse, pro-Assad thugs affiliated with a group called the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command shot them, killing 14 and injuring 43. As the Syrian war intensified, so did the plight of Yarmouk. Syrian fighter jets and helicopters have repeatedly attacked Yarmouk, using missiles and notoriously indiscriminate barrel bombs. But in December 2012, when opposition rebels entered the camp, the situation became dramatically worse. Yarmouk became the scene of intense fighting and a prolonged, and ongoing, siege. Efforts to deliver food and other aid have been systematically stymied.

What was once a population of at least 200,000 Palestinian refugees has dwindled to a tenth of its former size. Anyone who could flee has already done so. Those who remain are slowly and cruelly dying. The Syrian Observatory for Human Rights estimates that at least 100 people in Yarmouk have died from starvation and lack of medical supplies since last October. UN officials have expressed shock at what they have seen in recent visits to the camp. Filippo Grandi, a UN refugee official, said that the people he saw there last week had “the appearance of

ghosts."

The Syrian government is responsible for this situation, and those who try to fudge the issue by blaming rebels are deliberately deceiving the public. The northern entrance to Yarmouk is under the control of pro-Assad forces. But the government has nonetheless insisted that all aid go through the southern entrance, which is very dangerous to access because it is a battle zone between regime and opposition forces. Although senior government figures deny it, military forces on the ground reportedly admit that they are deliberately using starvation as a weapon against their "enemies" in Yarmouk, including both rebels and civilians. This is a man-made disaster, and the responsibility for it lies almost entirely with the leadership in Damascus.

To those familiar with the relationship between Baathist Syria and the Palestinian cause and people, the events at Yarmouk will not come as any surprise. But the Palestinian people as a whole should draw the obvious lesson: As long as they remain stateless, refugees will have no haven and no government to represent them. Atrocities will continue to take place, as they have wherever Palestinians have found themselves in the Middle East since 1948.

Some pro-Palestinian groups object to such a two-state solution, because it will inevitably involve significant compromises on the right of return for refugees to Israel. But Israel is simply not going to agree to accept large numbers of Palestinians returning from across the region, which would compromise the demographic makeup of the Israeli state. A unanimity of the Israeli political spectrum flatly opposes any such notion, and

there does not appear to be any form of leverage or quid pro quo that could alter that.

But a Palestinian state has much to offer refugees short of the right of return to Israel. Among other things, an independent Palestine could help protect a long-suffering people against further massacre, siege, or atrocity. Palestinians would finally be citizens in a state of their own and not stranded at the disposal of others who can, and have, turned on them with a vengeance.

This is not to suggest that the Israeli government or the PLO is in any meaningful sense responsible for addressing the tragedy at Yarmouk. Israel is not directly involved, and the PLO lacks the means and leverage to relieve the suffering, as it discovered when pro-Assad forces fired on an unarmed aid convoy it had organized.

But Yarmouk does stand as yet another harsh reminder to the Palestinian people and leadership of the urgent need to achieve independence through peace with Israel, despite the painful compromises that will be required of both sides. Palestinians should see in Syria yet another tragic life and death drama, another sign that they must unite and mobilize to attain an independent state. Until they have it, Palestinians throughout the Middle East will be forever liable to find themselves in the next Yarmouk.

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Article 7.

The New York Review of Books

Imaginary Jews

Michael Walzer

Anti-Judaism: The Western Tradition

by David Nirenberg

Norton, 610 pp., $35.00

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1.

In 1844, Karl Marx published his essay "On the Jewish Question." This wasn't an engagement with Judaism, or with Jewish history, or even with the sociology of German Jews. Its occasion was the contemporary debate about Jewish emancipation, but its real purpose was to call for the overthrow of the capitalist order. The call was expressed in a language that is probably not surprising to readers today and that was entirely familiar to readers in the nineteenth century. Still, it is a very strange language. Capitalism is identified by Marx with Judaism, and so the overthrow of capitalism will be, he writes, "the emancipation of mankind from Judaism." The argument is worth quoting, at least briefly:

The Jew has already emancipated himself in a Jewish way…not only insofar as he has acquired financial power, but also insofar as, through him and without him, money has risen to world power and the practical Jewish spirit has become the practical spirit of the Christian peoples. The Jews have emancipated themselves to the extent that the Christians have become Jews.

"Through [the Jew] and without [the Jew]"—mostly without him: as Marx certainly knew, Jews made up a very small part of the moneyed elite of England, the most advanced capitalist country, and an even smaller part of the "rising" German bourgeoisie. His own father had converted to Protestantism in order to facilitate his entry into bourgeois society, where Jews were not welcome in the early nineteenth century.

What Marx is doing here, David Nirenberg argues in his brilliant, fascinating, and deeply depressing book Anti-Judaism, is exactly what many other writers have done in the long history of Western civilization. His essay is a "strategic appropriation of the most powerful language of opprobrium available to any critic of the powers and institutions of this world." That sentence comes from Nirenberg's discussion of Martin Luther, but it applies equally well to Marx. Still, we should be more surprised by Marx's use of this language than by Luther's, not only because of Marx's Jewish origins but also because of his claim to be a radical critic of the ideology of his own time. He might, Nirenberg says, have questioned the association of Judaism and capitalism and written a critical history aimed at making his readers more reflective about that association. Instead, he chose to exploit "old ideas and fears about Jewishness."

Consider another famous use of this language of opprobrium,

this time not in support of but in fierce opposition to revolutionary politics. In his Reflections on the Revolution in France, published in 1790, Edmund Burke compared what was going on in France to previous revolutions (like England's in 1688) that were led by noblemen "of great civil, and great military talents." By contrast, he wrote, the revolutionary government in Paris is led by "Jew brokers contending with each other who could best remedy with fraudulent circulation and depreciated paper the wretchedness and ruin brought on their country by their degenerate councils."

In Burke's case, the choice of this language was probably not "strategic." The choice was structural—anti-Judaism was a feature of the worldview with which Burke was able to recognize what Marxists later described as a "bourgeois" revolution. "Given the complete absence of Jews from the actual leadership, whether political, pecuniary, or philosophical, of the French Revolution," Nirenberg writes, the line about "Jew brokers" (and also Burke's proposal to help the revolutionaries by sending English Jews to France "to please your new Hebrew brethren") may, again, seem very strange. In fact, it is utterly common; only Burke's ferocious eloquence is uncommon.

Friendly writers have worked hard to exonerate Burke of anti-Semitism. Nirenberg says only that they miss the point. Burke certainly knew that Danton, Robespierre, Saint-Just, and their friends and enemies among the revolutionaries were, all of them, Catholics and lapsed Catholics (plus a few Protestants). They were only figurative Jews, imaginary Jews, who came to Burke's mind, and to many other minds,

because the revolution forced him…to confront basic questions

about the ways in which humans relate to one another in society. These were questions that two millennia of pedagogy had taught Europe to ask in terms of "Judaism," and Burke had learnt the lesson well.

2.

Nirenberg's book is about those two millennia and their pedagogy. It isn't a book about anti-Semitism; it isn't a history of the Jewish experience of discrimination, persecution, and genocide; it isn't an example of what the historian Salo Baron called the "lachrymose" account of Jewish life in exile; nor is it an indictment of contemporary anti-Zionism or a defense of the state of Israel. The book is not about Jews at all or, at least, not about real Jews; it deals extensively and almost exclusively with imaginary Jews.

What Nirenberg has written is an intellectual history of Western civilization, seen from a peculiar but frighteningly revealing perspective. It is focused on the role of anti-Judaism as a constitutive idea and an explanatory force in Christian and post-Christian thought—though it starts with Egyptian arguments against the Jews and includes a discussion of early Islam, whose writers echo, and apparently learned from, Christian polemics. Nirenberg comments intermittently about the effects of anti-Judaism on the life chances of actual Jews, but dealing with those effects in any sufficient way would require another, and a very different, book.

Anti-Judaism is an extraordinary scholarly achievement. Nirenberg tells us that he has left a lot out (I will come at the end to a few things that are missing), but he seems to know

everything. He deals only with literature that he can read in the original language, but this isn't much of a limitation. Fortunately, the chapter on Egypt doesn't require knowledge of hieroglyphics; Greek, Hebrew, and Latin are enough. Perhaps it makes things easier that the arguments in all the different languages are remarkably similar and endlessly reiterated.

A certain view of Judaism—mainly negative—gets established early on, chiefly in Christian polemics, and then becomes a common tool in many different intellectual efforts to understand the world and to denounce opposing understandings. Marx may have thought himself insightful and his announcement original: the "worldly God" of the Jews was "money"! But the identification of Judaism with materialism, with the things of this world, predates the appearance of capitalism in Europe by at least 1,500 years.

Since I want mostly to describe Nirenberg's argument (and, though without the authority of his erudition, to endorse it), let me note quickly one bit of oddness in it. One could also write—it would be much shorter—a history of philo-Judaism. It might begin with those near-Jews, the "God-fearers" of ancient Rome, whom Nirenberg doesn't mention. But the prime example would be the work of the Christian, mostly Protestant, Hebraists of the late sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, who searched in biblical and rabbinic texts for God's constitution and produced books with titles like The Hebrew Commonwealth. Many of these writers studied with Jewish scholars, chiefly from the Netherlands, but (with some notable exceptions) remained in most of their references to contemporary Jews conventionally anti-Semitic.

Nirenberg writes about these Christian Hebraists with his usual learning, but they don't fit neatly into his book. They were looking for an ancient, biblical Judaism (with the rabbis of the talmudic age as helpful interpreters) that they could learn from, even imitate. Nirenberg's proper subject is a hostile understanding of Judaism, early and late, reiterated by writers of very different sorts, with which the social-political-theological-philosophical world is constructed, enemies are identified, and positions fortified. Philo-Judaism is aspirational; anti-Judaism claims to be explanatory.

What is being explained is the social world; the explanatory tools are certain supposed features of Judaism; and the enemies are mostly not Jews but "Judaizing" non-Jews who take on these features and are denounced for doing so. I will deal with only a few of Judaism's negative characteristics: its hyperintellectualism; its predilection for tyranny; its equal and opposite predilection for subversive radicalism; and its this-worldly materialism, invoked, as we've seen, by both Burke and Marx. None of this is actually descriptive; there certainly are examples of hyper-intellectual, tyrannical, subversive, and materialist Jews (and of dumb, powerless, conformist, and idealistic Jews), but Nirenberg insists, rightly, that real Jews have remarkably little to do with anti-Judaism.

3.

Speaking to German students in May 1933, a few months after the Nazis took power, Joseph Goebbels proclaimed that "the age of rampant Jewish intellectualism is now at an end." Goebbels was a third-rate German intellectual (the word is unavoidable: he had a Ph.D.; he wrote articles; Nirenberg suggests that we

think of him as an apostate intellectual). But he was making an argument that had been made by many less infamous, indeed, more worthy, figures. It begins in the Gospels, with the earliest attacks on the Judaism of the Pharisees. Christian supersessionist arguments—i.e., arguments about what aspects of Judaism had been superseded by Christianity—were based on a set of oppositions: law superseded by love, the letter by the spirit, the flesh (the material world, the commandments of the Torah, the literal text) by the soul. "I bless you father…," writes Luke, "for hiding these things from the learned and the clever and revealing them to little children."

The Pharisees were indeed learned and clever, as were their rabbinic successors; the discussions and disputations of the Talmud are a particularly revealing display of learning and cleverness. By comparison (it's a self-description), the early Christians were naive and innocent children to whom God spoke directly, evoking the faith that brought salvation (which law and learning couldn't do).

The difficulty here is that the Christians very quickly produced immensely learned, clever, and disputatious theologians of their own, who were then accused, and who accused each other, of Judaizing—thinking or acting like Jews. The earliest Christian writers, Paul most importantly, were engaged with actual Jews, in some mix of coexistence and competition that scholars are still trying to figure out. Nirenberg writes about Paul with subtlety and some sympathy, though he is the writer who sets the terms for much that comes later.

By the time of writers like Eusebius, Ambrose, and Augustine, the Jews had been, as Nirenberg says, "a twice-defeated

people"—first militarily by the Romans and then religiously by the imperial establishment of Christianity. And yet the threat of Judaism grew greater and greater as the actual Jews grew weaker and weaker. According to their triumphant opponents, the Jews never gave up their hostility to Jesus and his followers (indeed, they didn't convert). They were endlessly clever, ever-active hypocrites and tricksters, who mixed truth with falsehood to entice innocent Christians—in the same way that those who prepare lethal drugs "smear the lip of the cup with honey to make the harmful potion easy to drink."

That last charge is from Saint John Chrysostom, who was such a violent opponent of "the Jews" that earnest scholars have assumed that Judaism must have posed a clear and present danger to Christianity in his time. In fact, Nirenberg tells us, there was no such danger; the people mixing the poison were Christian heretics. If Saint John feared the Jews, "it was because his theology had taught him to view other dangers in Jewish terms."

The critique of Jewish cleverness is fairly continuous over time, but it appears with special force among German idealist philosophers of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, who repeat many of the supersessionist arguments of the early Christians. Kant understood the heteronomy he sought to overcome—action according to moral law externally imposed rather than freely accepted by the agent—in Jewish terms, but he was himself considered too Jewish by the philosophers who came next, most importantly by Hegel. Kantianism, Hegel claimed, was simply a new version of "the Jewish principle of opposing thought to reality, reason to sense; this principle involves the rending of life and a lifeless connection between

God and the world." According to Hegel, Abraham had made a fateful choice: his rejection of the world in favor of a sublime God had alienated the Jews forever from the beauty of nature and made them the prisoners of law, incapable of love. (Needless to say, Schopenhauer, in the next generation, thought that the academic Hegelians of his time were "Jews" and followers of "the Jewish God," but I shall stop with Hegel himself.)

It isn't Nirenberg's claim that any of these philosophers were anti-Semites. Indeed, Hegel defended the rights of Jews in German universities and thought that anti-Semitic German nationalism was not "German-ness" but "German-stupid-ness." Nor is Nirenberg arguing for any kind of intellectual determinism. He doesn't believe that Goebbels's attack on Jewish intellectualism was the necessary outcome of the German philosophical identification of Judaism with lifeless reason—any more than German idealism was the necessary outcome of Christian claims to supersede Pharasaic Judaism or of Lutheran claims to supersede the Judaizing Catholics. In all these cases, there were other possible outcomes. But philosophers like Hegel used the language of anti-Judaism to resolve "the ancient tension between the ideal and the real," and their resolutions were enormously influential. The idea of Judaism as the enemy of "life" had a future.

4.

Judaism's associations with worldly power and subversive rebellion are closely linked, for what is rebellion but an effort to seize power? So Jewish bankers can rule the world and Jewish Bolsheviks can aspire to overthrow and replace the bankers. In

some alcoves of the Western imagination, the two groups can almost appear as co-conspirators. The populist anti-Semitism of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries (what August Bebel called "the socialism of fools") has a long history. One very early example is Saint Ambrose's response to the emperor Maximus, who punished the leaders of a Christian mob that burned a synagogue in the Mesopotamian city of Callinicum: "That king," Ambrose said, "has become a Jew." What made Maximus a "Jew" was not that he defended the Callinicum Jews but that he ranked enforcement of the law over the demands of the spirit (and the religious enthusiasm of the mob).

Often in the Middle Ages, Christian rulers were accused of Judaizing by populist rebels; the accusations had a curious doubleness. Tyranny was, first of all, imagined as a feature of Judaism, both when there were Jews at court (as physicians, advisers, tax collectors, and money-lenders) and when there were no Jews at court. The Jewish "seduction" of princes was one common way of understanding tyranny. Of course, Jewish seduction was often princely exploitation: the Jews were allowed to collect interest on loans to the king's Christian subjects so that he could then "expropriate a considerable share of the proceeds." It was a kind of indirect taxation, at a time when the royal power to tax was radically constrained. The indirectly taxed subjects resented the Jewish money-lenders, but, Nirenberg stresses, the resentment was politically acted out, again and again, in many times and places, though Jews rarely predominated in royal financial affairs "and then only for short periods of time."

Anti-Judaism also had a second and rather different political usefulness. Jews were imagined not only as tyrants or the allies

of tyrants but at the same time, and more realistically, as oppressed and powerless. Given their rejection of Jesus Christ and their complicity in his death, the oppression of the Jews was justified; but when a tyrannical ruler oppressed his Christian subjects, he could be accused of trying "to make a Jewry" out of them, which obviously wasn't justified. "We would rather die than be made similar to Jews." That last line is from a petition of the city council of Valencia to King Peter in 1378. So tyranny was twice understood in Jewish terms: a Judaizing prince treated his subjects like Jews.

Populist rebels obviously did not think of themselves as Jews; the construction of subversion and rebellion as "Jewish" was, and is, the work of conservative and reactionary writers. Among modern revolutionaries, the Puritans actually were Judaizers (focused far more on the Old than the New Testament), though with their own supersessionist theology. The use of the tropes of philo- and anti-Judaism during the English civil war made some sense, even though there were no Jews in England in the 1640s. The French revolutionaries were neither Jews nor Judaizers, though Burke and others understood them by invoking the "old ideas and fears." But it was the Bolsheviks who, more than any other group of rebels, were widely understood as "Jewish." It is true that many of them were Jews, though of the sort that Isaac Deutscher called "non-Jewish Jews." Judaism had nothing at all to do with Bolshevism and yet, if Nirenberg is right, the Bolsheviks would have been explained in the language of anti-Judaism even if there had never been a Trotsky, a Kamenev, or a Radek among them.

5.

The identification of Jews with merchants, money-lenders, royal financiers, and predatory capitalists is constant in Nirenberg's history. I will focus on one moment in that history, Shakespeare's England and The Merchant of Venice, which will give me a chance to illustrate the difference between his anti-Judaism and the anti-Semitism that is the subject of more conventional, but equally depressing, histories. Anthony Julius's Trials of the Diaspora: A History of Anti-Semitism in England includes a long and very intelligent discussion of Shakespeare's play.1 Julius calls The Merchant of Venice an anti-Semitic drama that is also a dramatization of anti-Semitism and the beginning of its literary investigation. Shakespeare, as always, writes from opposing perspectives, but he clearly leans toward Shylock's enemies.

Shylock himself is the classic Jew: he hates Christians and desires to tyrannize over them; he loves money, more than his own daughter; he is a creature of law rather than of love. He isn't, indeed, a clever Jew; in his attempt to use the law against his Christian enemy, he is unintelligent and inept. (A modern commentator, Kenneth Gross, asks: "What could [he] have been thinking?") But in every other way, he is stereotypical, and so he merits the defeat and humiliation he receives—which are meant to delight the Elizabethan audience.

Julius doesn't ask Nirenberg's question: What put so many Jews (like Shylock or Marlowe's Jew of Malta) on the new London stage, in "a city that had sheltered fewer 'real Jews' than perhaps any other major one in Europe"? His answer—I can't reproduce his long and nuanced discussion—is that London was becoming a city of merchants, hence a "Jewish" city, and Shakespeare's play is a creative response to that development, an effort to

address the allegedly Judaizing features of all commercial relationships, and then to save the Christian merchants by distinguishing them from an extreme version of the Jew. But the distinction is open to question, and so the point of the play is best summed up when Portia asks, "Which is the merchant here, and which the Jew?" The play is about law and property, contracts, oaths, pledges, and promises. Shylock is the Jew of the gospels: "I stand here for law." But he is defeated by a better lawyer and a more literal reading of the law: Portia out-Jews the Jew—which is surely an ironical version of Christian supersession.

So Shakespeare understands the arrival of modern commerce with the help of Judaism, though he knew no Jews and had never read a page of the Talmud. He knew the Bible, though, as Shylock's speech about Jacob multiplying Laban's sheep (Act 1, scene 3; Genesis 30) makes clear. And Paul and the gospels were a central part of his intellectual inheritance. Shylock emerges from those latter texts, much like, though the lineage is more complicated, Burke's "Jew brokers" and Marx's "emancipated Jews." The line is continuous.

6.

Nirenberg's epilogue addresses one major theorist's denial of that continuity. In the preface to The Origins of Totalitarianism, Hannah Arendt mocks what she calls the doctrine of "eternal antisemitism" (this could serve, Nirenberg writes, "as an ironic title for my own book") and insists that the "specifically Jewish functions" (banking and finance) in the capitalist economy made the Jews partly "responsible" (her word) for the hatred they evoked.2 This is much like Marx's claim that "the Jews have

eagerly contributed" to the triumph of their "worldly cult," "Haggling," and their "worldly God," "Money."

Arendt actually draws on the statistical work of Walter Frank, a Nazi economist, who headed an Institute for the History of the New Germany, to support her account of the role of the Jews in the German bourgeoisie. It can't be the case, she argues, that the Nazis, who had "to persuade and mobilize people," could have chosen their victims arbitrarily. There has to be a concrete answer, a local socioeconomic answer, to the question: Why the Jews?

Nirenberg agrees that the choice of the Jews was not arbitrary; nor does he find Arendt's argument surprising—though he rejects all the usual hostile explanations: her assimilationist childhood, her long relationship with Heidegger, and so on. He does think it remarkable that Arendt "clung" to her argument about Jewish responsibility "even after the full extent and fantastic projective power of Nazi anti-Semitism (including its vast exaggeration of the Jews' economic importance) became clear." But his whole book is a kind of explanation for why she found it so easy to connect Jews and finance: the connection was one of "the a priori ideological commitments that structured her selection and interpretation of 'facts' about the Jews."

The disagreement with Arendt nicely sums up Nirenberg's book. His argument is that a certain view of Judaism lies deep in the structure of Western civilization and has helped its intellectuals and polemicists explain Christian heresies, political tyrannies, medieval plagues, capitalist crises, and revolutionary movements. Anti-Judaism is and has long been one of the most powerful theoretical systems "for making sense of the world."

No doubt, Jews sometimes act out the roles that anti-Judaism assigns them—but so do the members of all the other national and religious groups, and in much greater numbers. The theory does not depend on the behavior of "real" Jews.

Nirenberg's history of anti-Judaism is powerful and persuasive, but it is also unfinished. It never gets to the United States, for example, where anti-Judaism seems to have been less prevalent and less useful (less used in making sense of society and economy) than it was and is in the Old World—and where philo-Judaism seems to have a much larger presence. The modern state of Israel also makes no appearance in Nirenberg's book, except for one sentence on the next-to-last page:

We live in an age in which millions of people are exposed daily to some variant of the argument that the challenges of the world they live in are best explained in terms of "Israel."

So we have a partial discontinuity (the US) and an unexplored continuity (contemporary Israel) with Nirenberg's history. There is still work to be done. But here, in this book, anti-Judaism has at last found its radical critic.

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1. Oxford University Press, 2010, pp. 178–192. ↩

2. Harcourt, 1968, pp. 5–7, 9. ↩