

après 1850, cet effort étant indissociable de l'organisation du personnel : de la campagne à la ville se dessinent des pratiques et des exigences culturelles, un esprit de communauté ou de corps, une organisation des carrières et des statuts.

À cet égard, des spécificités entre la poste canadienne et la poste française apparaissent d'emblée. L'exode rural a sans doute commencé plus tôt en France qu'au Canada, où la colonisation a fait sentir longtemps ses effets dans le XX<sup>e</sup> siècle. Le sursaut de la population rurale pour défendre ses bureaux de poste date des années 1990 alors qu'en France il correspond au milieu des années 1970. De même, les modes d'organisation des postes française et canadienne diffèrent, les attributions du ministère des postes canadien étant bien moins étendues dans cet État fédéral que celles du ministère des PTT français. Se différencient également les représentations qui leur sont attachées : l'usage du terme « client » pour désigner la collectivité canadienne utilisant les services n'avait guère cours en France à la même période où le terme « d'administré » était plus fréquent. Mais l'ouvrage ouvre sur un même débat comparatif relatif aux contraintes du service public, qui doit situer sa présence par rapport aux administrés français et aux clients canadiens, obéissant à une logique territoriale plus qu'économique.

Ici comme là se pose la question de la poste comme administration ou comme entreprise : comment, en fonction des évolutions économiques et sociales, l'État canadien a-t-il redéfini le service du public par rapport à la logique formelle de l'État en France, où la notion est inscrite depuis le début du XX<sup>e</sup> siècle dans une certaine cohérence du droit public? Si cette histoire reste à faire, l'ouvrage suggère en tous cas que l'influence d'un type d'État ou d'un autre (fédéral du côté canadien, centralisé du côté français) ne saurait à lui seul expliquer la totalité des évolutions.

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ANIDJAR, Gil — *The Jew, The Arab: A History of the Enemy*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2003. Pp. xxv, 261.

Solutions to the conflict between Arab and Jew in the Middle East have been on the table for a long time. Experienced mediators are convinced that outstanding issues — borders, status of Jerusalem, even refugees — could be resolved in a few days. Why, then, does the conflict persist? Why can it not be resolved over a good feast in someone's tent? It seems now that we have the solutions we need to look again for the roots of problems that are deeper and more intractable than can be dealt with by experts in conflict resolution.

We can begin by saying that the dispute is more than a tribal squabble over scarce lands and resources. Indeed, a wide range of theories dig below this surface. Some, echoing Hegel's celebrated passages in the *Phenomenology of Spirit*, describe it as a fight to the death about national recognition. Others maintain that it is best understood as a flashpoint in the "clash of civilizations", while still others, impressed by the power of Jungian archetypes, discern a struggle fuelled by the Biblical arche-

types of Isaac and Ishmael. In this volume, Gil Anidjar, an assistant professor of comparative literature at Columbia University, proposes the most ambitious theory of all: a conflict fashioned in the depths of European civilization, then exported to the Middle East by agencies that have a stake in keeping it boiling. Though he presents these views in a very difficult book, Anidjar regards them as self-evident. Thus, in an interview on the Internet, he tells us that, as a joke, he wanted for his cover a picture of the Pope blessing both sides. He is confident that readers would recognize that such an image is as incongruous as a representation of Iago as a marriage therapist for Othello and Desdemona.

Anidjar's view that the conflict originates in Europe is neither new nor surprising. Recent literature, notably Margaret McMillan's best-selling volume on imperial machinations at the Paris Peace Conference in 1919, makes the same point. But Anidjar looks beneath the surface of European imperial intrigue. His Europe is that of Christendom, of Paul, of Aquinas, of Shakespeare, Hobbes, Kant, and Hegel among others — the European *Kultur* that we usually think of as a shining castle above the Europe of Balfour and Clemenceau. Echoing Foucault, postmodernists, post-colonialists, and other bearers of cultural studies, Anidjar seeks to unmask this lofty Europe, to expose a more insidious reality, one that spins webs of identity to entrap and manipulate lesser peoples. In his words, this is a Europe that has “managed to distinguish itself from both Jew and Arab and to render its role in that distinction — the separation and enmity between Jew and Arab, invisible” (p. 6).

Alas, most social and political historians will find the work incomprehensible, and, while historians of ideas will find nuggets of insight here and there, they too will find it heavy going. All will find that they have been dropped into a terrain transfigured by the works, the vocabulary, and the strategies of Jacques Derrida. Thus “the Jew, the Arab” of the title does not refer directly to the flesh-and-blood peoples so named, but to a footnote to one of Derrida’s speeches. There is a full chapter on Derrida’s concept of the Abrahamic, with considerable discussion of “the Jew, the Arab” in Derrida’s psyche (Derrida was an Algerian Jew), and the analysis that emerges has a Derridean stamp. It consists of close interrogations of the materials, deconstructions of primary concepts, and a Freudian-type excavation of the European unconscious — what Anidjar calls the hidden history of the enemy. Readers drenched in cultural studies will find the rhythms of argument and exposé familiar, but even they will have to work hard.

In a brief review, one cannot do justice to a work of relentless argument, especially since the author claims new directions and breakthroughs at every turn. At best, one can offer a brief sketch that will allow us to address his very controversial conclusions. In the introduction, Anidjar provides a preview of his procedure. His model is the work of Mahmood Mamdani, in Rwanda, who describes how the legal system of European colonialism tightened pre-existing fluid tribal relations with legal definitions that singled out one tribe, the Tutsi, as a people apart, thus exposing them to the possibilities of retribution and finally genocide. Anidjar seeks a similar exploitation of that most crucial of powers, the power to define, which is the basis of the invention of the Jew and the Arab as enemies. He does not, of course, have a system as clear-cut as Mamdani’s colonial legal code and thus requires more subtle

tools of analysis. His method is to seek the enemy that emerges from an interrogation, part Derridean, part Freudian, of the history of exegesis of Christ's injunction to "Love Thy Enemy".

Part 1, entitled "The Theological Enemy", traces this history from Paul's Epistle to the Romans through to Augustine, Aquinas, and other Christian exegetes (with interludes on Derrida, Freud, and Rosenzweig). In the section on Paul's Epistle to the Romans, the author provides a skilful account of Paul's implicit allusions to the Pharisees as "the enemy". Subsequent sections show how "love thy enemy", while remaining central to Christian theology, is refurbished and made consistent with just war, imperial adventures, and pogroms. In the climax of this section, where thinkers must take account of the centuries of war between Christendom and Islam, Anidjar deconstructs the "enemy" as the dual image of the Jew as theological enemy and the Arab as the secular enemy.

The evidence in support of this thesis is, in my view, very murky, but it becomes clear that Anidjar uses this as the basis of his central discovery, the origins of the theogico-political split — the division between state and church as the defining characteristic of the modern West. Anidjar means to expose this split, so crucial to the West's self-definition, as the very double-edged sword with which the West can strike and manipulate both peoples — a festering ground for anti-Semitism and Orientalism, meant to divide and stage-manage.

One could write a whole essay questioning the fruitfulness of these methods and the validity of the conclusions. Regarding the methods, one would have to ask why such subterranean interrogations are necessary to bring out a vision of the enemy which, if true, could be demonstrated in a more straightforward fashion. After all, there is nothing much hidden about Europe's view of its Jews and Muslims. Mediaeval Christianity distinguished between Jews and Muslims, but surely not in this way. The artistic portrayals of the Saracens were very "theological", and the Jewish monkey-lender or child killer was very secular. Nor is it plausible that the theogico-political split, which was in some sense embedded in Christianity from the beginning, was brought to prominence because of this dual enmity. The call for the separation of Church and state was rather a product of the wars of the Christians with one another in the sixteenth century than the wars with Islam in the twelfth and thirteenth. Whatever bad faith has appeared in the secular religious split, Anidjar's disdain for the contemporary secular state in France notwithstanding, the struggle for the secular state was and is a struggle for a neutral territory outside the control of contending religious authorities.

The second part of the volume shows the subsequent history of this dual enemy. Paradoxically, Anidjar's argument concerning Western prejudice is strongest where both Jew and Muslim are interchangeable, as in his sections on Kant and Hegel, rather than where they are split. The work is a faithful instance of the manner in which Derrida's methods address an historical and political problem, filled with close scholarship and striking insights here and there leading to arbitrary conclusions.

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