Philippe-E. Landau, *Les Juifs de France et la Grande Guerre. Un patriotisme républicain, 1914-1941*

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d'explorer les domaines, de suivre les parcours et les expressions de l'anticléricalisme, avec notamment un « Lexique libre penseur et anticlérical », en un ensemble complété par une collection de notices biographiques succinctes.

Les bénéfices du genre sont patents. Car, en multipliant les angles d'observation, les « domaines de l'anticléricalisme » nous emmènent hors des sentiers battus. Ressortent ainsi à la fois la diversité des manières d'être anticlérical et l'omniprésence du débat, la façon dont celui-ci infiltre la vie des Français dans tous ses registres, des plus ambitieux aux plus quotidiens, et détermine notamment toute réflexion, tout effort ou entreprise intellectuels ; toute occurrence fournissant une ample moisson à qui voudrait illustrer la thèse des deux France.

On découvre un versant moins connu des grandes efflorescences de piété qui ont marqué le second XIX^e français, les « assauts » dont celles-ci ont pu faire l'objet, toute une véritable contre-culture s'en prenant avec une verve inépuisable au Sacré-Cœur parisien comme aux dévotions de La Salette ou de Lourdes. La médecine revient à plusieurs reprises dans l'ouvrage, à la fois par la question du fondement intellectuel de la science, ainsi d'un passionnant article sur ce que le grand aliéniste Charcot appelait (dans un article donné à une revue anglaise) la *faith-healing*, position d'autant plus significative que ce grand médecin refusait par ailleurs tout engagement politique ; mais aussi à cause de l'enjeu social qu'elle constitue, notamment au sein de l'institution hospitalière. De même, le poids de la question dans le domaine de la politique extérieure et particulièrement celui, si sensible à la fin du XIX^e siècle, des alliances, la peur notamment qu'une politique trop proche des intérêts romains n'en vienne à compromettre toute relation avec l'Italie.

Une très judicieuse partie intitulée, « Devenir anticlérical », livre de véritables parcours de conversion, faisant aussi apparaître, sous l'exigence de rationalité, les subjectivités, les sensibilités et le poids des blessures personnelles. Tandis que les mêmes acteurs réapparaissent de thème en thème, d'un détour à l'autre de cette manière de comédie humaine anticléricale et qu'émergent liens, tissus de relations, circulation entre milieux divers, contagions d'un registre à un autre. Se dessinent ainsi des logiques, ou plutôt des dynamiques de radicalisation, chaque partie ne rebondissant inmanquablement que sur les affirmations les plus radicales, ou la partie la plus radicale des expressions de l'autre.

Une part de la réponse à nos questions apparaît aussi dans le mode, le ton, l'affect. Au fil des

exemples, on est également frappé par la virulence extrême des adversaires des anticléricaux, celle particulièrement du journal *La Croix*, toujours en première ligne. Il ne s'agit vraiment pas de débat mais bien de combat, en une surenchère sans cesse réalimentée. Un combat qui ne cesse de renforcer la détermination du politique, en ce sens la Troisième République est bien la République anticléricale, ou peut-être plutôt « anticléricaliste ». Reste que cette lecture renvoie aussi à une interrogation sur les autres, les hésitants, les troublés, ceux qui ne se sont vraiment sentis à leur place ni d'un côté ni de l'autre. Tel n'est certes pas le sujet de ce livre, mais devrait bien être celui d'un autre à espérer pour bientôt.

Rita Hermon-Belot.

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LANDAU (Philippe-E.).

Les Juifs de France et la Grande Guerre. Un patriotisme républicain, 1914-1941. Paris, CNRS Éditions, 1999, 293 p. (bibliogr.).

What is the significance of the Great War in the history of Europe's Jews? If the question was asked of the Second World War, it would seem absurd. Hardly anyone today has not heard about the destruction of European Jewry, which was one of the central events of that war. But gradually, over the last four decades or so, there has been a growing awareness of the role played by World War I in the shaping of twentieth century Jewish experience. It has become commonplace, despite varying and contradictory scholarly appraisals of that war, to view the mass brutalization on an "industrial" (The term "industrial killing" was introduced by Omer Bartov, in his 1996, *Murder in Midst: The Holocaust, Industrial Killing, and Representation*) that would see its apogee in the work of the Einsatzgruppen and the gas chambers as deriving from the experience of the trenches of World War I. Until now, however, only scant attention has been paid to the narrower question of what the Great War meant specifically for the Jews who were experiencing it.

P.-E.L., who holds a doctorate in contemporary history and serves as archivist of the Central Consistory of Jews in Paris, has authored several articles on the Emancipation and Jewish patriotism in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries and a book, *L'Opinion Juive et l'Affaire Dreyfus*. His attention turned toward World War I at a time when several decades of scholarship could provide a context within which to answer that question. In the same year that the present volume appeared, the Leo Baeck Institute of New York organized an exhibit on

the parallel topic of German Jewish patriotism, "Fighting for the Fatherland." An introductory essay by Jay Winter written for the catalogue provides a natural companion piece to the present work.

Previous research has demonstrated the strong French identification of Jews of Alsace-Lorraine from 1871 to World War I. Vicki Caron, following on the heels of sketchier work by Sylvain Halff, showed in detail that Jews left behind in German-occupied territory continued to maintain a French identification and developed a yearning for France. (*Between France and Germany: the Jews of Alsace-Lorraine, 1871-1918*, Stanford University Press, Stanford, California, 1988). In broader studies, other scholars have included reference to the growing patriotism of the early twentieth-century French Jews.

P.-E.L., giving credit to those who preceded him, picks up where earlier studies leave off. Drawing also on his own previous scholarship and his skills as a documentalist, he has produced an in-depth examination of the "republican patriotism" of French Jews, as it developed in response to the First World War. He demonstrates the mechanism by which the war simultaneously solidified Jewish identification with France and blinded Jews to dangers that were to come.

The dates in the subtitle may surprise. The study extends considerably beyond the closure of World War. The reason is simple and logical: this book looks not only at the period of that war and what it meant at the time for the Jews of France. It also examines the way Jews' expectations of France and of their own status, from the Great War right up to the beginning of the Second World War, were formed and informed by the Jewish experience of the First War.

It is generally agreed that the battlefields of the Great War had a leveling effect on the social strata of soldiers. Across otherwise impenetrable class divisions, camaraderie developed under fire. Jews benefited in a special way from this general phenomenon. Confident that their contribution would be recognized, they were convinced that their emancipation was at last fully realized. The fraternity of the trenches in one war would seal the emancipatory acts resulting from another.

World War I therefore cemented a Jewish patriotism that had its birth with the French Revolution and had already been bolstered by the participation of French Jews in the national mourning for the lost provinces of Alsace-Lorraine. Opting for France, and moving out of the amputated regions in order to remain French,

the choice of those eastern Jews had been a step toward the ultimate proof of Jewish loyalty. The sacrifices of the soldiers would certainly eradicate any remaining doubts.

A powerful symbol might have seemed to sustain this conclusion. Alfred Dreyfus had been restored to military service in 1914. The army officer at the center of an enduring national "Affaire", a man who best symbolized the lingering reluctance of conservative France to perceive its Jewish citizenry as full-fledged and trust-worthy citizens, was vindicated in time to join his comrades during a war that was to become the cementing experience for Jewish patriotism and confidence in the Republic.

So blinded were they by this comforting assessment, much of the Jewish community failed to recognize the earliest signs of danger that would become painfully manifest in the Vichy period. Despite the generality that antisemitism was largely suspended during the period of the *union sacrée*, there were distinct exceptions to this fact. The Action Française, that well-known and powerful exponent of anti-Jewish ideology, withdrew from the *union sacrée*. Even within the military, where it has been generally acknowledged that the shared hell of the trenches eradicated most social distinctions, there were acts of bigotry. One such episode led to a rebellion of Armenian and Jewish soldiers against a persecuting officer. In the severe reprisals that ensued several soldiers were shot for their mutiny.

The *union sacrée* fell further apart even as Clemenceau attempted to perpetuate it in peacetime. The Action Française emerged from the war stronger than ever. Nourished by the great fear that gripped the population as a result of its four-year ordeal, antisemites took advantage of French traumas and apprehensions in developing new justifications for hating immigrants and Jews. The author shows that Jewish war veterans, especially the foreigners, were to take a major role in the combat against antisemitism.

The volume is neatly divided into three sections. Part I details the experience of the soldiers on the front. Of the 180,000 Jews in France at the time of the outbreak of the war, P.-E.L. estimates that 16,000 were mobilized. In addition, 8500 foreign Jews, mainly from Central and Eastern Europe, joined the foreign legion. (There were, of course, numerous Jews among both the enemy and allied forces, especially in the German, Russian and American armies.) Particular consideration is given to Algerian Jews, whom the A. labels, "Macca-bees", in recognition of their special ardor.