



Socialism of Fools: Capitalism and Modern Anti-Semitism

By Michele Battini

Columbia University Press. Hardcover. Condition: New. 352 pages. Carefully analyzing obscure texts, Michele Battini targets the critical moment in which anti-Jewish stereotypes morphed into a sophisticated, modern social anti-Semitism. He recovers the potent, anti-Jewish anticapitalist propaganda that cemented the idea of a Jewish conspiracy in the European mind, despite ample evidence to challenge it. The Jewish conspiracy myth proved to be a significant political event in Europe. Battini's investigation is crucial to understanding the atrocities that characterized the Jewish experience in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries and the ongoing threat to the welfare of Jews today. Beginning in the eighteenth century, counter-Enlightenment intellectuals and intransigent Catholic writers singled out Jews for conspiring to exploit self-sustaining markets and the liberal state. And, with the old enemies of Christianity now assimilating into society, these opinion makers warned, Jews could plot in secret. Toussenel and Proudhon spread these ideas among socialist and labor movements in the nineteenth century, and their conspiracy theories only intensified during the Long Depression of the 1870s. Anti-Jewish anticapitalism then migrated to Western Europe: in the Habsburg Empire with the Christian Social Party; in Germany with the Anti-Semitic Leagues; and in France with the nationalist movements. It also traveled...



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