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Robert S. Wistrich

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FROM AMBIVALENCE TO BETRAYAL *The Left, the Jews, and Israel*

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Robert S. Wistrich : From Ambivalence to Betrayal: The Left, the Jews, and Israel (Studies in Antisemitism) before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised From Ambivalence to Betrayal: The Left, the Jews, and Israel (Studies in Antisemitism):

33 of 34 people found the following review helpful. Masterful New Research By Werner Cohn Once again Professor Wistrich has given us the fruits of his great erudition and deep learning. Again his subject is contemporary anti-Semitism. This time he focuses on the following paradox: the protagonists of the political Left in the West -- who never cease to proclaim their attachment to the Enlightenment and human values -- have joined the Islamists of the

Middle East in a war of malice and defamation against Israel and the Jews. In telling his story, Professor Wistrich goes deeply into the history of European movements and ideas of the 19th and 20th centuries. The details often make painful reading. I am happy to have this new volume on my book shelves, where it shares space with a number of Wistrich's earlier books, and also with the books of other scholars (for instance Anthony Julius's "The Trials of the Diaspora"). This body of work is our first line of defense against the premier malice of our time, the doctrine that calls itself "anti-Zionism" but is in fact anti-Judaism writ large. I do have a small proviso: The story as a whole depends on its treatment of detail. And in its function as a work of reference, easy access to the details is essential. Yet the index, which should be a key to this detail, is woefully inadequate. Many of the phenomena that are described in the book (for example the British left-wing movements Respect and the Socialist Workers Party, among many others) cannot be found in the index. 18 of 18 people found the following review helpful. A vitally important political / historical document. By JSJ This 600 page tome thoroughly documents the rarely-mentioned antisemitism that was (and continues to be) a major problem for the political left. The progressive socialist utopian theories promoted by the secular leftist intellectuals of 19th century - hostility towards religion, class-hate, anti-capitalism - fueled hatred of Jewish society and made a political science out of medieval classic antisemitism. It's fascinating that so many of the leaders of this movement - including Marx - were secular Jews, who were hostile to Judaism and Zionism. This book couldn't come at a more critical time. Hostility towards religion (except Islam), class-hate (the one percent vs. the 99%), anti-capitalism (Occupy Wall Street Obamunism), and Israel's political isolation are alive and well in Left-wing circles today. If the Socialist Left consolidates even more power in the coming years, pray that history does not repeat itself! 11 of 11 people found the following review helpful. Critical Study. By Lucky7 This book provides a critical intellectual history of antisemitism as it journeyed through the political left in 19th-century European thought through the 20th-century's totalitarian tragedies of Fascism, Communism, the New Left, and radicalized Islam. It is meticulously researched and provides a balanced view for someone like myself who always interpreted antisemitism as a "right-wing" or ultra-conservative ideology. The book illuminates the destructive thread of antisemitism in leftist ideological movements and thought. Highly recommended.

From Ambivalence to Betrayal is the first study to explore the transformation in attitudes on the Left toward the Jews, Zionism, and Israel since the origins of European socialism in the 1840s until the present. This pathbreaking synthesis reveals a striking continuity in negative stereotypes of Jews, contempt for Judaism, and negation of Jewish national self-determination from the days of Karl Marx to the current left-wing intellectual assault on Israel. World-renowned expert on the history of antisemitism Robert S. Wistrich provides not only a powerful analysis of how and why the Left emerged as a spearhead of anti-Israel sentiment but also new insights into the wider involvement of Jews in radical movements.

"This is a magisterial work, providing a comprehensive understanding of the origins of the most pernicious challenges currently facing the Jewish people, especially those originating from the enemy within." Isi Leibler, Jerusalem Post