

# ENCYCLOPAEDIA JUDAICA

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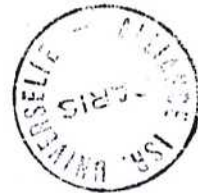
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TRIGANO, SHMUEL (1948– ), French sociologist and intellectual, born in Blida, Algeria. A professor of sociology of religion and politics at the Nanterre University Paris x, Trigano's main purpose was to investigate the enigma of modernity and the nature of Jewish politics. By studying the Jews as agents and subjects of history, he tried to understand why Jews disappeared from the public space in the modern world in the aftermath of the Emancipation and how Jewish politics have been restored in the historical arena with the creation of the State of Israel. He developed his reflections in two directions: an analysis of modernity and an attempt to understand the essence of Jewishness, with regard to the political dimension of the world. Following an hermeneutical method, Trigano developed, from his initial *Le Récit de la disparue* (1977) to *La demeure oubliée, genèse religieuse du politique* (1982), *Philosophie de la Loi, l'origine de la politique dans la Tora* (1992), and *La séparation d'amour, une éthique d'alliance* (1998), an anthropological approach to Judaism.

He published numerous books, which are not only concerned with the Jewish sphere but also with the essence of politics and democracy as such. Assuming that the attitude of democracy towards the Jews is a key to the understanding of its very nature, he postulates that the Jewish question could illustrate the failure of the human rights theory to account for collective identity and to face the question of transcendence, which modernity can not paradoxically avoid despite the phenomenon of secularization and civil religion. Trying to pinpoint the origins of the presence and topicality of Jewishness in the modern world through Jewish history, Trigano conceives the idea of the Jewish State not as a regression to the past but as an invention of a new age. A special part of his work is devoted to French Judaism, considered as an exemplary case of the civil political status of the emancipated Jew. More recently Trigano focused on the new European antisemitism. In *Les frontières d'Auschwitz, les ravages du devoir de mémoire* (2005), he intended to demonstrate the way Europe expects the Jews to remain in the role of victims, the only recognition allowed to them. He assumes that as soon as they depart from this role, as is the case when they live in a sovereign political state, they are subjected to reprobation.

Being one of the main figures in contemporary French Judaism, Trigano was the founding director of the College of Jewish Studies at the \*Alliance Israélite Universelle (1986– ) and initiated the periodical *Pardès*, an European Journal for Jewish Studies and Culture (1985). In 2001, he created a research center devoted to the analysis of contemporary antisemitism. He was a president of the Observatory of the Jewish World. He also was the editor of the 4-volume series *La Société juive à travers l'histoire* (1992) intended to illustrate the permanence, unity, and continuity of the Jewish people over 30 centuries.

[Perrine Simon-Nahum (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.)]