Edy Cohen - Syllabus

Antisemitism and Holocaust Denial in the Arab World

Anti-Semitism is the world's "longest hatred,"." Although the phenomenon has clearly diminished in some countries, it is rampant in the Middle East and in the arab world.

I have chosen to teach this course at least partly as a result of my personal experience. As a Jew, born and raised in an arab country, I have been affected by the issue of anti-Semitism all my life.

The course will focus on antisemitism and Holocaust denial in the Arab world. Throughout the semester we will learn about the dissemination of such texts as *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion* and *Mein Kampf* and the role they played in the demonization of Jews in the Middle East. We will analyze the rise of Middle Eastern antisemitism and its exacerbating affect on the Arab-Israeli conflict.

We will study the works of leading figures such as Sayyid Qutub and Hassan al Bannah in Egypt. From there we will move to pre-state Palestine and examine Haj Amin al Husseini's anti-Jewish propaganda in the 1930s and 40s.

We will learn about the introduction of Nazi propaganda into the Arab world during the period of the Third Reich and how it complicated Arab-Jewish relations in the Middle East. The spread of antisemitic propaganda had very real consequences for the Jews of the Arab world, particularly of Iraq, who suffered from a state-sponsored pogrom, known as the Farhud events of 1941.

Students today should be aware of the history of anti-Semitism in the arab world including the suffer and the peesecution of thousands of jews who lived in the arab countries in the 20 century. It is impossible to have a full and meaningful understanding of our culture without it.

I believe that the most effective access to this history is through reading and viewing works of art that confront this ongoing world tragedy with aesthetic and visceral power. Ideally, this course will provide that opportunity.

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