

Resentment, Anxiety and Careerism: Accounting for Antisemitism in the Academy and Among the Intelligentsia

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Recently I've been professionally involved in surveys of two very different Jewish populations – one of Jewish university students on 55 American campuses and the other of Jewish leaders in 28 European countries. Yet a majority of respondents in both surveys reported great concern about antisemitism.

The 2013 Pew Survey revealed that older American Jews are unlikely to meet antisemitism but young Jews do meet it. Where in the US today is one most likely to find antisemitism? Where are swastikas painted? Not on shop windows or at railroad stations not at the sports stadium but on university campuses on Jewish fraternity houses and on banners at campus demonstrations.

And what of the situation in Europe? In 2015, on behalf of the Joint Distribution Committee, we surveyed several hundred European Jewish community leaders in five languages. They were asked who were their allies in the struggle against antisemitism “always or most of the time.” A majority of 54% said their national governments were supportive while only 13% said intellectuals and academics acted as friends of the Jews. Conversely when asked who they saw as a threat to Jewish communities “always or sometimes,” 33% of Western European leaders cited intellectuals and academics compared to 18% in former Soviet bloc nations. This hostility to Jews, particularly among Western European intellectuals, requires explanation for it's not a new problem. My task is to try to explain why Jews have a problem in the Academy and at universities.

The Intelligentsia

The author Tom Wolfe (NEH interview 2006 as Jefferson lecturer) made a distinction between intellectuals and people of intellectual achievement. In his definition “an intellectual feeds on indignation” – “a person who is knowledgeable in one field but speaks only in others.” As we shall see history reveals that Jews are disproportionately the targets of such indignation.

Jewish history in the modern period has been dominated by the experience and fate of Jews in Germany and Russia - countries of intellectual pretensions and powerful ideas. The intelligentsia in Russia in 19th century was the first intelligentsia to be aware of itself as such. It created an astonishing high culture of writers and thinkers, painters and musicians that became the admiration of Europe. But elements had a messianic twist drawing on monkish notions of the 3rd Rome, folk memories of Holy Rus and the Slav soul to give Russia a universal mission to redeem the fallen, materialist world with a higher spirit of Christian Orthodox truth and justice. Dostoevsky – no friend of the Jews- was the exemplar of this movement. When Tsarism fell mystical memories of Russia as moral savior of mankind were transferred to the new Soviet Union in the official formula “the fatherland of the international proletariat and the toilers of the world.” This gave Russia, transformed into the USSR, another universal mission as the worker’s fatherland that would lead the world to socialism and finally the nirvana of communism. History records that Jews became victims of both the materialistic and the spiritual versions of Russia’s forays into utopian idealism. One result of this Russian-Soviet connection was that antisemitism –in the form of Marxist-Leninism anti-capitalism and anti-Zionism - found a place in leftist ideology and progressive anti-colonialist politics worldwide. Historic antisemitism produced the anti-Zionism we see today.

One of the fallacies under which many Jews and other well-meaning people suffer is that educated people are inherently less prejudiced than the uneducated. Racism and nastiness, like crime generally, is commonly associated with the so-called ‘lower orders’. Conventional wisdom holds that prejudice equals ignorance and therefore can be fought—and ultimately eradicated—through education. More education begets more enlightenment.

In 1776 Adam Smith postulated that “an instructed and intelligent people ... are always more decent and orderly than an ignorant stupid one.”¹ This belief is a twin version of a worldview that contrasts the physicality and boorishness of the benighted with the refinement and sophistication of the learned class. Both relate to a theory of individual pathology and the mob’s proclivity to violence. The frustrated, inarticulate, alienated and angry simpleton is juxtaposed with the balanced and mentally healthy scholar.

The problem with this psychological construct is that it relies on class prejudice rather than historical facts. It is a liberal myth. The educated clergy in Europe were not always less cruel than the illiterate peasants. Architects are not necessarily morally superior or better behaved than

¹ Adam Smith, *The Wealth of Nations*, 1776, Book V, Chapter 1, Part 3, Article II.

truck drivers. My focus of this lecture is the realm of ideas and the mind the world of the intellect. Ideas are crucial to explaining the problem of the efficacy of hate. Ideas are what people have always been prepared to live, kill and die for. The famous economist, John Maynard Keynes suggested that:

Ideas . . . both when they are right and when they are wrong, are more powerful than is commonly understood. Indeed the world is ruled by little else. I am sure the power of vested interests is vastly exaggerated compared to the gradual encroachment of ideas.

Neitzsche claimed the root of political psychology is resentment – *resentiment* – and that it was the distinguishing social emotion of modern societies (Friedrich Neitzsche, *The Genealogy of Morals*, 1899). His thesis was that other people’s or group’s success breed resentment and resentment in turn breeds hate. It’s a passion bound up with the identity of the one who feels it and he rejoices in damaging others by virtue of their membership of the targeted group. Moreover, particularly in insecure epochs hatred brings order out of chaos and decision out of uncertainty.

Once we understand that ideas are both freestanding and powerful we gain an indispensable tool for combating the insidious argument that victims cause the hatred they receive. Jewish behavior or actions can—and does—affect the arguments and narratives of enemies. Yet this recognition does not mean that the actions and behavior of Jews, rather than their simple existence, causes antisemitism. In the 1930s it was the individual economic or racial Jew who was the claimed cause of Germany’s, Europe’s and the world’s misery. Biological anti-Semitism logically requires a genocidal solution. Anti-Zionism offers a very different—and theoretically less murderous—prospect. The logical targets for eradication are Zionist political institutions and the leadership, rather than the whole population. The assault on these political institutions may involve violence and death but it is not inevitable. Hence the proponents claim neither to be racist or genocidal.

This argument is particularly appropriate to the contemporary university campus in North America and Western Europe. The current atmosphere in many arts and social science departments requires one to revisit the thesis in the 1927 attack by the French essayist Julien Benda in *La Trahison des clercs*. Benda accused the intelligentsia of his day of:

abandoning their traditional panoply of philosophical and scholarly ideals [whereby] for centuries [they] had exhorted men . . . to deaden the feeling of their differences [and instead had come to support and favour] the intellectual organization of political hatreds”.

This distinguished French writer once defined intellectuals as people whose function was to defend eternal and disinterested values like justice and reason. Events in 20th century Europe were to disappoint him.

One fact often ignored about interwar Europe and the build-up to the Holocaust is that in Germany and Austria the Nazis controlled the universities before they controlled streets or the organs of government. Looking back at the history of the Third Reich, what stands out is the conspicuous absence of resistance by means of faculty strikes or student protests to the mass expulsions of Jewish staff and students from universities. One result, as Daniel Goldhagen showed in his controversial 1996 book *Hitler's Willing Executioners*, was that the *Einsatzgruppen*, the mobile killing squads of the Eastern Front in 1941-2, were definitely a 'better class of German'. There was a surprisingly high proportion of university graduates among these fanatics and psychopaths.

All this makes prescient the words of that leading light of the *Aufklärung*, the German Enlightenment, Georg Christoph Lichtenberg (1742-99) when he suggested in one of his trenchant aphorisms:

*Today we are trying to spread knowledge everywhere. Who knows
if in centuries to come there will not be universities for re-establishing
our former ignorance?*

Lichtenberg, one of the most famous scientists of the 18th century might just as aptly be describing today's post-modernist academics. Education, after all, has two core aspects: the cognitive and the affective. Thus I would suggest that knowledge is essentially a good thing. By themselves, ideas are neither good nor bad. It is through their application—and combination—that the two become deleterious. This is the problem—and danger—of modernity: the linkage of knowledge with bad ideas. One could claim that the most dangerous people have not been soldiers or scientists, but political philosophers and ideologues.

The problem here resides in the unenlightened or retrograde center of higher education. In fact, this phenomenon emerged much earlier—and in the highest echelons of academia—than even Lichtenberg could have imagined. For it was the greatest German historian of his age, Heinrich von Treitschke, Professor of History at the University of Berlin, who in 1879 re-coined and endorsed the slogan *Die Juden sind unser Unglueck* – 'The Jews are our misfortune' first used by Martin Luther. While von Treitschke died in 1896, his idea lived on. Fifty years later this identical phrase became both a slogan and a rallying cry, as it was to be incorporated into the banner of the Nazi Party newspaper *Der Sturmer* in order to inspire Hitler's storm troopers. Post-modern fashion would classify such things as coincidences. Yet it is significant that that the editor and publisher of this newspaper, Julius Streicher, was to be tried at Nuremberg and

executed for crimes against humanity. Why? In the words of the prosecution, Streicher was convicted of “poisoning the minds of a generation”. It is a resounding endorsement of Keynes’ axiom about the power of ideas. It is equally important for us to note this innovation in international law. Ideas and words have consequences: The incitement to hatred and advocacy of murder and genocide is as much a crime as the act itself.

The issue of antisemitism in higher education is important because of the crucial role universities play in society, culture and the modern economy. They control access to the professions and act as gatekeepers to positions of power and authority as well as most high paying occupations. For the past 150 years the key to socio-economic advancement in most countries has been access to higher education. In order to understand the problem let us examine the historical record in detail.

Jews and the University Problem

Historically, universities in the Christian West and in the Muslim lands were founded and run by religious bodies. Theology was the pre-eminent discipline and other subjects were only slowly added to the syllabus. Thus Jews were excluded on religious grounds from most European universities from the Middle Ages until the era of Jewish civil emancipation in the 19th century. The main exception was Italy’s medical schools, especially Padua. The Protestant Reformation did not change this exclusion policy. The Protestants maintained strong commitment to Replacement Theology - transfer of the Covenant from Jewish people to the Christian Church the New Israel. In addition, Martin Luther was fiercely antisemitic. In 1543 Luther published *On the Jews and Their Lies* in which he wrote that the Jews are a "base, whoring people, that is, no people of God, and their boast of lineage, circumcision, and law must be accounted as filth." They are full of the "devil's feces ... which they wallow in like swine. Tolerance was slow in emerging across Europe. In England Oxford, Cambridge and Durham universities operated religious Test Acts for admission until 1871. It was no accident that in the 1820s leading supporters of Jeremy Bentham’s new secular University College London were prominent Jews.

Russia had the world’s largest Jewish population from the 1790s to the 1930s but they faced severe educational barriers. During the late 19th century Tsar Alexander III introduced a policy that only a tiny percentage of Jews could receive a higher education.

After the 1917 Communist revolution large numbers of Jews enrolled in institutions of higher education, and professors and research workers won signal recognition in the universities, institutes, and academies. During Stalin's "black years" (1948–53), however, a drastic reduction of their number took place, when Jewish scholars were dismissed in great numbers from their posts and many of them arrested or exiled. After Stalin's death the situation improved but restrictions on those of Jewish nationality (in the Soviet parlance) were re-introduced during the late-1970s anti-Zionist campaign – under the slogan “Zionism is racism” - and the battle over freedom of emigration. Thus prestigious academic institutions such as Moscow State University

introduced a 2% quota for Jewish students. There was a kind of back to the future irony in Soviet President Leonid Brezhnev re-introducing the public policies of Tsar Alexander III. It certainly suggested that the Communist experiment of international brotherhood and solidarity was failing and the end was nigh for the Soviet Union.

In other states with large Jewish communities, similar constraints on Jewish social advancement operated. In the 1920s Poland, Hungary, and Romania introduced the *numerus clausus* to limit Jewish student enrolment. In Poland, particularly, Jews were relegated to the "ghetto benches" in university lecture halls, while periodic riots were organized by antisemitic students. The U.S was not immune to this discriminatory trend. In 1922, Harvard president A. Lawrence Lowell defended the existence of a 10 percent quota for Jews at Harvard by expressing concern about "the large and increasing proportion of Jewish students in Harvard College," and his policy was supported by Harvard undergraduates who claimed that "Jews do not mix [and] they destroy the unity of the college" (in: *Harvard Graduates' Magazine*, Sept. 1922). In 1945, Dartmouth College president E.M. Hopkins justified a quota for Jewish students by emphasizing that "Dartmouth is a Christian college founded for the Christianization of its students." In 1947, President Truman's Commission on Higher Education charged that quota systems and policies of exclusion had prevented young people of many religious and racial groups, but particularly Jews and blacks, from obtaining a higher education and professional training. A study by the American Council on Education (1949) showed that the average Jewish applicant for college admission had considerably less chance of acceptance than a Catholic or Protestant of comparable scholastic ability. In the same year, application forms of 518 colleges and universities and of 88 schools of medicine and dentistry were still found to contain at least one and usually several potentially discriminatory questions. Even after Jewish students were admitted in most countries there remained barriers to hiring Jewish faculty.

Of course the classic example of civilization morphing into barbarism with the active assistance of large sections of the intelligentsia is Germany, the country which most of the world admired for its scientific and cultural leadership. Its prestigious university system was the model for modern institutions of higher education. Germany established the multi-disciplinary research university with its doctoral programs, graduate schools and scholarship across the natural sciences, humanities and the new social and behavioural sciences. In 1922, the famous German economist and sociologist, Max Weber, wrote an essay entitled, *Wissenschaft als Beruf* – Science as a Vocation. Here he put his finger, ten years before Hitler came to power, on one of the major reasons for the eventual displacement of the scholar by Nazi demagogues as proponents of academic values and goals. Without reference to the Nazis or any other political party, Weber revealed how the value void arose, which would permit totalitarian dictators and other fanatics to impose their iron rule over the universities. In the late-1920's, during the later years of the Weimar Republic, German university students began to harass Jewish students and put pressure on Jewish professors, thus preparing for the academic repression characteristic of the Nazi regime. It's important to note here that the Nazis controlled the universities, both student unions

and the faculty clubs, before they controlled the streets or the government. In the 1920s there was continuing demand for the removal of Jews from the German Student Federation (Deutsche Studentenschaft or DSt). This evidence suggests that the majority of students supported at least a drastic reduction in the number of Jewish teachers at institutions of higher learning.

The publication in 1924, nine years before the Hitler regime took power, of Lenard's "England and Germany at the Time of the Great War" is a prime example of academic and intellectual antisemitism. As a Nobel Prize winner in physics before World War I, Lenard's views were quite influential. He not only believed that "England nearly always was a political monster" but also that Albert Einstein practiced "Jewish physics" which somehow differed from "German physics." Similar views were held by the famous German physicist Johannes Stark, the zoologist Golt, the theologian Hirsch, the art historian Pinder, the surgeon Sauerbruch and countless others.

On the Nazi take-over in January 1933 famous philosopher Martin Heidegger, delivered a speech entitled "*Die Idee der Politischen Universität.*" Here Heidegger stated: "The National Socialist revolution is not merely the taking over of an already existing power in the state by another party sufficiently large to do so, but this revolution means a complete revolution of our German existence . . . Heil Hitler!" Heidegger and eight of his colleagues published an "Oath of Allegiance of the Professors of the German Universities and High Schools to Adolf Hitler and the National Socialist State." Thus began the so-called "cleansing process" at German universities. All German professors were public employees, responsible to the Minister of Science, Art and Public Education at Berlin. So April 7, 1933 regulations were issued designed to exclude from the German Civil Service and hence from all universities, those persons who in the view of the Nazi party were unfit to hold office. "Non—Aryans," i.e., Jews. As a consequence of these policies the dismissals of professors at German universities began in earnest with the academic year of 1934—35. In that year, 1,145 professors were dismissed or pensioned early. This state policy offered rapid advancement for young scholars was welcomed by most younger, Aryan faculty – there were literally jobs for the boys. Thus, after 1933, they were inclined to carry out their academic functions in the spirit of National Socialism.

Widespread support for the reduction in the number of Jewish students and teachers had not only made Nazis popular on the campuses before 1933. As a sign of student radicalism, however, many students remained dissatisfied with the 1933 law; they continued to boycott the lectures of Jewish professors even if they enjoyed exemption under the Aryan paragraph in the Civil Service Law, because they were war veterans. Their ruthless campaign, which lasted almost two years, finally achieved its goal: almost every Jewish professor who was legally still allowed to teach had resigned from his position by 1935.

What of Jewish students? They were hit by the euphemistic 'Law Against the Overcrowding of German Schools and Universities' promulgated on April 25, 1933. This law was complemented by the orders of the Prussian Ministry of Education stipulating that the share of non-Aryans

could not exceed 5 percent of the already enrolled students. According to the *Niederelbisches Tageblatt*, in 1932 there were about 4,000 non-Aryans at German universities. By the summer of 1933, their number had declined to 1,900 nationwide. In the summer semester of 1934, there were only 24 Jewish freshmen at German universities, who made up only 0.4 percent of the 6,189 first-year university students. By the winter semester of 1934/35, there remained only 800 Jewish university students in all of Germany.

Revolutions and purges proceed rapidly once the levers of state power are achieved and fanatics are very energetic. Hence the aphorism, that the price of freedom is eternal vigilance.

Totalitarian movements demand and obtain what the Irish poet William Butler Yeats described as a “passionate intensity capable of overwhelming all other considerations.”

In March 1938 the Nazis took over Austria and incorporated it into the Third Reich. Within three weeks 150 Jewish professors were dismissed from the University of Vienna Medical School alone. But as in 1933 there were no student protests or faculty strikes against Nazi “race policy.” And there were no boycotts of German universities by universities in Scandinavia, Britain, or the U.S. Refugee scholars from Europe, including Albert Einstein, found themselves excluded from tenured posts. In fact, Ivy League presidents welcomed Nazi Germany’s government officials more than they did Jewish students. Since America’s top universities and medical schools operated Jewish quotas presumably they did not feel confident about criticizing Germany. What this sad saga illustrates is that antisemitism was both fashionable and endemic in western intellectual circles only the intensity varied across societies. The history of universities in the first half of the 20th century debunks the notion of progress and a linear progression in the affairs of mankind. In fact, American Jews’ relationship with universities has been checkered and Jews were more welcome in the halls of academe in the 1880s than in the 1930s.

How do we account for the persistence of antisemitism, a particular and particularly pernicious form of prejudice and racism, across time and space? We can draw explanations from a number of academic disciplines – politics, sociology, economics, psychology, anthropology, theology, literature as well as history.

Many writers from Karl Marx to Protestant theologian Reinhold Niebuhr (*Moral Man and Immoral Society*) believed that “political opinions are inevitably rooted in economic interests of some kind or other.” However, the historical record suggests that class analysis is not completely sufficient since political opinions can arise from religious and philosophical commitments, cultural origins, social aspirations or perverse animosities without economic roots. In fact in 1942 Niebuhr in *The Race Problem* contends that racism is located in “group consciousness . . . the inveterate tendency among men to generalize about individuals in another group upon the basis of the least favourable evidence in regard to them.” This view of inter-group relations is very close to social psychologist Henri Tajfel’s social identity theory (1974). The tendency towards in-group out-group bias whether based on ethnicity or class is very evident in Marx’s *Der Judefrage* and a series of antisemitic tracts by Wagner, Houston Chamberlain, John Hobson,

Charles Maurras, and Hitler. Apart from their espousal of hatred and defamation these works are also notable for their search for human perfectionism and political utopianism. I would contend that utopian idealism, a fondness for monism as well as a preference for totalitarianism are covariates of antisemitism and that this explains much of its appeal to many intellectuals and academics rooted in both the Christian West and the Muslim lands.

The political right was attracted by religious and racial antisemitism while the Left has adopted class-based and political antisemitism. The point that needs emphasis here is that the Soviet Union and the Marxist-Leninist Third International it led was an ideological movement based on theoretically argued texts. Anti-Zionism was official policy and a great deal of attention was given over decades to arguing the case against Zionism as a 'reactionary movement' and against the policies and praxis of the State of Israel. A vast library of books, leaflets, historical and theoretical articles and speeches denouncing Israel and Zionism spewed out of Moscow and its satellites. Though Soviet policy was not based on racial or biological ideas about Jewish 'pollution' of the nation, in practice many communist publications in their enthusiasm to denounce Jewish class and religious traits often fell back on classic Jew-baiting and 'unofficial' historic antisemitic arguments that degenerated into screeds which would have gained a place in pre-war Nazi publications. They gave increasing prominence to Hobson's theory of Imperialism with Wall Street Jewish bankers as the controllers of an exploitive colonialism that was pauperizing the world. This approach emphasized conspiracy theories and echoed themes in the infamous *Protocols of the Elders of Zion*. Even sophisticated Communist theorists and intellectuals found it difficult to establish the demarcation lines between what they believed was legitimate and vehement criticism of Israel and real antisemitism. When attacked by western Jewry they fell back on theology. Lenin had defined antisemitism as 'spreading hostility to Jews' and a 'diversionary tactic of capitalists'. Antisemitism was a crime under the 1922 criminal code. Thus by definition a socialist state could not be antisemitic and the Soviet Union was an example of tolerance and fraternal internationalism. One finds echoes of this argument in U.K. Labour Party leader Jeremy Corbyn's denials of antisemitism.

This meant it was impossible for the Soviet leadership to embrace an open government policy of classic antisemitism whatever the personal inclinations of Politburo members. Thus the euphemistic term Anti-Zionism became the favored label. Unlike antisemitism it was not an immutable personal characteristic so it did not automatically threaten each individual Jew but only Jews who thought incorrectly. In fact, anti-Zionism could be and was embraced by good Communists (and other Marxist revolutionaries) of Jewish extraction willing to denounce the sins of other Jews duped by capitalism, religion and other falsehoods. The resulting anti-Zionist propaganda material was disseminated by the agitprop departments of Communist parties, fraternal or front organizations, and fellow travelers across the world for decades until it became a central plank in the litany of grievances and accusations against the evil ways of western imperialism and colonialism.

While the USSR never officially called outright for the extinction of the State of Israel, Trotskyist and other revolutionary leftist groups were less inhibited and were even fiercer in their anti-Zionist rhetoric and agitation. During the 1970s their terrorist offshoots such as Baader-Meinhof, Red Brigades and 'Carlos the jackal' went into active partnership in the 'armed struggle' alongside Palestinian militants such as Abu Nidal in attacks on Jews and Israelis across the world in outrages such as at the 1972 Munich Olympics massacre and the Entebbe plane hijacking.

Utopian idealism appeals particularly to the young. Violent revolutionaries – fascist, Marxist, Islamist are overwhelmingly young adults – the same age group as populate universities. It's not a chance occurrence that Mussolini's fascist anthem was "Giovinezza" meaning youth. So we can postulate a developmental factor at work. The desire to create a new order. Again it is important to remember that the cultural and artistic known as Futurism was embraced by Italian fascism. So what about the role of the western university today? UK government figures show that 47% of convicted terrorists in Britain since 2001 attended university (well above the national average) and 6 convicted terrorists were presidents of the Islamic society at their university (Haras Rafiq, Quilliam Foundation).

But why are the Jews so often a target of utopian idealists from across the political and religious spectrum? Interestingly most cultural representations of the Jew in art, literary fiction, and film tend to be of an elderly Jewish man. So is it that the Jew represents and is associated with the past and its failures and disappointments. A resentment of the past seems to motivate hatred of the Jew who often seems to symbolize tradition and history – that which must be destroyed in the pursuit of a new order.

Whereas the intelligentsia of the 1920s, which Julian Benda criticized, were drawn from the nationalist right, the situation is different now. Today's treacherous *clercs* are largely found on the left of the political spectrum among the journalists, pundits, moralists, and pontificators of our fast expanding media, along with their supporting cast of 'critical' academics. In the past 15 years we have been inundated by a barrage of sophisticated agitprop with apocalyptic insinuations that indicts Israel and the Washington Neo-Conservatives as the world's misfortune and directly to blame for war, terrorism, and globalization. This narrative, whereby Jews are out there somehow frustrating the international community's best interests and firm commitment to peace, prosperity and human rights, is not new. It is a modern adaptation of the conspiracy thesis of the *Protocols of the Elders of Zion*. Boiled down to its essence the idea bears an eerie similarity to Hitler's favorite rhetorical line at his rallies when railing about Germany's economic misery and geo-political problems. "*Wer ist schuldig? Der Jude!*" – "Who is guilty? The Jew."

The sociologist Pareto's theory of revolution, which focuses on social mobility, might be relevant here as a sociological explanation for this paradigm shift between the 1920s and today. The social mobility of the European intellectual elite that Benda criticized was ultimately

blocked by the economic downturn and overall sense of pessimism and crisis of his time. In 2015, in the wake of post-war decades of plentiful opportunity and mobility for the New Class are not western intellectuals once again becoming similarly frustrated? Certainly the intelligentsia—especially the university professor—has forfeited social and economic status in Europe and the U.S. as the result of the ‘big bang’ in finance and new technologies which generally favor entrepreneurs and commercial activity over public service and teaching.

Michael Curtis in his book *Verdict on Vichy* shows that the French left intelligentsia has been down this road of tacit support for bigotry before. During the Vichy regime 1940-4 Jews were boycotted, their assets confiscated and Jews and Jewish influence were removed by statute from public life and the national economy. Yet for its prominent writers – André Gide, Paul Claudel, François Mauriac, Jules Romains, Rodger Martin du Gard, even André Malraux until nearly the end of the war – the rule was silence or inaction. This silence was even more deafening in the case of Jean-Paul Sartre and Simone de Beauvoir, who so strongly influenced the climate of intellectual opinion after the war. The ‘heroic’ Simone de Beauvoir worked for a time on a cultural programme for Radio Nationale in occupied Paris. Her companion, Jean-Paul Sartre, happily replaced a dismissed Jewish professor of philosophy. Sartre’s book on the origins of antisemitism was only written in 1947. The liberal professions were no better. It was only in 1999 that the French doctors’ association, representing 180,000 members, acknowledged that the ‘basic values of their profession had been violated when they acquiesced in legislation that discriminated against and excluded their Jewish Colleagues’ from practicing.

Yet, we must beware of historicism. What we are seeing today is a mutation in the virus of anti-Jewish ideas and prejudice that marks the morphing of antisemitism into another form. For this reason and others the phenomenon in evidence may be more accurately termed Judeophobia—a fear of, and hostility toward Jews as a collectivity, rather than the propagation of the racial ideologies of the old antisemitism. It is a mindset characterized by an obsession with the sins of the State of Israel, and Diaspora Jews in general as a consequence of the majority’s well-documented strong sense of attachment to Israel. Today's Judeophobia is an assault on the essence of the Jewish collectivity, both in terms of a Jewish sovereign state in its ancient homeland, and the nature of robust, emancipated, and self-aware Diaspora communities. What the new opponents of the Jews share with the pre-war fascists and Stalinists is a similar predilection for utopian idealism which in turn adopts a simple approach to problem solving - eliminate the cancer permanently from the body politic.

Thus, there are strident calls for an academic boycott of Israeli universities and scholars and campaigns for economic divestment from Israel but not for similar actions or boycotts against other states such as Russia, Syria, Iran, China or Saudi Arabia. Are the pacifist Tibetans and their admirable leader the Dalai Lama inherently less deserving of support and attention than the Palestinians? Could it be that the Tibetans just have the wrong sort of oppressors – the fearsome Chinese? Base motivations are at play here. Collaboration with Chinese universities, of course also offers lucrative career opportunities and for western university faculty and administrators.

Recruitment of Arab international students is also lucrative income for western universities while academic supporters of the class, race and gender thesis embrace Muslims as non-white victims of imperialism and Zionism.

That European elites are once again obsessed with “the sins and crimes of the Jews” is neither unprecedented nor unexpected. As the distinguished historian Robert Wistrich asserted one of the most intriguing and challenging features about antisemitism is that, at different stages in its development, it has come from all parts of the political spectrum and from different religious groups. There are of course inconsistencies and contradictions built into antisemitic thought. Is antisemitism rational or irrational? Obviously it meets perceived needs. Its attraction may be that it takes different forms at different times. It offers a Chinese restaurant menu of options and it is additive. It is opportunistic. The antisemite can pick and choose according to the context. The virus evolves over time. The motives can be rational or irrational. The antisemite is not obliged to be logical or coherent, a lacuna which is reinforced by post-modernism.

For the past century, Jews have been over-represented in universities in terms of numbers of students and faculty. They have had outstanding success in the academic and intellectual arena as evidenced by the disproportionate number of Nobel prizes awarded to Jews. This success must have consequences. I began with Nietzsche who claimed the root of political psychology is resentment – *resentiment* – and that it was the distinguishing social emotion of modern societies (Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Genealogy of Morals*, 1899). His thesis was that other people’s or group’s success breed resentment and resentment in turn breeds hate. It is a passion bound up with the identity of the one who feels it and he rejoices in damaging others by virtue of their membership of the targeted group. Higher education today in the West, particularly in the humanities and social sciences, is undergoing strains and its future is uncertain. History shows and psychology predicts that in insecure epochs hatred brings order out of chaos and decision out of uncertainty. A competitive, disorderly, insecure and fearful environment will almost inevitably produce antisemitism among utopian idealists who are over-represented in university and intellectual circles. Their individual careerist ambitions combined with their psychological and political orientations seem almost inevitably to pre-dispose them to embrace boycotts, disinvestment and sanctions on Israel and Jews.