

SYLLABUS

HIST-B 303 Issues in Modern European History/
JSTU-J 304 Social & Historical Topics in Jewish Studies #32844 (3 cr.)
MW 2:30-3:45; KH 312

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ANTISEMITISM IN SOCIOHISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

Irrational and often lethal hatred of Jews has a history of over 2000 years. Antisemitism made its first appearance in the ancient world, later intensifying in waves in Christian Europe and, to a lesser extent, in Islamic countries. Antisemitic myths became deeply embedded in Western culture. Racial and genocidal antisemitism rose with 19th century nationalism and culminated in the attempt by Nazi Germany to indiscriminately wipe out every member of the Jewish “race”. After Nazism was defeated and the horrors of the Holocaust became public, antisemitism in its racist forms became illegitimate in most societies. However, somewhat curiously, antisemitic attitudes and behavior continue to be a worldwide phenomenon today. They are often manifested in irrational attacks against the Jewish State of Israel, but also in distortions and denial of the Holocaust or in physical attacks against Jews. Antisemitic opinions are most openly voiced in Islamic countries, but their frequency is increasing again in a number of Western countries, including the United States. What are the historical roots of antisemitism? Why and in what forms does antisemitism persist today? What are factors in society that advance or contain antisemitism? We will examine the most significant antisemitic myths and events in their historical and social contexts, including the image of Jews as murderers of God, usurers, and conspirators, as well as the blood libel. Students will complete the course with an increased understanding of the irrational motives involved in antisemitism, how antisemitism is similar to and different from other prejudices, as well as the multiple sources from which antisemitism derives. We will study antisemitism from multiple angles, the foremost of which will be historical, but we will also examine social, philosophical, and psychological perspectives— through works that have become standard references on the subject of antisemitism as well as more recent works. Selected key antisemitic texts will also be discussed.

COURSEWORK

The course will emphasize class discussion and includes a high proportion of independent work. Our goal is to deepen an understanding of contemporary antisemitism in its many facets. Course activities include: (1) Doing the assigned reading before each class session; (2) participating in class discussions; (3) writing short writing assignments; and (4) undertaking a research project, culminating in a first and second paper and a class presentation. Your grade will be based on class participation and preparation (20%), short writing assignments (15%), your first (15%) and second (30%) paper and your class presentation (20%). More specific information about the research project is provided at the end of this handout.

You are encouraged to attend two public lectures on themes related to the subject matter of this course by visiting scholars. The names of these scholars and the dates, times, and topics of their talks will be provided at a later date. Extra credit will be given to students who attend these public lectures and thereafter submit brief response papers (writing assignments) to these presentations.

COURSE MATERIALS

The following texts are required reading for this course. In addition, you will be given some handouts/ resources on Oncourse and also encouraged to locate relevant materials on the Web.

Gross, Jan. *Fear. Anti-Semitism in Poland after Auschwitz: An Essay in Historical Interpretation.*

Küntzel, Matthias. *Jihad and Jew-hatred: Islamism, Nazism and the Roots of 9/11.*

Laqueur, Walter. *The Changing Face of Antisemitism: From Ancient Times to the Present Day.*

Norwood, Stephen H. *Antisemitism and the American Far Left.*

Rosenfeld, Alvin H., ed. *Resurgent Antisemitism: Global Perspectives.*

Sartre, Jean-Paul. *Anti-Semite and Jew.*

Taguieff, Pierre-André. *Rising from the Muck: The New Anti-Semitism in Europe.*

COURSE SCHEDULE

The (preliminary) schedule is ambitious but intended to raise your interest. We will make adjustments according to your interests and your research project. Please discuss these with me as early as possible.

Please do the assignments for each day before the class, so that we can focus on discussing it. Be prepared to summarize the main points of each reading.

January 13 M – Introduction: Antisemitism in the 21 century and its roots. Explanation of course aims, assigned readings, written work, grading. Your expectations.

January 15 W – Defining antisemitism: coming to terms with a changing phenomenon.

Required reading: *Working Definition of Antisemitism* (document on Oncourse);

Laqueur, *The Changing Face of Antisemitism*, chapter 2;

Langmuir, *Toward a definition of antisemitism*, chapter 14, pp. 311-352 (link provided on Oncourse).

January 20 M – Martin Luther King, Jr Day (no class)

January 22 W – Antisemitism & Jews: obvious and less obvious relations.

Required reading: Sartre, *Anti-Semite and Jew*.

Submit writing assignment by email by January 21 (about 300 words):

Discuss your definition of antisemitism and differences to other forms of hatred/ prejudices/ ideologies/ projections.

Submit topic proposal for your paper. See paper assignments for details.

January 27 M – Western Europe: discourses, surveys, threats and attacks.

Required reading: Laqueur, *The Changing Face of Antisemitism*, chapter 7; Taguieff, *Rising from the Muck*, introduction and chapter 1.

January 29 W – Antisemitism in 21st century Europe: Manifestations and Actors: extreme Right, extreme Left, mainstream, Arabs/Muslims

Required reading: Rosenfeld, *Resurgent Antisemitism*, chapters 9 and 15 (Schneider, *The Catholic Church, Radio Maryja, and the Question of Antisemitism in Poland*;

Wistrich, *Anti-Zionist Connections: Communism, Radical Islam, and the Left*).

February 3 M – Antisemitism in 21st century Europe: Actors and Interpretations

Required reading: Laqueur, *The Changing Face of Antisemitism*, chapter 3; Additional materials will be provided on Oncourse/ in class.

February 5 W – Antisemitism Among Muslims in Europe

Required reading: Rosenfeld, *Resurgent Antisemitism*, chapter 10: Jikeli, *Antisemitism among young European Muslims*

Submit prospectus for your paper. See paper assignments for details.

February 10 M – Antisemitism from Islamists and the extreme Right in Germany

Materials will be provided for discussion in class.

February 12 W – Antisemitism from the Far Right. Case studies from Hungary and Greece.

Required reading: Materials will be provided on Oncourse/ in class.

February 17 M – The French Revolution and Enlightenment and from religious anti-Judaism to racist antisemitism in late 19th century Germany.

Required reading: Laqueur, *The Changing Face of Antisemitism*, chapter 4 and 5.

February 19 W – *Film showing: excerpts from Shoah (Lanzmann).*

February 24 M – The Kielce pogrom

Required reading: Gross, *Fear*, chapter 3

February 26 W – The legacy of the Holocaust: How is this past dealt with?

March 3 M – Muslim Antisemitism.

Required reading: Laqueur, *The Changing Face of Antisemitism*, chapter 10; introduction and chapters 1 and 2 from Küntzel, *Jihad and Jew-hatred*.

March 5 W – The Muslim Brotherhood and Hamas.

Required reading: Küntzel, *Jihad and Jew-hatred*, chapters 3, 4, and epilogue.

March 10 M – The case of Iran.

Required reading: Rosenfeld, *Resurgent Antisemitism*, chapter 12 (Choksy, *Antisemitism's Permutations in the Islamic Republic of Iran*).

Submit first version of your paper. Bring copies to submit to other members of your peer review group. See paper assignments for details.

March 12 W – In-class peer review groups for feedback on papers.

Bring your written evaluations of the papers by the other members of your peer review group. See paper assignments for details.

March 17 M – Spring recess (no class)

March 19 W – Spring recess (no class)

March 24 M – Historical roots of antisemitism: early Christianity and the Middle Ages.

Required reading: Laqueur, *The Changing Face of Antisemitism*, chapter 3; Additional materials will be provided on Oncourse/ in class.

March 26 W – Pogroms in Russia

Required reading: Materials will be provided on Oncourse/ in class.

March 31 M – The centrality of antisemitism in Nazism

– Assessing Antisemitism: When do prejudices become dangerous?

Required reading: Materials will be provided on Oncourse/ in class.

April 2 W – Psychoanalytical approaches to understand antisemitism

– Racism and Antisemitism

Required reading: Materials will be provided on Oncourse/ in class.

April 7 M – Antisemitism & American Far Left: Guest lecture by Prof. Stephen Norwood.

Required reading: Norwood: *Antisemitism and the American Far Left*.

April 9 W – Discussing reports on public lecture by visiting scholars and their main theses.

If you chose to write a brief response paper, including the main theses and points to discuss (500-750 words) please submit by April 8.

April 14 M – Antisemitism and Anti-Zionism: Looking into the Boycott, Disinvestment, and Sanctions (BDS) campaign against Israel.

Required reading: Rosenfeld, *Resurgent Antisemitism*, chapter 1 (Harrison, *Anti-Zionism, Antisemitism and the Rhetorical Manipulation of Reality*).

Additional materials will be provided on Oncourse/ in class.

April 16 W – Antisemitic views on the Israel-Palestinian conflict: the Mohamed Al-Durah case as an example of a modern blood libel: “Jews kill children.”

Required reading: Materials will be provided on Oncourse/ in class.

April 21 M – Antisemitic cartoons, antisemitic “humor” and antisemitism on the Internet

Required reading: Materials will be provided on Oncourse/ in class.

Submit writing assignment by email by April 20 (500-750 words):

Discuss three cartoons provided on April 16 on Oncourse: Describe each cartoon in a couple of sentences. What was the context of publication? What symbols are used? What antisemitic stereotypes are associated with it? What might be used as arguments to that it is not antisemitic?

April 23 W – Antisemitism in the US

– Antisemitism on campus

Required reading: Materials will be provided on Oncourse/ in class.

April 28 M – Holocaust denial and diminishing

Required reading: Spencer and Di Palma, *Antisemitism and the Politics of Holocaust Memorial Day in the UK and Italy* (will be provided on Oncourse);

Rosenfeld, *Resurgent Antisemitism*, chapters 17 and 19 (Porat, *Holocaust Denial and the Image of the Jew, or: 'They Boycott Auschwitz as an Israeli Product* and

Rosenfeld, *The End of the Holocaust and the Beginnings of a New Antisemitism*).

April 30 W – Holocaust education and education combating antisemitism

Submit your final research paper in class today.

May 7 W – Final examination (optional) 2-4pm.

PAPER ASSIGNMENTS

All students in this course will submit a first and a second version of their paper and present an oral report in class. Guidelines for these assignments are presented below. Please feel free to see me with any questions you might have.

Schedule

(1) **On or before January 22:** The first step is to choose a topic (please see the list of topics below). Please give me **brief proposals** for one or more topics that interest you. Each proposal should explain the topic, why it interests you and how you might approach it. Submit the topic proposal in print or by email. I urge you to talk with me about the topic and how to proceed. I will respond to your topic in writing.

(2) **February 5:** Submit **prospectus** for your paper, including a 300-word description of what you plan to do and how you plan to do it and a preliminary biography of the primary and secondary sources you have found. I will comment on your prospectus in writing. Please also make an appointment with me to discuss your paper in progress.

(3) **March 10:** Submit your **first version of your paper** (8-10 pages, double-spaced) in class. It is not a draft but a complete, finished paper. You should prepare five copies: one for you to keep, one for me, and one for each of your three peers in your review group. Therefore, late papers cannot be accepted. Feedback will be discussed in class on March 12.

The paper will be evaluated using these criteria:

- Command of the relevant primary materials and secondary literature.
- Originality: does this represent the writer's own ideas, building on the work

- of others? Or is it just a rehash of what others have done?
- Soundness and persuasiveness of the argument: does the writer marshal evidence logically and persuasively? Has the author anticipated counter arguments?
- Presentation: clarity of expression and ideas (including grammar, punctuation, spelling). Does the presentation facilitate getting the points across or does it get in the way? Would only minimal editing be needed for publication?

A typical paper includes an abstract (one paragraph summary), an introduction (including a thesis), the body of the paper, a conclusion, and a list of references. For references and citations please use the Chicago Manual of Style 16th edition (full note) or another standard reference style.

(4) **March 24 – April 23: Oral presentations.** Every student will be asked to give a brief (8-12 minute) presentation in class on his or her paper. Your presentation will be evaluated by me and by three of your peers. Your presentation will serve as a basis for class discussion on the topic of your presentation. I am happy to hear a dry run of your talk in advance to provide feedback on both content and manner of presentation. Feel free to make an appointment.

(5) **April 28:** Submit your final paper (15-20 pages, double-spaced) in print and by email (PDF document). For evaluation criteria and reference style see above. This paper should be a significantly improved and more detailed version compared to your first paper.

Citation

In your written work, you have to give credit where credit is due. If you quote from another writer, or if you paraphrase his or her ideas, points, or arguments, you must give a bibliographic citation or footnote in proper format. This is true even if you're using an online source or something that's included as part of a DVD package. Failure to do so is plagiarism. Any paper that is found to be plagiarized, in part or in whole, will receive an automatic F.

Plagiarism Policy

According to I.U.'s Code of Student Rights, Responsibilities and Conduct, "Plagiarism is defined as presenting someone else's work, including the work of other students, as one's own. Any ideas or materials taken from another source for either written or oral use must be fully acknowledged, unless the information is common knowledge. What is considered 'common knowledge' may differ from course to course.

- a. A student must not adopt or reproduce ideas, opinions, theories, formulas, graphics, or pictures of another person without acknowledgment.
- b. A student must give credit to the originality of others and acknowledge indebtedness whenever:
 1. Directly quoting another person's actual words, whether oral or written;
 2. Using another person's ideas, opinions, or theories;
 3. Paraphrasing the words, ideas, opinion, or theories, whether oral or

written;

4. Borrowing facts, statistics, or illustrative material; or
5. Offering materials assembled or collected by others in the form of projects or collections without acknowledgment.”

TOPICS FOR RESEARCH PAPERS AND REPORTS

Note: The topic headings listed below are broadly defined and will need to be more narrowly focused and refined for your papers. We will discuss how you might best go about doing that well before the due date for submission.

Instructions: Choose one of the following. See me, if you wish, if you have any questions about your selection or need help in pursuing it. You will be asked to submit a working title for your paper and a brief outline of it no later than **January 22**.

Early Christian antisemitism

Pogroms in 11th century Europe

Pogroms in Russia

Early Muslim antisemitism

Pogroms in 11th century Northern Africa/Iberian Peninsula

Antisemitism on the political left (choose a specific time period and country or one author)

Antisemitism on the political right (choose a specific time period and country or one author)

Anti-Americanism and antisemitism

Antisemitism within the Boycott, Disinvestment, and Sanctions (BDS) campaign

Antisemitism at the UN Durban conference (focus on a limited number of NGOs)

Antisemitism and the critique of capitalism

Antisemitic campaigns in the Soviet Union

Antisemitism in a Western European country (please choose one or compare two)

Antisemitism in an Eastern European country (please choose one or compare two)

Holocaust denial, distortion, and obfuscation as forms of antisemitism

The Protocols of the Elders of Zion: The myth of a Jewish world conspiracy

Antisemitism on the Web

Antisemitism in the United States

Antisemitism and the United Nations and/or the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation

Antisemitism on college and university campuses

The revival of medieval blood libels

Literary antisemitism (please choose one work or author or compare two)

Antisemitic views of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict (case study of news coverage of particular events such as the case of Mohamed Al-Durah or military operations).

Differences between antisemitism and racism

Differences between antisemitism and “Islamophobia”

Efforts to combat antisemitism (legislative, educational, etc.)

Antisemitic cartoons (case study on a particular cartoon or cartoonist)

Antisemitic “humor” (case study, e.g. on Dieudonné)

Psychoanalytical explanations of antisemitism

Some other topic of your choice (be sure to clear topic with me before pursuing it).