Modern antisemitism: from prejudice to extremism

Objective of the course:
The course aims to analyze the functions of antisemitic prejudice in different historical times and social contexts as well as the social psychological mechanisms underlying antisemitic political mobilization and political violence.

Description of the course:
The course not only offers an insight into the continuity of antisemitic prejudice through ages, societies and cultures, but discloses the social psychological background of extreme hate and violence against Jews. Main theories of prejudice and stereotyping – realistic group conflict theory, scapegoating, social dominance theory, authoritarianism theory, the stereotype content model, group conflict theories – will be discussed in relation to antisemitism as well as the psychology of acceptance of conspiracy theories and genocidal political ideologies. At the end of course methods of prejudice reduction and intergroup reconciliation will be introduced.

Course type: lecture (4 credits)

Course level: introductory (cross-listed)

Number of weeks of instruction: 6 (2 X 2X45min class)

Evaluation:

- journal (on readings and class) (25 %)
- written exam (30 %)
- essay: “The perception of antisemitism in Europe” (analysis of five interviews with students from different countries) (30 %)
- attendance (15 %)
Topics and required readings:

1. Introduction


2. Antisemitic prejudices in contemporary society: what is antisemitism?


3. Antisemitism: stereotypes, prejudice and measurement


4. Social psychological roots of antisemitic prejudice (authoritarianism, social dominance orientations, stereotype content model, group conflict theories)


5. Historical and cultural roots of antisemitic prejudice (anti-Judaism, political antisemitism, genocidal antisemitism)


6. Post-Holocaust antisemitism and Holocaust denial (secondary antisemitism, new antisemitism, anti-zionism, old antisemitism)


7. Scapegoating and genocidal antisemitism


8. Political extremization


9. **Conspiracy mindset**


10. **Antisemitism today**


11. **Prejudice reduction and de-extremization**


12. **The perception of antisemitism – how do we construct and understand antisemitism?**

Other resources:

Video: European antisemitism from its origins to the Holocaust (USHM)  
http://www.ushmm.org/confront-antisemitism/european-antisemitism-from-its-origins-to-the-holocaust

Video: Crossing the line 2. (Jerusalem U)  
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tNDcsH_wgU