

**Antisemitism Past and Present**  
Course Syllabus  
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Course Description

Robert Wistrich has called Antisemitism “The Longest Hatred.” Although the term “Antisemitism” was coined by Wilhelm Marr in 1879, hatred for the Jewish people is centuries old, predating Christianity. The Holocaust remains the most heinous historical expression of Antisemitism, but hostility toward the Jewish people has proven to be a perennial evil. Lawrence Langer observed that “what happened once is possible ever more.” Yehiel De-Nur feared that the Holocaust was merely a “dress rehearsal.” Religious and political extremists from Christian to Islamic, from liberal to conservative, continue to stoke the flames of the inferno. Any ideology that promotes the annihilation of women and children, of the old and the infirm, of civilian non-combatants. should terrify not only Jews, but all of humankind. This course is designed to expose the origins of such hate and to promote dialogue centered on identifying and uprooting radical elements before they reach maturity.

Student Learning Objectives/Outcomes

Students are expected to (i) develop and demonstrate the ability to compose original critical essays on the topic of Antisemitism, (ii) to develop and demonstrate the ability to present a refined presentation of their final essays, and (iii) to demonstrate the ability to engage in Socratic dialogue in a civil manner and with an open mind.

Grading

Attendance/class participation 15%

This course is designed to be dialogical. Students are expected to engage in class discussion and contribute to the learning environment. Attendance is mandatory.

Essays 25% each

Students are expected to submit three original essays throughout the semester. Due dates are listed in the Assignment Calendar. Each essay will count for 25% of the final grade. Late work will only be accepted with a valid excuse (health condition, family emergency, etc.).

Presentation 10%

Each student is expected to present his or her final essay on one of the two assigned presentation days at the end of the semester. Presentations will count for 10% of the final grade.

## Required Textbooks

- Benz, Wolfgang. *The Holocaust: A German Historian Examines the Genocide*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1995.
- Gradowski, Zalmen. *From the Heart of Hell: Manuscripts of a Sonderkommando Prisoner, Found in Auschwitz*. Auschwitz: Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum, 2018.
- Lazare, Bernard. *Antisemitism: Its History and Causes*. Lincoln, NE: The University of Nebraska Press, 1995.
- Michael, Robert. *Holy Hatred: Christianity, Antisemitism, and the Holocaust*. New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2006.
- Müller, Filip. *Eyewitness Auschwitz: Three Years in the Gas Chambers*. Chicago: Ivan R. Dee, 1979.
- Patterson, David. *Anti-Semitism and its Metaphysical Origins*. Cambridge University Press, 2018.
- Wistrich, Robert S. *Antisemitism: The Longest Hatred*. New York: Pantheon Books, 1991.

## Assignment Calendar

Week 1 – Course Introduction

Week 2 – The Origins of Antisemitism (Antiquity to the Reformation)

- Bernard Lazare *Antisemitism: Its History and Causes*, pp. 8-56.  
Wistrich, Robert S. *Antisemitism: The Longest Hatred*, pp. 3-29.  
Michael, Robert. *Holy Hatred*, pp. 1-44.  
Patterson, David. *Anti-Semitism and its Metaphysical Origins*, pp. 55-80.

Week 3 – Antisemitism from the Reformation to the Holocaust

- Bernard Lazare *Antisemitism: Its History and Causes*, pp. 56-163.  
Wistrich, Robert S. *Antisemitism: The Longest Hatred*, pp. 29-78.  
Michael, Robert. *Holy Hatred*, pp. 45-152.

Week 4 – Influences and Precedents that Paved the Way to the Holocaust

- Barber, Philip. “Bricks in the Road to Auschwitz” (class handout).  
Patterson, David. *Anti-Semitism and its Metaphysical Origins*, pp. 107-164.

Week 5 – Overview of the Holocaust

\*\*\* Essay 1 Due \*\*\*

Benz, Wolfgang. *The Holocaust: A German Historian Examines the Genocide*.

Week 6 – Auschwitz: The Essence of the Holocaust. Part I: Witness Accounts, Diaries

Gradowski, Zalmen. *From the Heart of Hell: Manuscript of a Sonderkommando Prisoner Found in Auschwitz*.

Week 7 – Auschwitz: The Essence of the Holocaust. Part II: Witness Accounts: Memoirs

Mueller, Filip. *Eyewitness Auschwitz*.

Week 8 – Auschwitz: The Essence of the Holocaust. Part III: Literature

Ka-tzenik *Kaddish* – class handouts

“Operation Old People”

“Operation Children”

“A Tear in the Death Camp”

“A Kindergarten in Auschwitz”

“In Line to the Crematorium”

Week 9 – Holocaust Representation

Film screening – *Son of Saul*

Week 10 – Post Holocaust Antisemitism, Part I: Holocaust Denial and Anti-Zionism

\*\*\* Essay 2 Due \*\*\*

Patterson, David. *Antisemitism and its Metaphysical Origins*, pp. 165-222.

Week 11 – Post Holocaust Antisemitism, Part II: Anti-Semitism in the Middle East

Wistrich, Robert S. *Antisemitism: The Longest Hatred*, pp. 195-267.

Patterson, David. *A Genealogy of Evil* excerpts (class handouts)

“The Essence of the Jihadist Evil”

“Modern Jihadist Ideological Foundations”

Week 12 – Post Holocaust Antisemitism, Part III: Political Antisemitism in the West

ADL materials (available online)

Power Point (available through Blackboard)

Week 13 – The Fate of Antisemitism/ Student Presentations Day 1

\*\*\* Essay 3 Due \*\*\*

Lazare, Bernard. *Antisemitism: Its History and Causes*, pp. 175-183.

Ka-tzetnik interview (video) – The Holocaust was a dress rehearsal

Week 14 – Student Presentations Day 2