



## Politics and Antisemitism

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### Course Overview:

In this course, we explore the idea of antisemitism as a political tool employed by repressive regimes to oppress not only Jews, but society at large. Throughout history, mass killings of Jews have repeatedly been orchestrated by authoritarian powers: Muslim jihadis, German Nazis, Tsarist boyars, Catholic inquisitors, Roman imperialists, and Greco-Macedonian imperialists. This pattern suggests that antisemitism serves a function for oppressors. But what might that function be? Several authors have argued that the development of Western liberty owes little or nothing to Greece and Rome—contrary to what is often taught in modern Western education. They note that Greece and Rome granted civil rights only to a small minority, while brutally oppressing everyone else. By contrast, the Jewish tradition traces its origin to a *slave revolt*—the *Exodus*—and introduces the idea that equality under the gaze of God translates into equality under the law. It also developed an impressive legal framework to protect individual rights and safeguard the most vulnerable in society: the orphan, the widow and the foreigner. Jewish tradition encourages skepticism of authority and significantly limit the power of kings. Most dramatically, Judaism effectively abolishes slavery. From this perspective, antisemitism is the tool of oppressive elites, aimed at suppressing a tradition that has long championed liberty and legal equality—the very pillars of liberal democracy.

Date	#	Topic
	1	What is Judaism? What are Jewish values?
	2	Theories of Antisemitism
	3	The Church and the origins of the Protocols of the Elders of Zion
	4	The cases of the Russian Tsarist, Nazi German, and Soviet Empires
	5	The case of Contemporary Islamist regimes and the rebirth of Israel
	6	Wokism and the Death of Equality – antisemitism in the global Elites

## Class # 1: What is Judaism? What are Jewish Values?

Judaism's foundational story, the *Exodus*, can be understood, in sociological terms, as a *slave revolt*. In the biblical account, it is God himself—acting through Moses—who leads this revolt against Pharaoh. What follows in the Torah is the creation of a new legal order designed to prevent oppression by limiting the power of kings and protecting the vulnerable. Slaves were not abolished outright, but transformed into protected persons: they could not be mistreated, had to share in their master's material conditions, and were even served first at meals. If abused, they were freed immediately; if they sought refuge, they could not be returned. After seven years, all were freed. In intention and effect, Judaism sought to abolish slavery and to affirm the equal moral dignity of all—including foreigners—"for you were foreigners in Egypt" (Deut. 10:19). This ethic is grounded in the Golden Rule, "Love your neighbor as yourself" (Lev. 19:18), paraphrased by Rabbi Hillel as, "What is hateful to you, do not do to others." Adopted also by Christianity, this principle became the bedrock of Western ethics, shaping modern liberal democracies dedicated to rights and liberty despite centuries of resistance and persecution.

- The Structure of the Hebrew Bible. Hazony, Y. (2012). *The philosophy of Hebrew scripture*. Cambridge University Press, chapter 1.
- The Ethics of a Shepherd. Hazony, Y. (2012). *The philosophy of Hebrew scripture*. Cambridge University Press, chapter 4.
- The History of Israel, Genesis-Kings: a Political Philosophy. Hazony, Y. (2012). *The philosophy of Hebrew scripture*. Cambridge University Press, chapter 5.
- Ken Spiro, *Jewish Values*: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1QqsA6aqRzo&t=11s>

## Class # 2: Theories of antisemitism

Over the years, many theories have been proposed to explain antisemitism. Some suggest Jews have been scapegoated to redirect popular frustration, while others point to jealousy over Jewish success or to their cultural distinctiveness, which triggers xenophobia. Yet none of these explanations account for the consistent recurrence of anti-Jewish attacks across centuries—nay, millennia!—despite dramatic changes in politics, economy, culture, and religion. This striking regularity points to a possible deeper cause: the inherently subversive nature of Jewish ethical and religious practice. By promoting equality, liberty, and justice, Judaism challenges arbitrary power and oppressive regimes. Its persistent moral and legal philosophy, transmitted across generations, has repeatedly provoked hostility in authoritarian ruling elites, making antisemitism one of the most enduring features of Western history.

- Patterson D. Anti-Semitism and Its Metaphysical Origins. In: *Anti-Semitism and Its Metaphysical Origins*. Cambridge University Press; 2015:i-i.
- Prager, D., & Telushkin, J. (2003). *Why the Jews?: the reason for antisemitism*. Simon and Schuster.
- Ken Spiro, *Why the Jews?* <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dIDHbA3Afsc>
- Gil-White, F. (2014). *El Colapso de Occidente: El Siguiente Holocausto y sus Consecuencias*. México, DF: FACES (Fundación para el Análisis del Conflicto, Étnico y Social). Series Prologue, Prologue to volume 1 & Introduction to volume 1.
- Francisco Gil-White, *The origins of democracy* <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ltGuwhcVICw&t=3s>

### **Class # 3: The Church and the origins of the Protocols of the Elders of Zion**

The Medieval Catholic Church, a totalitarian institution, restricted laypeople from reading the Bible in vernacular languages, allowing access only to clergy and approved scholars, effectively controlling how its largely Hebrew texts could be interpreted. This restriction aimed to prevent Christians from encountering the story of the Israelite slave revolt and the anti-elite laws it inspired. When proto-Protestant movements, such as the Waldensians and Albigensians, defied this restriction and began translating the Bible, radical political movements emerged. Though violently suppressed—most infamously during the Inquisition—their ideas could not be fully contained. Meanwhile, the Church launched campaigns to demonize Jews, portraying them as Christ-killers, vampires, and well-poisoners during the Black Death. Such charges laid the groundwork for the notion of a “Jewish conspiracy,” later modernized in 19th-century Church propaganda and ultimately distilled into The Protocols of the Elders of Zion, a fabricated text claiming Jews sought global domination—a document that ultimately helped fuel the Holocaust.

- Ben-Itto, H. (2005). *The Lie that Wouldn't Die: The Protocols of the Elders of Zion*. London: Vallentine Mitchell.
- Cohn, N. (1967). *Warrant for genocide: The myth of the Jewish world-conspiracy and the Protocols of the Elders of Zion*. New York: Harper & Row.
- Maurice Joly; John S. Waggoner (translator) (2002). *The Dialogue in Hell between Machiavelli and Montesquieu*. Lexington Books.

- Gil-White, F. (2014). *El Colapso de Occidente: El Siguiente Holocausto y sus Consecuencias*. México, DF: FACES (Fundación para el Análisis del Conflicto, Étnico y Social). Volume 3, chapter 8
- Gil-White, F. (2014). *El Colapso de Occidente: El Siguiente Holocausto y sus Consecuencias*. México, DF: FACES (Fundación para el Análisis del Conflicto, Étnico y Social). Volume 3, Chapter 10.

## **Class # 4: The cases of the Russian Tsarist, Nazi German, and Soviet Empires**

The Tsarist Russian Empire weaponized The Protocols to stir antisemitic violence, as top official Vyacheslav von Plehve openly explained: the goal was to “drown the revolution in Jewish blood.” When the 1917 revolution occurred despite these efforts, fleeing White Russian aristocrats brought The Protocols to Western Europe, where it quickly became a bestseller. Hysteria spread across the West, fueled by fears of a supposed Jewish conspiracy controlling the media, labor movements, industry, finance, and governments. The Nazi movement later adopted The Protocols as the backbone of its propaganda, claiming that Jews sought to destroy Western civilization by secretly corrupting all institutions. To “save” Germany, the argument went, German citizens should surrender their rights and empower a single leader—the *Führer*—to protect the nation from the Jews. In this way, the Germans became the first to be enslaved by the Nazis, then all of Europe. Meanwhile, the Bolshevik movement initially preached universal working-class solidarity, but Marx’s own antisemitism—blaming Jews for capitalism—eventually influenced Soviet communism, transforming Tsarist antisemitism into its Marxist form. Like all antisemitic totalitarian regimes, Soviet leaders oppressed everyone, Jews and non-Jews alike, showing how antisemitic ideology consistently predict broad social and political domination.

- Caplan, Jane. *Nazi Germany: A Very Short Introduction*. Oxford University Press, 2019
- Axel Kiser, *the rise of Nazism*.  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=II06stTqdhY&t=3735s>
- Pipes, R. (2001). *Communism: a history*. Modern Library ed. Modern Library.
- McGeever, B. (2019). *Antisemitism and the Russian Revolution*. India: Cambridge University Press.
- Francisco Gil-White, *Why do so many people in the modern West hate the Jews?*  
<https://franciscogilwhite.substack.com/p/joly-dialogue-nazis-church-tsar-protocols-shoa>

## **Class # 5: The case of Contemporary Islamist regimes and the rebirth of Israel**

The common interpretation in media and academia of the Arab-Israeli conflict frames it as a territorial dispute: Arab Muslims in Mandate Palestine are said to have fought for land allegedly denied to them by Zionist Jews. An alternative perspective emphasizes Islamism, the ideology that places jihad—or ‘holy war’ against ‘infidels’—at the center of Islamic practice. Historical events support this view. In 1947, Arabs of Mandate Palestine were offered a state in the very lands they now claim, but their leader Hajj Amin al-Husseini refused. His protégé and secretary general of the Arab League, Azzam Pasha, declared that Muslims worldwide would wage a jihadi “war of extermination” to prevent the creation of any Jewish state. Jihadist doctrine permits Jews and Christians to live as dhimmis—semi-slaves under Muslim rule—but demands their extermination if they resist. From this perspective, the creation of the State of Israel in lands formerly ruled by Muslims is interpreted by jihadism as a slave revolt that automatically demands the renewal of jihad. That is precisely how Husseini, Founding Father of the Arab Palestinian movement, creator of Al Fatah, and mentor to Yasser Arafat and Mahmoud Abbas, did interpret it. The movement has been strongly supported by Islamist regimes like Qatar and Iran, which impose totalitarian rule on their own populations and treat non-Muslims as chattel. More broadly, oppressive Muslim elites see the subversive political potential of the Jewish movement as intolerable, motivating efforts to undermine or destroy a thriving Jewish state in their midst.

- Nawaz, M. (2013). *Radical: my journey out of Islamist extremism*. Lyons Press.
- Bunton, Martin. *The Palestinian-Israeli Conflict: A Very Short Introduction*. Oxford University Press, 2013.
- Francisco Gil-White, *What is Palestine?*  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uq0IVAGjj9M&t=2s>
- Francisco Gil-White, *The Nazis and the Palestinian Movement*.  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QK8aB8I8ERU>
- Francisco Gil-White, *PLO Fatah and Iran: The Special Relationship*  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=35loR5uu0SA>

## **Class # 6: Wokism and the Death of Equality – antisemitism in the global Elites**

When postwar economic growth reduced the need for class struggle in the developed West, Marxist intellectuals, led by Herbert Marcuse’s Frankfurt School, doubled down on Marxism. This required finding—or manufacturing—new sources of social conflict. The new strategy became fundamentally racist, defining “oppressors” primarily by skin color rather than economic position. White Westerners were cast as oppressors regardless of behavior, while non-white populations were defined as saintly victims, oppressed. Within this framework, Jews

were uniquely targeted: behind the evil of Western capitalism, wokism quietly places the eternal Jew. Ostensibly cloaked in a 'compassionate' ideology, 'safe spaces' started popping up in elite universities to protect various categories of 'victims'—except Jews. The Jews could never be empathized with—never victims, only eternal oppressors. Zionism was demonized as a racist settler-colonial project, rather than praised as the indigenous liberation movement that it is, while Arab Palestinians were reified as the epitome of victimhood and oppression. Support for the "Palestinian cause"—often a thin cover for terrorism—became the defining virtue signal for anyone wishing to avoid ostracism in institutions of prestige increasingly dominated by the woke New Left from the late 1960s onward. The consequences extended beyond Jews, undermining meritocracy, equality before the law, and civil rights more broadly, including women's rights, children's rights, parental rights, and the rights of white, heterosexual men. As with all other forms of antisemitism, the social processes generated by this Woke ideology ended up oppressing everyone, including the very leftists who propagate it, who must constantly navigate ever-shifting rules of ideological correctness.

- Henrich, J., & Gil-White, F. J. (2001). The evolution of prestige: Freely conferred deference as a mechanism for enhancing the benefits of cultural transmission. *Evolution and human behavior*, 22(3), 165-196.
- Carolina Di Tella, *Los judíos en el esquema interseccional*. Coloquio ed. 64 (marzo 2024)
- David Patterson, *Antisemitism morally required in the wake of October 7<sup>th</sup>*. forthcoming
- Pluckrose, H., & Lindsay, J. (2020). *Cynical theories: How activist scholarship made everything about race, gender, and identity—and why this harms everybody*. Pitchstone Publishing.
- Ramaswamy, V. (2021). *Woke, Inc.: Inside corporate America's social justice scam*. Hachette UK.