

Anti-Semitism: Its History and Politics

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Course description:

This course explores the history and politics of anti-Semitism. We begin with “traditional” Jew-hatred in the middle ages, particularly in the Christian world, and discuss its religious, political, and economic causes. We then examine the gradual transition in the character of the hostility towards the Jews against the background of modern developments such as the emergence of the modern state; the age of Enlightenment, the Industrial Revolution, the shift to a capitalist economy and the rise of nationalism. In the second part of the course, we discuss the rise of modern anti-Semitism at the end of the 19th century, the particular character of German anti-Semitism as a “cultural code” in this period, and the re-emergence of anti-Semitism as an important political force in Germany after WWI.

Course Requirements:

Full attendance.

Weekly reading assignments: Students are required to read the assigned items for every week.

Response papers: Students are required to submit two response papers, each 3 pages long. The papers should discuss the main reasons for the hatred or hostility toward Jews in a specific period, using at least three of the texts from the relevant section in the reading list.

The final grade is determined by attendance, participation in class that reflects engagement with the reading materials, and the response papers.

Final paper: Students may submit a final paper: a short, referat paper or a seminar paper. Short papers are to be submitted by July 14th, 2019. Seminar papers are to be submitted by October 27th, 2019.

Reading list:

1. Introduction (1): Questions in the Study of Anti-Semitism

Hannah Arendt, "Antisemitism as an Outrage to Common Sense," in *The Origins of Totalitarianism* (San Diego: Harcourt, Inc., 1968), chap. 1 (pp. 3-10).

2. Introduction (2): The Jew as a Symbol

Karl Marx, "The Jewish Question," 1844, at

<https://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1844/jewish-question/>

David Nirenberg, *Anti-Judaism: The Western Tradition* (New York and London: W. W. Norton & Company, 2013), pp. 1-12.

Additional reading:

Gavin I. Langmuir, "Toward A Definition of Antisemitism," in *Toward a Definition of Antisemitism* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1990), pp. 311-352.

3. Early Christian Foundations

David Nirenberg, *Anti-Judaism: The Western Tradition* (New York and London: W. W. Norton & Company, 2013), 48-86; 87-134.

Jeremy Cohen, "The Doctrine of Jewish Witness," in *Living Letters of the Law: Ideas of the Jew in Medieval Christianity* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1999), pp. 23-65.

Saint Augustine, "In Answer to the Jews," in *Treatises on Marriage and Other Subjects*, trans. Charles T. Wilcox et al., ed. Roy J. Deferrari (Washington: The Catholic University of America Press, 1955), pp. 391-414.

Additional reading

David Nirenberg, *Anti-Judaism: The Western Tradition* (New York and London: W. W. Norton & Company, 2013), 13-47.

Leon Polakov, "Anti-Semitism in Pagan Antiquity," in *The History of Anti-Semitism*, trans. Richard Howard (New York: Schocken Books, 1976), 3-16.

4. Late Medieval Anti-Judaism

David Nirenberg, *Anti-Judaism: The Western Tradition* (New York and London: W. W. Norton & Company, 2013), 183-216; 217-268.

Jacob R. Marcus, *The Jew in the Medieval World: A Source Book: 315-1791* (Cincinnati: Hebrew Union College Press, 1999), pp. 27-54; 128-157.

Additional reading:

Hannah R. Johnson, "Thomas of Monmouth and the Juridical Discourse of Ritual Murder," in *Blood Libel: The Ritual Murder Accusation at the Limits of Jewish History* (The University of Michigan Press, 2012), chap. 1 (pp. 30-58).

Jeremy Cohen, *The Friars and the Jews: The Evolution of Medieval Anti-Judaism* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1982), chap. 2, 3, 10.

Leon Polakov, "The Image of the Jew," in *The History of Anti-Semitism*, trans.

Richard Howard (New York: Schocken Books, 1976), 123-169.

Salo Baron, "Ghetto and Emancipation," *Menora* (1928) reprinted at:

https://archive.org/stream/ghettoemancipati00baro/ghettoemancipati00baro_djvu.txt

Robert Chazan, *Reassessing Jewish Life in Medieval Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), chap. 5, 6, 8.

5. The Reformation and the Legend of Shylock

David Nirenberg, *Anti-Judaism: The Western Tradition* (New York and London: W. W. Norton & Company, 2013), 246-268; 269-299.

[Excerpts from Martin Luther] Jacob R. Marcus, *The Jew in the Medieval World: A Source Book: 315-1791* (Cincinnati: Hebrew Union College Press, 1999), pp. 185-189.

Additional reading:

William Shakespeare, *The Merchant of Venice*, ed. Charles Edelman (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002).

Christopher J. Probst, *Demonizing the Jews: Luther and the Protestant Church in Nazi Germany* (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2012), pp. 39-58.

6. The Age of Enlightenment

David Nirenberg, *Anti-Judaism: The Western Tradition* (New York and London: W. W. Norton & Company, 2013), 325-360.

[Excerpts from Voltaire, Fichte and Fries] *The Jew in the Modern World: A Documentary History*, eds. Jehuda Reinharz and Paul Mendes-Flohr (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), pp. 279-285.

Additional reading:

Jacob Katz, *From Prejudice to Destruction: Anti-Semitism, 1700-1933* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1980), pp. 34-47.

7. The Jews, the Nation-State, and The Dreyfus Affair

Hannah Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism* (San Diego: Harcourt, Inc., 1968), chap. 2, 4.

David Nirenberg, *Anti-Judaism: The Western Tradition* (New York and London: W. W. Norton & Company, 2013), 423-459.

[Excerpts from *J'Accuse* by Emile Zola] *The Jew in the Modern World: A Documentary History*, eds. Jehuda Reinharz and Paul Mendes-Flohr (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), pp. 328-330.

8. East European Pogroms

David Engel, "What's in a Pogrom? European Jews in the Age of Violence," in *Anti-Jewish Violence: Rethinking the Pogrom in East European History*, ed. Jonathan Dekel-Chen, David Gaunt, Natan S. Meir and Israel Bartal (Bloomington and Indianapolis, 2011), pp. 19-37.

Michael Aronson, "The Anti-Jewish Pogroms in Russia in 1881", in *Pogroms: Anti-Jewish Violence in Modern Russian History*, ed. John Klier and Shlomo Lambroza (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), pp. 39-61.

John D. Klier, "Christians and Jews and the 'Dialogue of Violence' in Late Imperial Russia," in *Religious Violence between Christians and Jews: Medieval Roots, Modern Perspectives*, ed. Anna S. Abulafia (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002), pp. 157-167.

[Excerpts from The Protocols of the Elders of Zion] *The Jew in the Modern World: A Documentary History*, eds. Jehuda Reinharz and Paul Mendes-Flohr (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), pp. 339-342.

Additional reading:

Peter Kenez, "Pogroms and White Ideology in the Russian Civil War," in *Pogroms: Anti-Jewish Violence in Modern Russian History*, ed. John Klier and Shlomo Lambroza (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), pp. 293-313.

Robert Weinberg, "The Pogrom of 1905 in Odessa: A Case Study," in *Pogroms: Anti-Jewish Violence in Modern Russian History*, ed. John Klier and Shlomo Lambroza (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), pp. 248-290.

9. German Anti-Semitism (1)

Stefan Rohrbacher, "The 'Hep Hep' Riots of 1819: Anti-Jewish Ideology, Agitation, and Violence," in *Exclusionary Violence: Antisemitic Riots in Modern German History*, ed. Christhard Hoffmann, Werner Bergmann, and Helmut W. Smith (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 2002), pp. 23-42.

Jacob Katz, "Nationalism and Romanticism," in *From Prejudice to Destruction: Anti-Semitism, 1700-1933* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1980), pp. 74-91.

[Excerpts from Wagner, Marr, Duehring, Renan, Toussenel, Dostoievsky, Drumont, Stoecker, Treitschke, Mommsen, Nietzsche and Fritsch] *The Jew in the Modern*

World: A Documentary History, eds. Jehuda Reinharz and Paul Mendes-Flohr
(Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), pp. 302-327.

Additional reading:

Richard Wagner, "Judaism in Music," in *Judaism in Music and Other Essays*, ed.
William Ashton Ellis (Lincoln and London: University of Nebraska Press, 1995), pp.
75-122.

Paul L. Rose, "Richard Wagner: Prophet of Revolutionary Antisemitism," in *German
Question, Jewish Question: Revolutionary Antisemitism from Kant to Wagner*
(Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992), 279-379.

10. German Anti-Semitism (2)

Shulamit Volkov, "Antisemitism as a Cultural Code: Reflections on the History and
Historiography of Antisemitism in Imperial Germany," *The Leo Baeck Institute Year
Book* 23(1) (1978): 25–46.

Robert S. Wistrich, "Socialists and Antisemites in Europe before 1914," in *From
Ambivalence to Betrayal: The Left, The Jews, and Israel* (Lincoln and London: The
University of Nebraska Press, 2012), pp. 176-214.

David C. Large, "Out with the *Ostjuden*': The Scheunenviertel Riots in Berlin,
November 1923," in *Exclusionary Violence: Antisemitic Riots in Modern German
History*, ed. Christhard Hoffmann, Werner Bergmann, and Helmut W. Smith (Ann
Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 2002), pp. 123-140.

Additional reading:

Jacob Katz, *From Prejudice to Destruction: Anti-Semitism, 1700-1933*

(Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1980), 195-220.

Moshe Zimmermann, *Wilhelm Marr : The Patriarch of Anti-Semitism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986), chap 7.

11. Conclusion

David Engel, “Away from a Definition of Anti-Semitism,” in *Rethinking European Jewish History*, eds. Jeremy Cohen and Murray J. Rosman (Oxford ;Portland, Or.: Littman Library of Jewish Civilization, 2009), pp. 30-53.