319-01H SEM - Antisemitism: The Great Hatred: Honors

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SEM: Antisemitism: The Great Hatred—Honors—10949--Theology 319-01H

Attributes:
Diversity Curriculum Requirement Course, Gender and Diversity Studies Minor
Jewish Studies Minor, Honors, Peace Studies Minor

Xavier University
Cintas Center 201
Spring Semester, 2014

Syllabus

Course Description

The term “antisemitism” is a relatively modern word, first popularized by a German journalist, Wilhelm Marr, in 1879 to express certain types of negative attitudes about Jews. It was soon understood to mean all forms of hostility toward Jews, past and present. The genesis of antisemitism, however, can be traced to the pagan world where it remained essentially cultural and social, rather than, as it developed within the Christian world, theological and later, racial, or in the Muslim world where it was theological, political, and racial.

The purpose of the course is three-fold:

1. To trace the history and suggested causes of antisemitism within various, cultural, political, religious, and economic settings;

2. To examine forces which either reinforced or counteracted antisemitic attitudes and behavior; and

3. To study contemporary manifestations of this ancient hatred.

Course Goals and Objectives

Writing in 1986, historian David Berger in History and Hate: The Dimensions of Anti-Semitism observed:

We shall never fully understand antisemitism. Deep rooted, complex, endlessly persistent, constantly changing yet remaining the same, it is a phenomenon that stands at the intersection of history, sociology, economics, political science, religion and psychology. But it is often the most elusive phenomena that are the most intriguing, and here fascination and profound historical significance merge to make this subject a central challenge to . . . historians.

The class responds to Berger’s challenge by surveying the historical development of antisemitism from the emergence of Christianity and its separation from Judaism to the present. Consideration is given to early church attitudes, the development of medieval
antisemitism, the Crusades, the rise of Islam, the Reformation and post-Reformation periods, the Enlightenment, and the emergence of racist and nationalist antisemitism in the nineteenth century. In addition to examining antisemitism in Eastern, Central, and Western Europe and the Middle East, the class also addresses this phenomenon in the United States. It is important to note, that there had been a tendency for a number of years, to assume that antisemitism, as a major threat to western culture died in a Berlin bunker in April 1945. Since this is not the case, the class also examines antisemitism in post-World War II Europe and in the former Soviet Union. Further, the class discusses the origins and development of Arab-Islamic antisemitism and its implications for both peace in the Middle East and as a threat to Enlightenment ideals in the West.

A word of caution: Since an entire course dealing with the Holocaust is taught at Xavier University, our course, while discussing this topic, does not delve deeply into it.

The history of antisemitism can be studied from a variety of legitimate and very different perspectives. However, the primary underlining theme of this course is suggested by Edward Flannery in his seminal work, The Anguish of the Jews: Twenty-three Centuries of Anti-Semitism. Flannery writes that at the close of the third century, the Jew “was no more than a special type of unbeliever.” By the end of the fourth century, [his] civil status was precarious, and his image had greatly deteriorated . . . . He was a satanic figure cursed by God, and marked off by the state.” This course will contextualize antisemitism within various historical periods, asking the question of why the Jews were seen as “the Other,” why they were accused of “cosmic evil” and how these charges came to flourish in Christian, Muslim, and secular societies.

Assigned Readings: There are five required and one optional texts for this class. The first, A Convenient Hatred: The History of Antisemitism, is a general history of antisemitism covering the period from the sixth century BCE to the present. The second, Antisemitic Myths: A Historical and Contemporary Anthology, contains some ninety-plus documents tracing antisemitic myths from the early Christian period to the present. The third book, The Trial of God, is a play that takes place in a Ukrainian town following the devastating Chemielnicki pogroms of 1648-1649. To understand the background of this work, the class will be exposed to the political, religious, and national movements of this period: national tensions among Poles, Ukrainians, Cossacks, and Tartars; religious conflict among Catholics, Russian Orthodox, and Jews; and economic and class bitterness among German tradesmen, Polish nobility, and Jewish tax-farmers and estate overseers. It has been estimated that during this period, between 100,000 and 500,000 Jews perished and 700 Jewish communities were destroyed.

The Trial of God not only deals with the issue of theodicy, but with the interrelationships among four Jewish men, an outspoken non-Jewish female maid, and ineffective and, at times, antisemitic Russian Orthodox priest, a young woman who was driven insane as a result of multiple rapes she suffered during a recent pogrom, and the Devil. The play compels students to appreciate the nature of 17th century history, to examine the origins of East European antisemitism, and to address the question of why evil exists in our world.

For the most part, the class addresses antisemitism in broad strokes, tracing the phenomena from cultural prejudice in the pagan era through religious bigotry in the Christian-Muslim periods, and finally racism of the modern era. The fourth book deals with antisemitism from the perspective of early twentieth century America. Henry Ford’s War on Jews and the Legal
**Battle against Hate Speech** examines Ford's antisemitic publications and the libel suit against him by Aaron Sapiro. The book also examines early considerations of hate speech.

The fifth book, *Not Your Father’s Antisemitism: Hatred of the Jews in the 21st Century*, is an anthology dealing with a variety of subjects such as antisemitism in contemporary Europe, antisemitism in Islam, *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion*, Holocaust denial, the American experience, and Israel.

**Required Texts**


**Optional Text**


There will be “hand-outs” to supplement the required texts.

**Requirements**

In addition to the reading assignments, you will write a research paper, fifteen pages in length plus bibliography, and make a fifteen-minute presentation sharing the results of your research—including your bibliography; prepare two reflection/response papers four-five pages in length; facilitate an in-class discussion on a topic to be assigned by your professor; and contribute regularly to class discussions. When making your fifteen-minute presentation, you may use any style you wish, for example, power point, traditional oral report, or any other method you deem appropriate. Also, prior to your presentation, you will distribute to the class a one-page summary of your research.

**NB:** In your research project, your bibliography will need to include a minimum of six sources, including primary and secondary works. You may only use quality and scholarly internet sources.

**Reflection/Response**

The first Reflection/Response, a review of Wiesel’s *Trial of God*, will be due on February 4, and your second, Woeste’s *Henry Ford’s War on Jews* is due on March 13. You should briefly summarize the events and personalities in these books, but I want you to choose a theme or themes and expand upon them. This is not a research paper, but feel free to consult other
sources and you may bring in issues that we discussed in class. To assist in your writing, please read the attached essay, "How to Write a Critical Book Review."

Class Format

There will be discussions of concepts and facts found in the readings and assigned texts. There also will be lectures to provide background and to put into context the assigned readings. I will call on you directly by name during discussion periods.

No eating, drinking or wearing hats in class—except for religious or medical reasons.

Please turn off beepers and cell phones before entering the classroom. Computers may be used in class but only with my permission.

General Policies

Attendance is imperative. Six or more unexcused absences will result in the grade of “F” for the course. Four to five unexcused absences will result in receiving the grade of “F” for class participation; three will result in the reduction of the grade for class participation by up to one full letter.

If you will be absent the day your presentation is to be made, you must contact me prior to class. An excused absence from your oral presentation will be permitted only for a grave reason and only at my discretion. Failure to follow these policies can result in receiving an “F” for that assignment.

Written assignments are expected on time. If, however, you need to be absent the day a paper is due, you must contact me with a valid reason prior to class time or no later than 5:00 p.m. the following day. Unexcused late work will be penalized up to one full letter grade depending upon the lateness. Please note that written assignments may be submitted prior to the assigned due date. I accept no assignments electronically, unless I have given you prior permission.

All submitted written work must be your own. The unattributed use of another’s material is a violation of University policy and will be handled accordingly.

Evaluation

1. Research project: 30%
2. In-class presentation of your research project: 10%
3. Reflection/Response—Wiesel: 15%
4. Reflection/Response—Woeste: 20%
5. Class facilitation: 15%
6. Attendance and Class Participation: 10%
7. There will be no examinations.

We will follow the Grading Policy as dictated by the Department of Theology. (See attached.)
Office Hours

Office hours are by appointment only. If you wish to arrange a meeting, please do not hesitate to call me at home, 554-4645, or use my Xavier University e-mail address, rappm2@xavier.edu. You may also write me care of my personal e-mail address, mgrapp@hotmail.com.

This syllabus and accompanying reading schedule will be revised as needed.

If you have to miss a class for some reason, be sure to inquire as to what you missed.

Xavier University
Spring Semester, 2014
Research Project

Among historians, it is a “given” that any historical narrative will necessarily involve some subjective interpretation. As Jacques Barzun and Henry Graff wrote:

A large subject is like a mountain, which no beholder ever sees entire: if he climbs it he discovers only selected aspects; if he stands off, he sees but an outline and from one side only; if he flies over it, he flattens it out. Similarly, as early historian of the Protestant Reformation [for example], would treat it as mainly a theological and military event; a man of the eighteenth century would view it as a reshaping of the map of Europe, a strengthening of emergent states, and a furthering of intellectual freedom. In the nineteenth century, the Reformation would appear as a religious movement with political and social implications; in the twentieth, it would rather seem a social and economic revolution with religious and political side effects. To the researcher, the Reformation is all of these things, being a mountain.

This semester’s research project is to examine a specific individual, incident, document, or event from two perspectives: Jewish and Christian or Jewish and Moslem, depending on the subject. Discuss the topic and how historians, reflecting each of the two world views, have selected and interpreted the data to describe the subject. Your paper should be approximately fifteen pages in length plus bibliography.

Possible topics:

| The Dominicans | Henry Ford |
| The Gospels    | Charles Lindbergh |
| Paul           | Geoffrey Chaucer |
| Patristic Fathers | William Shakespeare |
| John Chrysostom | Fr. Charles Coughlin |
| Voltaire       | T. S. Eliot |
| The Koran      | Ronald Dahl |
| Innocent III   | Joseph Kennedy |
| Pius IX        | Maximilian Kolbe |
| Pius XII       | Richard Wagner |
| The Crusades   | Holocaust Denial |
| Martin Luther  | General Ulysses S. Grant |

If you wish to write on a more traditional historiographic subject, below are some suggestions:

*Did antisemitism exist in the pagan world, or did it emerge only after the beginning of Christianity?*

*Are the Gospels inherently antisemitic? If not, how does one explain the anti-Jewish sentiments expressed in the Christian Scriptures?*

*Are the expressions of antisemitism found today in many areas of Arab/Muslim culture borrowed from European Christianity or inherent in Islam itself?*

*Should there be laws prohibiting the public expression of racism and antisemitism?*

*Antisemitism: Causes and Remedies*

*Are there strong antisemitic currents in the modern feminist movement?*

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**Class Outline**

**Jan. 14**  Introduction; Class overview; Definitions and spelling; Pre-Christian

**Jan. 16**  Judeophobia; Video: *The Longest Hatred*

*Goldstein, Forward-21*

*Perry and Schweitzer (Hereinafter cited P&S), Introduction*

**Jan. 21**  Christian Roots of Antisemitism

**Jan. 23**  *Goldstein, 23-38*

*P&S, 1-10*

*Mt 27:24-26; IThess 2:13-16; Jn 8:44; Gal 2:16; Rom 3:20*

**Jan. 28**  The Crusaders and the Jews of Western Europe

**Jan. 30**  *Anti-Jewish canonical laws (Handout)*

**"Early Christian art reveals a hotbed of anti-Jewish sentiment" (Handout)*

*Goldstein, 75-102*

*P&S, 11-28*

**Jan. 30: Submit topic of major research project**

**Feb. 4**  Islam and the Jews

*Goldstein, 38-54; 149-156*

*Berenbaum, 101-117; 119-140*

**Feb. 4: Submit First Reading Assignment (Wiesel)**

**Feb. 11**  From Inquisition to Expulsion: Antisemitism in Christian Spain

*Goldstein, 93-111*
Feb. 18  Social and Religious Struggles in Western Europe: The Beginning of the Ghetto
     *Goldstein, 112-156
     *P&S, 43-48
Feb. 20  
Feb. 25  Enlightenment and Emancipation: Reaction and Aftermath
Feb. 27  *Goldstein, 157-182
     *P&S, 49-54; 55-64
Mar. 4  Spring Break
Mar. 6  
Mar. 11 Emancipation, Reaction, and Aftermath
Mar. 13  *P&S, 75-89
     **Mar. 13: Submit Second Reading Assignment (Woeste)**
Mar. 18  Entering the 20th Century: Eastern Europe
     *Goldstein, 137-149; 215-257
     *P&S, 127-137
Mar. 20  Entering the 20th Century: Western Europe, World War II and Beyond
Mar. 25  *Goldstein, 207-215; 289-361
     *P&S, 90-103; 104-119; 120-126
Mar. 27  Antisemitism in the United States
     *Berenbaum, 197-244
Apr. 1  
Apr. 3  Islamic Antisemitism: 20th and 21st Centuries
     *Goldstein, 325-349;
     *P&S, 307-336
     *Berenbaum, 93-98; 329-355
Apr. 8  Antisemitism in the 21st Century
     *Goldstein, 339-361
     *P&S, 283-292
Apr. 10 No Class
Apr. 15 No Class: Passover
Apr. 17  Easter Holiday
Apr. 22  Oral Reports
Apr. 24  Oral Reports
Apr. 29  Oral Reports
     **Apr. 29: Major Research Paper Due**
May 1  Conclusions; Human Nature and Bigotry; Video: *The Courage to Care*
     Evaluations
May 8  Final Exam: 10:30-12:20