

ANTI-SEMITISM

WHAT ARE ITS NEW FORMS?

WHERE DOES IT COME FROM
& WHY DOES IT PERSIST?

WILL IT EVER GO AWAY?

A SYMPOSIUM WITH

AYAAN HIRSI ALI, DAVID BERGER, PHYLLIS CHESLER, JEREMY COHEN, IRWIN COTLER,

MOHAMMED S. DAJANI DAUDI, HASIA DINER, STUART EIZENSTAT, AVNER FALK, IRA FORMAN,

MICHEL GURFINKIEL, DAVID KERTZER, BRIAN KLUG, DAVID MAMET, DAVID NIRENBERG,

EMANUELE OTTOLENGHI, CYNTHIA OZICK, DINA PORAT, ALVIN ROSENFELD, ARI ROTH,

SHLOMO SAND, MAXIM SHRAYER, CHARLES ASHER SMALL, ELI VALLEY, HANS-JOACHIM VOTH, XU XIN

AND OTHERS ONLINE:

MICHAEL BARKUN, BENT BLÜDNIKOW, ROBERT CHAZAN, LEONARD DINNERSTEIN, EVA FOGELMAN
ZVI GITELMAN, MICHAEL GOLDFARB, JONATHAN JUDAKEN, SHMUEL TRIGANO, SERGIO WIDDER

INTERVIEWS BY: SARAH BREGER, DINA GOLD, GEORGE JOHNSON, CAITLIN YOSHIKO KANDIL, SALA LEVIN & JOSH TAPPER

THE OLDEST HATRED IS BY SOME ACCOUNTS ALIVE AND WELL, BY OTHERS AN OVERUSED EPITHET. WE TALK WITH THINKERS FROM AROUND THE GLOBE FOR A CRITICAL AND SURPRISINGLY NUANCED EXAMINATION OF ANTI-SEMITISM'S ORIGINS AND STAYING POWER.

DAVID BERGER

OUTSIDERS & ENEMIES

In the ancient Greco-Roman world, people evinced a wide variety of attitudes toward Jews. Some admired Jewish distinctiveness, some were neutral, but others were put off by the fact that unlike any other people in antiquity, the Jews had a god who limited their social interaction with non-Jews and prevented them from participating in public rites that Jews considered idolatrous. To some observers, this meant that Jews hated the rest of humanity. With the rise of Christianity, some of the reasons for hating Jews should have receded—since Christians also promote the notion of one God—but instead, Jews' rejection of Jesus and the description of their responsibility for the crucifixion engendered renewed hostility and reinforced some of the negative tropes inherited from the Greco-Roman world. The fact that Judaism was seen as an enemy faith but was simultaneously granted unique toleration in Christian

Europe meant that Jews became the quintessential Other, and they consequently became the primary focus of hostility even in ways that transcended the theological.

Once this focus on Jews as the Other became entrenched, it continued into modern Europe. Thus, although the decline of Christianity as the central phenomenon of European society and the rise of the Enlightenment should arguably have led to the elimination of anti-Semitism, that is not what happened (even though anti-Semitism did decline). People turned back to some of the secondary reasons given in the Middle Ages, such as the accusation that Jews were economic exploiters or the invocation of their allegedly demonic character, which purportedly led them to engage in ritual murder and well-poisoning. Nazi anti-Semitism was nourished by such conceptions, and even the notion of ineradicable Jewish racial characteristics has precedent in late medieval circles where some people asserted that conversion to

Christianity could not eliminate the evil character of Jewish blood.

David Berger is editor of History and Hate: The Dimensions of Anti-Semitism and Ruth and I. Lewis Gordon Professor of Jewish History and dean of the Bernard Revel Graduate School of Jewish Studies at Yeshiva University.

JEREMY COHEN

AN ANTIQUATED RELIGION

In the earliest Christian writings, such as the letters of the Apostle Paul, there is a pattern by which Christians define who they are in terms of who they are not, in terms of an opposition to the Other—and that Other is the Jew. If the New Testament is a heavenly covenant, then the Torah of Jews is an earthly law. If Christians are identified with a heavenly Jerusalem, then Jews are identified with an earthly Jerusalem. In order for Christianity to be

right, Judaism must be wrong.

At the same time, Jews and Judaism have a place in the Christian world, because they and their Bible testify to Christianity's biblical origins, and the contrast between the defeated, enslaved Jew and the victorious Christian validates Christianity. When Saint Augustine (354-430 CE) taught that Jews needed to be preserved—and dispersed and subjugated—so that Christians could define themselves in opposition to them, we might say that he perceived them as standing on a platform in a railroad station waiting for the “Salvation Express” to come and pick them up. But they would be standing there forever, because they had missed the only such train—the one that would have led them to Jesus Christ. In Augustine's terms, the Jews were “stationary,” stuck, as it were, in “useless antiquity.” The Jew reading his Bible resembled a blind man looking into a mirror, and Christians could best appreciate their own vision in contrast to him.

Notwithstanding this perception of the Jews, there was, in fact, a vibrant and creative post-biblical rabbinic tradition evolving at the same time that Christianity was evolving. When the late medieval Church eventually awakened to the realities of Talmudic Judaism, it had the Talmud confiscated, tried and burned, because it deviated from the Christian construction of who the Jews needed to be: fossils of an Old Testament that had long ago lost its validity and vitality.

Talmudic Jews, then, as opposed to the blind unbelievers that Augustine beheld in the Jews, were now seen as rejecting the truth deliberately, and there was little need and less tolerance for them in a properly ordered Christian society. Christian teachers soon concluded that the Jews had killed their Messiah and their God intentionally. The popular imagination ran wild with this myth of the deliberate unbeliever, nourishing the demonization of Jews and promoting blood libels, well-poisoning

charges, and other such late-medieval accusations. Here lay important groundwork for modern anti-Semitism: *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion* and its myth of the international Jewish conspiracy, for example, owe much to medieval and even classical Christian patterns of thought.

Jeremy Cohen is the author of several books, including The Friars and the Jews: The Evolution of Medieval Anti-Judaism and Christ-Killers: The Jews and the Passion, from the Bible to the Big Screen, and professor of European Jewish history at Tel Aviv University.

DAVID NIRENBERG
A CORRUPTING INFLUENCE

Many religions have a dream of transcendence, of an ideal world in which there is no corruption, no suffering and no evil, and where the soul is eternal. And yet we live in a world of suffering, where bad things happen to good people, no matter how pious. How to explain the tension between ideal and reality? One way to do so is to imagine a source of corruption, an agent of confusion seeking to orient us toward the deadly material world, rather than toward our transcendent ideal. Judaism has been used to imagine the part of the world that is materialistic, fleshy, the enemy of our immortal soul.

Christianity and Islam both teach us to love God more than money, family, the world and even your own life. The opposite is also true—if you love the world, then you're turning away from God. The Jews are often used to represent this error, an error that is, of course, common to much of humanity. When Jesus says, “Store not your treasures on earth,” he's teaching all humanity but using the Pharisees as his negative example. The Qur'an uses a similar strategy when it says that the Jews are the greediest for life, that they will abandon God for worldly gain.

In both traditions, the Jews stand for loving the world too much, a temptation that affects everyone who lives in the world. Hence “Jew” becomes a way of criticizing anyone. When Christians see a Christian loving the world too much, they call him a Jew or a Judaizer. The same is true in Islam. Sunnis call Shiites “the Jews of our community,” and Shiites characterize Sunnis as Jews. This is what makes anti-Judaism so useful: it has the power to criticize any “incorrect” attachment to God and the world, even when the people involved aren't Jewish.

In Shakespeare's *Merchant of Venice*, for example, Shylock could represent all sorts of “incorrect” attachment to money, contract, law and love, even though there hadn't been Jews in England for 300 years. Martin Luther attacked the Pope as a Jew and was repaid by Catholics in the same coin. And in the Syrian civil war today, the opposition forces call Bashar al-Assad a Jew, and he in turn calls the al-Qaeda troops fighting against him Judaizers and Zionists. It is this flexible power to criticize so many aspects of this world, even when they have nothing to do with real Jews or Judaism, that has made anti-Judaism such a useful tool for so many people in so many different times and places.

David Nirenberg is a historian at the University of Chicago and author of Anti-Judaism: The Western Tradition.

AVNER FALK
EXTERNALIZING EVIL

Many anti-Semitic tropes are the product of two unconscious processes. One is “splitting,” the unconscious division of external emotional objects into “good” and “bad.” This tendency is illustrated in fairy tales such as Snow White, in which the child has two mothers: the “good” mother who has died and the

“evil” stepmother who torments. This splitting leads a person to view the world in black and white—the good us versus the bad them.

The other process is unconscious projection and externalization. In the Middle Ages, for example, German peasant children were strictly raised to be clean and proper, even while they lived with their pigs, so they unconsciously projected their own “dirty” and “bad” wishes onto the Jews. Germans during this time wholly believed in the existence of the *Judensau*—“Jews’ sow”—a huge, ugly pig with tusks that was the wife of the Devil. The Jews were said to be their offspring and were depicted as suckling her and eating her excrement. Numerous towns in Germany prominently displayed this image in sculptures, woodcuts, paintings and drawings on bridges, churches, public squares and municipal buildings.

Similarly, as in the myth of Abraham and Isaac, or of Laius and Oedipus, the ancients used to sacrifice their firstborn son while unconsciously projecting their infanticidal wishes onto their gods. Christians later projected them onto the Jews, saying they killed Christ and murdered Christian babies to make matzo. In the same way, Adolf Hitler was a sexual deviant—it is well documented that he could only reach orgasm when he made women defecate on him—but he accused Jews of wanting to indulge in sexual perversions and of wanting to pollute German blood. Hitler suspected that he was partly Jewish, so in his case, in addition to unconscious projection, he also displayed unconscious splitting, with the idea of “We Germans are good; Jews are bad.”

As a minority among Christians, Jews have lived in two contradictory conditions: believing themselves to be the Chosen People, while being despised and discriminated against by others. Inevitably, Jews have internalized the dual complexes of being both superior and inferior, which, psychologically, is very difficult. This problematic self-image caused be-

havior patterns that further antagonized the Christians and created a vicious circle in relations with the majority. While the human species may be more technologically sophisticated today, we have not yet progressed much psychologically. People need to have enemies, so anti-Semitism is not going to disappear any time soon.

Avner Falk, an Israeli clinical psychologist, is the author of Antisemitism: A History and Psychoanalysis of Contemporary Hatred.

HANS-JOACHIM VOTH

ECONOMIC PATTERNS

The research says there aren’t any easy economic explanations for anti-Semitism. When one compares the towns and cities that committed pogroms in the 14th century with those that didn’t, they’re all incredibly similar—they’re next to each other and have similar economic functions and demographic compositions. But one of those places burned its Jewish citizens in 1349-50, and the other didn’t. One thing that does stand out is that whatever happened in the 14th century lasted throughout the next 600 years: The same places that did or did not attack Jews did more or less the same thing in the 20th century in terms of persecution before and during the Nazi era—they voted more for the Nazis, committed more pogroms in the 1920s, attacked their synagogues with greater frequency in 1938 and deported more Jewish citizens.

This pattern of the past being able to predict what happens in the 1920s and 1930s is consistent, except in cities with extensive trade, especially in Hanseatic cities. What this seems to suggest is that in a non-trading location, deepest Bavaria, for example, teaching one’s children to hate people who are different produces no real cost. However, if I live in Hamburg and tell my children to

hate everyone who doesn’t look like us, then there’s a cost, and the children will be less likely to succeed. In this way, trade gradually undermines the transmission of hatred from generation to generation: Hamburg today has the lowest frequency of committed anti-Semites in Germany, and another Hanseatic city, Lübeck, voted massively against the Nazi regime even after it came to power.

Hans-Joachim Voth is professor of economics at the University of Zurich.

SHLOMO SAND

JUDEOPHOBIA’S NEW EXCUSE

Instead of anti-Semitism, I like to say “Judeophobia,” since I don’t believe in a Semitic race—that concept was invented by anti-Semites in the 19th century. Judeophobia has a long history, stretching from the 4th until the 20th century, and is rooted in Christianity, which said Jews killed the son of God. Until the 1950s, Judeophobia was legitimized by the press and even the pope. It was in the 1950s that Judeophobia became less and less legitimate in Europe’s public square, but it continued underground there and in the United States.

Today, we’re seeing the beginning of hostilities against Jews that started as anti-Zionism but have become anti-Israel. This popular hostility is not from the Middle Ages but has emerged from Arab and Muslim emigration. The Israeli-Palestinian conflict has nourished this new anti-Semitism, and we cannot ignore the fact that in some way, the creation of Israel gave rise to this. The continuation of this conflict will only lead to more hostilities against innocent Jews who have nothing to do with Israel’s politics. As an Israeli citizen, my duty is to fight against the Israeli government and to not give the new anti-Semitism an excuse for this propaganda.

Shlomo Sand is a professor of history at Tel Aviv University and author of The Invention of the Jewish People.

DAVID MAMET

A CONVENIENT SCAPEGOAT

The great Barbara Tuchman, author of *Bible and Sword*, points out that anti-Semitism is independent of its object. What Jews do or fail to do is not the determinant. The impetus comes from the needs of the persecutors and a particular political climate. The Jews have been stateless for 2,000 years and have been blamed for everything that goes wrong. Anti-Semitism is massively convenient for any country in trouble—whether it’s Hitler during the 1930s, isolationists in the United States or the “peace movement” from the 1960s. Nowadays, it’s still convenient for any country in turmoil. The Occupy movement, for example, is against the one percent, and assumes that means Jews—it doesn’t matter if Jews are actually rich or not. This is the elephant in the room. In the absence of any enemy, people say, “Oh good, I know it’s probably the Jews—that’s probably it.”

David Mamet is a Pulitzer Prize-winning playwright, screenwriter and director and author of The Wicked Son: Anti-Semitism, Self-hatred, and the Jews.

BRIAN KLUG

COMPLEX & CONTENTIOUS

Before we can broach the roots of anti-Semitism or explain why it still exists, we must address the question, what is anti-Semitism? This question turns out to be both complex and contentious.

It is complex partly because the word anti-Semitism was coined in the 19th

century to signify a racist ideology. Some people today use it only in this narrow sense, while others (including me) use it to refer to hostility to Jews at any period, whether Jews are seen in racial, religious, ethnic or cultural terms.

It is contentious mainly because of the highly politicized debate over Israel. Critics of Israel, crossing a line in the sand, find themselves accused of anti-Semitism. They react by accusing their accusers, alleging that the charge against them is nothing more than the machinations of “the Israel lobby.” At once, this is seized upon as an anti-Semitic slur, which in turn is denounced as a Zionist smear. Round and round they go in an acrimonious circle that gets ever more vicious.

To break this circle we need to clarify what anti-Semitism is. At its heart is a negative stereotype of the “Jew,” in which Jews are seen as sinister, clannish, rootless, parasitic, cunning, money-grubbing, power-grabbing and so on.

The roots of this stereotype lie in antiquity, especially the early Christian polemic against Judaism. Over the centuries the stereotype became detached from its religious moorings. It survived the sea change of the Enlightenment, which secularized the predominantly negative narrative about Judaism handed down to it by the very Christianity that it saw itself as overturning. It is deep in the culture of Europe; hence it exists to this day. And because it is essentially a *cultural* phenomenon, you can find anti-Semitism on the political left as well as the right.

So when is criticism of Israel anti-Semitic? When, directly or indirectly, it projects the negative stereotype of the “Jew” onto the Jewish state. Sometimes this is open and sometimes it is concealed. But we must remember that the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is a bitter struggle. Partisanship can lead to intemperate criticism. When “friends of Israel” are intemperate, this does not make them anti-Arab racists. By the same token, when “friends of Palestine” single Israel out unfairly, this does

not make them anti-Semites.

Anti-Semitism still exists, and it has spread round the world. But it does not help us fight it if we close our eyes to other reasons for hostility to Israel or if we see anti-Semitism when it is not there.

Brian Klug is a senior research fellow in Philosophy, St. Benet’s Hall, University of Oxford.

IRA FORMAN

A SERIOUS RETROVIRUS

Anti-Semitism and its resurgence can’t always be described in rational terms. Since it’s been around for more than 2,000 years, asking “why” is not always the most useful exercise. Instead, one must first start with perspective—how bad is it? One interesting exercise is to compare today with the 1930s. There are some analogies, such as openly anti-Semitic, xenophobic parties with parliamentary representation—some with street militias—which haven’t been around since the 1920s and early 1930s. In recent decades there have also been threats to eliminate the State of Israel and demonization of Jews as vermin, cockroaches and snakes. But there are also many differences. Unlike the 1930s, there are many places for Jews to live, and Israel not only exists, but defends Jews. Iran, as frightening and serious a threat as it is, is not the preeminent military power that Nazi Germany was. This is not to downplay Iran’s potential nuclear capabilities, but if we look honestly, we have to say that this is not the 1930s.

Having said that, anti-Semitism is very serious and is getting worse. Anti-Semitism is like a retrovirus, morphing from pagan anti-Semitism to Christian anti-Semitism, to Enlightenment anti-Semitism, to racialized anti-Semitism, to now, an anti-Semitism that is associated with anti-Zionism. The complexity has made this a difficult issue to address, but woe to all of us if we decide to throw up

our hands because of that complexity. We ought to take this issue of modern-day anti-Semitism as equally concerning as the Soviet Jewry movement and equally deserving of attention.

Ira Forman is the U.S. State Department's special envoy to monitor and combat anti-Semitism.

HASIA DINER
MISDIAGNOSED IN AMERICA

I am always suspicious of the way “anti-Semitism” is used—it is an easy, convenient label used to end a conversation or analysis instead of exploring what is really going on. This does not mean that there is not a thing called anti-Semitism, but I think it is profoundly overused. It is not at all uncommon now, or in the past, to describe a situation as “anti-Semitism” any time somebody does not like someone else’s political attitudes or behavior vis-à-vis the Jews. For example, today, the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS) campaign is labeled anti-Semitic. Why is it that somebody cannot take a political, moral, ethical stance and say, “I think the policies of the Israeli government are reprehensible and the only way to push Israel to change is to boycott their products”? I am not sure why that constitutes anti-Semitism, but it is immediately tarred with that feather. Among other problems, this means it is impossible to have a conversation about Israel or BDS because one is accused of being anti-Semitic.

In another example from American history, in the 1910s, 1920s and 1930s, the phone companies in cities such as New York and Boston tended to recruit workers from Catholic high schools. These students were considered educated and neat—since Catholic schools enforced a certain standard of orderliness—and the companies believed these girls would not be prone to unioniza-

tion. When Jewish girls applied for these jobs, however, they would not get them. Most historians have called this anti-Semitic, but I am not sure if this is true. Was it anti-Semitism or anti-unionism—or did the phone companies simply have a vision of which group would make good workers? Instead of anti-Semitism, I would describe the situation with a more analytic statement: Jewish women could not get jobs with the phone companies because the companies recruited telephone operators among the Catholic high schools. To say it is anti-Semitism tells me nothing.

Similarly, African Americans and others complained about Jewish merchants in their neighborhoods in the 1920s and 1930s. But when these merchants were replaced in the 1970s by Korean merchants, guess what—they started complaining about Korean merchants. Was this really anti-Semitism, or anger, hatred, resentment, jealousy and hostility toward the shopkeepers who were not from the neighborhood, regardless of who they were? These are just a few examples to show just how slippery the category is. Obviously, quotas against Jews were anti-Semitic. The Nuremberg laws were anti-Semitic. But I think much of the behavior that is labeled as anti-Semitic is really something else.

Hasia Diner is a professor of Hebrew and Judaic Studies at New York University and author of We Remember with Reverence and Love: American Jews and the Myth of Silence after the Holocaust, 1945-1962.

MAXIM SHRAYER
RUSSIAN OPPRESSION

To understand the roots and expressions of anti-Jewish prejudices in the Soviet Union, one must go back to the late modern era. The Jewish condition in the Russian Empire was marked by

officially mandated, legal discrimination based on religion. Jews were constricted to the Pale of Settlement and disenfranchised. Throughout the czarist period, both the legacy of Christian Judeophobia and the empire’s official rhetoric on the Jew fueled popular anti-Jewish prejudices. A convert to Christianity was no longer a Jew in accordance with the law, yet conversion did not exactly safeguard ex-Jews from bouts of popular intolerance.

The revolutions of 1917 abolished religious and ethnic discrimination. In reality, the Jewish condition in the Soviet Union evolved into a twofold predicament. Judaism was nearly suppressed, and it’s a miracle we survived there as a religious identity. Jews were officially defined as an ethnic group with a spoken Germanic language (Yiddish). While the Soviet people’s memory hadn’t been cleansed of Judeophobia, the Soviet rhetoric on the Jewish question obviated the targeting of Jews as an ethnic, social and intellectual group. Following World War II and the Shoah, state-sponsored discriminatory measures were widely practiced in the Soviet Union. And that’s how it remained from the 1960s through the 1980s, when I grew up in the Soviet Union.

With the formation of the State of Israel, a rhetoric of anti-Zionism began to loom large over the horizon of Jewish life in the USSR. Following Israel’s victory in the Six-Day War and the beginning of the exodus of Soviet Jewry, the anti-Zionist rhetoric permeated the Soviet mainstream to replace crude, vintage 1950-1953 Stalinist anti-Semitism. Anti-Zionism became a storefront for a variety of Soviet anti-Jewish products. Soviet-era Israel-bashing relates to the present-day reality of anti-Semitism in the Western world. Nowadays, not only heirs of thugs with axes but white-collar *pogromshchiks* in Europe and America channel anti-Jewish prejudices into Israel-bashing. This brings us back to the history of anti-Jewish prejudices in

Russian and Soviet lands, and to the lessons we can learn from it.

Maxim D. Sbrayer is the author of Leaving Russia: A Jewish Story and a professor at Boston College.

DAVID KERTZER

THE ROLE OF THE VATICAN

The demonization of the Jews by the Roman Catholic Church has played an important role in the evolution of anti-Semitism from its modern inception in the 1880s through the Second World War and into the post-war period. In 1987, Pope John Paul II called for a commission to investigate whether the Church bore any responsibility for the anti-Semitism or the Holocaust. Eleven years later, the commission's statement, which became the official position of the Catholic Church, said no. Its claim was that in the past, the Church had often encouraged anti-Judaism—a negative view of Jews based in religion—but that the anti-Semitism that led to the Holocaust was something different, since it was based on negative social, political, economic and racial views of Jews. This narrative, although comforting, has no historical basis.

From the beginning of modern anti-Semitism near the end of the 19th century, the Church was engaged in demonizing Jews. Starting in 1880, for example, *Civiltà Cattolica*, a Jesuit publication under Vatican supervision, was filled with vicious, negative pieces on the dangers that Jews presented to Christians in Europe, claiming that Jews sought to secretly enslave Christians through a clever combination of capitalism and communism. Similarly, just weeks before Mussolini announced anti-Semitic racial laws in Italy, the Vatican newspaper warned of the threat of Jews to healthy Christian society and essentially approved the use of restrictions on the rights of Jews.

The turning point was the Second Vatican Council, which rejected the idea that Jews are collectively responsible for the death of Jesus and called for other measures to end the demonization of Jews and other religious communities. However, it only occurred against a significant opposition, and there remains a conservative wing of the Church that laments the Second Vatican Council as a disaster.

David Kertzer is a professor of anthropology and Italian studies at Brown University and author of The Popes Against the Jews: The Vatican's Role in the Rise of Modern Anti-Semitism.

DINA PORAT

HOLOCAUST INVERSION

As much as it sounds like a contradiction, the Holocaust reinforced many negative images of Jews. Instead of the empathy Jews were hoping for after the Holocaust, in recent years this has turned completely upside down. Holocaust denial is a new iteration of *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion*, which says that Jews want to rule the world and have a plan to do so; Jews destroy, then rule; Jews have the means to do so; Jews control the media and finance. The Holocaust denier says that Jews invented a story, convinced the whole world that it's true and received compensation without any justification. Since the fall of the Soviet Union, countries that had been under the yoke of the Soviets have said, "First we had the Nazis, then the Soviets, and only the Jews get compensated—what about us?" They see the Jews who are well-to-do and enjoy education, health and participation in politics and culture, and say, "Now they want us to return money and assets that were taken from us by the Soviets?" There has been a certain reversal here. The Jew was the martyr for many years after the Holocaust, but it's not so anymore. If the Jews are stronger and have the upper hand,

they cannot claim to be martyred anymore. It's called Holocaust inversion.

Dina Porat is head of the Kantor Center for the Study of Contemporary European Jewry at Tel Aviv University and the chief historian of Yad Vashem.

ALVIN ROSENFELD

SECONDARY ANTI-SEMITISM

Over the past 15 years, there has been a strong upsurge in anti-Semitism. But what motivates this is not so easy to say. A rule of thumb is that when the economy goes down, anti-Semitism goes up, but that's certainly not the only factor. Some of it is the diminution of historical memory over time. Some of it is born out of resentments and feelings of guilt that persist today, particularly in countries that were most responsible for the Shoah. Germany has the category of "secondary anti-Semitism," anti-Semitism that comes to the fore when Germans are reminded too often of the old anti-Semitism that contributed to the rise of the Third Reich.

Europe has never come to terms with the genocide of Jews during the Holocaust, so feelings of resentment toward Jews for living amid the peoples of Europe today, reminding them time and time again of what happened during the war, factor into today's anti-Semitism. This backlash against Holocaust consciousness and the appearance of Holocaust denial, minimization and relativization indicates that some people have had it with the Jews; they don't want to hear any more about it, and they are now throwing it back against the Jews.

Individual Jews today are okay, but Jewish collectivities are not. A person can love a Woody Allen movie, read Philip Roth's novels, enjoy klezmer music or eat bagels and lox, but when it comes to the notion of Jews as a people—particularly as a people

with a powerful nation-state—it doesn't go over well. According to Europeans today, we should be living in a post-nationalist, post-religious, post-militarism age. They look at the State of Israel and see a peculiar religion that belongs to a peculiar people that asserts itself with a strong military, and they don't like it. All of this adds up to suspicion of Israel and hostility to that country and its supporters.

Alvin Rosenfeld is a professor of Jewish Studies and English at Indiana University and director of the Institute for the Study of Contemporary Anti-Semitism.

ARI ROTH
A NEW GOLDEN AGE

Remembered anti-Semitism is a defining piece of our collective identity—it's certainly a defining piece of mine—yet alertness to episodes of global anti-Semitism elicits radically different responses in each of us. Some will see, in the rise of a neo-Nazi hate group or a far-right-wing political party, evidence that anti-Semitism is alive and well, pernicious as ever, and that Europe, emptied of most of its Jewish population, remains a ravaged reminder of all that Jew-hatred has wrought. Others will see governments, liberal political parties, church groups and educational ministries mindful of their country's terrible record and be admirably pro-active in creating a healthier, more tolerant and educated consciousness of Jewish life and its decimation in their citizenship. I've experienced the moving impact of educational initiatives in Italy, Sweden, Germany, Austria and am noting the return of a burgeoning Jewish life and growing Jewish population in Warsaw, Berlin, Stockholm. In a way, it's all about what we choose to see: either the return of Jewish life in Europe with a simultaneous sensitivity to the trauma experienced with accountability admitted, or a more starkly ravaged, emp-

ted absence, with flickerings of modern hate gestures: new graffiti, coded salutes to crimes past? Is it possible to see both realities simultaneously? To mourn as we remember, to marvel as time passes and to be on guard when ugliness reappears? This is, in fact, our condition; to interweave a consciousness of painful memory and new appreciation.

We are a fortunate bunch, we who live in this current golden age of Jewish life. We're more free, more secure, more powerful and more diverse as a people than at any point in our history. It would behoove us to take advantage of our relative security and prosperity and, rather than be fixated on the next stirrings of Jew-hatred far away from the lives we're leading, look more closely at the health of our own community conscience—to celebrate our moment in history and recommit to our best values of pursuing justice for all; of taking a thorough moral inventory of our own conduct and doing our part to repair ourselves and the world. We've been losing a lot of late in our Jewish community, and that's not the result of anti-Semitism. That's the result of our own intolerance: of attempts to shut down debate in the name of lock-step positioning; an insistence that only one voice speak for and about Israel when in fact the nation is healthy and robust enough to demand that many engage in the roiling debate that is Jewish democracy—a debate that welcomes and interweaves multiple perspectives.

Ari Roth is a playwright and the artistic director of Theater J in Washington, DC.

IRWIN COTLER
STATE-SANCTIONED HATRED

In the past, the most dangerous anti-Semites were those who wanted to make the world free of Jews. Today, the most dangerous anti-Semites might be

those who want to make the world free of a Jewish state.

This is the oldest, most enduring and most lethal of hatreds. If the Holocaust is a metaphor for radical evil, then anti-Semitism is a metaphor for radical hatred. There's no other people, no other state, that's the standing object of state-sanctioned incitement to hatred and genocide coming from governmental, terrorist and radical Islamic groups as is Israel and the Jewish people.

What makes today's delegitimization of Israel different from the classical, historical delegitimization is its masking under the rubrics of all that is good, such as the struggle against racism, and doing so under the effective cover of institutions such as the United Nations. This ideological anti-Semitism is much more sophisticated and arguably a more pernicious expression of the new anti-Semitism because it is not expressed in any genocidal incitement against Jews and Israel, which is overt and public and clear.

Irwin Cotler is a Canadian member of Parliament, a former justice minister and attorney general of Canada and an international human rights lawyer.

MOHAMMED S. DAJANI DAUDI
A PALESTINIAN PERSPECTIVE

In the beginning, anti-Semitism was based on religion. For centuries, Christians blamed Jews for inciting the Romans to crucify Jesus Christ, and as a result, prejudice against Jews spread like a virus in Christian Europe. It became fashionable to blame Jews as a minority for the ills in society. Christians who perceived Jews as a threat to their power, traditions and culture reacted by having them isolated in ghettos. This reached its climax when the Nazis perpetrated the Holocaust. On the Muslim front, Samuel

Huntington's thesis of the "clash of civilizations," which describes Islam as being on a collision course with Christianity and Judaism, agitated the Muslim world, awakening the beast in the heart of radical Muslims, who began to interpret the verses of the Qur'an to portray Jews as anti-God and as despised and hated by God, giving rise to anti-Semitism even among the sons of Sam.

One of the most widespread *hadith* attributed to the Prophet Muhammad says: "The Day of Judgment will not arrive until the Muslims fight the Jews and the Muslims kill them. Even if a Jew hides behind a rock or a tree, the rock or the tree will say: 'O Muslim, O worshipper of God! There is a Jew behind me. Come and kill him,' except the salt bush, for it is one of the Jews' trees."

This fabricated quote, which feeds anti-Semitism among Muslims, is in total contradiction to the text of the Qur'an, which affirms it is God who will judge on Day of Resurrection regarding issues in which people differ:

"Your Lord will judge between them on the Day of Resurrection regarding the things about which they differed."

It is in full contradiction to Quranic verses such as:

"[He/God] who did send down the Book which Moses brought as a light and guidance to the people"; "Children of Israel, remember the blessing I have bestowed on you, and that I have exalted you above the nations"; "Believers, Jews, Christians, and Sabaeans—whoever believes in God and the Judgment Day and does what is right—shall be rewarded by their Lord, they have nothing to fear, or to regret."

Part of the religious animosity in general, and anti-Semitism in particular, is due to ignorance. Most Muslims don't know much about Judaism, and what some know may be distorted. Interfaith dialogue here is an important tool to bridge the wide gap among various religious communities and to dispel stereotypical

images, myths and misperceptions.

I do not agree with the thesis that criticism of Israel is a guise for anti-Semitism, but would relate this trend to Israel's persistent occupation of Palestinian Territories, its lack of respect for human rights in its treatment of Palestinians, and its continued violations of international law on many fronts. I believe that Israel is making world Jewry pay a high price for its aggressive policies against the Palestinians and that it is time for Israeli policymakers to read between the lines the implications of such policy for the future of Israel and to seek peace and reconciliation to end the conflict.

Mohammed S. Dajani Daoudi is founding director of the American Studies Institute and director of libraries at Al-Quds University. He is the founder and executive director of Wasatia, Moderate Islamic Movement in the Palestinian Authority.

CHARLES ASHER SMALL

RADICAL POLITICAL ISLAM

The biggest manifestation of anti-Semitism today is the rise of radical political Islam, a reactionary social movement that is gaining power in many parts of the world, from the Middle East and Europe to even North America. Their agenda is the implementation of a narrow, reactionary form of Islam upon societies that marginalize women, remove gay people from society and do away with basic notions of religious pluralism and citizenship. While this social movement is implementing its agenda very effectively and using anti-Semitism to gain support, we in the West, for all sorts of reasons, are remaining silent.

Islamic reactionary social movements have taken the most pernicious forms of European anti-Semitism and fused them into their political and theological ideol-

ogy to delegitimize and demonize Israel. We see this most acutely on campuses in Europe and now in the United States and Canada. We're seeing students under tremendous pressure on campuses as they get caught up in this whole new wave of contemporary anti-Semitism. Students who have strong religious and cultural connections and affiliations with Israel are being categorized as being part of this invalid, Zionist/Nazi apartheid regime.

The demonization of Israel and the Jewish historical connection to Israel is a violent form of anti-Semitism. The distinction that some so-called liberals in the United States want to make between classical forms of anti-Semitism and critiques of Israel flies out the window in the Middle East and in Europe, and, mark my words, it will fly out the window here in the United States in the near future. How can liberals advocate for boycotting and divesting from Israel, when over the Green Line there are organizations backed by the Iranian Revolutionary Regime, the Muslim Brotherhood, Hezbollah, Hamas and others, who have no regard for basic human rights? The stench of hypocrisy is all over the place. We need to stop focusing so irrationally on Israel and look at what's happening in the region, where people are being slaughtered by the millions.

Charles Asher Small is the founder and director of the Institute for the Study of Global Antisemitism and Policy and the Koret Distinguished Fellow at Stanford's Hoover Institution.

AYAAN HIRSI ALI

ISLAM'S ETERNAL SCAPEGOAT

I was born in Somalia but raised as a young child in Saudi Arabia, where rabid expressions of anti-Semitism were everyday occurrences. Many Palestinian refugees were our neighbors and in their eyes, Jews possessed extraordinary, Harry

Potter-like powers, with the ability to cause death and destruction. *We can never defeat these Yabuds* was a common theme. Evil conspiracy theories abounded. If water didn't come out of the tap, *Oh the Jews are at it again*. If someone fell ill, *The Jews have poisoned him*.

On a tour in Belgium, when I was 23, the guide said we were in the Jewish quarter. All the Somalis froze. *Where are the Jews?* we asked. The guide pointed out an ultra-Orthodox man and his family walking past. *But they are people!* And then I cried. That was when I grew up mentally.

Anti-Semitism persists because scapegoating has served the West well for 2,000 years. It suits certain communities to blame others for their misfortunes. But Arabs are Semites, too, so the term does not really apply to them. Muslims believe they are the recipients of God's final words. Rabbinical Judaism can challenge the authenticity of the Qur'an and this is therefore seen as a threat. Arabs have adopted Nazi and communist thinking about Jews as their own, translating *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion* into Arabic.

The establishment of Israel was wholly alien to Arabs. Today Muslim countries are dictatorships, and the leaders use Israel to try and deflect criticism from themselves. The populations want democracy, and women want equality. They compare life in Israel with their lives, and the only defense their leaders have is to tell their populations *Jewish evil has got into you!* Children from the age of two are inculcated and indoctrinated to detest Jews by their social, religious and academic leaders despite none of them ever having met a Jew. This is how easy it is to manipulate billions of people. Hatred of Jews is taught to ignorant people, and there is no campaign to counter such propaganda.

Ayaan Hirsi Ali is a fellow at the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University, president of the AHA Foundation and author of The Caged Virgin: An Emancipation Proclamation for Women and Islam.

ELI VALLEY

ABUSE & OVERUSE

If anti-Semitism isn't the longest hatred, it's probably the most resilient. Once fueled by Christian dogma, it found its most horrifying expression in secular ideology, and it continues to exist even in countries populated by almost no actual Jews. Anti-Semitism is ultimately a theology, and like all theologies it is irrational at its core and therefore difficult to understand using instruments of logic and reason.

But in Jewish circles, anti-Semitism can be an easy discussion. It opens with "They hate us" and it closes with "They always will." In recent years in America, the discussion has been complicated by two factors: the enormous post-war decline in stateside anti-Semitism, and the enormous post-war increase in Jewish institutional power—something we are reluctant to discuss precisely because of the sensitivities surrounding anti-Semitic tropes. Nonetheless, the battle against anti-Semitism continues to be an essential component of Jewish communal life in the world's most hospitable and safest society for Jews.

Just as anti-Semitism can thrive in the absence of Jews, a fixation on Jew-hatred can thrive in the absence of anti-Semitism. In America, I think it reflects a deeper discomfort with—or deflection from—contemporary communal Jewish reality. And much of that discomfort and deflection concerns the greatest example of Jewish power in our time: Israel.

Which is not to say that genuine anti-Semitism directed at Israel does not exist, but that the fact of historic anti-Semitism has been used to neutralize criticism from the outside and self-scrutiny from within. In the decades coinciding with the massive colonization of the West Bank—perhaps the most monumental expression of Jewish power in history—we increasingly insist that Israel has become the Jew writ large on the global map, the "ghetto of

the world" subject to irrational hatred. This is an abuse of anti-Semitism and a dishonor to generations who suffered and often died because they were Jews. But more than that, it reflects a breakdown of moral clarity and a desertion from the obligations of power. The core of anti-Semitism might be irrational, but there's a method to the madness of its abuse.

Eli Valley, comic artist at The Forward, is currently finishing his first novel. He tweets @elivalley.

EMANUELE OTTOLENGHI

ANTI-ZIONIST JEWS

As the new wave of anti-Semitism that exploded in the aftermath of the Palestinian Intifada shows no signs of abating, some Jewish voices, mostly intellectuals or academics, have responded to the latest assault on the Jewish people by excusing, justifying, downplaying and in effect, joining it. Israel's detractors readily seize upon such Jewish and Israeli censures of Israel as both evidence of the validity of their most extreme arguments and as a shield against accusations of anti-Semitism.

Anti-Zionist Jews, and those who exploit them as an alibi for anti-Semitism, do not merely wish Israel to behave differently; they object to Jewish identity that Zionism has nurtured among Israel's Jewish citizens and Diaspora Jews alike—one that strongly embraces the notion of Jewish peoplehood and reaffirms the historical bond between the Jewish people and the land of Israel. The current language of anti-Semitism is deeply indebted to them and needs them to make its case.

After Auschwitz, anti-Semitism is a taboo, but prejudices may regain some respectability when the objects of hatred endorse them. Anti-Semites rely on Jews to conceal their own prejudice and make

it presentable; anti-Israel Jews comply by presenting themselves as proud dissenters, purporting to be “critical Jews,” noble dissenters following in the footsteps of biblical prophets. In truth, their rhetoric is neither prophetic nor critical, but is constantly cited as evidence that accusing Israel of sinister crimes—such as using the Holocaust as blackmail against critics to cover up ethnic cleansing—is both historically accurate and devoid of any prejudice. Yet there is very little that is Jewish about these intellectuals, even though they appeal to selective Jewish values that suit their assaults on Israel’s legitimacy.

Emanuele Ottolenghi is a senior fellow at the Foundation for Defense of Democracies and author of Auto-da-fé: Jews, Europe and Anti-Semitism.

PHYLLIS CHESLER

A POLITICALLY CORRECT DISEASE

Anti-Semitism is a disease, one that is not caused by the Jews who are the targets of such irrational hatred. Anti-Semitism is racism, pure and simple. Today, anti-Zionism equals racism. The irony is that the State of Israel, which was supposed to be a safe haven for Jews, has now, diabolically, become the reason for scapegoating Jews globally. Longtime Christian, Nazi and Islamic anti-Jewish beliefs are converging with a politicized “politically correct” version of anti-Semitism among the intelligentsia. This view has gone viral via the media and the Internet. The propaganda Joseph Goebbels generated is limited compared to what can be propagated in every language, all day, every day, via the Internet.

Politically correct progressives feel righteously justified in blaming the Jews because they say Israel is an apartheid state; that is not true, of course. But, if propaganda is funded well enough, which it has been for a long time—most recently by

the Arab League, the Soviet Union, Iran, the Palestinian Authority, Hamas, Hezbollah, the United Nations and numerous international human rights groups—then such Big Lies enter the bloodstream of the world and are accepted as true.

Instead of focusing on the carnage and millions of refugees in Afghanistan and Syria, the continuing genocide in Sudan, the Shia-Sunni religious wars, the Muslim-on-Muslim violence—instead of looking at real gender and religious apartheid in the Muslim world—people are focused on the alleged crimes of the tiny little state of Israel. If that’s not anti-Semitism, what is?

Phyllis Chesler is the author of The New Anti-Semitism: The Current Crisis and What We Must Do About It and an emerita professor of psychology and women’s studies at the City University of New York.

XU XIN

CHINESE PHILO-SEMITISM

China has no history of anti-Semitism. Religion has never had a hold on Chinese society; as a result, anti-Semitism is an alien concept. Prior to the 19th century, there was absolutely no contact between Jews and China, and no Chinese terminology whatsoever about Jews. Only in the past 100 years have the Chinese started to know and understand Jews. However, the majority of Chinese people have never met a Jewish person.

If Chinese people develop any anti-Semitic views at all, these will have been imported into China—such as the belief that Jews dominate the financial markets. *The Currency War*, written by U.S.-educated Song Hongbing, was published in 2007 and became a bestseller in China. In my opinion, the author is not an anti-Semite, but the book portrays Jews as playing a major part in the international currency markets, and that had an impact on the Chinese readership. But if there is the remotest sign

of anti-Semitism in China, it is only due to foreigners’ stereotyping of Jews.

Jews are perceived as being exceptional businessmen; successful Chinese who travel abroad for work are often referred to—and, indeed, refer to themselves—as “Chinese Jews.” This is an expression of flattery.

In 1992, China and Israel established diplomatic relations, and the Chinese press portrays Israel in a positive way. Trade, cooperation and tourism are growing between the two countries. Zionism is depicted as the nationalist movement of the Jewish people, and in the eyes of the Chinese, everyone has the right to their own nation. The book *Start-Up Nation* by Dan Senor and Saul Singer was translated and sold millions of copies in China. Officials and academics admire the innovative and creative skills of Israelis. Studying the Torah has become quite fashionable, and authors try to insert the word “Talmud” into the title of any book (e.g. *Talmud for Business*) because that virtually guarantees it will sell well.

Anti-Semitism will not gain the upper hand in China. Indeed, the Chinese people have a very high opinion of Jews. *Xu Xin is professor of Jewish Culture at the Diane and Guilford Glazer Institute of Jewish and Israel Studies, Nanjing University.*

STUART EIZENSTAT

THE ROLE OF DIASPORA JEWS

From the European perspective, the predominant issue with respect to Israel is human rights. A lot of the delegitimization efforts—which cross the line into anti-Semitism—come from the feeling that Israel is a Western country that is not acting in accordance with Western human rights values. A May 2013 BBC poll of 17 European Union countries ranked Israel fourth from the bottom as one of the worst countries in

the world on human rights, along with North Korea and Iran. In a 2002 Anti-Defamation League study, 35 percent of Europeans said their attitude toward Jews was a reflection of their attitude toward Israel. In European public opinion, the Palestinians are the weak party, victims of the Israeli “overlords.” This is not traditional anti-Semitism—since it’s not religiously based—but there is a transfer in which Jews and the Diaspora are serving as surrogates for Israel. Opposition to Israeli policy has become a basis for a minority of Europeans—but not an insignificant minority—to have more negative views toward Jews.

An important question is where the attacks on Israel’s human rights policies cross the line to a new form of anti-Semitism. For example, the academic boycotts, like that voted by the Association of American Studies, are not anti-Semitic—they are anti-Israel. Even though Israel is a Jewish state, it would be unfair to say that these people are anti-Semitic. They are trying to change—even though I would say it’s the wrong way—what they consider to be an inappropriate policy toward the Palestinians. We have to be careful not to treat all disagreements with Israel’s policy as anti-Semitic.

There are too many people in the United States, too many people in the organized Jewish community, for whom every criticism is not only inappropriate but is somehow anti-Semitic. That’s not only wrong, it’s destructive. If we say every criticism of anti-settlement policies is anti-Semitic or de-legitimization, we have less credibility to combat what really is anti-Semitism or when there really is inappropriate activity. So we have to be very, very careful about how we treat this, at the same time as we’re very aggressive in combating de-legitimization efforts.

Stuart Eizenstat, former U.S. Deputy Secretary of the Treasury, Under Secretary of State for Economic Affairs and Ambassador to the European Union, is Special Advisor to the Secretary of State on Holocaust Issues.

MICHEL GURFINKIEL
A FRENCH REVIVAL

For three generations, French Jews have enjoyed a golden age spanning the second half of the 20th century, but the landscape has changed dramatically in the last few years. The expression of anti-Semitic views, totally unacceptable until a few years ago, is now commonplace. This revival is due to a fusion of native—but until now mostly dormant—anti-Semitism with a virulent form common amongst Muslim immigrants. There is a strange phenomenon of politically extremist ideologues teaming up with Muslims, who now account for 10 percent of France’s population of 66 million. These immigrants exhibited a naiveté on arrival—they did not understand that it was unacceptable or politically incorrect to be anti-Semitic. And they express this in violent ways.

Michel Gurfinkiel was editor-in-chief of Valeurs Actuelles, is the founder and president of the Jean-Jacques Rousseau Institute, a conservative think tank, and is a Shillman/Ginsburg Fellow at Middle East Forum.

CYNTHIA OZICK
AN OMNIPRESENT THREAT

The subject is vile and searing and omnipresent, but one cannot address it in a 15-minute interview; or, in fact, in an interview of any length; nor, indeed, can one have the heart just now to address it in any superficial form or forum at all. Jews and the Jewish state are once again under siege everywhere: by the United Nations, world headquarters of anti-Semitism; by, it goes without saying, the religious leaders of Islam and their constituents; by the European Union; by the Obama/Kerry vise, including the appeasement of Iran, a regime sworn to the destruction of the Jewish state, to which the West is

by its silence wholly indifferent; by the so-called Human Rights movement; by the BDS assaults; by, in America, our own innocently deluded voting pattern; by, in America, our distancing from and growing indifference to the State of Israel; by, in America, our ignorance, our triviality, and our lack of any historical sense; and by much, much, much more.

Cynthia Ozick is a critically acclaimed novelist and short story writer, whose works have won the National Book Critics Circle Award and the O. Henry Award. ♡

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