Contemporary Anti-semitism: Same old or something new?

Spring 2020

Dr. Katherine Aron-Beller
Tel Aviv University International

Kathybeller8@gmail.com

Course Description: The transformation from Anti-Judaism to modern Anti-Semitism and now current day Anti-Zionism provide evidence for the adaptability of this longest hatred.

How should this contemporary Anti-Semitism be explained?

In 1948, three years after the end of World War II and the Holocaust (and the same year as the establishment of the State of Israel), the French philosopher Jean Paul Sartre published his famous “Reflections on the Jewish Question”. He noted that if the Jews did not exist, the anti-semite would invent him. Therefore anti-Semitism was not – and is not only a Jewish problem. It is a problem for non-Jews too. While many theorized (and hoped) that anti-Semitism would end after the Holocaust, today it extends across dozens of countries on different continents, takes many different forms, and current trends reveal rising levels. In the last few years alone, Jews have been purposefully targeted and killed once again in the heart of Europe, in France, Belgium and Denmark. Nor is the United States immune to anti-Semitism – most religiously-motivated hate crimes take place against Jews. What our nation witnessed Charlottesville in the summer of 2017 is a stark reminder of this fact. What are we going to do about it?

The course will address major issues in the history of Anti-Semitism in the last seventy years. Topics will include: origins of modern Anti-Semitism and its difference from older theological forms of Anti-Judaism; variations in Anti-Semitic patterns in Eastern, Central and Western Europe; Anti-Zionism and the de-legitimization of the State of Israel; Anti-Semitism in music, literature and cinema; Jewish self-hatred and the internalization of Anti-Semitic stereotypes by Jews; patterns of post-Holocaust Anti-Semitism in America; Holocaust denial; the ambiguous religious connection between evangelical Christian pro-Zionism and Anti-Semitism; Anti-Semitism on the Internet; and contemporary debates on the persistence and new forms of Anti-Semitism. A strong emphasis will also be put on the Jews’ political, social and ideological responses to this hatred.

Course Objectives: To enable students to be fully conversant in the complex issues of contemporary anti-Semitism and to become competent ambassadors to combat this irrational illegitimate hatred on return to their home universities.
Course Outline: The course is divided into the following sections:

1) Definitions
2) Starting points for our narrative? Holocaust Narrative or Muslim Anti-Zionism and the de-legitimization of the State of Israel in the Arab world.
3) Christianity and Anti-Semitism: Catholics and Protestants
4) National trends: Anti-semitism by countries – Poland, Germany, America, France, Belgium and UK.
5) Cultural Anti-semitism: Anti-semitism in Music, Film and Art
6) The Jews’ Response: CST to the Self Hating Jew
7) Projections: Anti-semitism in the 2050s and anti-semitism without Jews.
8) Fighting Anti-semitism on campus: New Ambassadors

DEFINITIONS

1. Monday 24th February: Anti-Semitism and the Problems of its Definition


Secondary Literature:


STARTING POINTS FOR OUR NARRATIVE?

2. Wednesday 26th February: The Origins of Contemporary Anti-semitism: When does it really start?

Sources:


Secondary literature:


3. **Monday 2nd March: Different patterns of hatred? Pogroms and East European Anti-Semitism**

Sources:


Secondary literature:


4. **Wednesday 4th March: Holocaust and Holocaust Denial**

Sources:

“Institute for Historical Review Online.” *Institute for Historical Review* [www.IHR.org](http://www.IHR.org)

Bradley Smith, “Committee for Open Debate on the Holocaust” [www.CODH.com](http://www.CODH.com)

“The Holocaust Was a Hoax,” [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3X2vUMh9Hr0](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3X2vUMh9Hr0)

Secondary Literature:


5. Wednesday 11th March: Anti-Zionism and the De-Legitimization of Israel

Sources:


Secondary literature:


6. Monday 16th March: The Islamization of Anti-semitism

Primary Source:


Secondary literature:


**CHRISTIANITY AND ANTI-SEMITISM: CATHOLICS AND PROTESTANTS**

7. Wednesday 18th March: The Popes and the Jews
Sources:


Secondary Literature:


John Pawlikowski and Jon Nilson, Restating the Catholic Church's Relationship with the Jewish People: The Challenge of Super-sessionary Theology (Edwin Mellen, 2013)


Sources:


Secondary literature:


NATIONAL TRENDS: ANTI-SEMITISM BY COUNTRIES


Secondary Literature


10. Monday 30th March: Preparation for Midterm

11. Wednesday 1st April

12. Monday 20th April: Anti-semitism in modern day Poland

Gross, Jan T. *Fear: Antisemitism in Poland after the Holocaust* (Princeton, 2006)


13. Wednesday 22 April: Anti-semitism in France and Belgium

Source:


Secondary Literature:


Maud S. Mandel, Muslims and Jews in France: History of a Conflict (Princeton, 2014)

  14. Monday 27th April: Post Holocaust Anti-semitism in America


Josef Joffe, Nations We Love to Hate :Israel, American and the New Antisemitism (Jerusalem: Vidal Sassoon International Center for the Study of Antisemitism, the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, 2005).


  15. Monday 4th May: Rising Anti-semitism in the Labour Party UK


Secondary Sources:

David Hirsh Contemporary Left Antisemitism (London: Routledge, 2018)


CULTURAL ANTI-SEMITISM

  16. Wednesday 6th May: Session Fifteen: Anti-semitism in Music, Film and Literature
Sources:

Richard Wagner, “Judaism in Music (Das Judenthum in Der Musik; 1850),” in

Richard Wagner, Judaism in Music and Other Essays, Ellis, William Ashton
(Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1995).

Heinrich von Treitschke, "Our Views" (1879) in Richard S. Levy (ed.), Antisemitism
in the Modern World: An Anthology of Texts (Lexington, Mass., and Toronto:

Secondary literature:

Patricia Erens, The Jew in American Cinema (Bloomington, University of Indiana Press,
1984)

Gentleman’s Agreement (1947)
(American Drama film based on Laura Z. Hobson’s best selling novel. It concerns a journalist
(played by Gregory Peck) who poses as a Jew to research an exposé on anti-Semitism in New
York City and the affluent community of Darien, Connecticut.)

Alain Finkielkraut The Imaginary Jew (University of Nebraska Press, 1994).

THE JEWS’ RESPONSE: FROM THE CST TO THE SELF-HATING JEW

17. Monday 11th May: The Self Hating Jew

Sources:

Karl Marx, “On the Jewish Question (Zur Judenfrage; 1843)” available online at
http://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1844/jewish-question/

Otto Rank , “The essence of Judaism” (unpublished 1905 manuscript) as quoted in
Secondary Literature:

Otto Weininger, Sex and Character : An Investigation of Fundamental Principles,
Translated by Ladislaus Löb, edited by Daniel Steuer and Laura Marcus (Bloomington, IN:
Indiana University Press, 2005).

Secondary Literature:

Sander L. Gilman, Jewish Self-Hatred : Anti-Semitism and the Hidden Language of
the Jews (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1986):

FIGHTING ANTI-SEMITISM ON CAMPUSES: THE NEW AMBASSADORS
18. Wednesday 13th May: Anti-semitism on University campuses

Sources:

Film: *Crossing the Line* (a film about anti-Semitism on Campus) on you tube US and UK versions.

Secondary Literature:


Deborah Lipstadt, Samuel G. Friedman, Chaim Seidler-Feller, “American Jewry and the College Campus: Best of Times or Worst of Times?” (New York: American Jewish Committee, 2005)


RULES AND REGULATIONS FOR MY COURSES

1. I expect you to attend all lectures. I do not take always take a class register but I have a good visual memory and know if you come/don’t come to class.

2. Make every effort to come on time. In fact, come early and then you’ll be sure you’re on time. It’s very distracting to have students wandering into class late.

3. I like to meet everyone in my courses. If I haven’t already met you, please introduce yourself.

Requirements for the Course:

1. Regular Attendance and Participation in lectures (10% of final grade)
2. Midterm (40% of final grade).
3. Final paper, which must be completed by all students (50% of final grade).

This final paper (10–12 pages) will analyze a primary text or an issue of dispute among historians, the topic to be chosen by the student from a list to be distributed or in consultation with the instructor.

TAU International Course Guidelines
Rules and Respectful Behavior
- No cell phones or laptops permitted in class unless approved by instructor for use
- Tardiness to class is not permitted
- As our courses bring together students from many different styles of learning and from a wide variety of home institutions, we ask that students remain respectful to and patient with fellow classmates at all time as some students may be more familiar with certain course material or procedures than others.

Learning Accommodations
In accordance to University guidelines, students with learning disabilities or accommodation requests must submit official documentation from their home country/university (translated into English by notary if not already in English) to TAU International (tauiacademic@taux.tau.ac.il) in advance of arrival describing in detail any specific needs they have. Students must also bring a copy of this documentation with them on-site and give it to their faculty on the first day of class while introducing themselves so that the faculty know who they are and what sorts of needs they may have. TAU International and its faculty cannot guarantee that all accommodations received at the home school can be similarly met at TAU but certainly does the best it can to make any suitable accommodations possible that are needed.

In-class Exams
TAU does not permit, under any circumstances, taking any in-class (including mid or final) exams early or later than the scheduled exam day. When selecting courses, it is thus very important to note below if there is an in-class midterm or final exam as this date/exam cannot be changed. Early departures from the program are not approved, nor are early or exception in-class exams.

TAU International Absence Policy
Attendance is mandatory in all of the courses. Missing classes will be reflected in the final grade of the course. Up to three justified absences from classes will be accepted (for example: emergency matter or illness, both of which will require an official doctor's note sent to the faculty on the day of the absence). Such cases of absence should be reported to your lecturer immediately and again, a doctor’s note is required. Students are required to arrive on time for classes. Teachers are entitled to treat any single case of lateness and/or repeated lateness as an unjustified absence. Please note that according to TAU Academic Policy, if a student's behavior or attendance during the semester is disagreeable his/her course participation may be cancelled at the discretion of TAU.

Students are responsible for reading and adhering to the policies and procedures in the TAU International Academic Handbook posted here at all times.