



Follow-Up Worksheet: Evaluating Modern Antisemitism

Purpose

This assignment is a follow-up to the History of Antisemitism presentation. Its purpose is to expand upon what you have learned and allow you to apply your knowledge in interpreting modern expressions of antisemitism.

Modern antisemitism

Anti-Judaism had been a part of Christian and Muslim society for generations. Wherever Jews lived, their existence and experience was shaped by the local environment and government. In the 19th century, these agendas and views were supplanted with modern antisemitism. Modern antisemitism changed the tone and direction of discussion and attitudes towards Jews.

Modern antisemitism applied the concept of race (false assertions that humans have different biology) with the existing economic, social, and political charges against Jews. These new ideas were often cast in terms of a "struggle for survival" between "races". This social-Darwinist (survival of the fittest) belief would become a catalyst for the Holocaust. Theoretically, up until the 19th century a Jew could convert to Christianity or Islam and be accepted. Now, with "race" (biology) as the determining factor of worth, Jews were trapped. Modern antisemitism, engaged in a self-perceived life and death struggle for survival against the "Jewish gene" became, in the words of Yehuda Bauer, focused on the murder of the Jewish child not yet born.

New antisemitism and Israel

Antisemitism existed before there was a state of Israel. "New antisemitism" is used to describe the emergence of a new strain of antisemitism since the 2nd Intifada (2000) and the attacks of 9-11-01. Although rooted in early forms of antisemitism (see: Grand Mufti Haj Amin al-Husseini and the Muslim Brotherhood), this new hatred links anti-Israeli feelings, antisemitism and anti-Zionism. Zionism was the 19th century Jewish movement to find a homeland for Jews. "Anti-Zionism" is often the new code-word for antisemitic expression.

Clearly, not all criticism of Israel is antisemitism. It is legitimate to criticize individual acts of the Israeli government or individual Israelis. Israelis themselves cherish this freedom of speech. But one steps over the line when antisemitic slurs are used to describe an entire people or double-standards are used to criticize Israel while ignoring similar behaviors of other groups or countries.

Today, there is no area in the world where rabid, genocidal antisemitism is being generated and distributed more than in the Arabic and Persian (Iran) Middle East. Many good Muslims worldwide are struggling to find ways of undoing this damaging philosophy that they do not agree with and which they see as a violation of the spirit of the Quran. This process began in earnest when Grand Mufti Haj Amin al-Husseini fused Nazi racial beliefs and propaganda techniques with his own brand of extremism while mobilizing support for Nazi Germany among Muslims.

What is the line between political criticism and antisemitism?

Criticism of Israel becomes antisemitism when:

1. Israel's very right to exist is challenged.
2. When Israel is judged by a double standard.
3. When Israelis are portrayed with traditional stereotypes.
4. When *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion* are used as a "legitimate" source.
5. When Israelis are portrayed as today's Nazis. This is Holocaust denial.



Haj Amin al-Husseini

Genocide has never taken place without being preceded by educational propaganda. As Muslim scholar Bassam Tibi states, "Only when the public takes the appropriate stand against the antisemitic dimension of Islamism will it be possible to say that they have truly understood the lessons of the Holocaust."

Task: The following items taken from Arabic sources. Using the above guideline and notes from the “History of Antisemitism” presentation, evaluate and explain the antisemitic content of the following. Propaganda appeals to peoples’ emotions while speaking to them in their own language. Consider: What statement is being made and how does each example exploit antisemitic attitudes?

1.



2.



“Those who have crucified all prophets [i.e., the Jews] have crucified my people tonight”
(Ad-Dustour, April 14, 2001). (Jordan)

3.



Iraq and Palestine Crucified
(Jalal Al-Rifa'i, Ad Dustour, 3/18/04 from Al-Jazeera).

4.



Al-Watan (March 17, 2002)

On-line activity:

The following are from <http://www.MEMRI.org> (The Middle East Media Research Institute). Note that these are not from marginal figures or strange, fringe radicals. In fact, these are from mainline media outlets broadcasting people who are regarded as important intellectuals and writers. Some of these are extremely difficult to watch. However, consider that these are shown for a variety of audiences during prime viewing time. Evaluate the following specific broadcasts:

On-line, type: <http://memritv.org/search.asp>. In the search box type in the following numbers:

- #158 - Iranian TV Special on Zionism, *The Protocols of The Elders of Zion*, and the War in Iraq
IRINN (Iran) - 7/14/2004 - 00:03:34
- #895 - Ramadan 2005 TV Shows - Al-Shatat: Jews Murder A Christian Child and Use His Blood for Passover Matzos Al-Mamnou' TV (Jordan) - 10/20/2005 - 00:03:09
- #924 - 3½-Year-old Egyptian Basmallah: Jews Are Apes and Pigs (Archival Material) Iqra TV (Saudi Arabia) - 5/7/2002 - 00:02:59
- #927 - Head of Psychiatry at Cairo's 'Ein Shams University, Prof. Adel Sadeq, on the Psychological Make-Up of a Suicide Bomber (Archival Material)
- #1184 - Egyptian Cleric Sheik Muhammad Sharaf Al-Din on a Children Show: The Jews Are the People of Treachery, Betrayal, and Vileness Al-Nas TV (Egypt) - 6/21/2006 - 00:02:24
- #1249 - Sheik Yousef Al-Qaradhawi: The Jews of Today Bear Responsibility for Their Forefathers' Crime against Jesus Qatar TV - 8/26/2006 - 00:03:22