



A History of Anti-Judaism & Antisemitism: Student Outline

Antisemitism is more than prejudice, racism, or discrimination. It has common features with other hatreds, but it is uniquely complex. Antisemitic accusations are irrational and counterfactual. They often fixate on an apocalyptic logic that seeks to destroy a "secret, mythical Jewish power." Often presented in terms of salvation or redemption, antisemites demonize Jews while seeking some sort of vengeful reckoning against the perceived Jewish threat. Rabbi Jonathan Sak's metaphor of a "mutating virus" will help us approach it.

Focus Questions:

- Where does antisemitism come from and how does it give meaning to individual and collective identity?
- How does antisemitism act as a virus – mutating to penetrate societal norms?
- Hate cannot be publicly aired without some form of justification. What sources of authority within cultures have legitimated antisemitism?

1st Mutation: Anti-Judaism

1. Destruction of the 2nd Temple took place: _____ CE
2. After 70CE the _____ and _____ traditions developed at relatively the same time.
3. One of the most dangerous _____ (lie) was the Deicide charge. This was the _____ belief that Jews were solely responsible for the death of Jesus (a fellow Jew).
1. Supersessionism (Christians replacing Jews) was often illustrated by the figures of _____ (Church) and _____ (the synagogue).

2nd Mutation: Demonic Anti-Judaism

2. A turning point in anti-Jewish thought came with the 1st _____ in the 11th century.
3. In the 14th century, the trauma of the _____ created the fantasy of conspiracy theories.
4. Blood libel
5. In _____ the American Lutheran Church _____ Luther's teachings on Jews.
6. *Judensau*
7. A turning point in Christian thought came when the myth of deicide was rejected by the Catholic Church with *Nostra Aetate* (10-28-65) at the Vatican II Council.

3rd Mutation: Racial Antisemitism

The 18th century Enlightenment sought to solve the “Jewish problem” by making Jews disappear through assimilation. The Enlightenment rejected authority and religious tradition. Although this restrained some of the false teachings of the churches it ironically opened a new phase of anti-Jewish thought: racial antisemitism. Church authority was unable to limit antisemitic violence emerging under the guise of national identity. Often churches embraced nationalism from the roots of anti-Judaism. As Europeans controlled new empires in the late 19th century an ideology adopted by many was social Darwinism that believed that nations were in a “struggle for survival.” Not coincidentally, 19th century antisemitism was marked by the idea of “racial” struggle.

8. *The _____ of the Elders of Zion* was invented in Russia in _____ to create a racial view of Jewish “conspiracy.”

4th Mutation: Anti-Zionism

9. Two origins of this new thought were Haj Amin _____, the Grand Mufti and _____ of the USSR.

10. Antisemitism based on the concept of a “Jewish world conspiracy” is not rooted in Islamic tradition, but in _____ mind-sets.

11. Antisemitism and Holocaust denial is fueled by the Israeli/Palestinian/Arab war, but _____ is not the root cause. It is an outlet, a _____

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**“By themselves, Christian anti-Judaism and antisemitism did not generate the Shoah. But, they were the indispensable “seedbed” for Nazis.” - John Pawlikowski**

**“No statement, theological or otherwise, ought to be made that would not be credible in the presence of the burning children (of Auschwitz).” - Rabbi Greenberg**

**“The absence of clarity is the beginning of complicity.” - Omer Bartov**

**“The missionaries of Christianity had said in effect:**

**You have no right to live among us as Jews.**

**The secular rulers that followed had proclaimed:**

**You have no right to live among us.**

**The German Nazis at last decreed:**

**You have no right to live.”**

**- Raul Hilberg**

For those interested in Catholic discussion of these issues:

[http://www.bc.edu/research/cjl/meta-elements/texts/cjrelations/resources/education/PASSION\\_resources.htm](http://www.bc.edu/research/cjl/meta-elements/texts/cjrelations/resources/education/PASSION_resources.htm)