

ANTI-SEMITISM THEN AND NOW

Words and Acronyms to Know

ADL – Anti-Defamation League – The nations premier civil rights/human rights agency.

Blood Libel – The believed use of the blood of Christians for Jewish ritual including the making of Passover bread.

Holocaust – The killing of millions of Jews and other peoples by the Nazis during World War II.

Passion – The final days of the life of Christ from entrance to Jerusalem to his death.

Semites – A member of any of the peoples who speak or spoke a Semitic language, including in particular the Jews and Arabs; for the most part, refers to the Jewish people.

Synod – A council of the Church usually convened to decide an issue of doctrine.

The Livingstone Formulation – “The presence of two elements. Firstly the conflation of legitimate criticism of Israel with what are alleged to be demonizing, exclusionary or anti-Semitic discourses or actions; secondly, the presence of the counteraccusation that the raisers of the issue of anti-Semitism do so with dishonest intent, in order to de-legitimize criticism of Israel”.

<https://engageonline.wordpress.com/2010/10/05/david-hirsh-the-livingstone-formulation/>

Vatican II – In 1965 the Ecumenical Council affirmed “the validity of Judaism as a religious way of life with which Catholics must establish relations of “mutual knowledge and respect,” and repudiating the idea of “the Jewish people as one rejected, cursed, or guilty of deicide.”

WAR – White Aryan Nation

Anti-Semitism is such a vast and multi-faceted subject that to better serve seminar needs, will be divided into two parts: pre- and post- Holocaust. Of course, that is without delving in depth into the Holocaust, which alone is an incredibly diverse and complicated subject. The pre- and post- sub topics help us to identify if there is a continuum within the same pathogenesis that led up to the Holocaust, or is there a

separate pathogenesis after the Holocaust that has taken a turn in a different direction, and though new is still just as virulent as ever. The assumption from most is that anti-Semitism has been on the decline since the events of the Second World War; however, you must decide after beginning familiarization of the topic through the resources contained herein as to whether or not that is true.

Pre-Holocaust

It is best to try to find a common ground for the definition of anti-Semitism. Kenneth Marcus in his book *The Definition of Anti-Semitism* alludes to dissuading the definition away from particular events or times in history. The Inquisition, for example, would be one form commonly referred to as systemic anti-Semitism, but could it not be instead an oppression of Jews in Spain, which is indeed anti-Semitic, but for political reasons? The medieval blood libel is another example referred to as anti-Semitic and relegated to a European phenomenon during a particular period of history; however, both of these examples are not only regional but past history. In other words, the incident itself passed away with history rather than remain a recognizable phenomenon in all periods of history up until now. Therefore, it is transient in nature and not thought sufficient by some for a definition. Marcus purports that the Jewish belief is that the definition of anti-Semitism remains the same and is systemic emerging now and then in its original form, and is not defined by its historical or geographical context. (Marcus, K., p. 7) In the list of questions contained in this presentation, you will be asked whether or not you feel anti-Semitism is a particular incident within the regional or political context of the time, or is it a chronic condition regardless of place or time? Hannah Arendt denies the *eternalism* of anti-Semitism and instead relegates it to a societal phenomena and, therefore, temporary in nature: “ The notion of an unbroken continuity of persecutions, expulsions, and massacres from the end of the Roman Empire to the Middle Ages, the modern era, and down to our time, frequently embellished by the idea that modern anti-Semitism is no more than a secularized version of popular medieval superstitions, is no less fallacious than the corresponding anti-Semitic notion of a Jewish secret society that has ruled_” (Ibid., p. 90) However, Arendt also

describes, which will be discussed in the following paragraphs, how anti-Semitism precludes totalitarianism. In *The Power of Ordinary People*, Arendt proclaims that totalitarianism is dependent on the “unconditional loyalty of the masses or ‘slumbering majorities’, who felt dissatisfied and abandoned by a system they perceived to be “fraudulent” and corrupt”. <http://billmoyers.com/story/the-power-of-ordinary-people-facing-totalitarianism/#.WNGoPWQ8Bu0.email>

But what was the origin of this *longest hate* toward the Jews? Many believe it originated with the death of Christ and the part played, as some believe, by Jews for his death. On a personal note, it is something that always vexed me that there does not seem to be any such hatred harbored against the Romans, who were the perpetrators of his death. Crucifixion is a Roman invention and not a Jewish one. Years ago out of my many readings it was mentioned, that for the council to agree for a crucifixion on a Friday was a way to allow the sufferer to escape death, since death from crucifixion took at least two to three days and all sufferers on the cross had to be brought down before Sabbath Friday at sundown. I believe it is accepted that the stabbing to the side by a Roman spear was the cause of death.

Scholars also deliberated on how the Jews of his time would react to Jesus’ claim to be God, which would have been considered by the Jewish leaders at that time to be blasphemous, in addition to the Roman’s position that he was a political rebel. Many citings in literature expound on what were the possible beliefs and conditions that spawned hatred for the Jews. Even the Gospel of John, written more than a hundred years after the death of Jesus describes Jews as outcasts. So the pathogenesis of anti-Semitism is of a very old and much debated origin.

In addition to this history, Charles Glock and Rodney Stark describe the pathogenesis of religious prejudice to any religion or practice other than the believer’s to be *particularism* meaning that one’s religion is the only true one. They quote Eric Hoffer and his *particularist* vision: “The true believer is apt to see himself as one of the chosen, the salt of the earth, the light of the world, a prince disguised in meekness, who is destined to inherit this earth and the kingdom of heaven too”.

(Glock, C.Y., Stark, R., Christian Beliefs and Anti-Semitism, p. 20) They go on to describe Christianity as foundational to salvation and for those without religious legitimacy or those that did not accept Christianity there could be no entry into “God’s kingdom”. (Ibid., p. 22) This is particularly true when the majority, as they describe, are of one *particularist* view, while a smaller group choose not to accept that belief. In the fourth century when the Christian world was gaining sway over the Roman Empire the Church began to institute restrictions against the Jews in order to force them toward conversion. These restrictions included marriage, sexual intercourse, and eating to or with Christians, and then in the 5th Century The Third Synod of Orleans forbade the hiring of Christian servants, or for Jews to appear in public during Passion Week. Subsequent Synods from other locations limited holding public office, religious discourse with Christians, and in 1200 Pope Innocent III proclaimed the Jews, like Cain are “doomed to wander the earth as fugitives and vagabonds, and their faces covered with shame”. (Ibid., p.148). It is these authors’ view that anti-Semitism as expressed from Christians emanated from the Jews inability to accept their *truth*. For example here is a quote from Pope Eugenius IV, Decree in 1442:

“ We decree and order that from now on, and for all time, Christians shall not eat or drink with Jews, nor admit them to feasts, nor cohabit with them, nor bathe with them. Christians shall not allow Jews to hold honors over Christians, or to exercise public offices in the state.” (Ibid., p.147)

Later during the reformation in the 16th c, it was well known that Martin Luther himself was an anti-Semite, who after many attempts at converting Jews proclaimed that they should be banished from Germany and all possessions taken from them. (Ibid., p.148). The hate was further reinforced by such passages in the New Testament, Matthew, where the Jews forced Pilot to crucify Jesus, and refused “to accept the responsibility” for this transgression and; therefore, must be punished. “This version of Jewish guilt has long served as rationale for anti-Semitism”, and since God is punishing the Jews so should the rest of Christendom. (Ibid., p.197) Glock and Stark quote a Sunday school text: “The Jews turned their backs on God, they refused His Son and they worshipped pagan gods. And they have been sorely

punished for centuries as a result... They are not really wanted anywhere". (Ibid., p.xviii) Is it not surprising that anti-Semitism should flourish under these proclamations?

In the 1800's, a German Catholic Nun, who was sainted, Anne Catherine Emmerich had a vision of the trial and subsequent death of Christ. Even though, more than 1800 years after his death, this vision has been believed and represented in the Passion with its in depth descriptions of the cruelty and sinister nature of the treatment of Jesus by Caiphus and the Council, or more simply by the Jews. One can only imagine what effect that would have had on an already angered population of Europeans against the Jews.

(http://www.jesuspasion.com/THE_PASSION.htm#CHAPTER%20VII)

It was not until 1965 and the Vatican II that the Catholic Church recognized Jews as not guilty of deicide, but I believe later part of that decision was overturned.

Nevertheless, through the rejection by the Jews of Christian particularism and an unverifiable version of the death of Christ as the fault of the Jews that anti-Semitism has thrived from early Christianity to finally find its supreme outlet in the final solution of the Holocaust.

Later into the 19th c. several sources cite anti-Semitism as an out spring from certain biased groups in Germany such as the German Table Society or Tishchgesellschaft founded in 1811, which quoted by Aly Gotz, " people were afraid of the Jews because, as they saw it, 'Jews – with their restless feet – were trying to slime, push, and force' their way into the sciences, arts, and society at large" (Gotz, A., Why the Germans, Why the Jews, p.49). This manifestation of fear was spawned for several reasons. Firstly, Judaism is not just a religion of beliefs, but also a studious endeavor based in causes and effects with encouraged discussion on the ramifications of actions. As Rabbi Levi Brackman states, " Jewish religious teachings and Torah stories are ideas that relate to behaviors and attitudes that lead directly to successful outcomes". <http://www.ynetnews.com/articles/0,7340,L->

3592566.00.html . It is not surprising that Europe and most of the world for millennia, the majority of which were illiterate would; therefore, interpret a learned group of men (women were not included in the Torah study or any Jewish studious pursuits, but were known to seek other avenues of study such as midwifery) as a threat. Education, even today, is considered threatening to many third world countries. Mr. Gotz goes on to extend the milieu in which anti-Semitism thrives to not only Germany but to Eastern Europe as “part and parcel for political emancipation”. (Gotz, A., p.57) He goes on that the security of a nation, as a whole is dependent on ethnic solidarity; which, of course, did not include the Jews; anti-Semitism, therefore, was an expected result of political strivings from a cohesive but disadvantaged populace. It is no wonder that Hitler could declare his anti-Semitism so overtly and consequently have his views so generally accepted.

Post Holocaust

Why then, if anti-Semitism is alive and well now despite its history, that we do not have an outpouring of anti- Jewish sentiment as previously unabashedly expressed in the Holocaust? Marcus described the lack of action commensurate with a high level of anti-Semitism as an “adherence to convention” or “ lack of opportunity or courage” and “not acting on their aversions”, resulting in what “the economists call *pent-up demand* “, (Marcus, K., p.8). Therefore, the horror of the Holocaust, which is known to have exterminated 6 million Jews along with millions of Gypsies, Homosexuals, Poles, the infirm, as well as many who did not fit into their guidelines of ethnically pure. The Holocaust then served to submerge the same hatred that continues to exist but destined it to the past, or will its former form re-emerge later from the *pent-up demand* Marcus describes and eventually work its way to the surface? Perhaps we are seeing some of that in the transference of Nazi Jewish hatred into Islamist Extremist Jewish hatred. The owners of the overt form of anti-Semitism now are Islamist extremists, using the fertile ground of the Israeli and the Palestinian struggle, and the hidden but nevertheless present form of unexpressed anti-Semitism. An example is the refusal of Iran and its leadership to accept the Holocaust as reality with no previous rebuttal from the rest of the world. This form

of anti-Semitism is demonstrated in the reaction to the cartoon in Denmark of the Prophet Mohammed, despite the fact that the cartoon was not published within a Jewish context:

“ You make fun of our prophet and we will deny your holocaust” (Hitchens, C., *Arguable Essays*, p. 705) The instances of anti-Semitic actions by Islamist extremists from three year old children citing the Jews as the devils of the world on Al Jazeera Saudi Arabian TV to Daniel Pearl, are too numerous to recount for our purposes, but what we must be cognizant of is that the overt form of anti-Semitism is reappearing with more frequency than ever anticipated. It is doing so under the impetus of anti-Zionism. That synagogues and Jewish Schools overseas need 24-hour guard, or hidden access is unthinkable to us in the US. However, Jewish institutions in the United States are now security aware and have plans in place in case of attack. In reaction to the events of 2015 in Paris of the slaughter of Jewish shoppers while in a kosher supermarket President Barack Obama said the following remarks, “Americans were right to be concerned when you have a bunch of violent, vicious zealots who behead people or randomly shoot a bunch of folks in a deli in Paris”. (Marcus, K., p.3) On face value, this comment describes the tragedy of the incident, but on another level is it not an example of the reluctance to support Jewish people when faced with anti-Semitism? Despite the fact, that I supported and still do President Obama, this comment met with much reaction since the shooting was not random. The victims were meant to be Jews and the incident is an unprecedented example of anti-Semitism, but he did not say that. There is a link to an article at the end of this report written by Mr. Singer of the Wall Street Journal. In that article, he describes how the United States has repeatedly refused to acknowledge anti-Semitism, as it presently exists. Yes, the US acknowledges the crime, but not the nature of it. There is no acknowledgement by the United States that the Palestinian territory is disputed, and remains ominously silent on such issues as the right of return despite generations past, land ownership disputes and other issues directly related to Israel and Palestine. The US has sat by quietly until the last statement by our UN Ambassador (in a link below). It is important to realize that showing a blind eye is not a way of dealing with anti-Semitism. On the contrary, anti-Semitism is an

indicator. Here is a rather strong quote, but nevertheless worth its place in this report by the essayist Hitchens, “ A moral cretin thinks anti-Semitism is a threat to only Jews”. (Hitchens, C., *Arguable Essays*, p.705) Perhaps, next will be, anti-Protestants, or anti-Catholics, or anti-Atheist, or anti-Farmers, or anti-Factory Workers and the list goes on.

In another sense, and not disregarding the timeless quality some believe anti-Semitism has, is Marcus’s common definition for anti-Semitism or simply “ a hatred of Jews’ or “Jew Hatred”. (Marcus, K., p35) He cites Tolstoy and Sartre as describing anti-Semitism as more than hatred, but rather a passion; if so, then is not any incident in time showing hatred of Jews anti-Semitic and, therefore, passionate in nature? Passion helps us to understand the emotion behind anti-Semitism since it is difficult in situations of hate; he goes on, to determine exactly the degree of hate, which clearly has a range or scale from mild to more severe. Marcus reminds us how prevalent Jewish hate can be, especially so when expressed in anti-Israel politics, when Israel is construed as the *collective Jew*. He gives the example of a flyer passed around the University of San Francisco State in 2002 containing these words: “Palestinian Children Meat – Slaughtered According to Jewish Rites under American License”, a clear reference to the blood libel of the Middle Ages. (Ibid., p.36)

In 1997 the European Union Monitoring Centre (EUMC) for Racism and Xenophobia established a clear definition and guideline for what is anti-Semitism. After several failed attempts from themselves and sister agencies, working indicators of anti-Semitism were established in 2005:

- Making mendacious, dehumanizing, demonizing, or stereotypical allegations about Jews as such or power of Jews collective – such as, especially but not exclusively, the myth about a world Jewish conspiracy or of Jews controlling the media, economy, government, or other societal institutions.

- Accusing Jews as a people of responsible for real or imagined wrongdoing committed by a single Jewish person or group, or even for acts committed by non-Jews.
- Denying the fact, scope, mechanism (e.g., gas chambers) or intentionality of the genocide of the Jewish people at the hands of National Socialist Germany and its supporters and accomplices during WWII (The Holocaust).
- Accusing the Jews as a people, or Israel as a state, of inventing or exaggerating the Holocaust.
- Accusing Jewish citizens of being more loyal to Israel, or to the alleged priorities of Jews worldwide, than to the interests of their own nations.

And in regard to the State of Israel:

- Denying the Jewish people their right of self-determination.
- Applying a double standard by requiring of it a behavior not expected or demanded of any other democratic nation.
- Using the symbols and images associated with classic anti-Semitism (e.g., claims of Jews killing Jesus or blood libel) to characterize Israel or Israelis.
- Holding Jews collectively responsible for actions of the state of Israel.

(Marcus, K., p.163)

The practice of not reporting incidents and crimes against Jews fostered by anti-Semitism, but instead reporting incidents or interpreted crimes of Israelis, again as the *collective Jew*, not a form of anti-Semitism? In 2006, a French Jew was kidnapped, beaten, stabbed and held hostage for two days. He was found with acid burns over 60% of his body and later died. The news in the US, to the best of my knowledge, did not mention it, but if this same incident happened to someone else of differing racial or religious origins, would it still not be reported? If that victim was a non-Jew, for example, and a Jew did the torture, or an Israeli would the News not have covered it? From the map of anti-Semitic crimes world-wide contained within a link below, how many do you recall hearing either on the TV or radio, but

switch that to the many times you have heard of Israeli retaliation against Palestinians in the disputed Palestinian territory?

What has distinguished this era from previous eras concerning anti-Semitism is the advent of the Internet and social networks. “Hitler and the Nazis could never have dreamed of such an engine of hate”. (Foxman, A.H., Wolf, C., *Viral Hate, Containing its Spread on the Internet*, 2013, p.10). Foxman and Wolf go on to describe a “sudden and rapidly increasing wave of bigotry-spewing videos, hate oriented affinity groups, racist online commentary, and images”, (Ibid. p.11) They cite the following organizations as hatemongering on the web:

Stormfront – membership over 250K, Klan based

Hammerskin Nation – well-organized Nazi based with some members convicted of harassment and murder.

The Nationalist Socialist Party (NSM) – largest neo-Nazi with members in 47 states; virulently promotes anti-Semitic rhetoric.

The New Black Panther Part for Self-Defense – the largest organized anti-Semitic and racist black militant group in America. (Ibid., p.12-13)

The aforementioned list is overtly racist and anti-Semitic, but what about the more subtle varieties of anti-Semitism? These groups use the web for *cloaked websites*, in other words, websites that appear legitimate in their content and name, but when delving into links within the site it becomes clear what the original intent was to the trained eye, but how many young people or the uninformed may take the information within those sites as truth. An example is the Historical Review (IHR.org) where the Holocaust is denied. (Ibid., p.16) A terrible example of how the web can inflame and corrupt was on the 4th of July 2010 on Facebook, where a host wrote, ‘Kill a Jew Day’. According to Foxman and Wolf, this posting initiated a subsequent wave of anti-Semitism. (Ibid., p.18) Online gaming is another form or medium to spread with titles such as *Aryan Test*, or *Clean Germany*, again targeting the propaganda toward the young. (Ibid., p.19) These authors also describe the legacy of the neo-Nazi Gary Lauck, born in Lincoln, Nebraska with the ominous nickname of the “Farm Belt Fuhrer”. He not only claims Germany as his homeland,

but also smuggled into Germany millions of neo-Nazi paraphernalia and founded several neo-Nazi cells within Europe. (Ibid., p.24) He was arrested but after his release established websites and a web hosting company to spread his vitriol not only efficiently, but also instantaneously. There are too many sites to mention here, both domestic and international. In short, we have had a spread of viral hate not to match any in history. However, it is not just the posting of hate that is so destructive, but also the making of connections between those that read and agree with the content that is even more threatening.

Questions to Consider:

1. Does anti-Semitism reinvent itself with each new generation or location, or is anti-Semitism akin to a chronic condition that goes into remission and then re-immerses regardless of time or location?
2. Do you believe that the United States harbors increasing anti-Semitic sentiments? If so, how can we ameliorate the problem?
3. Do you believe that anti-Israel sentiments are really anti-Semitic?
4. Concerning anti-Semitism, do you feel the world is in a state of crisis?
5. Do you feel the resurgence of anti-Semitic crimes we are recently hearing in the news are directly related to proclamations for unification such as *America first or America for Americans?*
6. In your opinion, is the News both in the US and abroad biased in terms of reporting anti-Semitic crimes?
7. Do you feel anti-Semitism impacts you personally?

In concluding this brief description of just some of the issues concerned with Anti-Semitism, it behooves us to remember a few quotes from the Irish born statesman and parliamentarian, who in the 18th c. stated:

*The only thing necessary for the triumph of evil is for good men to do nothing.
Nobody made a greater mistake than he who did nothing because he could do only a little.*

Those who don't know history are destined to repeat it.

https://www.google.com/#q=Edmund+Burke&*

How to Prepare for the Seminar:

There is quite a bit of material here if you wish to delve more deeply into the subject. However, I urge you to watch the following: The first link to the YouTube with Rabbi Jonathan Sacks of the UK, the second link from Haaretz on the questionnaire to determine if one is anti-Semitic with a link within the text to an interactive site with the statistics given globally for incidents of reported anti-Semitism, and the last link with our UN Ambassador Nikki Haley. There are so many interesting philosophies and views concerning anti-Semitism from brilliant scholars that I feel this report only serves to introduce the topic. I have included other links in case you would like them. If you are interested in reading more fully into the philosophy of Hannah Arendt and Totalitarianism, here is a link repeated from within the text.

<http://billmoyers.com/story/the-power-of-ordinary-people-facing-totalitarianism/#.WNGoPWQ8Bu0.email>.

Reading and Watching Materials:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uwN1WuDwIf0>

<http://www.haaretz.com/jewish/news/.premium-1.590590>

<http://www.amchainitiative.org> (I find this site a bit inflammatory, but it does demonstrate the climate in some US University campuses.)

<https://www.hudson.org/research/13363-a-step-toward-mideast-peace-tell-the-truth>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4mWX8VB18nI>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ev8q9iQIG30>