

The History of Antisemitism

EUH 3931, section 24107; JST 3930, section 24490

M-W-F, period 5, 11.45 am – 12.35 pm

Keene-Flint 119

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Course Description

This course explores the history of anti-Jewish discourse and images, mainly in Europe. It is largely a class in intellectual and cultural history, focused on the production of ideas and their role in the construction of individual and collective notions of the self. What role did anti-Semitism play in the self-conception of ancient Greeks and Romans, early and medieval Christians, modern Europeans and Americans? We will begin in the ancient period and end in the early twentieth century. The course will not deal with Nazi Germany and the Holocaust directly, but certainly serves to familiarize students with the themes directly relevant to a study of the 1930s and 40s. Readings will consist of primary source material and secondary scholarly monographs.

Required Books:

These texts should be purchased as part of the course requirement:

Robert Michael, *Holy Hatred: Christianity, Antisemitism, and the Holocaust* (2006)

Edward Berenson, *The Accusation: Blood Libel in an American Town* (2019)

There will also be readings, primary and secondary, that are part of the required assignments. These will be pdf files available on Canvas. These are required readings for the course.

Course Requirements:

Attendance is mandatory. You will be allowed to miss three class meetings without penalty; anything beyond that will affect your final evaluation and grade. After 3 missed classes you will lose five points on the next exam for each missed day.

Attendance is worth 5% of the final grade.

There will be **three midterms**:

Midterm one will be given on February 7. It will be worth 30% of your final grade.

Midterm two will be given on March 20. It will be worth 30% of your final grade.

Midterm three will be given April 22. It will be worth 35% of your final grade.

Grading scale:

A 93-100; A- 90-92; B+ 87-89; B 83-86; B-80-82; C+ 77-79; C 73-76; C- 70-72

D+ 68-69; D 66-67; D-64-65; Fail 64 and below

Students requesting classroom accommodations must first register with the Dean of Students Office (352-392-8565, www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/). The Dean of Students Office will provide documentation to the student who must then provide this documentation to the Instructor when requesting an accommodation. Students with disabilities should follow this procedure as early as possible in the semester.

Course Schedule

This is a general outline of how the lectures/class discussions will proceed. Obviously, this is not a weekly breakdown, since there are only six major temporal categories. Some themes will occupy us for longer or shorter periods of time than others. The assigned readings, which you are expected to do as we go along, are intended to correspond to the general themes, not to any particular day.

If you are coming to class and paying attention, you will know where we are in terms of the material, and therefore what you ought to be reading when.

1. Introduction

Reading:

Michael, *Holy Hatred*, Chapter 1, pages 1-14

PART ONE: Anti-Judaism: The Ethnology of Difference

2: Social Anti-Judaism: The pre-Christian Ancient World

Readings: All three of these are contained in the Canvas folder “Pagan Antiquity”

Peter Schaefer, excerpt from *Judeophobia*

“Pagan anti-Judaism, ancient sources”

Tacitus on the Jews

3: The Theology of Difference: Early Christianity--The New Testament

Readings: These are found in the Canvas folder “Early Christianity”

Primary documents: “New Testament Texts”

“Paul texts”

Rosemary Reuther, excerpt from *Faith and Fratricide*

4. Early Christianity--The Church Fathers

Readings:

Primary Documents: Augustine “Slay them Not,” and John Chrysostom, sermons against the Jews, in Canvas folder “Church Fathers”

Michael, Chapter 2, pages 15-44

5. The Middle Ages

Readings:

Michael, Chapter 3, pages 45-104

Joshua Trachtenberg, excerpt from *The Devil and the Jews* (found in Canvas folder “Medieval”)

Kenneth Stow, “Hatred of the Jews or Love of the Church: Papal Policy Toward the Jews in the Middle Ages” (found in Canvas folder “Medieval”)

6. The Reformation and Renaissance

Readings:

Michael, Chapter 4, pages 105-152

David Nirenberg, Chapters 7 and 8 from *Anti-Judaism* (pdf titled “Nirenberg Reformation and Renaissance” in Canvas folder “Reformation Renaissance”)

William Shakespeare, excerpts from *The Merchant of Venice* (pdf file in Canvas folder “Reformation Renaissance”)

PART TWO: Anti-Semitism: The Biology of Difference

6. Early Modern Period

Readings:

Jerome Friedman, “Jewish Conversion, the Spanish Pure Blood Laws and Reformation: A Revisionist View of Racial and Religious Antisemitism” (pdf file, Canvas, labeled “Friedman blood purity laws”)

7. The Modern World:

Readings:

Primary source readings in folder “Modern Antisemitism” in Canvas

Michael, Chapter 5, pages 153-184

Edward Berenson, *The Accusation*, entire book

Michael Winock, “Jews, Antisemitism, France” in Canvas