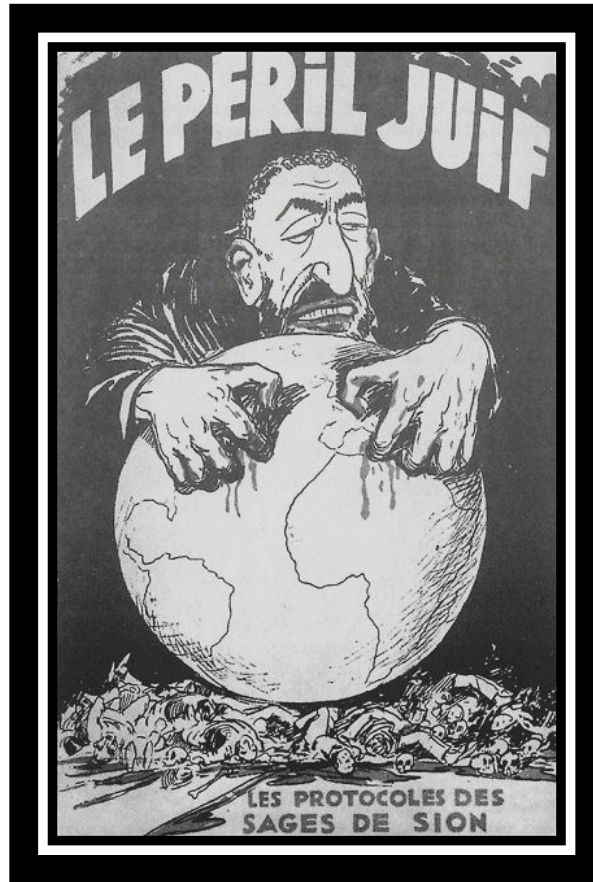


# Antisemitism and Philosemitism: Jews in Myth and Thought

Professor Jeffrey Veidlinger  
University of Michigan



From Moses the lawgiver to Madoff the shyster, Jews have figured prominently in European myth for some two thousand years. Regardless of whether it is out of admiration for their contributions to modern civilization or as a warning about imagined Jewish conspiracies, the nature of "the Jew" has occupied some of the most influential minds of the last two centuries. Some have lauded them as God's Chosen People, Hollywood moguls, Nobel Laureates, intellectual geniuses, and highly accomplished doctors, lawyers, and professionals. At the same time "the Jews" have been feared and despised as imagined worshippers of the Anti-Christ, political conspirators, financial manipulators, child murderers, and threats to racial purity.

Through close readings of some of the most influential works on the nature of Jewish identity--- written by Jews and non-Jews alike-- this course will analyze some of the ways that Jews have been imagined in modern history. **Notably, this class does not focus on actual Jews. You will learn little about Jewish life, community and culture from the readings in this course.** Instead you will come to understand how the image of the Jew has been imagined by a variety of writers, many of whom had little or no contact with actual Jews and wrote their treatises solely on the basis of their own prejudices and imaginations. Since antisemitism remains a threat and prominent—even accepted—form of bigotry in the world today, it is important to understand the tropes and myths that inform it.

## **Learning Objectives**

In addition to learning about the Jewish past, you will develop your reading, writing, and critical thinking skills. You will learn how to approach texts from a historical perspective, to think analytically about the past, to formulate historically relevant questions, and to analyze a variety of historical materials, including primary source texts and modern scholarship.

You will be able to analyze patterns in textual portrayals of the Jews.

You will be able to evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of contending definitions of and explanations for antisemitism.

You will be able to evaluate texts to better understand and interpret the societies and individuals that produced them.

You will be able to recognize the extent and impact of diversity among and between global Jewish communities

You will reflect on ways that historical knowledge can shape your own personal, ethical, and civic responsibilities

You will be able to analyze historical sources

You will be able to differentiate between primary source texts and secondary literature

You will be able to evaluate different types of historical evidence within their historical and social contexts

You will be able to develop arguments and write persuasive essays based on historical evidence

## SCHEDULE OF CLASSES AND READINGS

### Introduction

#### Introduction

#### Section One: Overview of the Problem

##### Defining the problem

Kenneth Marcus, "Introduction" to *The Definition of Antisemitism* (Oxford University Press, 2015)

##### Documenting the problem

David Brooks, "[How to Fight Anti-Semitism](#)" *New York Times*, March 24, 2015

Jonathan Sacks, "[The Return of Anti-Semitism](#)" *The Wall Street Journal*, January 30, 2015

Jeffrey Goldberg, "[Is It Time for the Jews to Leave Europe?](#)" *The Atlantic* April 2015

##### Surveying the problem

ADL [Global 100](#): An Index of Antisemitism

##### Antisemitism on College Campuses

Ruth Wisse, "[Anti-Semitism Goes to School](#)," and Ben Cohen, "[Response: Will Anti-Semitism Spread from American Universities to American Culture?](#)" *Mosaic Magazine* May 4, 2015

Barry A. Kosmin & Ariela Keysar, "[National Demographic Survey of American Jewish College Students 2014 Anti-Semitism Report](#)"

["American Studies Association Resolution on Academic Boycott of Israel"](#)

Leon Wieseltier, "[The Academic Boycott of Israel is a Travesty](#)"

##### The Storm over the Israel Lobby

[John Mearsheimer and Stephen Walt, "The Israel Lobby"](#)

[David Remnick, "The Lobby"](#)

[Michael Massing, "The Storm over the Israel Lobby"](#)

#### First Response due

#### Section Two: Judeophobia in the Premodern era

##### Scriptural Roots

John 2:13-25; John 5: 1-18; John 10: 22-39; Matthew 27: 1-37

[Complete Official Text of the Oberammergau Passion Play](#), 126-135

##### Medieval Art of the Jew

[Dark Mirror: Illustrations](#)

Joshua Trachtenberg, "The Blood Libel" from *The Devil and the Jews*

Sara Lipton, "[The Words That Killed Medieval Jews](#)," *New York Times*, December 11, 2015.

##### The Jews and the Law

Martin Luther, "The Jews and Their Lies"

##### The Jew as Usurer

[The Merchant of Venice, Act I, Scene 3; Act IV, Scene 1](#)

## **Film: The Disputation**

### **The Chosen People**

[Spinoza, "On the Vocation of the Hebrews, and whether the prophetic gift was peculiar to them"](#)

Avodah Zarah 2b

Romans 5

## **Second Response due**

### **Modernity and the Jews**

#### **The Uses of Jews for Profit**

Menasseh Ben Israel, "How Profitable the Nation of the Jews Are"

John Toland, "Reasons for Naturalizing the Jews in Great Britain and Ireland"

#### **Visit to UMMA**

#### **The Jews in Enlightenment Thought**

Gotthold Ephraim Lessing, *Nathan the Wise*

#### **Origins of the "Jewish Question"**

Richard Wagner, [Judaism in Music](#), Part I, pages 1-50

Karl Marx, "On the Jewish Question"

## **Topic and Bibliography Due**

#### **Racial Antisemitism**

Wilhelm Marr, *The Victory of Judaism Over Germandom*

Houston Stewart Chamberlin, *The Foundations of the Nineteenth Century*, excerpts

#### **The Jew in Modern Literature**

Fyodor Dostoevsky, *Memoirs from the House of the Dead*, chapter IX

[Mikhail Artsybashev, Sanin, chapters 32-33](#)

[Charles Dickens](#)

[Oliver Twist, Chapter 9](#)

## **Third Response Due**

#### **A Jewish Response**

[Leon Pinsker, "Autoemancipation"](#)

### **The Twentieth Century**

#### **In Defense of the Jews**

Mark Twain, Concerning the Jews, *Harpers Magazine*, September 1899

Emile Zola, "[J'accuse](#)" *L'Aurore* January 13, 1898

#### **Protocols of the Elders of Zion**

Protocols of the Elders of Zion

## **Paper Outline Due**

#### **Misogyny and Antisemitism**

Otto Weininger, "Judaism" in *Sex and Character*, 301-333

## **Capitalism and the Jews**

Werner Sombart, *Jews and Modern Capitalism*

## **The International Jew and Henry Ford**

*The International Jew*: “The Jew in Character and Business” Vol 1

“Jewish Control of the American Theater” from *The International Jew* Vol. 2

“Jewish Gamblers Corrupt American Baseball” *The International Jew* Vol. 3

*The Amazing Story of Henry Ford*

## **Nazi Antisemitism**

[Adolf Hitler, Mein Kampf, excerpts](#)

[Joseph Goebbels, “The Jew”](#)

[Der Sturmer Caricatures](#)

## **Paper Rough Draft Due**

## **Paper Workshop**

## **Final Paper Due**

### **Course Requirements:**

Class sessions are structured as discussions. You are expected to come to class having completed the readings for that class session. Even if you don’t completely understand them, it helps to read through them before class. During the class session, I will explain difficult terms and passages in the texts and guide you toward understanding both the plain meaning of the text and the deeper relevance of the documents for greater historical understanding. One of the goals of this course is to help you understand how to read historical documents and what types of questions to be asking of the texts. Your assignments will be based on these texts.

### **ASSIGNMENTS**

#### **In class Presentation 5%**

Each student must prepare at 10-minute presentation for one class, to be assigned the first day of class. The presenter is required to research and provide background information on the week’s readings (biographies of the authors, history of the text, reasons it was written, etc.), and to prepare 3-4 general discussion questions about the readings.

#### **Response Papers 45%**

You are required to submit three response papers as indicated in the syllabus. One response is a group assignment; two are individual assignments. We will be conducting in-class peer review exercises on each individual response paper prior to submission, so you are required to bring to class a hard copy of your paper on the due date for peer review. You will then be required to submit your final paper online by midnight on the online deadline. All response papers should be

submitted with annotations providing a self-analysis of your own writing.

### **Final Paper 30%**

You are required to write a final research paper on a topic of your choice dealing with issues raised in this class. Your paper must include analysis of at least one primary source document, and should include consultation with relevant secondary source materials. The paper is due in stages as outlined below. Each stage will be peer-reviewed and discussed in class and should be submitted online by the next night at midnight.

**1% Topic and Bibliography—**

**2% Outline—**

**2% Rough Draft—**

**25% Final Paper--**

### **Participation 20%**

You are required to attend every class having completed the assigned readings. You are expected to participate in class discussions. Periodic pop quizzes will count towards your participation grade.

### **Bonus Points 2%**

You can earn up to 2% bonus points in this class by attending and responding to lectures and events around campus related to the topic of this course. You can earn .5% for each event you attend, provided you submit a brief 300-500 word response paper within one week of the event. If you would like to write on an event not listed on the syllabus, you may consult the professor in advance to see if it is eligible.

### Response #1 (Group Assignment)

Your group is a committee set up by the university charged with assessing the state of antisemitism on American university campuses and determining whether the university should issue a response. Write a report on your findings and issue a set of recommendations. (1000 words)

### Response #2

Write a treatise (750 words) or other creative work (short play, poem, illustration) in the medieval or early modern style that would counter the type of negative portrayal of Jews we have seen in the examples provided.

### Response #3

Based on the readings you have done in this section, discuss some of the ways in which European attitudes towards Jews developed over the course of the nineteenth-century. Be sure to draw specific examples from the works we have read in class. (750 words)

## Grading Rubric for Writing Assignments

19-20: The response is a well-argued, specific and original answer to the question, and sheds novel light on the topic or presents the material from a new viewpoint. The argument is fully explored with ample evidence and is presented in a convincing and persuasive manner. The response has very few grammatical or spelling errors.

17-18: The response is well-argued and specific, and directly answers the question. The argument is explored in detail and presented in a convincing manner. The response has few grammatical or spelling errors.

15-16: The response addresses some aspects of the question, but it may be overly general, vague, or obvious. The response is mostly clear, but may digress at times or require further exploration. Insufficient evidence may be supplied to back up points. The response may have some grammatical or spelling errors.

13-14: The response may be too vague and, although there may be some good points, it fails to develop, or strays too far from the assignment. It may be unclear if the student understood or read the text. Grammatical and spelling errors may distract from the overall coherency of the argument.

11-12: The response has no clear direction, although there may still be some good points. The response may fail to address the assignment, or may misunderstand the text. Grammatical and spelling errors may make it difficult to understand parts of the response.

9-10: The response is difficult to understand due to severe structural or grammatical problems. The response does not address the assignment.

## Final Grade Scale

A+	100
A	95
A-	90

B+	87
B	83

B-	80
C+	77

C	73
C-	70
D+	67
D	63
D-	60
E	50
F	40



### **Statement on Missed Assignments and Tests**

There will be no make-up exams or quizzes except in the case of documented medical or other emergencies. In such cases, you must inform the professor that you intend to take a make-up within 24 hours of the time that the original was given. Unless you inform the professor within 24 hours, there will be no make-up exam even if you have a documented medical excuse. If you fail to take a quiz, you will receive a 0. Late assignments will receive a reduced grade of one point for every 24 hours they are late.

### **Statement on Academic misconduct:**

I expect you to follow the statement on academic honesty and intellectual integrity established by the LSA Community Standards of Academic Integrity. You can find out more about academic integrity at [www.lsa.umich.edu/academicintegrity/index.html](http://www.lsa.umich.edu/academicintegrity/index.html) Presenting someone else's work as your own (this includes the work of another student as well as information from books, articles, and web sites) is plagiarism. Other forms of academic misconduct include, but are not limited to: using unauthorized books or notes to answer examination questions; exchanging knowledge with another student verbally or in written form during a quiz; and writing for another member of the class. The penalty for academic misconduct will be a failing grade for the course and notification to the Registrar that the grade was given because of academic misconduct.

### **Statement on Classroom Civility**

In order to create and maintain a comfortable learning environment for all members of the classroom community, it is essential that we all display respect for each other. This class deals in particular with upsetting topics. Students should be sensitive to the different ways people react to the disturbing topics we will be studying, and should do their best to make their peers feel comfortable in having open discussions. This includes attentiveness to and participation in all classroom activities. Unnecessary disruptions during class should be avoided, as they are distracting to you, your peers and your instructor. This includes any private conversations, whether they are being conducted orally or via text/email etc. Eating in the classroom is prohibited.

### **This is an off-line classroom**

Since our class sessions are conducted as discussions, it is essential that everyone pay attention to each other rather than their screens. For this reason, you may not use electronic devices in the classroom without prior approval from the professor.

**Changes in Syllabus:** This syllabus is subject to change without prior notification.