Late 19th century depiction of supposed global Jewish domination

Nazi propaganda: “The Eternal Jew”

Dr. Alan Singer, Senior Lecturer in History
Honors College
Office: Honors House, 138

https://uwm.edu/honors/people/singer-alan/

I will not be holding face to face office hours. My virtual office hours will be Monday through Thursday, 9:30-11:00. This means I will be near my computer in case anyone has any questions or just wants to chat. We can do this through email or on Microsoft Teams but I really want to encourage you to virtually stop by. I can also set up meetings at other possible times if these hours don’t work for you.

Email: asinger@uwm.edu

Anti-Judaism and antisemitism are perplexing and irrational phenomena. For many centuries, the Jewish people have been vilified for denying the divinity of Jesus Christ, which, along with supposedly being sentenced to eternal damnation, they were purportedly marked to be murderers, usurers, and villains of all sorts. In modern times, the traditional theological hostility of anti-Judaism has had to make room for the racist formation of antisemitism where Jews are also castigated for their supposed role in defiling and undermining the “white-race”. By the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, in old-style monarchies
and empires, and in newly liberal nations, Jews were blamed for practically all social problems. As many Jews were supporters and beneficiaries of the European Enlightenment, reactionary thinkers held them responsible for secularization and economic and political liberalism. “The Jews” were accused of committing the greatest abuses of capitalism, and curiously at the same time, were charged with inventing socialism and Communism. The results of antisemitism were, as is well-known, disastrous with its zenith in the Holocaust. This course traces anti-Judaism and antisemitism from the Middle Ages to the present, when seventy-five years after the Holocaust, the so-called “oldest hatred” continues. Currently, in many parts of the world, Jews are being attacked or harrased on the largest scale since World War Two and the very concept of antisemitism is being cynically used in the increasingly unscrupulous politics of our own day.

In this course, we will address the following questions: Why have European and Western societies been so fixated on the Jewish people? How has hatred for the Jews been socially constructed as a mirror for larger society’s ills, and what ways has it manifested itself geographically and over time? And finally, why hasn’t “Enlightened” modernity ended this once and for all? By attempting to answer these questions, students will gain a broad understanding of one of history’s most vexing problems.

Please note that while antisemitism has been called the “oldest or longest hatred”, this class will not look at the plight of Jews, including during the Holocaust, as merely a special case in the history of civilization. Comparisons with other racisms, persecutions, and genocides of other peoples will be encouraged in our discussions. The histories of slavery and structural racism towards persons of African descent, Native Americans, and those subjugated under colonialism will be also brought into the conversation. By bringing these issues into our discussion of antisemitism, we will be able to see how multiple racist and oppressive systems operate together.

Remember to be respectful to your colleagues as we proceed. We will be discussing controversial topics and we will respect each other. Any intolerant behavior will be subject to disciplinary action. Please see the course policies below for further information.

**Required Readings:**


The following titles are posted as links and pdfs on the course Canvas site:


Coursework:
First Exam 25 pts
Second Exam 25 pts
Third Exam 25 pts
Written Discussion (participation) 25 pts

All three exams will contain identification/significance questions and two short essays.

The “written discussion” part of your grade will be based on the level of your participation. While this class will have an asynchronous online lecture component, much of it will focus on reading and online asynchronous discussion. I will post questions on Canvas which correspond to each day’s reading. You will have a few days to answer and comment on the questions. You are required to comment on every posted discussion question. The best comments are those that have substance and drive the discussion further. Please try to stay on topic. A good way to do that is to make sure you are directly answering a prompt or referencing an assigned reading. It is good to bring up non-direct but relevant issues, just be careful not to stray too far.

For the final paper, you will have the option to either answer a specific essay question, or you can do a short research essay. I will provide topics for the potential research paper or you can suggest one yourself.

*If you are taking this course for Honors credit, you will have a more extensive final project which will include the option of either an extended paper or a media project.

Statement of Student’s Time Investment:

The following is an estimate of how much time a student should spend on this course. Keep in mind that this is only an estimate and the student will be graded on their performance on their written work and discussion. Be prepared to spend more time during the weeks that assignments are due.

Reading/Viewing Course Materials, Working on Assignments: 125 hours total.

In all, you should be spending about 8-10 hours a week on this course.

Syllabus Covid Statement:
Please read the following UWM statement on Covid. This class is strictly online but take a look so you are familiar with UWM policy for your other classes.
https://uwm.edu/cetl/covid-19-syllabus-statements/
**Canvas:**
We will be using Canvas, the online course management program. Along with the book that is required for purchase, the rest of the readings will be posted on Canvas as pdfs and links. We will also be using Canvas for our written class discussions, announcements, and the introductory, recorded videos (short lectures) on Collaborate Ultra, which is built into Canvas. Please be aware that I will also be posting required relevant news/current events items or general items of interest to supplement our discussion. I will make sure that these will be brief.

**Evaluation Scale:**
You will receive a point grade (out of 100) for all your assignments. I will be using a basic plus/minus scale:

- A 93-100
- A- 90-92
- B+ 88-89
- B 83-87
- B- 80-82
- C+ 78-79
- C 73-77
- C- 70-72
- D 60-70

**Email:**
Students must check their UWM email often. Along with Canvas, we will use email as a primary means of communication outside of class.

**Policies:**
The following are the official policies for this course. By being enrolled, you are agreeing to them. If there is a medical emergency or something of this manner, policies can be adjusted if you present proper documentation.

General UWM policies:  

Course Specific Policies:  
**Late assignments:** Unexcused late assignments will lose 5 points for every twenty-four hours they are late

**Academic Misconduct:** Academic misconduct will not be tolerated in this course. Please consult the Dean of Students’ link here for an overview of what constitutes misconduct.  
https://uwm.edu/deanofstudents/conduct/academic-misconduct/overview/

**Students with Disabilities**
The University of Wisconsin Milwaukee supports the right of all enrolled students to a full and equal educational opportunity. The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), Wisconsin State Statute (36.12) require that students with disabilities be reasonably accommodated in instruction and campus life. Reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities is a shared faculty and student responsibility. Students are expected to inform me of their need for instructional accommodations by the end of the third week of the semester, or as soon as possible after a disability has been incurred or recognized. I will work either directly with you or in coordination with the Accessibility Resource Center to identify and provide reasonable instructional accommodations. Disability information, including instructional accommodations as part of a student's educational record, is confidential and protected under FERPA.

**Schedule:**
The following is the schedule of work you will be doing this semester. We will be using a Monday/Wednesday pattern. This means that you will begin and complete your reading/writing assignments on Mondays and Wednesdays. I will be posting the reading/discussion questions that correspond to each reading the night before the day listed in the schedule (by 10:00pm).

For the work posted for Mondays, you will have until 11:59pm on the following Wednesday to complete.

For the work posted for Wednesdays, you will have until the following Monday at 11:59 to complete.

Keep in mind that the essay assignments and exams are due on the day they are listed below.

Also note that as we begin new topics such as antisemitism in the Middle Ages, the Renaissance, the Enlightenment, etc., I will post lecture videos of about 20-30 minutes long. The purpose of these videos is to give you contextual information and provide you with a specific focus that has your readings in mind. You should also find these videos helpful for when you write your exams.

**Wed. Sept. 2 Course Introduction**
Read: syllabus
watch current events documentary, “Antisemitism in Europe (Deutche Welle)”, time: 42:26
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CD1LuZtBAZo&t=619s
Answer first written discussion questions
You may want to start reading Trachtenberg for next week.

**Mon. Sept. 7 Labor Day**
Take the day off. Think about all the wonderful things the Labor Movement has brought us. My favorites are weekends and safety on the job.

**Wed. Sept. 9 Antisemitism in the Middle Ages and in the Reformation**
Watch video lecture
Mon. Sept. 14 Antisemitism in the Middle Ages and in the Reformation
Read: Trachtenberg, 57-75

Wed. Sept. 16 Antisemitism in the Middle Ages and in the Reformation
Read: Trachtenberg, 76-96

Mon. Sept. 21 Antisemitism in the Middle Ages and in the Reformation
Read: Trachtenberg, 97-123

Wed. Sept. 23 Antisemitism in the Middle Ages and in the Reformation
Read: Trachtenberg, 124-155

Mon. Sept. 28 Antisemitism in the Middle Ages and in the Reformation
Read: Trachtenberg, 159-195

Wed. Sept. 30 Antisemitism in the Middle Ages and in the Reformation
Read: Trachtenberg, 196-220

Mon. Oct. 5 Antisemitism in the Middle Ages and the Reformation
Exam One (Due Wed. Oct 7 at 11:59pm)

Wed. Oct. 7 Antisemitism in the Middle Ages and the Reformation
Watch video lecture
Read: Martin Luther, On the Jews and their Lies, parts I-IV
http://danielhammarberg.com/martin_luther_on_the_jews.pdf

Mon. Oct. 12 Antisemitism in the Middle Ages and the Reformation
Read: Luther, parts V-VIII

Wed. Oct. 14 Antisemitism in the Middle Ages and the Reformation
Read: Luther, parts IX-XIII

Mon. Oct. 19 Antisemitism in the Age of the Enlightenment
Watch video lecture
Read: Abbé Grégoire, An Essay on the Physical, Moral and Political Reformation of the Jews,
Gotthold Ephraim Lessing, “A Parable of Toleration”

Wed. Oct. 21 Antisemitism in the Age of the Enlightenment
Fichte, “A State Within A State”

Mon. Oct. 26 The Debate on Incorporation and Emancipation
Watch video lecture
Read: “Debate on the Eligibility of Jews for Citizenship, December 23, 1789” and “The Emancipation of the Jews of France (September 28, 1791)

Wed. Oct. 28 The Debate on Incorporation and Emancipation
Read: Count Molé, “Napoleon’s Instructions of the Assembly of Jewish Notables”, Abraham Furtado, “Reply on Behalf of the Assembly to Count Molé (1806)

Mon. Nov. 2 The Debate on Incorporation and Emancipation
Read: Thomas Macaulay, “Civil Disabilities of the Jews”

Wed. Nov. 4 The Debate on Incorporation and Emancipation
Exam Two (Due on Monday, Nov. 9 at 11:59pm)

Mon. Nov. 9 Culture, Race, and the Jews
Watch video lecture

Wed. Nov. 11 The Dreyfus Affair
Watch video (42:00)
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yVdZ5fZBic
Read: Émile Zola, J’Accuse

Mon. Nov. 16 Eastern Europe: The Pogroms and the Beilis Trial
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FfN3yQJxeE&t=2065s
Watch video excerpts (Russian Jews. Film 1. Before the Revolution) (English subtitles) 33:00-45:00, 57:30-1:12:00

Wed. Nov. 18 Jewish Women in the German Weimar Republic
Read: Marion Kaplan, “Sisterhood under Siege: Feminism and Anti-Semitism in Germany, 1904-1938”

Mon. Nov. 23 Nazi Antisemitism and the Holocaust
Watch video lecture

Mon. Nov. 30 Nazi Antisemitism and the Holocaust
Read: Excerpts, Daniel Jonah Goldhagen, “The Evolution of Eliminationist Antisemitism in Modern Germany”, 80-106

Wed. Dec. 2 Nazi Antisemitism and the Holocaust
Read: Goldhagen, 106-128

Mon. Dec. 7 Nazi Antisemitism and the Holocaust
Read: Michael Marrus, “The Final Solution”

Wed. Dec. 9 Nazi Antisemitism and the Holocaust
Read: Marrus, “Public Opinion in Europe”

Mon. Dec. 14 Conclusion: Contemporary Antisemitism
Watch video lecture
Read: news items
Final Discussion Questions

Exam Three is due on Wed. Dec. 16 at 11:59pm.