

ANTI-SEMITISM

I. “ANTI-SEMITISM”

- A. from $\alpha\nu\tau\iota$ (= “against”)
- B. Popularized by German racist ideologue Wilhelm Marr, 1870s.
- C. Now . . .

II. ORIGINS

- A. May Have Arisen out of Religious Conflicts of Hellenistic Age
 - 1. Hellenistic Culture became predominate after Alexander the Great
 - a. Hellenizing of the East; Orientalizing of Greeks
 - b. Gradually Developed in Last Centuries BC
 - c. Classical Greek Evolved to Koine Greek
 - 2. Identification of many local/national gods was commonplace
 - 3. Jews were unique in not accepting/honoring the gods of others
 - 4. Christians are sympathetic with the Jewish plight in these struggles
- B. Persecution by Antiochus IV Epiphanes (167 BC)
 - 1. Attempt to force Hellenization/assimilation of Jews
 - a. Temple violated by enforced identification of Yahweh with Zeus
 - b. Proscribed: 1) Torah; 2) Sabbath/Synagogue observance; 3) circumcision
 - 2. Resulted in Maccabean Revolt, cleansing of Temple, Hanukkah remembrance (164)

III. ANTI-SEMITISM IN THE NEW TESTAMENT?

- A. Passages about “the Jews”
- B. Inevitable conflict on issue of the Law

IV. THE JEWS AND PRE-CHRISTIAN ROME

- A. In the Early Roman Empire
 - 1. Jews had some privileges in Roman world, but remained distinct, outsiders
 - 2. Sporadic anti-Jewish violence, mainly from non-participation in local rites
 - 3. The First Jewish Revolt Against Rome (AD 66-70)
 - a. Political rebellion stemming from religious ideals
 - b. Jerusalem and the Temple destroyed by Rome, AD 70
 - c. one million Jews perished
 - 4. Further Jewish rebellions in AD 117 and 132-35 ended Jewish political power
 - 5. Roman “anti-Semitism” not racially based, nor was it genocidal
 - 6. But Jews became landless and powerless as a people; scattered in the Diaspora
 - 7. General latent and potent anti-Semitism developed in Roman world from 3rd cent.

- B. Transformation of Jewish Life after AD 70
 1. Loss of Temple/sacrificial system as basis for religious practice
 2. Emphasis on written word, inner transformation
 3. Rabbinical school of Johanan ben Zakkai: the continuance of Judaism
 - a. Granted religious autonomy by Roman victors for non-violence
 - b. Jamnia and the Council of Jamnia AD 90
 - c. Emphasis on study of Torah, not on nationalistic concerns
 - Jews thereby accepted role of religious minority among others
 - Jews became defenseless, at the mercy of rulers of realms where they lived
 - d. Rabbinical way was the only option after AD 70; became sole heir of Judaism
 4. Diaspora became norm of Judaism; i.e., Jews were more scattered among Gentiles

- C. Jews and Christians: the Protagonists Become the Antagonists
 1. Christian support of Jews in past (in OT, vs. Antiochus IV) in efforts to resist other gods
 2. But most Jews did not accept Jesus as the Messiah or Son of God
 3. First Christians were Jews; but Christianity became increasingly Gentile
 4. Jews began to reject Christian Jews as apostate
 5. Increased schism between Jews, Christians after AD 70

V. THE ESTABLISHED CHURCH AND THE JEWS

- A. Before the Peace of the Church (ad 313)
 1. Christianity and Judaism were together as minorities in the Roman World
 2. But, Christianity and Judaism created mutual “disconfirmation”

- B. After Constantine: official “Teaching of Contempt”
 1. Theology of supersession (displacement theology)
 - a. Jews stubbornly rejected Jesus as Messiah, Son of God
 - 1) OT sins as early signs of apostacy
 - 2) killing of Christ (**deicide**) was final straw
 - b. therefore, God rejected the Jews
 - 1) destruction of Temple/Jerusalem seen as punishment
 - 2) they lost place in God’s promises
 - 3) last chance to repent in the return of Christ
 - c. God’s promises to the “Jews” were transferred to the Church (“spiritual Israel”)
 2. Jews, no longer God’s chosen, viewed as a pariah people

- C. Anti-Semitic attitudes and statements were not produced by the uneducated masses
 1. A certain logic dictated the attitudes of the Church toward Jews
 2. Christian leaders (even great ones) showed great hostility towards Jews
 - a. Early Christian fathers (Gregory of Nyssa [331-396], John Chrysostom [344-407], Augustine [354-430])
 - b. Reformers: **Martin Luther, “On the Jews and Their Lies”**

- D. Jews in the Christian world from the 4th-11th centuries
 1. Jews restricted from certain governmental positions, but not commerce
 2. Jews moved into commerce and similar occupations
 3. relatively peaceful coexistence until end of 11th century

VI. JEWS AS OUTSIDERS

- A. Jews were forced to live as minorities among other peoples
- B. Jews naturally accepted jobs that were difficult for members of the majority to hold
 - 1. Occupations requiring impartial treatment of customers
 - 2. Examples: traders, bankers, merchants, artisans
 - 3. These occupations (especially banking/usury) were considered dishonest by majority
 - 4. Jews' religious emphasis on learning the written word made certain skills common
 - a. These skills needed in undeveloped economy: literacy; ability to keep accounts
 - b. Persons lacking these skills were predisposed to distrust those exercising them
 - c. Jews were frequently involved in trades not requiring labor
- C. Modern economic systems would rob Jews' of their minority niche in society
 - 1. Many trades/occupations were opened to all persons
 - 2. Everyone was treated equally, eliminating the "need" for a middleman minority

VII. ACTIVE ANTI-SEMITISM IN CHRISTIAN EUROPE

- A. 1096: Many Jews of Europe massacred during First Crusade in Germany
- B. 1215: Lateran Council forced Jews to wear specially marked clothing
 - 1. Jews identified as Satanic
 - 2. “**Blood Libel**” allegations that Jews sacrificed Christian children in religious rites
- C. Expulsions
 - 1. As Western European economies developed, Jewish roles were filled by majority
 - 2. Religious anti-Jewish feelings gave way to economic anti-Jewish feelings
 - 3. 1290: Jews expelled from England
 - 4. 1306: expelled from France
- D. 1348-1351: The Black Death devastates Europe; Jews blamed, massacred
- E. In fifteenth century **Spain**
 - 1. 1391: Anti-Jewish riots break out throughout Spain
 - 2. 1481-1492: Spanish Inquisition
 - 3. **1492: Expulsion of Jews by Ferdinand and Isabella**
 - 4. 1496: Jews expelled from Portugal
- F. 1516: First **ghetto** established (Italy)
- G. Shift of Jewish population to the east
 - 1. Jews migrated to Poland, Ukraine, Lithuania, Russia
 - 2. These areas lagged behind in economic development
 - 3. Jews were able to secure their now-traditional niches in commerce there
 - 4. Eventually, economic modernization brought anti-Jewish feeling there, too
 - 5. Jews limited to the “Pale” by Russian conquerors
 - 6. **Pogroms** in the later nineteenth century

VIII. ANTI-SEMITISM IN MODERN EUROPE

- A. The Enlightenment of the Eighteenth Century
 1. Hostile to Christianity, brought a secularization of thought
 2. But, also hostile to Judaism, mother of Christianity
 3. With reduction of religious motivation, anti-Semitism became racial in nature

- B. 1789: The French Revolution
 1. Gave emancipation/equality to Jews in France
 2. Extended by Napoleon's conquests
 - a. 1808: equal citizenship to Jews in conquered Germany
 - b. when Napoleon defeated, German emancipation rescinded
 3. Middle-class reactions against French emancipation set stage for the Holocaust
 - a. traditional enemies of the Jews: church, peasants, nobility
 - b. by entering bourgeois, Jews made new enemies on the Left
 - c. over-extended proletariat and surplus professional class struggled
 - 1) little emigration from France compared with other countries (no relief)
 - 2) Jews were seen as cause/benefactors of modern society and its ills
 4. French Catholic and Right-wing monarchist anti-Semitism
 - a. victim of Revolution and later Republics was the Catholic church
 - b. Third Republic set up after defeat by Germany in 1870
 - c. anti-Semitic papers appeared in Paris late in the century

- C. Further Emancipation
 1. 1848: Jews granted equality in Germany, later rescinded
 2. 1869: Jews granted German citizenship by Bismark
 3. 1897: First World Zionist Congress held in Basel; the Bund established

- D. The Jews as Traitors (Judas characterization)
 1. 1894-1906: **The Dreyfus Affair**
 - a. Alfred Dreyfus, Jewish Captain in French army General Staff
 - b. accused of supplying secret information to the Germans
 - c. forged documents used in conviction and subsequent re-conviction
 - d. generated tremendous anti-Jewish editorialism and sentiment in French society
 - e. forgeries detected and Dreyfus pardoned in 1899, cleared in 1906
 - f. observation by Theodor Hertzl gave rise to **Zionism**; tenets:
 - 1) anti-Jewish sentiment was a result of the emancipation of the Jews
 - 2) it exists wherever many Jews live and will develop wherever they may go
 - 3) the only escape is for Jews to have their own homeland away from others
 2. ***The Protocols of the Elders of Zion***
 - a. Forged document purporting to be the record of a Jewish conclave, late 19th cent.
 - 1) gives Jewish plan for world domination
 - 2) 24 "protocols"
 - b. Contrived by Czarist secret police from existing documents
 - 1) privately printed in 1897
 - 2) public edition published by mystic priest Sergius Nilus in 1905
 - c. Spread to other places: Palestine, Poland, Germany, USA, etc.
 - d. Quoted/used by anti-Semites since
 - 1) Henry Ford in anti-Semitic paper, *The Dearborn Independent*
 - 2) Adolf Hitler in *Mein Kampf*
 - 3) Still cited today
 - e. Exposed as a forgery in a series of articles in *The Times* in London, 1921