



Abstracts

Panel 1

Bart Ehrman

From the Jewish Jesus to the Anti-Jewish Church

This paper will discuss the roots of antisemitism in the earliest Christian communities by highlighting one of the great ironies of ancient religion: even though Jesus and his followers were thoroughly Jewish, in every way, within a hundred years of his death the Christian church had by and large turned against the Jews. Second century Christians not only claimed that they, not the Jews, were the true people of (the Jewish) God; they also advocated a message that attacked Jews and maligned their religion. It was this radical departure from the message and mission of Jesus that eventually led to the ugly history of anti-Jewish legislation and persecution.

Sara Lipton

What's in a Nose? On the Origins, Evolution, and Implications of the Antisemitic Caricature.

In this paper I discuss the context and inspirations for the assignment to Jews of a characteristic physiognomy in medieval Christian art and thought. I then explore the transmission of the caricatured Jew's face into the modern period, and consider its implications and effects.

Opening Lecture

Stuart Eizenstat

21st Century Challenges to the Jewish World: the Return of Antisemitism Seventy Years After the Holocaust

There is a disturbing rise of antisemitism in parts of Europe, with the rise of far-right, xenophobic parties in countries from Hungary and Ukraine to France, sometimes involving violence directed at Jewish communities in countries as disparate as Sweden, France, and Belgium. This is the result of a combination of factors, including economic stresses in Europe giving rise to long-standing stereotypes; opposition to Israeli policies which are projected against Jewish communities; and disaffected European Muslim young people.

[Panel 2](#)

Oded Zinger

Is There 'a Legacy of Islamic Antisemitism'?

With the continuation of the Israeli-Arab conflict and the worsening entrenchment of its various parties in irreconcilable positions there is a growing tendency to search for the roots of the conflict in an essential opposition between Judaism and Islam. In this way, the fourteen centuries between Muhammad's defeat of the Jewish tribes in Medina and the latest terror attack in Israel are collapsed and any hostile act against Jews is presented as manifestations of what a recent volume titled *The Legacy of Islamic Anti-Semitism*. While the relationship between Judaism and Islam has been the subject of numerous studies, this paper will use documents from the Cairo Geniza to explore two issues that have not received sufficient attention in the context of the debate on Islamic antisemitism: The pervasive use of Muslim court by the Jews of medieval Egypt and the terminology used by these Jews to designate hatred and violence against them. Examining these two issues will help shed light on a topic that is both disputed and pressing.

Magda Teter

"The Theological Jew and the Historical Jew in Jewish-Christian Relations"

This talk will examine the development of the theological Jew in Christian texts and consider its impact on the historical Jew, encountered in everyday life. The talk will examine the historical reality and its relation with theoretical attitudes expressed in theological texts and in law.

Hans-Joachim Hahn

On the origins of Antisemitism: Aspects of an Ongoing Debate.

I will show in my talk, why it seems to be fruitful to look for the origins of Antisemitism in the debates against emancipation at the end of the 18th century. It is then when political opposition to Jewish emancipation no longer refers to the religious difference but now aims to attack Jews as potential fellow citizens. In this perspective the later racial argumentation of the second half of the 19th century still forms an important transformation, but should no longer be regarded as the actual beginning of political Antisemitism.

[Panel 3](#)

Antony Polonsky

Coming to Terms with the 'Dark Past': Confronting the Holocaust in Poland and Lithuania

In my presentation, I will attempt to provide an analysis of the complex and often acrimonious debates about the involvement of Poles and Lithuanians in the mass murder of the Jews during the Second World War. These are part of a much wider argument about the totalitarian experience of Europe in the twentieth century and reflect the growing preoccupation with the issue of collective memory. What I want to examine is the way these debates have evolved in Poland and Lithuania and in the wider world. These have not been only internal matters, since Jewish survivors from these countries and many others in the Jewish world, where the collective memory of these events was very different from that of the Poles and Lithuanians, have also played an active role in the attempts to reshape the memory of the Holocaust. My goal is to evaluate how far progress has been made in coming to terms with what has been described as the 'dark past' in these two countries.

Alon Confino

How did the Nazis Interpret Anew the Jewish Past and How Do Some Jews Today Interpret Anew the Holocaust Past?"

I belong to a group of historians who believe that one cannot understand the Holocaust without putting at the center the question 'why the Jews'? At the same time, my interpretation of the Holocaust is fundamentally different from some trends in the antisemitism approach to the Holocaust that argue, explicitly or implicitly, that an accumulation of the ancient hatred through the centuries paved the way and ultimately produced the Holocaust. I argue the opposite. It is not that the past (of antisemitism) *produced* the present (of the extermination), not that the ancient hatred led to the Holocaust, but that the Nazis interpreted anew the past of Jewish, German, and Christian relations to fit their vision of creating a new world. It is the Nazis who made sense of, and gave new meaning to, past antisemitism, not so much the other way around. This approach has implication not only to understanding the Holocaust and antisemitism, but also to understanding some notions of Holocaust memory among Jewish-Israelis in the present.

Nicolas Berg

The Völkisch Goethe in the Early 20th Century: Antisemitic Scholarship from Adolf Bartels to Wolfgang Martini

Theodor Fontane is alleged to have said: 'Strange how the Jews here do the German cultural work and the Germans provide the antisemitism in return.' Indeed, the finding presented here as a mere aperçu has been confirmed by historical scholarship: the more passionately Jewish philologists, literary historians and biographers of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century attempted to provide proof of their commitment to the care and cultivation of the German cultural canon, the more radically their efforts were denounced by the antisemites of the time. Around 1900 the völkisch activist Adolf Bartels introduced into literary historiography the practice, which would later become commonplace as 'Jew research', of marking Jewish authors in bibliographies with a 'J'. Publicists and writers such as Wilhelm Schäfer, Max Maurenbrecher and Franz Koch recast Goethe himself as a pioneer of the völkisch nation. And the German philologists Wolfgang Martini and Wilhelm Emrich, whose works remained for years after 1945 a fixture of fundamental general knowledge, grumbled about the supposed unbridgeable gap between Jewish and non-Jewish research on Goethe. The presentation traces these dramatic developments and attempts to demonstrate how it was possible that the universalistic convictions of Jewish scholars in the 1930s ultimately came to be seen as a historical phenomenon, even by their exponents and advocates, such as Berta Badt-Strauss, Kurt Singer and Samuel Meisels. They described, as though in retrospect, the passion with which especially Jewish scholars had revered the poet from Weimar, and understood it as a feature of a special age, which they now began to regard as over.

[Keynote Lecture](#)

James Carroll

Jesus, “The Jews,” and the Abuse of Memory: Get Back to Work.

The post-Holocaust Christian reckoning with Church complicity in lethal anti-Semitism is begun, but far from finished. Indeed, the once revolutionary interfaith conversation has gone stale, as if the fundamental problem has been resolved. But the full meaning of the Jewishness of Jesus, and the Jewishness of Christian origins, remains under-appreciated even by sophisticated new Jesus scholarship, much less by the ordinary preaching of the Church. The majority of Christians have not been persuaded of the Christian roots of the Holocaust. Uprooting the “Christ-killer” slander is not enough. Scripture, liturgy, art, music, theologies of salvation and evangelization must all be reinterpreted or amended. As long as Jesus is understood and proclaimed as in essential conflict with his Jewish milieu, the hot current of antisemitism will run on in the heart of Christian faith. The further burden of needed change belongs to the likes of those gathered here, a small group to bring about an intellectual shift to swing the broader culture. Get back to work.

[Panel 4](#)

Yaakov Ariel

Neither Antisemitism nor Philosemitism: Mainstream American Christian Attitudes Towards Judaism and Jews.

Attitudes towards Jews have undergone enormous changes in the aftermath of World War II. For the most part the developments have signified a decrease in hostility and greater acceptance. However, Christian groups have differed in their reactions. Liberal Christians have granted unprecedented legitimacy to Judaism but distanced themselves from the Jewish enchantment with Israel, and in the 2000s has given lesser priority to dialogue with Jews. Although conservative Christians do not recognize the legitimacy of other faiths and insist on the need to establish a relationship with Jesus, and although their fascination with the Jews cannot be described as ‘Philosemitism,’ their opinions on the Jews have also been transformed and are much more appreciative. Residues of older, more suspicious attitudes are evident in all camps.

Jean-Yves Camus

The French Extreme-Right, Israel and the Jews: Is the Old Hatred Still Alive?

The current situation in France with regard to Antisemitism needs be better explained. My talk will discuss the evolution of the French extreme right movement since 9/11. It will explain how the movement is divided between an Occidentalist faction on the one hand and a rival, Anti-Western faction on the other hand. The Occidentalists have toned down their Antisemitism and they will occasionally support Israel. The rival faction is radically anti-Zionist, antisemitic, and it seeks an alliance with the like-minded fringes of the radical left and the Islamists.

Jeff Kaplan

The Fusion of the Future: Terror Meets the Radical Right

Many years ago, a young seeker left a Buddhist monastery in India and returned to Great Britain where he fell under the spell of Colin Jordan's National Socialist rhetoric. Hitler's dream of racial purity hit him with electric force and in this epiphany a new enlightenment dawned. For a time. But as with so many seekers in the cultic milieu, he soon became disillusioned and from his despair came a new infatuation; Satanism with a pronounced National Socialist tinge and the order of Nine Angles was born. In the 1990s he at last found his true spiritual home. Taking the Shihada, he embraced radical Islam, where he remained, well placed by 9/11 to council others toward a better place in the center of a global conflict where the aspirant can join a band of brothers who transcend the brave talk and craven betrayal which defines the radical right. Within the supportive community of radical Islam they have the opportunity to strike telling blows against the shibboleth they know to be ZOG, the hated Zionist Occupation Government which controls America and is the true power behind the creation of the emerging multicultural European Union. "The Fusion of the Future" focuses on the probable emergence of new a cutting edge form of violent antisemitism.

[Panel 5](#)

[No abstracts for the panel with journalists.]