

ANTISEMITISM TRAINING

L'TAKEN

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PLEASE DO NOT CIRCULATE



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1. WHICH OF THESE PEOPLE ARE JEWISH?
2. WHERE DO YOU THINK THEY ARE FROM?
3. WHAT TYPE OF JEWS MIGHT THEY BE?



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**HINT! NO,
THEY'RE
NOT ALL
JEWISH...**

JEWISH COMMUNITIES AROUND THE WORLD

Conversos, Sephardi Jews, Spain & Latin America

In the 15th and 16th centuries, Spanish Jews (Sephardim) were the victims of the Spanish Inquisition, a concerted campaign to obliterate the Jewish religion and culture. Persecuted Sephardim were forced to convert to Catholicism, becoming “conversos”. Many fled their homes and the lives they had built. In today’s South America, descendants of Sephardim still exist - often unaware of their ancestry. Even so, many grow up unknowingly engaging in Jewish rituals passed down through generations, such as lighting candles on Friday night and not eating pork. Known as “crypto-Jews,” many have recently decided to embrace their religious heritage, sometimes at considerable personal cost. This photo, taken in Ecuador in 2007, shows a mother and daughter at her Bat Mitzvah, as both connect with their ancestors, reclaim their faith, and engage in their birthrights as Jews. Conversos are sometimes referred to by the word Marrano, a derogatory term meaning “pig” or “swine”.

Mizrachi Jews, Yemenite Jews Arriving In Israel

Jews have lived in Yemen for over two thousand years. There are numerous stories passed down about how the community arrived - from non-Jews converting when the Queen of Sheba visited King Solomon, to Jews travelling to Yemen under the prophet Jeremiah. However they arrived, there were synagogues being constructed by the first century BCE, and by the fourth century CE, the leaders of the kingdom had converted to Judaism and expected their people to do the same. After the rise of Islam, the Jewish community experienced times of both flourishing and violent persecution. In 1679, all Jews were expelled to the Mawza region, where two thirds of the community died of starvation or disease. Those still alive were allowed to return a year later, but only to a Jewish quarter outside the city. Many Yemenite Jews moved to Palestine before the creation of the State of Israel. In 1947, Yemenite rioters, assisted by the police, engaged in a pogrom that killed 82 Jews and destroyed hundreds of Jewish homes and businesses. In 1948, a rumour of the Jewish ritual murder of two girls led to mass looting, leading to the majority of Yemen’s Jewish population being airlifted to Israel in Operation Magic Carpet. In the 1990s there were still hundreds of Jews living in Yemen, with a few synagogues and academies, but after two antisemitic murders in 2008 and 2012, yet more Jews were airlifted to Israel in a secret operation. Fewer than 90 Jews now live in Yemen.

Scarlett Johansson, USA

Scarlett Johansson is an actress. She was born to an American Jewish mother of Russian and Polish descent and a Danish non-Jewish father. Johansson identifies as Jewish and was raised observing Jewish festivals. Her maternal great grandfather, Saul Szlamberg, moved to America before the Holocaust, working as a grocer in New York. His brother and his brother’s two daughters died in the Warsaw ghetto.

Jews of Kaifeng, China

This photo is taken of the Jews of Kaifeng in the late 19th or early 20th century. Jews have lived in China for over a thousand years. It is thought the first Jews in China were merchants from Persia, Iraq, Iran and India. They may also have been European Jews fleeing the Crusades who received the Emperor’s blessing to reside in the city of Kaifeng, which was then an important hub in Silk Road trading route. The Ming dynasty (1368-1644) required Jews to have one of 8 surnames - Ai, Shi, Gao, Gan, Jin, Li, Zhang, and Zhao. Until the 17th century “Kaifeng Jews” had largely preserved their traditions and customs. They built synagogues and used Chinese character prayer books. Later, intermarriage and cultural suppression meant their numbers severely dwindled. By the beginning of the twentieth century, the Zhang clan had converted to Islam. There remain a small number of Kaifeng Jews still in China, alongside many other Jewish communities now living in China.

Ofra Haza, Yemen

Ofra Haza was an Israeli singer of Yemenite heritage. Born in Tel Aviv to Yemenite immigrant parents, she grew up in poverty and became a symbol of pride in Yemenite Jewish heritage, singing in Arabic and

Hebrew and often wearing traditional Yemenite Jewish clothing. She won a US Grammy, topped the Eurochart and was regularly played on MTV, before dying of AIDS related illness in 2000. In England she is best known as the singing voice of Miriam in the Disney movie Prince of Egypt.

Isro'il/Bukharan Jews, Central Asia

Bukharan Jews historically spoke Bukhori, a dialect of Farsi. Their name refers to the former Emirate of Bukhara - modern day Uzbekistan. They call themselves Isro'il (Israelites). They were the largest Jewish community in Central Asia, settling there from at least the fourth century CE. Early Bukharan Jews shared a mosque with local Muslims, but by the eighteenth century they faced persecution and forced conversion. By the middle of the nineteenth century the community started emigrating to Palestine. From 1865, under Russian rule, Bukharan Jews could practise Judaism but were relegated to the ghetto and forced to wear distinctive clothing. The vast majority emigrated after the end of the Soviet Union. Today, there are around 150,000 Bukharan Jews in Israel and 60,000 in the USA. A few thousand still remain in Uzbekistan. Despite a population of 15,000 in 1989, almost none remain in Tajikistan after the government destroyed the Synagogue, kosher butcher and Jewish school in 2008. Bukharan Jews have their own music called Shashmaqam, which is an ensemble of stringed instruments infused with Central Asian rhythms.

Bene Israel, India

Bene Israel are one of the Jewish communities in India. They arrived in India sometime almost 2000 years ago when their ancestors were shipwrecked in western India, near the coast of Konkan, while on a trading voyage to the far east. The community reached its peak in 1948 when Bene Israel numbered 20,000. The majority have now emigrated to Israel, the US, Canada and Britain.

Beta Israel, Ethiopia

Beta Israel are a group of Jews who lived in what is now Ethiopia and Eritrea. They are believed to have been isolated from mainstream Jewish communities for a thousand years, and so have slightly different practises known as 'haymanot'. A significant portion were persecuted and forced to convert to Christianity during the 19th and 20th centuries. Their own origin stories include the idea that they were part of the lost tribe of Dan, or the tribes that came to Ethiopia with Menelik I, the child of Solomon and the Queen of Sheba. In 1991, Ethiopia was facing dangerous political destabilisation and the Israeli military airlifted 14,325 Ethiopian Jews to Israel in 36 hours in Operation Solomon. 130,000 Beta Israel now live in Israel, with 4000 remaining in Ethiopia, and others living around the world. Beta Israel are sometimes referred to as Falasha, a derogatory term meaning "landless wanderers"

Edith Stein, Germany

Edith Stein was a Polish and German Jewish philosopher who converted to Roman Catholicism and became a Discalced Carmelite nun. She is canonised as a martyr and saint of the Catholic Church, and known by the religious name Teresia Benedicta a Cruce. After being baptised in 1922, she taught at a Catholic school in Speyer, but had to give up her position in 1933 as Christian converts were still counted as Jews by Nazi racial criteria and civil servants required an "Aryan certificate". She joined a monastery in Cologne, but was soon sent to a monastery in the Netherlands for her safety. Theresia was arrested by the Nazis on 2 August 1942 and sent to Auschwitz, where she died in the gas chamber seven days later.

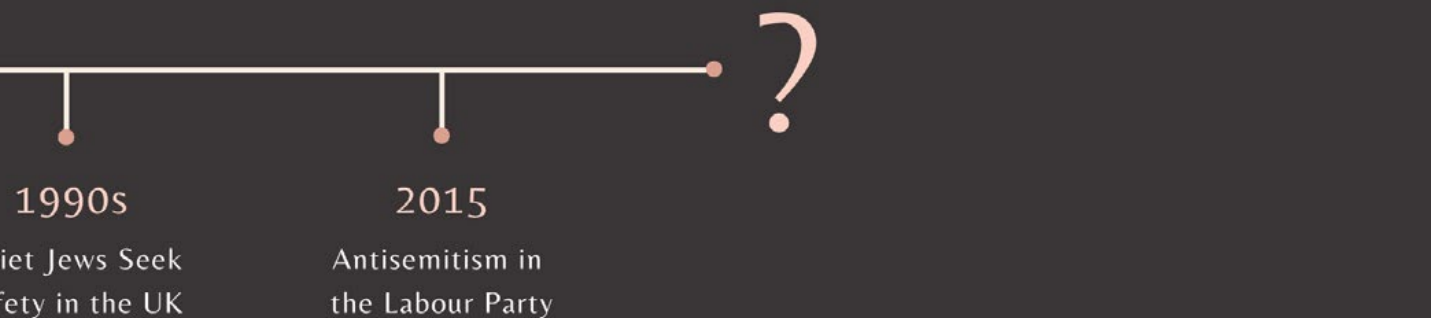
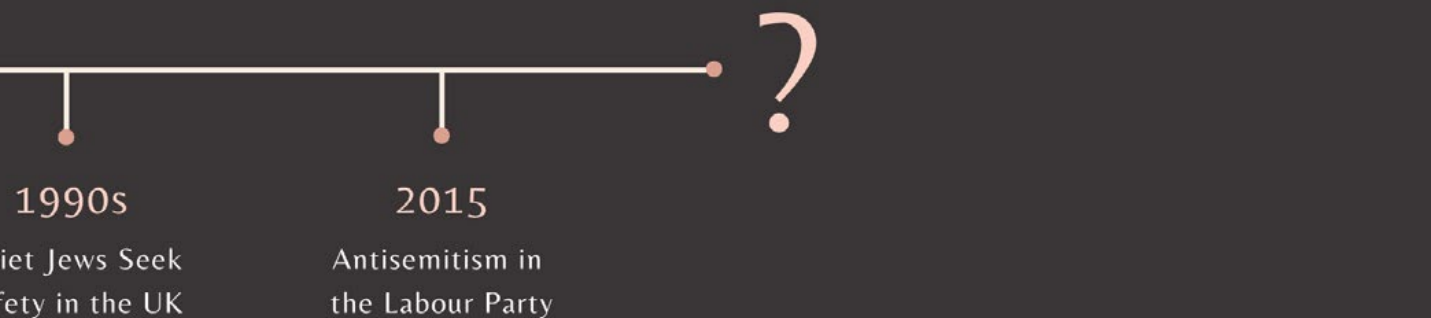
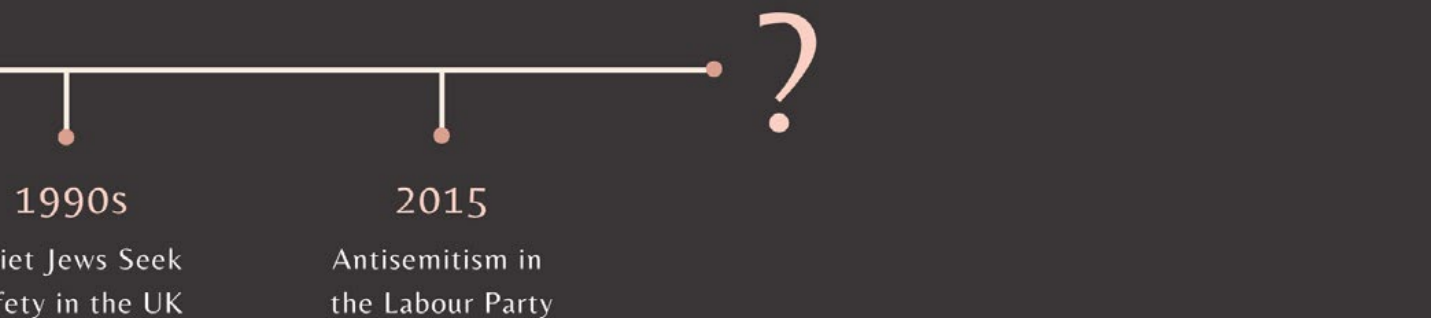
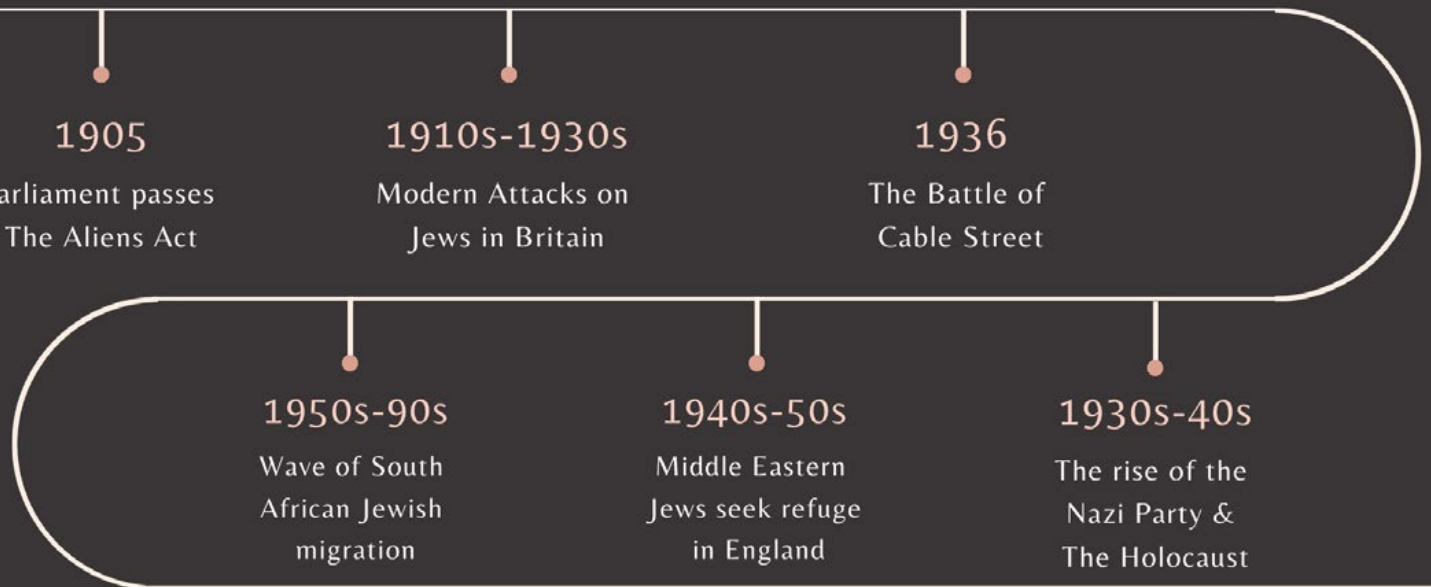
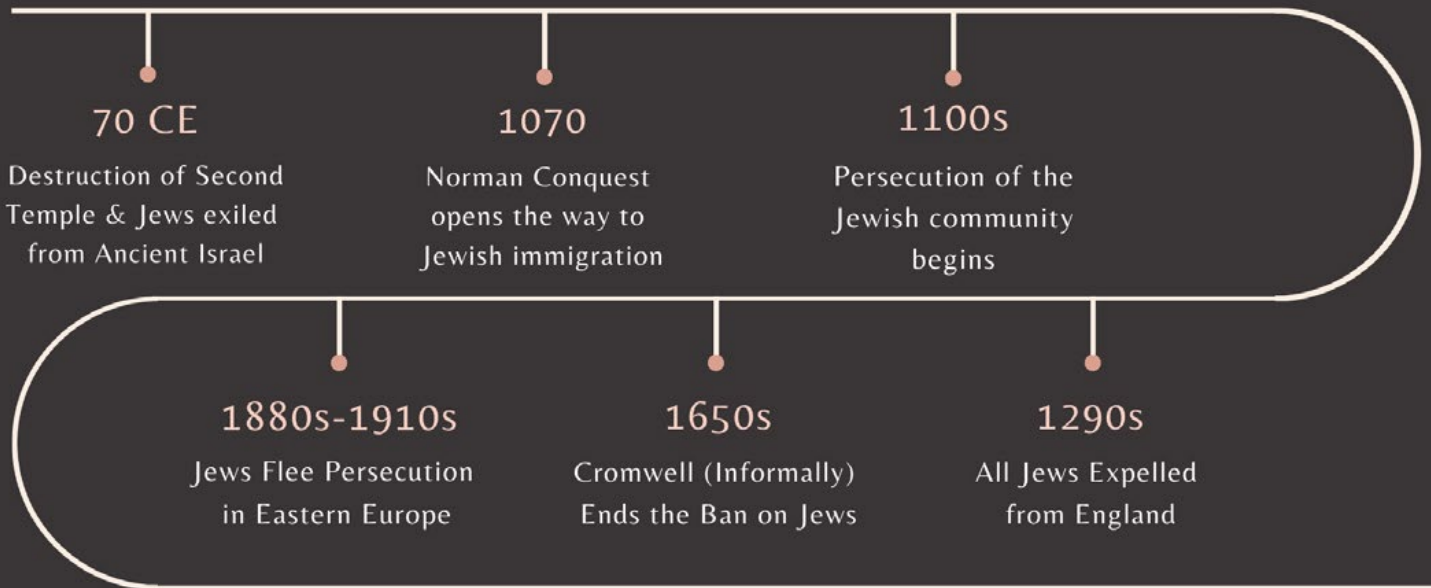
MaNishtana, USA

MaNishtana is a New York-based African-American Orthodox Jew-born from two African-American Orthodox Jewish parents. He is a Rabbi and author of three books on the intersection of Jewish and African-American identity. MaNishtana was born and grew up Chabad-Lubavitch (a particular stream of Orthodox Judaism) and hails from a legacy of African-American Judaism stretching back to the 1780s.

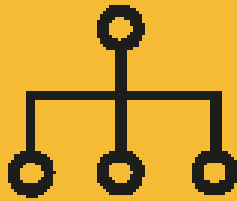
Jason Biggs, USA

Despite playing Jews "almost exclusively" since childhood, Jason Biggs is actually Roman Catholic...

A Brief History of Antisemitism in Britain



THE 4 I'S OF OPPRESSION



Ideological

A system of beliefs or ideas



Institutional

Using the laws, the legal system, the education system, public policy, media, political power, etc... to maintain ideology



Interpersonal

The idea that one group is better than another and has the right to dominate/ control the other



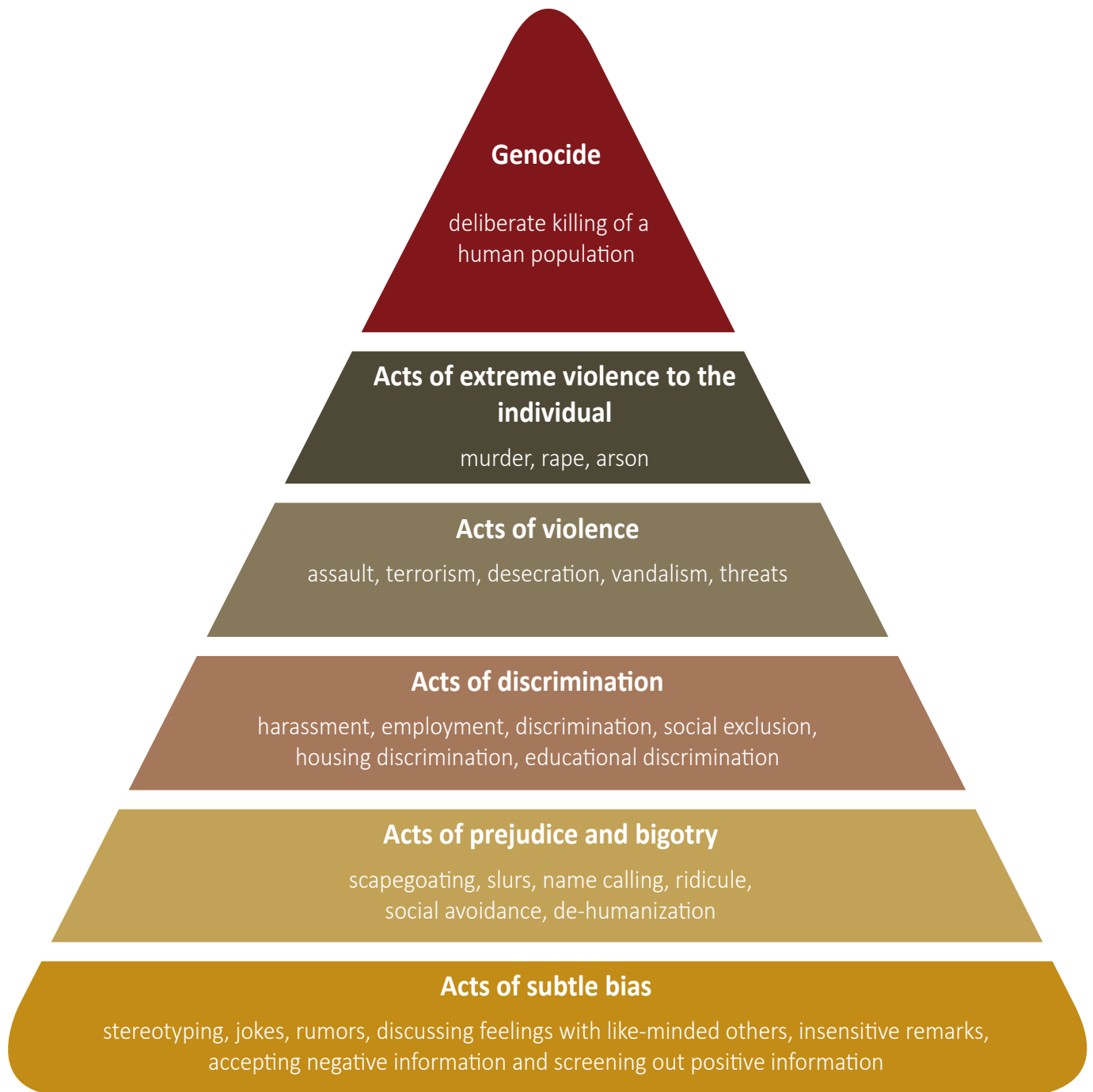
Internalized

The oppressor doesn't have to exert any more pressure, because we now do it to ourselves and each other

TARGETS & AGENTS OF OPPRESSION

Name of System	Group with Power (Agent)	Group Denied Power (Target)	Internalised	Interpersonal	Institutional	Ideological
Classism Capitalism	Wealthy People	Poor People				
Sexism Patriarchy	Men	Women				
Racism White Supremacy	White People Non-Jews/Romani/Slavic People	People of Colour Romani & Slavic People				
Transphobia	Cisgender people	Non-binary & transgender people				
Homophobia Heterosexism	Heterosexual People	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Pansexual, Asexual, Queer People				
Ableism Disablism	Non-disabled people	Disabled people				
Anti Muslim Hatred Islamophobia	Non-Muslims	Muslims People assumed to be Muslim				
Antisemitism Anti-Jewish Oppression	Non-Jews	Jews				

THE TRIANGLE OF HARM



The Anti Defamation League adapted the work of Gordon Allport and Gregory Stanton into this pyramid

THE CYCLE OF ANTISEMITISM



*Antisemitic sentiment often predates Jews living in a place. Antisemitism doesn't require the presence of living, breathing Jews. In fact, it was often stereotypes people had about Jews that caused them to invite members of the community to move in the first place.

TROPE 1: JEWS & MONEY

Jews as money grabbing, greedy and cheap

Kevin Myers

Sorry, ladies — equal pay has to be earned



The row over presenters' salaries sums up the dysfunctional BBC

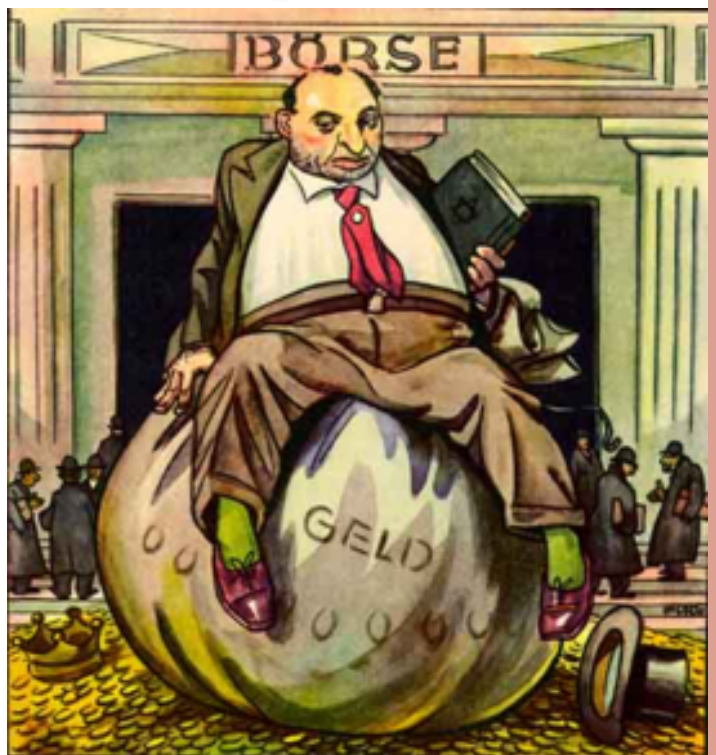


MENU

THE SUNDAY TIMES

SUNDAY JULY 30 2017

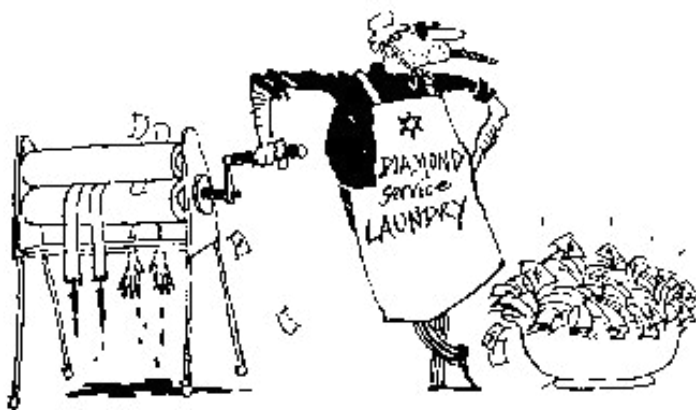
I note that two of the best-paid women presenters in the BBC — Claudia Winkleman and Vanessa Feltz, with whose, no doubt, sterling work I am tragically unacquainted — are Jewish. Good for them. Jews are not generally noted for their insistence on selling their talent for the lowest possible price, which is the most useful measure there is of inveterate, lost-with-all-hands stupidity. I wonder, who are their agents? If they're the same ones that negotiated the pay for the women on the lower scales, then maybe the latter have found their true value in the marketplace.



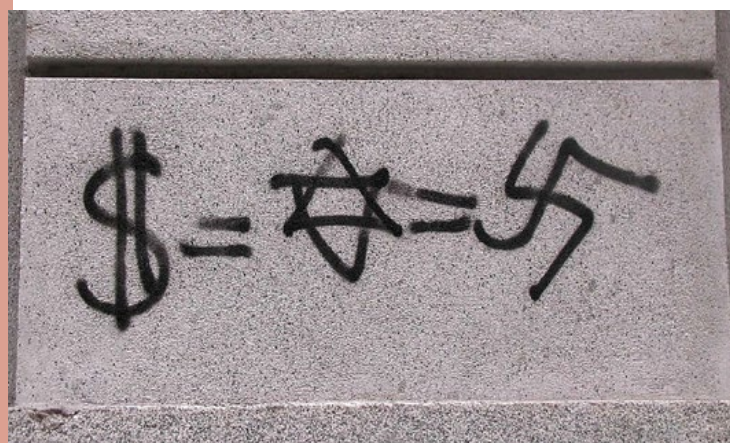
...WITH JEWS



... YOU LOSE!



VOTE NO ON
MATT LESSER



YOU WANNA KNOW
WHAT'S MORE
IMPORTANT THAN
THROWIN' AWAY
MONEY AT A STRIP
CLUB? CREDIT



YOU EVER WONDER
WHY JEWISH
PEOPLE OWN ALL
THE PROPERTY
IN AMERICA? THIS
HOW THEY DID IT



MR.
STEAL
YO'
PENNIES



JEWS & MONEY

April Rosenblum summarises the origins of the trope: *"For centuries in Christian empires, Jews were not legally permitted to work in mainstream professions. They often survived by working at trades forbidden to, or considered 'beneath', Christians. During the Middle Ages, Christians were not allowed to lend money because the Church believed that collecting interest from loaned money was a sin. At the same time Jews were not allowed to do many of the jobs that Christians did – they were explicitly banned from Guilds, and most professions. Since the Jews were able to collect interest from the Christians, many became money lenders and lots of rulers (including in Britain, with William the Conqueror) required Jews to be tax collectors. Although some Jews benefited from economic privilege, most remained poor, and the classic dynamic of anti-Jewish oppression went on: Jews who got to work did so at the price of everyday exposure to the violence and anger of poor peasants in debt; rulers got to use them as scapegoats in time of economic instability."*

Recent scholarship has made clear that even in the medieval era, most Jews weren't involved in money lending, and the majority of money lenders were actually Christian (which frustrated the church, resulting in increasingly hard opposition to it). In order to enforce the idea that money lending was a negative, 'unchristian' practise, the Church actively portrayed it as Jewish.

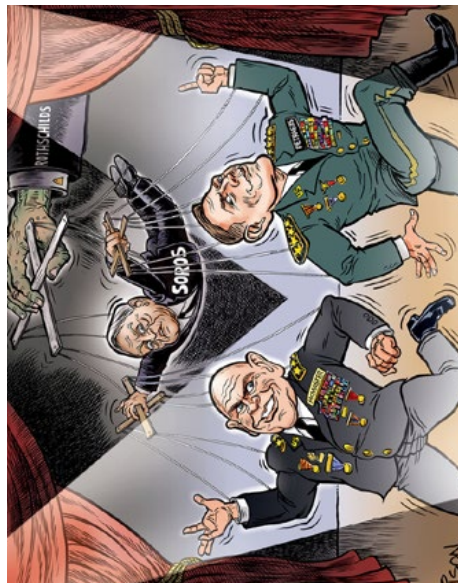
New York organisation Jews for Racial and Economic Justice (JFREJ) breaks down myths about money and Jews in contemporary America: *"The very wealthiest individuals on the planet are predominantly Christian according to non-partisan wealth research firm New World Wealth. In 2015, their study found that more than half of the world's millionaires identified as Christian and that there are more Hindu and Muslim millionaires than Jewish ones. Of the 13.1 million people in the world who are millionaires, 56.2% were Christians, while 6.5% were Muslims, 3.9% are Hindu and 1.7% are Jewish. Contrary to conspiracy theories about Jews – and conspiracy theories about economic dominance in general – no single group controls the planet's wealth."*

We don't have similar data in Britain, but it may surprise you to know that in Reform and Liberal Synagogues, around 50% of members pay a 'reduced fee' subscription, and that there are at least two Jewish soup kitchens operating in London today (because most food banks don't supply Kosher food).

In Europe, antisemitic myths around Jews and money often are linked to the Rothschild family – a trope which allows antisemites to combine depictions of Jews as rich, secretly powerful, and somehow not loyal to their country through their 'internationalism'. Rothschilds is a merchant bank. Many people, particularly progressives, may have critiques of banking as an industry – but the bank remains statistically small compared to similar banks founded by white, Christian, men that are not often conflated with the same stereotypes (e.g. JP Morgan) and Rothschilds are not bankrolling national banks, nor the World Bank, as often accused. In common with many of the antisemitic stories about how Jews became linked to finance, the founder of Rothschild's Bank, Mayer Amschel Rothschild, grew up in poverty in a ghetto (an area of a city, normally too small, where Jews were forced to live), where his father had been pushed into money lending because of restrictions on Jewish employment. How we talk about the Rothschilds is evidence of the double bind Jews were in – required to take on these jobs because of antisemitic laws, but then punished for having done so.

TROPE 2: JEWS & POWER

Jews as secretly controlling the Government, media, other minorities & world



DAILY STORMER

JEWS ARE BEHIND THE “LEGALLY BLACK” CAMPAIGN

Diversity Macht Frei

March 4, 2018

According to their website, Advocacy Academy was founded by Amelia Viney. You won't be surprised to learn that she is Jewish.

How Liberal Jewish Values Inspire my Work The Advocacy Academy - Amelia Viney

Amelia Viney is the founder of The Advocacy Academy, a charity working to unleash the power of disadvantaged young Londoners to create a more just and equal society.

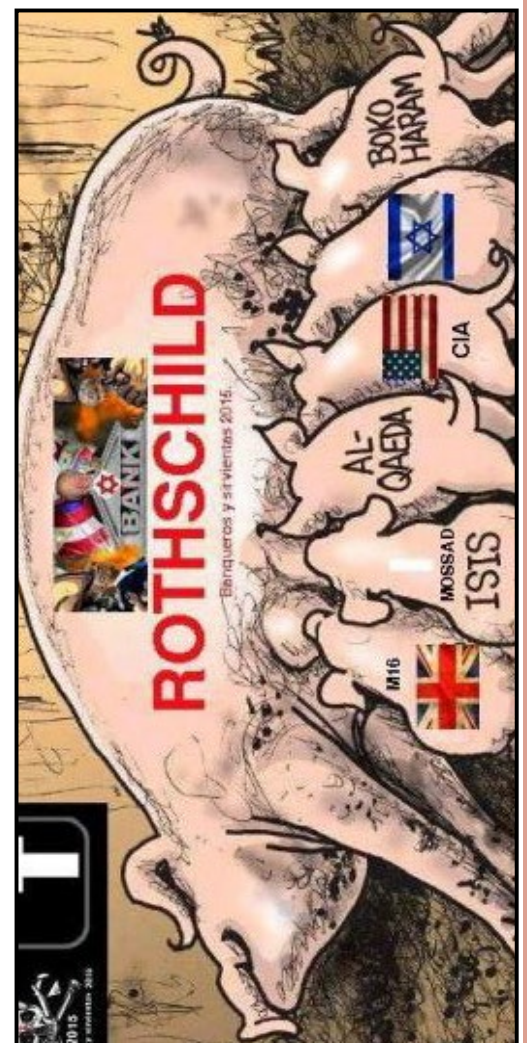
Just like L'JY-Netzer, The Advocacy Academy is a youth movement with social justice at its heart. Too many young people from marginalised backgrounds feel powerless to create meaningful change in their communities, and voiceless in the big conversations that directly affect them - like housing, crime and education. Across a transformational eight-month Fellowship programme, we give these young leaders the knowledge, skills and confidence to make a real difference in their communities.

Everything I know comes from my 15 years in L'JY-Netzer - how to empower and trust young people, teach them how to lead and take them on a journey of personal identity. Liberal Judaism's prophetic voice taught me never to be afraid of "speaking truth to power" - that it was, in fact, my duty.

We're always on the look-out for like-minded Liberal Jews who are excited to support our work. Just like L'JY-Netzer, our programme relies on the generosity of volunteers and donors. We'd love to have you involved! For more information please visit www.theadvocacyacademy.com.



This fits with a long tradition of Jews weaponizing other minorities against Christians and Europeans, from Muhammad to Martin Luther King. And they wonder why they are hated.



JEWS & POWER

Antisemitic ideas about Jews often portray our community as the 'secret power' in some way. The locus of this control varies, but often involves government, media or banking, but has extended to 'shadowy groups' of people who are 'really in charge', and in some memorable cases, accusations of controlling the weather (see some excellent responses here: www.heyalma.com/best-jokes-jews-controlling-weather).

Probably the most famous example of this trope is in a document called The Protocols of the Elders of Zion, which is a fabricated text pretending to be the minutes of the meeting where Jewish leaders discuss their goal of world domination. This document was a hoax that first appeared in Russia in 1903 but has since been translated to multiple languages, and Henry Ford funded the printing of half a million copies to be distributed across the US in the 1920s. Despite this being totally fake and more than a century old, it is still widely available and believed today. The Protocols are a basic template for many modern anti-Jewish conspiracy theories: sneaky, greedy Jews secretly plotting to control the weather, manipulate financial systems, influence the media, destroy the Labour party, stage the 9/11 terrorist attacks, or put Black people in charge of everything.

According to April Rosenblum, *"The idea that Jews control the government or the world began with church authorities passing down images of Jews as a group in league with the Devil, with special powers from the Devil that gave them evil control over earthly events. In Europe, Christian rulers furthered the myth that Jews were in control, by forcing Jews into roles where they appeared as "the face" of power with which everyday peasants interacted (i.e. as tax collectors). As European culture grew more secular, the idea was modernised, and brought to a new level of worldwide fame in the form of the Protocols of the Elders of Zion forgery. During the Nazi years, this European propaganda was imported to non-European cultures, including the Arab countries, where oppression of Jews had previously been based not on myths of Jewish world power, but on simpler notions that Jews ought to stay in their place as second-class citizens."*

A few things are worth lifting up in this analysis. Firstly, this links to how Jews were used as a "buffer" by those in power - sometimes literally, in the case of the Pale of Settlement. Jews are often used as the visible face of much more complex systems of power, a role referred to as "the middlemen" or "middle agents". It reflects the function of antisemitism - which is for Jews to act as a decoy for whoever is in power - a group that is tolerated in order to, at the right moment, act as scapegoats.

As Aurora Levins Morales, a Puerto Rican Jewish writer and poet, writes: *"[Anti black] Racism is like a millstone, a crushing weight that relentlessly presses down on people intended to be a permanent underclass. Its purpose is to press profit from us, right to the edge of extermination and beyond. The oppression of Jews is a conjuring trick, a pressure valve, a shunt that redirects the rage of working people away from the 1%, a hidden mechanism, a set up that works through misdirection, that uses privilege to hide the gears. Unlike racism, at least some of its targets must be seen to prosper, must be well paid and highly visible. The goal is not to crush us, it's to have us available for crushing. Christian rulers use us to administer their power, to manage for them, and set us up in the window displays of capitalism for the next time the poor pick up stones to throw. What is hard for the angry multitudes to see is that Jews don't succeed in spite of our oppression. We are kept insecure by our history of sudden assaults, and some*

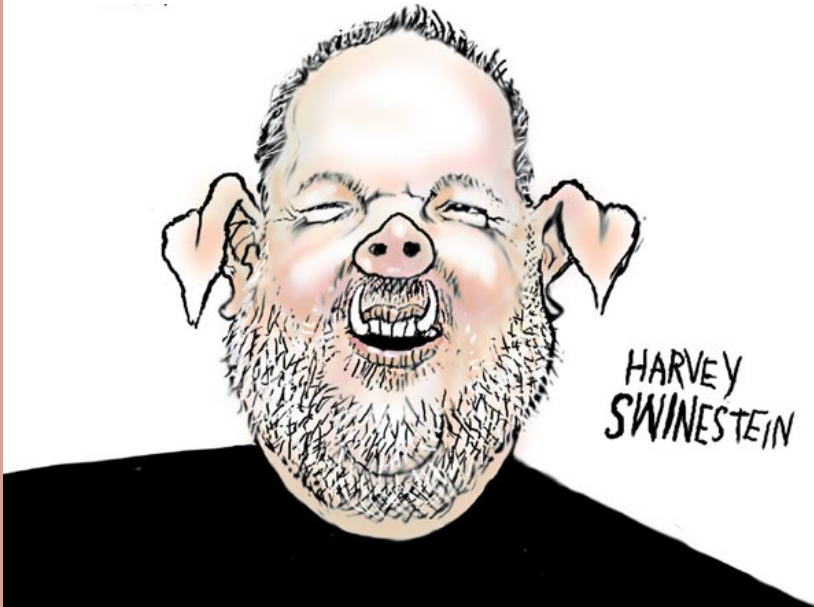
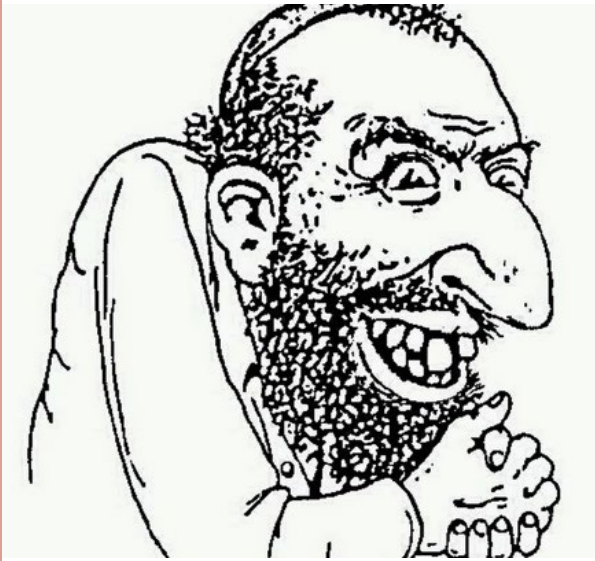
of us, a minority of us, are offered the uncertain bribes of privilege and protection. Privilege for a visible sample of us is the only way to make the whole tricky business work. Then, when the wrath of the most oppressed, whether Russian peasants starving on potatoes or urban US People of Color pressed to the wall, reaches boiling point, there we are: The Tsar's tax collector, the shopkeeper and the pawnbroker, the landlord and the lawyer, the social worker and the school administrator. And whether it's a Polish aristocrat watching the torches go by on pogrom or the Episcopalian banker discreetly out of sight while working class people tell each other that Jews control the economy, the trick works."

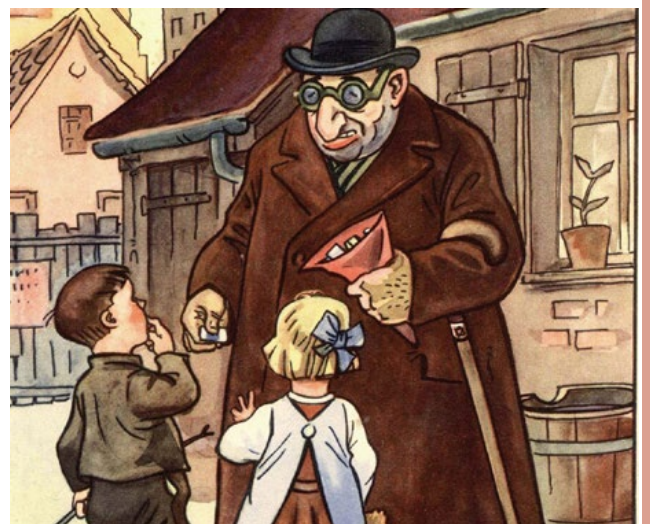
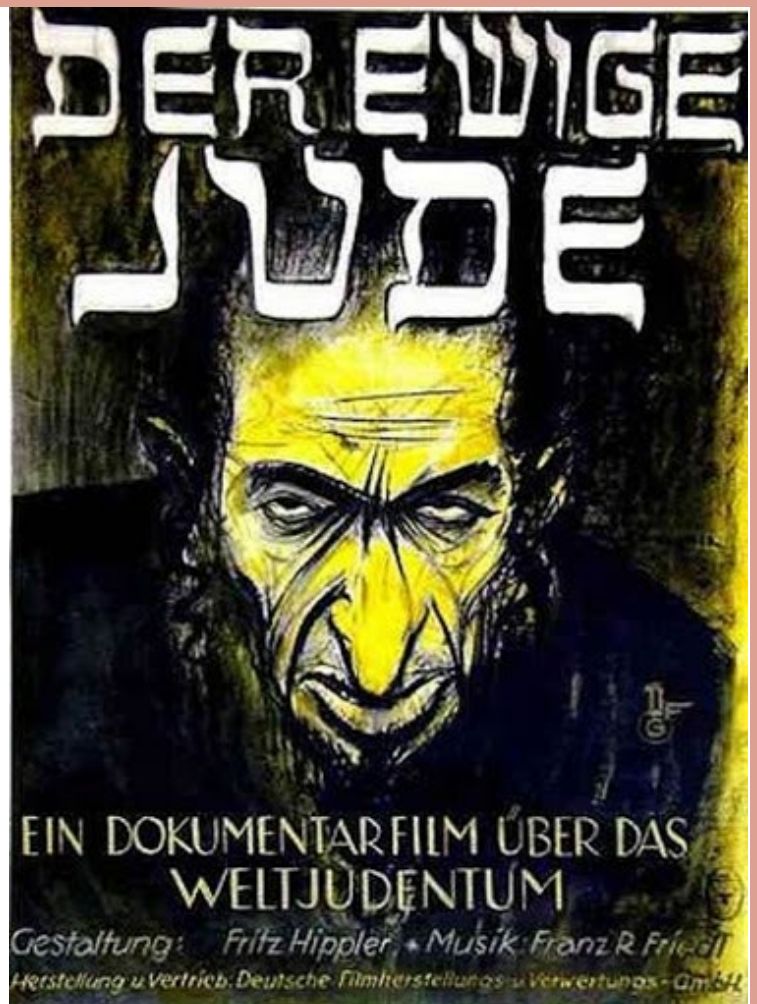
Secondly, part of how Antisemitism often works is by suggesting that Jews aren't vulnerable, or not as vulnerable as other communities. This means often that, combined with segregation of Jews, or the deliberate opportunity to allow some Jews to rise to positions of power and prominence, we are often divided from the very people who would normally be our allies. We're seen as 'not really at risk' or 'crying wolf'. The most obvious undermining of the idea that the Jews are so powerful is the fact that a third of Jews were murdered in the Holocaust - the Jewish community has still not reached its pre-Holocaust numbers. This happened the last century and on our own continent - and our country only let in a small number of children, despite Jewish communities begging the Home Office. This is why Holocaust denial is such an important trope for antisemites - it seeks to "prove" that Jews aren't *really* vulnerable, as that would mean they can't be all-powerful.

Thirdly, this trope often interplays with other kinds of racism, particularly anti-black racism. Eric K. Ward, author of *Skin in the Game* who spent time with white supremacist groups, writes, "*The successes of the civil rights movement created a terrible problem for White supremacist ideology. White supremacy had been the law of the land, and a Black-led social movement had toppled the political regime that supported it. How could a race of inferiors have unseated this power structure through organizing alone? Some secret cabal, some mythological power, must be manipulating the social order behind the scenes. This diabolical evil must control television, banking, entertainment, education, and even Washington, D.C. It must be brainwashing White people, rendering them racially unconscious. What is this arch-nemesis of the White race, whose machinations have prevented the natural and inevitable imposition of white supremacy? It is, of course, the Jews. Jews function for today's White nationalists as they often have for antisemites through the centuries: as the demons stirring an otherwise changing and heterogeneous pot of lesser evils "*

TROPE 3: JEWISH BODIES

Jews as big-nosed, weak-bodied and pale or yellow skinned





JEWISH BODIES

As we have seen, there is no single way to “look” Jewish. However, there have long been historic tropes about how Jews look – they normally are depicted as weak, big and hooked nose, with pale or yellow skin.

Part of this is an antisemitic trope of Jews as “foreign” or “other” – Jews are often portrayed xenophobically for the purpose of being juxtaposed with a European, blonde haired, blue eyed, “Aryan” ideal. Historically (until the 1950s), even light-skinned Ashkenazi Jews were not considered ‘white’ in Britain, America, or South Africa – and to white supremacists they still are not. Deep in antisemitism is the idea that Jews are a foreign pollutant, and so antisemitic depictions of Jews often portray us as that. In modern day imagery, Jews are often depicted as just very ‘other’ – photos of Charedi men from the back have become the stock image used by even mainstream news channels.

Some tropes are worth being particularly aware of:

- **Horns.** Some of the imagery is simply to make Jews look unattractive and devil-like. Jews are often depicted in antisemitic cartoons as having horns – which combines both a Christian idea that Jews were in league with the devil, and a deliberate mistranslation of a verse of Torah where Moses is described as coming down from Sinai with beams of light coming out of his head.
- **A large or hooked nose.** The truth is, there is no Jewish nose. Where does this trope come from? Just to prove how rooted this idea is in genetics, it doesn’t come about until the 12th century. At that time, a new Christian devotional style becomes popular – one that focused on the suffering of a mortal Jesus on the cross. Ideas that Jews were ‘hard hearted’ to the suffering of Jesus result in the earliest depiction of a nose being symbolic of Jewish bodies. Jews were portrayed as turning their head so as to highlight the lack of concern they were giving to Jesus’ suffering, thus revealing a large nose in profile. In time, that idea was expanded to all Jews. Sara Lipton writes, *“This image served many purposes. In being so fleshily vivid and realistic, the Jew’s face seemed to embody for Christian viewers the physical, secular, material world, a realm with which Jews had long been associated in Christian polemic. Four centuries of seeing pointy-hatted, big-nosed, bearded Jews in art had conditioned Christians to regard Jews as different and socially distant.”* Other theorists have suggested other, psychological frames played a part – that the nose is a stand in for a circumcised penis, somehow deformed in the Christian imagination. This idea has roots in the European imagination all the way back to Ovid, who wrote *“noscitur e nano quanta sit hast viro”* – *“It is known from the nose how much ‘haft’ has the man”*.
- **Jewish men as weak.** Some of the antisemitic imagery, perhaps unsurprisingly, has roots in real antisemitic experience. Jews were banned from carrying weapons under both Christian and Muslim regimes, and Jews repeatedly experienced violence they were not able to defend themselves or their families from. This played a big part in the re-imagining, post-Holocaust, of a militarised and secure Jewish ideal. Today, we often see images of Jewish men as nerdy, weak or physically in contrast to the strong Aryan ideal.
- **Jews as smelling bad.** This is a trope that originated in the medieval era with the idea that Jews bodies smelled as a result of drinking Christian blood. It has largely fallen out of use, but occasionally comes up in new ways – for example, in a Swiss hotel that displayed a sign demanding Jewish guests had a shower before using the swimming pool, the story of an airline removing a Jewish family for smelling bad, or in the phrase, “stinking Jews” that is still repeated today.

TROPE 4: JEWS & MURDER

Jews as murderous child killers & blood-lusting





JEWS & MURDER

One of the most famous antisemitic tropes is the Blood Libel. It began in the 12th century in Norwich – a Christian child called William died, and Jews were accused of being the reason why. The trope, in its classic form, accuses Jewish communities of seeking the blood of non-Jews – and normally non-Jewish children – to use in religious rituals (e.g. as an ingredient in Passover matzah, or to recreate the crucifixion of Jesus.)

Whilst originating in England, this Blood Libel later repeats across Europe, and then across much of the rest of the world –

- In 1250, the cult of Dominguito del Vals in Spain claimed the child was murdered by Jews
- Along with William of Norwich, Little Saint Hugh of Lincoln and Simon of Trent became objects of local cults and veneration in the UK after similar accusations.
- Attacks on Jews after false accusations have occurred also in Bristol, Bury St Edmunds, Gloucester, York and London.
- In 1910, Jews in Shiraz, Iran are killed for the same story
- Attacks occur across the Russian Empire with the same justification
- Even in 2005, 20 members of the Russian Duma called for all Jewish organisations to be banned because of “ritual murder”

There have been repeated killing of Jews when this accusation has occurred. According to Walter Laqueur, *“Altogether, there have been about 150 recorded cases of blood libel (not to mention thousands of rumours) that resulted in the arrest and killing of Jews throughout history, most of them in the Middle Ages. In almost every case, Jews were murdered, sometimes by a mob, sometimes following torture and a trial.”*

In England, the most famous account of libel was written by Chaucer in 1255 after a child named Hugh was found dead. This led to a number of Jews being executed by the Crown.

In the 16th century, Suleiman the Magnificent, Sultan of the Ottoman Empire, issued a royal decree denouncing blood libels. In 1955, Church of England leaders put up a plaque at Lincoln Cathedral to apologise for *“trumped up stories of ‘ritual murders’ of Christian boys by Jewish communities. . . These fictions cost many innocent Jews their lives. . . Such stories do not redound to the credit of Christendom”*. In Catholicism, the Vatican officially banned the cult of Dominguito in 1965. Despite this, his icons still remain in cathedrals in Seville and Zaragoza.

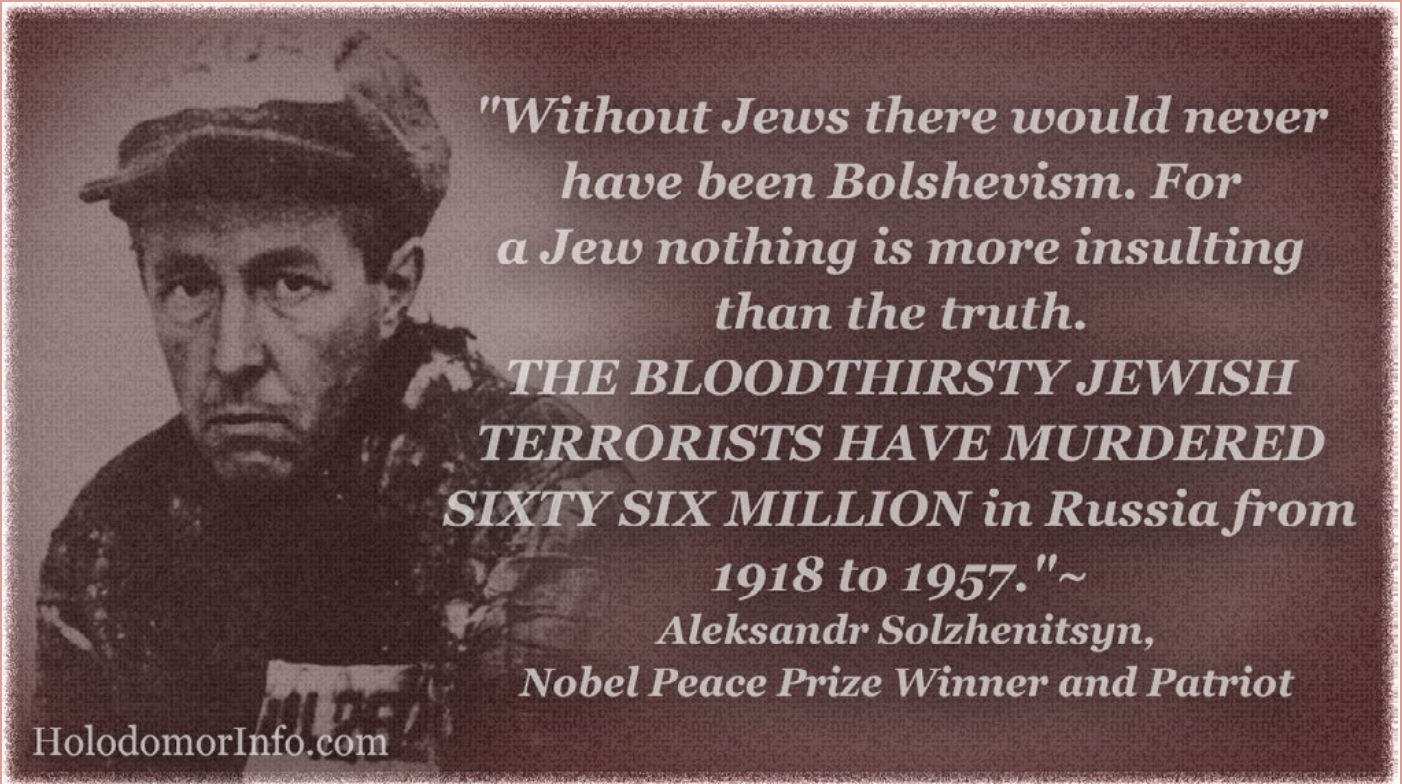
In Judaism, the use of blood (human or otherwise) in cooking is prohibited by the kashrut (kosher dietary laws). Blood from slaughtered animals may not be consumed, and it must be drained out of the animal (Leviticus 17:12-13).



TROPE 5: JEWS & LOYALTY

Jews as the conspiring fifth column: the enemy of Capitalism, Communism, the Church and Christianity





From: Jen Greenberg <jen.bergice@gmail.com>
Date: 28 October 2016 06:05:29 BST
To: charlotte.fischer@citizensuk.org.uk
Subject: Muslims Refugees in Israel

Hi Charlotte,

I saw the video of your fellow Jews advocating for more Muslim and black refugees in the UK. Why don't you jews put your money where your mouth is and send them all to Israel or to Saudi. Those are rich countries. Stop destroying the UK and Europe with your filthy cousins. Keep them all in Israel or the Middle East.

It was a big mistake bringing the Jews into the UK before WW-2 and also fighting against Hitler. If only we knew how you rats would bite us in the behind, we would have not helped you. So stop your foolishness and now we know why you jews were kicked out of every country in the world. You tried to destroy them.
 Karma will one day destroy you destroyers.

Jen.



JEWS & LOYALTY

The function of Antisemitism is for Jews to act as a decoy for whoever is in power - a group that is tolerated in order to, at the right moment, act as scapegoats. When there is unrest, Jews are presented as the 'power' - the reason why something bad is happening.

One of the tropes that allows this to work is of Jews as the 'enemy'. This can be framed as Jews not being loyal to a country, a political party, a 'race', a social class, or any other grouping.

In the 19th century, with the beginnings of nationalism and Jewish emancipation, these concerns of loyalty were often framed around the fact Jews had behaviours that were not shared by secular people or Christians - they kept dietary or religious practises, and the fact Jewish communities reached across nation state borders - so was there true loyalty to each other?

As part of this concern around Jews and their loyalty, Jews are often portrayed as crafty or cunning. This also fits into the cycle of antisemitism, where Jews are deliberately isolated from other communities who could be allies by being seen as a problem instead. Most recently, this trope has been used by some members of the Black Hebrew Israelites, who have portrayed Jews as the fake descendants of the twelve tribes of Israel (usurping the true descendants, black and brown people).

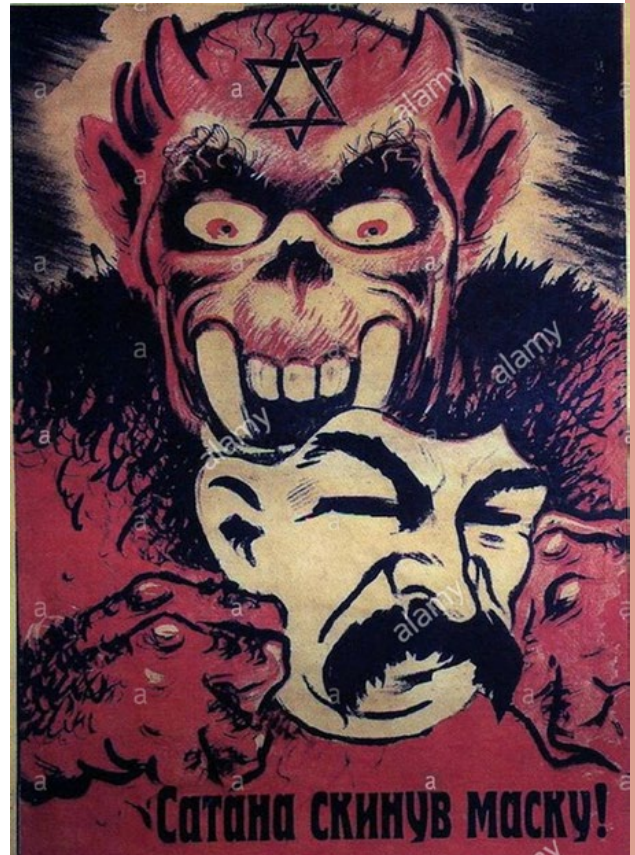
Confusingly (for Jews too!) this trope of Jews and loyalty can mean Jews are - depending on whether the antisemitism is coming from the left or the right - depicted as both communist radical agitators or as the capitalists behind structural oppression betraying working people. This played out recently when some Labour activists described a Jewish community protest against antisemitism in the party as really being at the behest of ring wing Conservative stooges, despite the Jewish Labour Movement, Jewish Labour members, and a number of Labour MPs attending.

In left wing antisemitism, Jews are often portrayed as right wing, conservative, and associated with money. In right wing antisemitism, Jews are often portrayed as agents of communism or socialism, a force allied to other minorities and progressive communities, and behind civil rights, feminism, or multiculturalism.

As Ruth Wodak puts it, *"You have sort of the communist - the revolutionary, and you have the capitalist - the rich Jew. You have the intellectual, who's sort of thinking about how to upheave, and destroy, and change society. On the other hand, you have the greedy Jew, who's only after your money and basically who only trades, who doesn't really work. So my theory about antisemitism is what I call the 'Judeus ex machina,' which means whenever you need an enemy image, you can produce one by instrumentalizing any clichés about Jews. And that seems to work very well right now, that whenever you need some kind of cliché and stereotype, it's like if you would grab into a big bag and you just pull out whatever suits this kind of political function."*

TROPE 6: JEWS, GOD & THE DEVIL

Jews as the devil, demonic and the embodiment of evil



Confederate Knights of the Ku Klux Klan
24/7 kkk hotline 540-328-1689 confederateknights311@gmail.com

OPEN UP YOUR EYES!
TO THE JEWISH STAR OF MOLOCH! 666!
SYNAGOGUE = SYNDICATES OF GOG!

Provided by
MEMRI

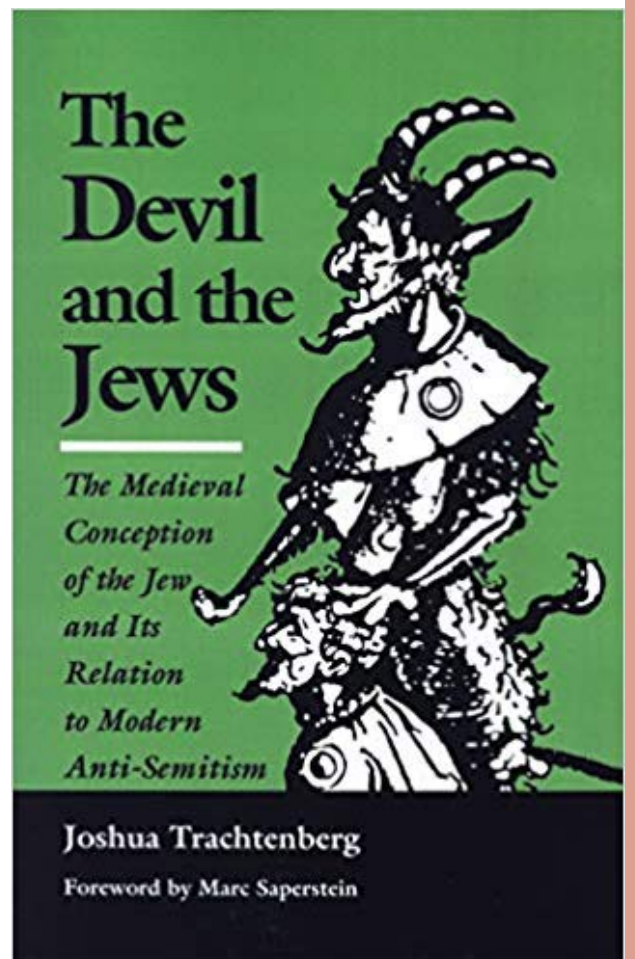
1 2 3 4 5 6

1 2 3 4 5 6

1 2 3 4 5 6

six sided star six sided hexagon six triangles

JEWS ARE THE CHILDREN OF SATAN REVELATION 2:9



JEWS, GOD & THE DEVIL

Jews as the 'source of evil' is a common trope, and not unconnected to those around Jews and power or Jews and appearance.

In the early days of Christianity, this was framed as a theological battle around Jews refusing to accept Christianity - if they wouldn't accept this version of God then they are effectively rejecting salvation and must be in support of the devil. And in our section on bodies, we've already covered tropes of the Jews as literally horned like the devil.

Much of the sense of Jews as evil increases when the Roman Empire becomes Christian. From this point onwards, it is no longer politic for the Roman authority to be responsible for Jesus' death, and so the role of Rome is minimised and Jews become responsible for Deicide.

Under Nazism, antisemitism was also framed as a battle against evil. 'Redemptive antisemitism' saw destroying Jews as destroying a source of sin that must be eradicated to save the world. Nazis believed in a 'natural hierarchy' of humans that Jews undermined, claiming that peace could only be achieved by murdering Jews and returning to that order.

In 2017, white nationalists in the US marched in Charlottesville under the banner 'Jews are Satan's children'. In another example about how the same antisemitic tropes can be used by both sides of the political spectrum, leaders such as Louis Farrakhan in the Nation of Islam have also repeatedly invoked the imagery of "Satanic Jews".

More recently, some members of the Hebrew Israelites, a black separatist church who are not considered Jewish by the Jewish community (and are entirely unrelated to the many black Jews), have been in the headlines for carrying out lethal antisemitic hate crimes. Some Hebrew Israelites hold antisemitic views as fundamental parts of their ideology. Recently, a member was filmed verbally harassing a Jewish family on the Northern Line tube in London and another member shot dead three people in a kosher supermarket in New Jersey. Antisemitic Hebrew Israelite ideology draws on some of the same tropes we've seen before - it asserts that Jews are liars and false worshippers of God, that they are working for and/or worship Satan, and that they have tricked their way into being seen as the descendants of the Israelites when in fact Hebrew Israelites are the 'true descendants' of the Twelve Tribes.

LESSONS ON LANGUAGE

WHAT IS SAID OR DONE The Jewish Litmus Test

WHAT MIGHT BE HEARD OR UNDERSTOOD This is when Jews have to effectively pass an additional test that other folks don't, by relaying their politics on Israel-Palestine, or the Labour party, before they are allowed to participate.

There's two major problems with this. One is obviously that it's racist. The fact we are Jewish shouldn't in itself be cause for suspicion or additional checks. The second is that it harms our fight against antisemitism. A commitment to fighting antisemitism has to extend to all Jews, not just to Jews you agree with. Ditto racism, feminism, homophobia and so on - respecting women that you respect is not the same as respecting women. The reason for this is best framed by the academic author Keith Kahn-Harris, when he talks about a concept of 'selective' versus 'consensus' antisemitism:

"Consensus Antisemitism is easily identifiable - the open, unashamed, visceral hatred, disdain or abuse directed at Jews as Jews. It does not seek Jewish approval and has no place for anything other than the occasional, highly exceptional, Jew within it. Consensus Antisemitism is indifferent to who Jews actually are and what they actually believe, and is sometimes entirely ignorant of them. The nexus of politics and identity is not a problem for consensus Antisemites as there is no politics that Jews could hold that would "save" them. Consensus Antisemitism is directed at all Jews and has no interest in Jewish diversity; it assumes that Jews themselves form a consensus. When Robert Bowers opened fire on worshippers at the Tree of Life synagogue in Pittsburgh he shouted "All Jews must die". In contrast, selective Antisemitism is intensely interested in and even knowledgeable about who Jews are and, in particular, what politics they hold. Selective Antisemites seek out Jews for approval or damnation; they make alliances with some Jews and hold them close."

Here's why only fighting antisemitism directed against Jews you like isn't good enough: because no Jew, no matter how much you may disagree with them on Israel-Palestine, deserves to be killed for being Jewish. When a consensus antisemite, a person who really hates all Jews, comes for us, every Jew is hurt by it. And picking and choosing the Jews you like, or finding one or a handful of Jews that agree with you, just builds the idea that some Jews are okay and some aren't - when the commitment to fighting against racism has to be unconditional. No Jew deserves to experience antisemitism no matter what other horrible politics they have that we may need to hold them accountable for - otherwise you end up applying rights for some but not all.

WHAT IS SAID OR DONE Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS)

WHAT MIGHT BE HEARD OR UNDERSTOOD Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions is a non violent strategy that has been used in many struggles, from the Civil Rights Movement to the anti-apartheid movement. It is not innately an antisemitic strategy. The Palestinian BDS campaign, headquartered in Ramallah, does not ask for a boycott on Jews, it very specifically boycotts Israeli products and state organisations and their representatives. Not everyone who supports BDS necessarily understands that, but that is what the Palestinian call is for. We wanted to flag why, even with this specific framing, it is so painful to some people in our community. Specifically for Jews, a boycott often echoes historical experiences of boycotts of Jewish businesses, specifically but not exclusively under Nazi Germany (boycotts of Jewish businesses also existed in Canada, the US, Poland and Austria). From the 1st April 1933, the Nazi government announced a boycott of Jewish owned businesses, their first official act of discrimination against Jews. A star of David was painted on the doors and windows of many Jewish owned businesses, and SS officers stood outside of them to intimidate non-Jews not to go in. Signs went up saying, 'don't buy from Jews', 'the Jews are our misfortune!' and, somewhat ironically now, 'Go to Palestine!'. These boycotts resulted in a number of attacks on Jews and Jewish buildings. That doesn't mean BDS is innately antisemitic or an illegitimate tactic - it just means that it can be quite traumatising for a lot of Jews and Jewish communities.

WHAT IS SAID OR DONE Stereotypes of Jews (Jewish Princess, Jewish Mother. . .)

WHAT MIGHT BE HEARD OR UNDERSTOOD I'd put this in the confusing box of things that are sometimes used by Jews, but should not be used by non Jews – like the n-word by black people. The image of a Jewish princess as a rich, greedy, spoilt, shallow young Jewish woman is just an ancient trope of Jews as money grabbing wrapped up in misogynistic clothing.

There is some odd gendered framing of Jewish women as 'Jewish Mothers' – that we are somehow overbearing, hypochondriac worriers, obsessed with feeding, matchmaking and *k'velling* about our children. Jews actually invoke this trope all the time – but it may not be one for non-Jews to use. Partly that's because it creates a box that Jewish women are then meant to fit into. As it so happens, I do like feeding people, but I'm not even a mother, and I'm definitely not your mother, so a non-Jew tying that quality to my Jewishness feels like I'm being forced into some weird performance of what Jews should be.

WHAT IS SAID OR DONE Comparing Jews or Israel to Nazis or Hitler

WHAT MIGHT BE HEARD OR UNDERSTOOD Let's look at this through a feminist lens: we would never allow someone to use the worst thing that has happened to a person (where they were unarguably a victim) as the same stick to beat that person with. It is not appropriate to use the fact someone has been raped as a weapon against them – we wouldn't say "*as someone who has survived rape, how can you justify xyz*". People's ideology and actions are open to criticism, but not by weaponising things they were victims of.

In the same vein, we recommend you don't use language around Nazis, or comparisons to Nazism, to describe Jews or the state of Israel – 1) it's not accurate; 2) It causes harm by (re)traumatising people. Anything you want to point out about a person or a state's behaviour you can say directly and clearly without comparing it to the party that perpetrated genocide against its people.

WHAT IS SAID OR DONE "Slur" or "smear"

WHAT MIGHT BE HEARD OR UNDERSTOOD As the Community Security Trust writes: "*The implication of this 'smear' allegation is not just that complainants are wrong about whether there is a significant problem of antisemitism. . . it is that they deliberately and maliciously invent, exaggerate or misrepresent alleged examples of antisemitism, in a coordinated and knowing way, for political purposes. This directly contradicts fundamental anti-racist principles, as set out in The MacPherson Report of the inquiry into the murder of Stephen Lawrence, that an allegation of racism should be taken seriously and investigated in good faith.*"

Even worse, [when in relation to Labour] the notion that Jews would lie about antisemitism in order to prevent the election of a Prime Minister who would care for 'the many' against 'the few' echoes antisemitic conspiracy theories that accuse Jews of dishonesty and manipulation in pursuit of goals that are opposed to the interests of the nation as a whole. It assumes bad faith, cunning and secret coordination: standard features of antisemitic conspiracy theories down the ages. . ."

According to academic Dr David Hirsh, writing about the 'smear' allegation in 2018: "*The standard response to Jews is not that they have misjudged the situation, perhaps for understandable reasons related to their history. . . The standard response to Jews is that they know that their claims of having experienced antisemitism are false, and they persist in making them anyway for selfish tribal reasons. . . Moreover this is the charge made against the community as a whole, not only against particular individuals. . . Make no mistake, the charge against the Jewish community is that it is involved in a conspiracy against the left. Any individual could get it wrong. But when a whole community gets it wrong together, in an organised and co-ordinated way, and in bad faith, then the allegation is one of Jewish conspiracy to lie and to smear."*

WHAT MIGHT BE HEARD OR UNDERSTOOD First of all, the word Zionist is not always used as a negative. Lots of Jews will define themselves positively as Zionists. But there are a few things we want to say about the pejorative use of the term.

- Don't use it as synonym or euphemism for Jew or Jewish
- Definitely don't use the terms Zio, ZioNazi, Zio troll
- Zionism is a really broad church. Most simply, it is a form of nationalism that believes in a relationship between the Jewish people and the land that is now the modern states of Israel and Palestine. What that relationship looks like varies significantly from person to person - from settlers who believe in one Jewish-only state encompassing the whole of Israel/Palestine, to cultural Zionists or groups like Brit Shalom, who wanted to live in the land of Israel, but not in a Jewish state, sharing exactly equal status with Palestinians.
- If you repeat any of the tropes we've spoken about that have existed for hundreds of years, and you just change the word Jewish to Zionist, it will sound like you're being antisemitic. This is partly because others have already played that game - language gets co-opted.
- Take a moment to think about this in the context of other struggles. Most of us are familiar with the term queer. When we were growing up, it was mainly used in a derogatory way, and has been deliberately reclaimed by LGBTQ communities. Ditto, if you think of the word n-e-g-r-o, which was not innately negative (it is the French for black and 100 years ago most black organisations referred to their own organisations with that in the title. These words got co-opted or reclaimed and the meanings changed. As a result, people who are not black should not use any of the n-words.
- Language is a social frame and so the meaning of your words is not only decided by you. Somebody can't use the n-word and acceptably say *"well, I didn't mean it like that"* - other people have imbued it with meaning that exists regardless of whether they mean it that way or not. And lots of people on the far right have already chosen to do that with the word Zionist.
- The far right uses the term Zionist in very problematic ways. They refer to the ZOG, or Zionist Occupation Government, not to refer to Palestine, but to refer to a conspiracy theory that Jews secretly control all western governments. Just in case they weren't being subtle enough in that antisemitic trope, they sometimes refer to the JOG, or Jewish Occupational Government.
- Far right neo-Nazi websites use the word Zio or Zionist for Jew all the time, switching the word "Jewish" with "Zionist" but referring to the same conspiracies or tropes e.g. "Zionist media". It's not good enough to say whatever you were going to say and defend it with the justification "I said Zionist, I didn't mean Jew!"
- This means it is incredibly important to be specific. E.g. *"I hate his Zio politics"* versus *"I don't agree with an ethno-nationalist state that affords some groups within it more rights than others"*.
- This doesn't mean we can guarantee no one will ever find your words offensive, but it means you have a much better chance of advocating for an anti-racist cause that matters without invoking another form of racism.
- By the way, this isn't the only euphemism for Jewish - Rothschilds, North London intellectuals, New York humour. . . Jewish is much shorter to say - just use it, then at least we'll all be on the same page.

WHAT IS SAID OR DONE Blaming Israel for Antisemitism

WHAT MIGHT BE HEARD Violent and virulent antisemitism pre-existed the state of Israel by about 2000 years. It existed before the modern form of Zionism, and in fact part of the reason the current form of Zionism came about was *because* of antisemitism. If the state of Israel disappeared, the idea antisemitism would miraculously end is false.

WHAT IS SAID OR DONE Israel has no right to exist

WHAT MIGHT BE HEARD OR UNDERSTOOD There are three main things that get brought up for some Jews when they hear this phrase. The first is a feeling of exceptionalism - why does everyone else have the right to self-determination in the form of a nation state and the Jewish people don't? We question other state's governments and policies, but rarely their continued existence, despite plenty of them being founded on war, colonisation, and genocide. For some Jews, it's the double standard that can feel troubling.

The second is around the erasure of Jewish history. Jews have lived in Israel/Palestine for thousands of years, and it has a central place in our story as a historic homeland from which our ancestors were forcibly exiled. Sometimes, the idea of Israel not having the right to exist can be used as a way to deny the historic and religious connection of the Jewish people to the land, and in turn can feel like co-option of the Jewish story.

The third is around safety. For many Jews the deep and difficult question is, "If Israel ceases to exist, then where do we go when things fall apart again?" As a people, we've been thrown out of almost every country we've ever lived in. Most of the time, no one took us in - we were met with closed doors. Even the Jews who would never move to Israel of their own free will can see it as a safety net - something put to the test when Soviet and Ethiopian Jews faced persecution in the countries they called home for centuries. No matter how we individually feel about it as a country, If Israel ceases to be, many Jews fear that there will be no back up - we face the possibility of being stateless once again and without options should we face attempted annihilation.

There are all sorts of very important arguments within the community about whether the state of Israel as it exists today really does makes Jewish people safer. And there's no consensus about whether a different incarnation of Israel/Palestine would make Jewish people less safe. It is also true that there are plenty of Jews who strongly believe in Palestinian rights.

This is simply to say that questing the legitimacy of the state to exist has complex undertones because the phrase has been used to mean everything from promoting a two-state solution - to one shared Republic which affords all peoples equal rights and power - to calling for all Jews to be pushed into the sea. Because there are people who use this phrase to mean the forcible removal of every Jewish person from Israel/Palestine, it's often the ambiguity of this phrase that leads to it being complicated for some Jews. As before, we suggest being specific.

To be clear, it is absolutely possible to criticise the State of Israel without being antisemitic, but this requires intentionality.

GLOSSARY

AJO Anti-Jewish oppression; the systemic or institutional oppression of Jewish people.

Antisemitism A modern term coined in 1879 by German nationalist Wilhem Marr, to give a sense of scientific validity to the hatred of Jews. Has only ever been used to mean hatred and abusive behaviour towards Jews.

Ashkenazi Technically: of Central or Eastern European Jewish descent. Today, however, it is often used as a catchall term that includes Western European Jews as well

Ashkenormativity The institutionally and socially enforced omnipresence of Ashkenazi culture and history within Jewish spaces as well as society as a whole, resulting in the erasure, marginalization and diminution of other Jewish traditions and narratives.

Assimilation A process by which non-dominant or non-mainstream people or cultures slowly take on more and more features of the dominant culture, and slowly lose their native/original cultural markers.

Coded Language A way that racist or sexist ideas are expressed without explicitly being clear that they are racist or sexist. In German Lopez's definition, "the term describes phrases that are so often targeted at a specific group of people, or a specific idea, that eventually the circumstances of a phrases use are blended into the phrase's meaning...since "thug" has been used so often to describe black men even when they're doing nothing wrong, it now carries a racist connotation." Professor Haney-Lopez has written "The way these words play into stereotypes without outright mentioning them gives the user some leeway. ...it allows people to say, 'Hey, I'm just criticizing the behaviour, not criticizing a racially defined group". With antisemitism, terms such as Zionist, Zio, North London elite, metropolitan elite, global media have all been used.

Christian Hegemony "The everyday, systemic set of Christian values, individuals and institutions that dominate all aspects of U.S. society" and date back to hundreds of years of global history. According to author Paul Kivel, "It is a complex and shifting system that benefits all Christians, those raised and those passing as Christian. It refers to the concentration of power and wealth accumulated to a predominantly Christian power elite, while all others experience exploitation and constant vulnerability to violence."

Dog Whistle A subtly aimed political message which is intended for, and can only be understood by, particular groups.

Ethnicity A social group that shares a common and distinctive culture, religion, or language.

Gentile/Goy A non-Jewish person. Goy literally means nation. Not pejorative, but sometimes wrongly assumed to be by non-Jews.

Ghetto A part of a city, especially a slum area, occupied by a minority group or groups. The term was first used in Venice, where in 1516 Jews were forced to live in a specific area (although this was not the first time that Jews were forced to live in a segregated area of the city). The ghetto was a walled quarter with its gates locked at night. Jews were forced to pay the cost of building the wall. Since then, ghetto has referred to any small area of land that populations of Jews were forced to live in throughout history. Another infamous example was the Warsaw Ghetto in World War II Nazi-occupied Poland.

Holocaust Denial Essentially just another conspiracy theory about Jews. Holocaust deniers claim that the murder of 6 million Jews by the Nazis never took place or they minimize the number of Jews killed. They allege a secret, massive conspiracy by Jews to fool the world, ignoring the obvious and overwhelming evidence to the contrary and the basic absurdity of their claim. As with climate change deniers, 9/11 conspiracists, and birthers, they often use rhetoric that calls for an “open debate” about the Holocaust, or describe the issue as a “controversy” when in fact there is no disagreement about the tragic truth of the Jewish genocide anywhere outside of antisemitic fringe groups and there is nothing to debate.

Ladino/Judaeo-Spanish A form of Spanish that was spoken by Sephardi Jews. It was historically written in the Hebrew alphabet but is now normally written in the Latin alphabet. Once the trade language across most of the Balkans, it is now under threat with most of its speakers being very elderly.

Litmus Test Referencing chemistry, a pass-fail test, meaning to judge someone harshly based on a single belief or other criteria.

Mizrachi Jews who were indigenous to the Middle East, North Africa, Central Asia, and the Balkan region, many for up to 2,500 years. Distinct from Sephardi Jews, many of whom migrated and settled in these same regions after their expulsion from Spain, but historically many Mizrahi Jews have referred to themselves – or been referred to – as Sephardi Jews

Neo Nazis A term that usually refers to individuals or groups who subscribe to white supremacist ideology, and or specifically the ideology and rhetoric of Adolf Hitler and the German Nazi party, usually centered around antisemitic beliefs.

Pogrom A violent riot including attacks, killing and/or persecution of an ethnic or religious group, sometimes intended to purge that group from a town or region. (In our context, aimed at Jewish people.)

Scapegoat A person or entity onto which blame is unfairly and irrationally attached.

Scientific Racism/Racial Biology Scientific racism is a pseudoscientific belief that empirical evidence (such as skull size, skin thickness, nose size, hair texture, blood colour) exists to support or justify racism, racial inferiority, or racial superiority. Scientific racism was common from the 1600s to the end of World War II.

Sephardim Jews who trace their heritage to Spain and Portugal, but who after the Inquisition may have moved to the Middle East, other parts of Europe, North Africa or the Americas.

Spanish Inquisition An extension of the Papal Inquisition, set up in 15th century Spain by Catholic monarchs, Ferdinand and Isabella, who also sent Christopher Columbus on his expedition to the Americas. After forcing all religious heretics to either convert to Christianity or leave Spain (thereby relinquishing all assets to the Church), the Inquisition itself lasted hundreds of years with the goal of investigating, torturing, and killing Jewish, Muslim, and Romani conversos. It did not legally end until 1834.

White Supremacy According to Frances Lee Ansley, writing in the Cornell Law Review, white supremacy is “A political, economic and cultural system in which whites overwhelmingly control power and material resources, conscious and unconscious ideas of white superiority and entitlement are widespread, and relations of white dominance and non-white subordination are daily re-enacted across a broad array of institutions and social settings.” White supremacy is the system of oppression that empowers white people at the expense of People of Colour.

White Supremacist People who are invested in actively perpetuating the ideology of white supremacy and who generally believe that white Christians are genetically and culturally superior to other races and religions. White supremacist groups often have long histories of antisemitic and racialized violence.

Xenophobia A fear or hatred of foreign people or ideas.

Yiddish The historical language of Ashkenazi Jews, and a combination of Hebrew and German and Aramaic. It is written in the Hebrew alphabet. Before the Holocaust, 11-13 million of the 17 million Jews alive spoke Yiddish; 85% of Jews who were killed in the Holocaust were Yiddish speakers. For many of the Chasidic Jews in London, it will be the language they speak.

Trope A significant recurring theme or motif.

Zionist An extremely complicated and often confusing term, as it can be used quite legitimately in political discussion. Zionism is simply the belief of the Jewish people in their right to exist, free from persecution, in their own country. Those claiming to be only anti-Zionist, not antisemitic are denying Israel's right to exist, which is considered to be one of the manifestations of antisemitism. Criticism of specific policies of the Israeli government is not antisemitic.

Zionism According to Wikipedia: Zionism is the national movement of the Jewish people that supports the re-establishment of a Jewish homeland in the territory defined as the historic Land of Israel (roughly corresponding to Canaan, the Holy Land, or the region of Palestine). Modern Zionism emerged in the late 19th century in Central and Eastern Europe as a national revival movement, in reaction to antisemitic and exclusionary nationalist movements in Europe. Soon after this, most leaders of the movement associated the main goal with creating the desired state in Palestine, then an area controlled by the Ottoman Empire.

Advocates of Zionism view it as a national liberation movement for the repatriation of a persecuted people residing as minorities in a variety of nations to their ancestral homeland. Critics of Zionism view it as a colonialist, racist and exceptionalist ideology that led advocates to violence during Mandatory Palestine, followed by the exodus of Palestinians, and the subsequent denial of their right to return to property lost during the 1948 war.

'Zionist' is increasingly being used as a way of avoiding saying Jew. People who do this will usually exhibit other forms of antisemitic behaviour. The use of modifications, such as Zio, ZioTroll, and especially ZioNazi is always Antisemitic in intent.

WHAT TO DO TOMORROW

HOW TO START DISMANTLING ANTISEMITISM IN YOUR RELATIONSHIPS & ORGANISATIONS

IDEOLOGICAL

Tune your ears. This is our first and most important job. Commit to becoming literate in antisemitism, Judaism, and the Jewish community. This takes time and energy and requires an active choice to understand the roots and realities of an incredibly complex system of oppression. Read, discuss, reflect, and repeat.

Avoid talking about the Jewish community as a monolith. Don't erase Jews of colour by perpetuating the idea that all Jews are white and Ashkenazi. Avoid falling into the trap of assuming all Jews share the same socioeconomic status, beliefs, access to power, voting record, or traditions. Challenge the assumption that the Jewish community has anything in common beyond that one unifying truth that we're all Jewish.

Don't underestimate the danger facing the Jewish community when we tell you that everything is not OK.

INTERNALISED

When we hear people reference their internalised Antisemitism, how do we respond? Firstly, we don't take it as permission to repeat those tropes ourselves. We might hear Jews telling Jewish jokes, but that's not an invitation for us to do the same, or even to laugh. Our job here is to (1) identify that internalised antisemitism is at play and (2) be sure not to compound any harm that is occurring by laughing, agreeing, or amplifying antisemitic sentiment - even if it's coming from a Jewish person.

INTERPERSONAL

When you hear people using antisemitic tropes, exercise your agency and say something. Confidently interrupt wherever tropes appear, and explain to the people using them where they come from and why they're so egregious. We've included a cribsheet below with language you can pick up and use to disrupt antisemitism the moment it happens. Expect to make mistakes. It can be hard to find the right words to navigate these messy moments, and acknowledge you might say the wrong thing. Speaking out can be scary (especially in a professional context), but antisemitism thrives, in large part because people ignore or deny its existence.

Listen to, and take the lead from, your Jewish colleagues. In moments when antisemitism is in the news, be conscious of the pain and strain this can cause. If appropriate to your relationship, check in with them to acknowledge what's going on and express your support. In equal measure, avoid putting the burden on your Jewish colleagues to explain antisemitism to you - even seemingly innocuous questions can be exhausting, uncomfortable, and unsafe to answer - so navigate the conversation with sensitivity.

Wherever you can, cultivate meaningful relationships with Jewish people.

INSTITUTIONAL

Ensure your organisation has an anti-racist code of conduct which makes it clear that interpersonal antisemitism is not acceptable. Hold more trainings like this one so every employee or member has a common language to talk about antisemitism before it happens, and understands the agreed process to interrupt and be held accountable when it does (and it will) in your spaces.

If your organisation has to depict Jews as part of its work - either through illustration or photograph - be careful not to repeat antisemitic tropes about the Jewish body'. Similarly, avoid erasing, obsessing about, dehumanising, or generalising Charedim (strictly-Orthodox Jews), whose images are so often used to portray us as "different" and "other".

If Christians get to take off their religious festivals without taking annual leave, consider a process for other communities to do the same (and please don't suggest that Jews should make this up by working on Christmas!) Also, make sure Jewish holidays are in your organisational calendars and if you wouldn't plan a big event over Christmas, avoid doing so over the major Jewish festivals.

Ensuring you consider the need for kosher food and prayer breaks in programming, and recognise that programming on Friday evening and Saturday may make it difficult for observant Jews to attend.

Make sure your messaging doesn't perpetuate antisemitic tropes - train your communications team to understand and avoid these, especially if your organisation speaks about inequality, oppression, banking, religion, power, Israel/Palestine, and any other sensitive areas that cut close to the bone for the Jewish community.

If you want to wish people well over a Jewish festival, make sure you know a little something about it. For example, don't use the image of a loaf of bread in a Passover post when the festival explicitly bans bread (it will be seen as superficial...)



Follow

As Jewish people prepare for Passover, we're wishing everyone in the Jewish community chag sameach. #Passover



6:58 AM - 19 Apr 2019

INTERRUPTING ANTISEMITISM

Calling Out

- When we need to let someone know that their words or actions are unacceptable and will not be tolerated
- When we need to interrupt in order to prevent further harm
- Will likely feel hard and uncomfortable, but necessary
- Allows us to hit the “pause” button and break the momentum

Ouch. I need to stop you there.	That word/comment is harmful. Would you like to pick a different word?	I'm going to push back against that. I disagree. I don't see it that way because...
Okay, I am having a strong reaction to that and I'd like to let you know why.	I don't find that funny.	I wonder if you've considered the impact of your words?
Hmmm.. I think you may want to think this one through a bit more. How about we hit pause and speak about this later?	I want you to know how your comment just impacted me.	That's not our culture here. Those aren't our values.
Is sex/gender/gender identity/gender expression/race/class/ ethnicity/ religion/ability/ immigration status/ body type/ marital status/ age/ pregnancy relevant to your point? How?	It sounded like you just said _____. Is that really what you meant?	I feel obligated as your peer/colleague/friend to tell you that your comment wasn't okay.
<i>Remember, it is a powerful thing for the target of oppression to hear these words from the mouth of an ally!</i>		

Calling In

- When there is an opportunity to explore more deeply and come to a mutual sense of understanding
- When we are seeking to grow and learn
- When we want to help imagine different perspectives, possibilities, or outcomes
- Provides for multiple perspectives and encourages shifts in thinking
- Focused on reflection and response, not reaction
- Is not just a suggestion (Don't you think you should...?)

I'm curious. What do you mean by ____?	What was your intention when you said ____? How might the impact of your words/actions differ from your intent?	What sort of impact do you think your decision/comment/action might have?
Is it possible that someone might understand your words/actions differently? How might someone else experience what just happened?	How might your own comfort level, assumptions, expectations, prior experiences be influencing your beliefs, decisions, process in this moment?	How is ____ different from ____? What is the connection between ____ and ____?
How did you decide, determine, conclude ____?	When did you start thinking/acting/ speaking this way? Why?	What would have to change in order for ____?
Why do you assume ____ to be true?	What were you trying to achieve by doing ____? Is this the best way? What other approaches have you considered?	Do you know why I am stopping you? Do you want to have a go at thinking through how I might respond?
<i>Remember to think about how to call out the behaviour while calling in the person</i>		

Adapted from Seed The Way & The Oregon Center for Educational Equity: What Did You Just Say? Responses to Racist Comments Collected from the Field & the School Reform Initiative Pocket Guide to Probing Questions & Seed The Way

INTRODUCTORY READING LIST

As a next step introduction

- **Understanding Antisemitism, Jews for Racial and Economic Justice (JFREJ)** An Amerocentric guide to antisemitism by a NYC based collective advocating for economic and social change jfrei.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/JFREJ-Understanding-Antisemitism-November-2017-1.pdf
- **The Past Didn't Go Anywhere, April Rosenblum** A 2007 pamphlet for left wing movements created by an American activist [Archive.org/details/ThePastDintGoAnywhere](https://archive.org/details/ThePastDintGoAnywhere)
- **Strange Hate, Keith Kahn-Harris** A British sociologist's insight into how to approach tackling antisemitism as part of a broader anti-racist outlook [Antisemitism on the left](#)
- **That's Funny, You Don't Look Antisemitic by Steven A. Cohen** A very funny 1980s guide to the history and practises of antisemitism within the British left [Libcom.org/files/thats_funny.pdf](https://libcom.org/files/thats_funny.pdf)
- **My Left Side Hurts more by Benji Lanyado** [Medium.com/@benjilanyado/my-left-side-hurts-more-910b850ff70b](https://medium.com/@benjilanyado/my-left-side-hurts-more-910b850ff70b)
- **Antisemitism and the Russian Revolution by Brendan McGeevor**
- **Socialist antisemitism and its discontents in England, 1884-98** A deep look at antisemitism within British socialism at the turn of the century [Core.ac.uk/download/pdf/83960427.pdf](https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/83960427.pdf)
- **Antisemitism here and now by Deborah Lipstadt** This is a very accessible introduction to some ideas in antisemitism, framed as a series of letters between Professor Lipstadt and her students

Jews and race

- **The Colors of Jews by Melanie Kaye/Kantrowitz** A book designed to challenge assumptions about the Jewish community, by presenting the voices of Black Jews, Indian Jews, Sephardi Jews, Mizrahi Jews, and many other Jewish communities.
- **How Jews Became White Folks and What That Says About Race in America by Karen Brodtkin**
- **The Jew's Body by Sander Gilman** An examination of the historic tropes around Jews' bodies
- **The Invention of the Jewish Nose by Sara Lipton** www.nybooks.com/daily/2014/11/14/invention-jewish-nose

Antisemitism, white supremacy, and anti-black racism

- **Skin in the Game by Eric K. Ward** An exploration of why antisemitism is so foundational to white nationalism www.politicalresearch.org/2017/06/29/skin-in-the-game-how-antisemitism-animates-white-nationalism
- **"Negroes are antisemitic because they are anti white" by James Baldwin** [Archive.nytimes.com/www.nytimes.com/books/98/03/29/specials/baldwin-antsem.html](https://archive.nytimes.com/www.nytimes.com/books/98/03/29/specials/baldwin-antsem.html)

Antisemitism & Christianity

- **Living in the Shadow of the Cross: Christian Hegemony by Paul Kivel** A look at the idea of 'Christian hegemony' and its impact, including on antisemitism
- **Jewish-Christian Relations 1000-1300 by Anna Sapir Abulafia** This academic book details key centuries in western europe in the Christian development of antisemitic ideas and practices

THAT'S FUNNY YOU DON'T LOOK ANTISEMITIC BY STEVE COHEN, 1984

How The Left Does Not Fight Anti-Semitism

Left Modesty

There is one particular response from the Left, when presented with accusations of its own anti-semitism, that is almost liturgical in its repetition. This is the vanity which leads not merely to protestations that the socialist movement has actually opposed anti-semitism, but to the claim that it has consistently been in the vanguard of all such opposition. For instance, John Nolan (letters *Socialist Challenge* 1.1.81) made the modest claim that **"in the struggle against all forms of oppression, including anti-semitism, the I.M.G. and Socialist Challenge have proved themselves to be amongst the best of working class fighters"**. The Stalinists have made a similar claim about their own organisations. Hyman Lumer in his preface to Lenin *On the Jewish Question* states that the official Communist Parties **"have been the most resolute fighters against all national and racial discrimination and oppression"**. The sect may change, but the catechism remains the same!

Enough has already been presented to reveal the misplaced arrogance of this. How could a socialist practice which has internalised so much anti-semitism be in the forefront of resistance to it? However, it is relevant to go beyond this and to criticise much Left practice even on those occasions when it is apparently opposing anti-semitism. The point is that this opposition often, at its best, severely underestimates anti-semitism and, at its worst, is complicit in it by accepting its terms. Either way, it ultimately rests on a refusal to see anti-semitism as an ideology.

Complicity in Anti-Semitism

There have been periods in this country, as elsewhere, when sections of the Left, far from fighting anti-semitism have threatened to unleash pogroms against Jews. An article in *Justice* claimed that socialists

"have no feelings against Jews as Jews, but as nefarious capitalists and poisoners of the wells of public information we denounce them. It would be easy enough to get up a capitalist Jew-bait here in London if we wished to do so" (21.1.1893).

It is, incidentally, not insignificant that the medieval accusation of Jews poisoning the water wells reappears under a different guise in imperialist

England. Moreover the S.D.F, like many other 'socialists' believed that pogroms were a prelude to an anti-capitalist revolution. Thus Hyndman applauded popular attacks on Jews in Austria on the grounds that:

"The attack upon Jews is a convenient cover for a more direct attack upon the great landlords and Christian capitalists" (*The Historical Basis of Socialism*, 1883).

However, the reality is that even where the Left has purported to struggle against anti-semitism it has frequently compromised itself with anti-Jewish feelings.

For instance the most classic form of compromise is to appeal to anti-semites to fight fascism! If Hyndman could call upon anti-semites to destroy capitalism (as represented by Jews), then it is equally 'logical' to call upon anti-semites to fight fascism as a manifestation of capitalism. In 1937 the Left Book Club published a book by G. Sacks entitled *The Jewish Question*. This proclaimed:

"Hate the Jew if you must but do not allow your hatred to make you the victim of the fascist who, on the plea that he also hates the Jew, makes you his accomplice in worse crimes".

Sacks then went on to point out that what was wrong with fascism was not its attacks on the Jews but that these attacks were no guarantee of a better society, thus:

"If fascism really meant the end of the class struggle, then the humiliation and destruction of sixteen million Jews would be worthwhile, for the ultimate benefit to humanity would transcend that of a small minority of people who would scarcely be missed".

In other words the 'explanation' we have previously examined, that anti-semitism is just a series of 'mistakes', appears here in its ultimate form—namely as a total concession to anti-semitic ideology.

It would be wrong to see this form of complicity as being confined to the Stalinist and social democratic tradition around the Left Book Club. Thus the *Big Flame* editorial of September 1982 actually stated that as a socialist response to the Israeli invasion of the Lebanon **"it would be a serious error to participate in or help incite the emergence of a new wave of anti-semitism"**. The use of the word 'error' implies that the question of unleashing pogroms is merely one of tactics.

The perverse logic of this is that if anti-semitism acted as a break on the Israeli government then it would in some way be legitimate.

Even amongst those on the contemporary Left fighting fascism, there is occasionally a residual belief that Jews are somehow legitimate targets for popular hatred. For instance Ed Rosen in an article in *Peace News* (21.3.80) wrote that the Nazis used anti-semitism in order "**to break the power of a privileged Jewish economic community**". In other words, German Jews were supposedly rich and powerful—so what else could they expect? They asked for it. Indeed, we have already seen that advocating assimilation, as an answer to anti-semitism, itself rests on the assumption that there exists something actual and tangible in Jewish behaviour to which the anti-semite is merely responding.

Denying The Significance Of The Material Consequences Of Anti-Semitism

Anti-semitism is essentially a view of the world, an ideology, yet of course it does have material and atrocious consequences for Jews—witness the 'final solution'. However the Left has systematically under-estimated these material consequences as can be seen in the following examples.

The holocaust is seen as unique and without any historical precedent. Thus Nigel Ward has stated that anti-semitism did not exist in Eastern Europe until the penetration of capital in the last century (*Socialist Challenge* 2.10.82). He ignores centuries of pogroms, often sanctioned by the Orthodox churches, not the least of which were the atrocities perpetrated by Chmielnicki in 1648, when an estimated one million Jews were killed—only those accepting baptism being spared. Chmielnicki is still regarded in the Ukraine as a national hero. Similarly, Ward claims that the economic position of Jews in Western Europe was "**threatened by the development of early capitalism**" after the eleventh century. Quite apart from the historical error of an assumed Jewish economic position—the word 'threatened' suggests some minor material decline. The reality was the constant attacks on Jewish communities throughout the Crusades. These in fact were repeated shortly afterwards, during the period of the Black Death (1348-9) when Jews were blamed in popular mythology for the plague. In Germany alone, over 200 communities were exterminated whilst attacks took place on a smaller scale in Poland, Catalonia and in the north of Italy.

The other side to the perverse view that the holocaust was without precedent, is the equally perverse notion that anti-semitism disappeared with the holocaust.

Big Flame criticised those whom it claims "**hark back constantly to the history of anti-semitism**" (October 1982). In other words anti-semitism exists only in 'history'—though *Big Flame* does have the grace to admit that the 'tiniest elements' might still be around today. This is not simply reactionary. It is ahistorical and seems to be based on the liberal and social democratic myth that anti-semitism was defeated by the bourgeoisie in World War Two ... as though this were somehow seen by the Allies as a war against anti-semitism. The same politics occurred in the propaganda slogan of the Anti-Nazi League in the middle of the 1970s—"Yesterday it was the Jews, today it is the blacks", This imagined that somehow anti-black racism didn't exist at the time of pre-war fascism and that anti-semitism disappeared after, and as a result of, imperialist war.

There is another particularly insidious aspect to this constant under-estimation of anti-semitism. This is the appalling attitude by the Left that Jews will have to have one foot in the grave before it will respond. By this time, of course, it will be too late anyway. Thus Uri Davies (*Peace News* 26.1.79) was anxious to stress that

"Given the current social and political circumstances prevalent in Britain, anti-semitism does not feature as a prominent element in British racism ... Jews in Britain are not the first nor the worst victims of racism. There is no denial that in future, given certain social and political developments, racism directed against Jews could figure more prominently in British society. But this is a contingent possibility and not a present development nor a likely development in the near future".

It is not claimed that Jews are either the 'first' or the 'worst' victims of racism—and such was certainly not claimed in the article to which this was a reply. However, it is remarkable that any attempt to draw attention to the existence of anti-semitism can result in such slanderous assertions. The message appears to be that there is a queue or hierarchy of victims, and Jews will have to wait till they get to the front before anyone will take any serious political notice. Uri Davies seems to have a touching faith in the present social order. He should remember the misassessment of August Bebel who, in spite of his active opposition to anti-semitism, said in 1906 that "**It is comforting that in Germany it will never have a chance to assert a decisive influence on the life of state or society**" (quoted by Silberner in an article on German Social Democracy, *Historia Judaica* 1953).

Paradoxically, although the reality of Jewish oppression is often denied, the Left still persists in defining the Jew as a victim, but in a purely abstract way. However, this status is a surrogate one to play us off against different groups. A coarse example was the statement by Ken Livingstone, the Labour leader of the Greater London Council, that the suffering of the Irish at the hands of the English was worse than the Nazi holocaust of European Jewry. Who are statements like this supposed to help? Certainly not the Irish, who have an autonomous existence, and don't require their oppression to be validated by a league table with other groups. Neither do they help the Jewish people who are in any event being constantly told that their oppression is near the bottom of any league table.

Even when certain socialists claim that the Left has constantly fought anti-semitism, they have a totally restricted meaning of what anti-semitism is. They ignore and leave unopposed the anti-semitism of daily life on which fascism is ultimately built. For the Left, anti-semitism only seems to exist, if at all, when matters get to the stage of organised violence on a mass scale. There is absolutely no recognition of the profoundly anti-semitic culture which underlies these physical manifestations. It is as though major physical violence against Jews is an aberration which springs out of nowhere. There is a reverse side to all this. This is that anti-semitism without physical violence is deemed simply not to exist. Cultural imperialism is just ignored. As has been emphasised, the Left actively advocates assimilationism.

Denying The Significance Of Anti-Semitism As An Ideology

Central to the socialist compromise with anti-semitism, and the underestimation of its material consequences, is the failure to perceive anti-semitism as an ideological force existing in daily life. It has already been emphasised in the previous chapter how anti-semitism is wrongly seen as a series of 'mistakes' made by its proponents. There is a reverse side, though, to this analysis. Anti-semitism is viewed as a series of tactical manoeuvres by the bourgeoisie designed to mislead the workers. The conventional wisdom of the Left is that 'pogroms' are simply a diversionary tactic by the ruling class: for tactical considerations the ruling class spreads false propaganda about Jews in order to induce erroneous perceptions in the rest of the workers. It is often presented as openly as this. For instance, the *Daily Worker*, then the paper of the Communist Party, stated that anti-semitism was a vehicle **"to divert the attack upon the capitalist class as a whole into an attack upon a section of that class—the Jewish section (2.3.1933).** In similar vein and in the same period, A.M. Wall, the

Secretary of the London Trades Council, in addressing a meeting called by the Jewish People's Council in London's East End, said

"Anti-semitism has always been used for the same purpose—in order to give the masses an enemy to attack so they won't discover the real enemy" (*Jewish Chronicle* 16.10.36).

This analysis permeates every single part of the Left and can easily be found today. Thus *Big Flame* in its editorial of September 1982 explained anti-semitism by asserting that Jews are used as 'scape-goats' in periods of crisis. *Newsline*, as has already been seen, described anti-semitism as a 'trump-card' which the Tories have 'up their sleeves'. In other words, anti-semitism is viewed as some form of magic trick that is kept hidden until a period of capitalist crisis, and is then used to divide the workers—who apparently have not been previously divided by it.

This is a nonsense. People are already divided by reactionary ideas of all kinds. Anti-semitism exists in daily life. It does not need a conspiracy of the bourgeoisie to convince people. Anti-semitism may be, in Marxist terms, ruling class ideology, in that it arguably serves the interests of any particular governing class. However, it has also developed a relative and extremely strong autonomy over the last two millennia. It is genuinely believed by all classes.

One of the reasons why Nazism was so successfully expansionist right through Europe and into parts of the USSR, was because there was a large measure of popular support for the anti-semitism that was explicitly central to it. For instance, Polish Jewry was under increasing attack in the years prior to the Nazi take-over, and at least one village to which Jews returned after the Nazi defeat suffered massacres in 1945. The myth that Jews went like sheep to the slaughter is parallel to the myth that the mass of the local populace throughout Europe was either ignorant or immobilised through fear. The holocaust had popular support in many places in the occupied countries. Indeed, complicity in the 'final solution' is now a national scandal in France today.

However, just as people like G. Sacks tried to win anti-semites to the anti-fascist cause, so today some of the Left seek to deny the popular appeal of the Nazi anti-semitism. They do this by disputing the centrality of anti-semitism to Nazi theory. Thus Ed Rosen in his article in *Peace News* wrote that anti-semitism was a "sideshow" with Nazism. He also stated that **"both before and after Hitler came to power anti-semitism was never a mass movement in Germany"** and that it

occurred only "**periodically**" under the Nazis. The assumption is that the Nazis did not believe their own anti-semitic ideology. It was just a tactic—and not an important one—that could be turned on and off like a tap. This is almost the 'reductio ad absurdum' of the denial of the mass appeal of the ideology of anti-semitism as an explanation of the world. To present this ideology as a tactical 'invention' by fascist demagogues to divide the workers, simply misunderstands the depths of its roots.

Moreover, behind this lies a completely cynical amorality which exists today with respect to the struggle by Left groups against anti-black racism. The suggestion is that racism of any kind is not to be opposed for its own sake, but because it divides the class. Socialist ideologues are apparently immune to it by definition. Within the class, it is simply an 'error'. The logical conclusion of this is that Jewish people, along with everyone else, should not be fighting anti-semitism because it is anti-Jewish, but because it divides the class! Indeed, A.M. Wall actually did say that in the struggle against fascism ... **"It was necessary for the Jews not to talk of themselves as Jews"** as this was somehow divisive. There is another logical conclusion to this: where there are no Jews, or where all Jews have been massacred and there is no longer a danger of class division, then presumably anti-semitism is permissible.

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A few notes...

The word "Left" is used here to describe radical and progressive social justice movements and the individual activists who take up social justice struggles. You don't have to identify with this specific term -- it's a useful word here mainly because it's short.

The word "antisemitism" will be used here specifically to refer to oppression against Jews. (For background on why the term works this way, see p. 9.) This definition should not be used to downplay the ongoing oppression against Arab people, who, like Jews, have been labeled Semites. An alternative, more accurate term is "anti-Jewish oppression." It's useful for activists to gain experience with both terms.

A glossary is located at the end of this pamphlet.

See **footnotes** at www.thepast.info.

Dedicated to

Dr. Oscar Klier,

founder and ex-Rector of the Universidad de Congreso in Argentina, mentor and friend; whose life's dream was destroyed in 1998 by an organized antisemitic campaign, and who is still seeking justice.

and **Cherie Brown,**

whose work to analyze anti-Jewish oppression was mentioned by so many interviewees as a source of inspiration and belief in themselves, whether they had worked with her closely, or seen one article by her long ago.

FIRST EDITION, APRIL 2007. (4/24/07 revision)

This was written and researched by April Rosenblum and helped by many small donations from supportive individuals. Special thanks to Judy Rosenblum, Joel Rosenblum, Josef Kardos, all of the "If Not Together" interviewees and advisors, and dedicated readers of early drafts of "The Past;" to Kate Zaidan, whose generosity of heart and mind went beyond the call of duty in ways I won't forget; and to my friends, across many borders.

Two Jews, a crumbling empire, and a struggling resistance movement walk into a bar...

For people who have committed themselves to fundamental social change, the situation we're stuck in with antisemitism is like a bad joke.

From one side, progressive and radical activists and scholars are being attacked by organized campaigns to brand us antisemites. In particular, **it's virtually impossible to speak out critically** about Israel without being charged with antisemitism.

At the same time, we face **real currents of unchallenged anti-Jewish oppression** in our movements and the world. This endangers Jews, corrupts our political integrity, and sabotages our ability to create the effective resistance our times demand.

The Left has long procrastinated on taking on anti-Jewish oppression. In part we've **had trouble because it looks different** from the oppressions we understand, which enforce inferiority on oppressed groups to disempower them. Anti-Jewish oppression, on the other hand, can make its target look extremely powerful.

Antisemitism's job is to make ruling classes invisible. It protects ruling class power structures, diverting anger at injustice toward Jews instead. But it doesn't have to be planned out at the top. It serves the same ends, whether enshrined in law or institutionalized only in our minds; whether it's state policy, popular 'common sense,' or acts of grassroots movements like our own.

It's always a real struggle for the Left to successfully tackle oppression within its own ranks. But when we do it, **our movements gain, every time,** from the deeper understandings that emerge. To start the process this time, we need some basic information about what anti-Jewish oppression is and how to counter it. But it has to come from a perspective of justice for all people, not from opportunistic attempts to slander or censor social justice efforts that are gaining strength.



In writing this, I do not want activists to put aside the vital issues we already work on to switch to this one. No battle today for peoples' basic human rights can afford to lose our energy and commitment. **What's called for** is for us **to integrate radical analysis of anti-Jewish oppression into the work we already do.**

May the ideas here strengthen us for all the tasks ahead.

April Rosenblum

Sometimes people on the Left think the oppression of Jews stopped being a problem after the Holocaust. That's easy to think if what you know comes mostly from the U.S., where Jews have been unusually safe. To really measure whether antisemitism has power, you have to watch the global picture. **Take this small sampling:**

Anti-Jewish agitation in the halls of power:

Russia, January 2005: 20 parliament members and 500 prominent citizens asked the country's Prosecutor General to ban all Jewish organizations in Russia. Calling Judaism anti-Christian, extremist and inhumane, the group cited the medieval myth that Jews ritually murder Christian babies as fact, and said, "the whole democratic world is under financial and political control of the international Jewry."

antisemitism is still

Malaysia, October

2003: Addressing the world's Muslim leaders, prime minister

Mahathir Mohamed declared that "the Jews run this world by proxy. They get others to fight and die for them," and "have now gained control of the most powerful countries."

Iran, December 2005: President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad declared the Holocaust a myth created by Jews. When a Right-wing Danish newspaper sponsored cartoons that demeaned Islam, demonstrators in a government-supported protest proclaimed the Zionists had pushed Denmark to it. *Hamshahri*, Iran's state-funded, widest-read newspaper, sponsored an international cartoon contest to encourage debate on "alleged historical events like the Holocaust." In a conflict where Jews played no part, it was Jews who were fair game.

Street-level violence, high-level denials

France, January 2006:

Ilan Halimi, a 23 year-old Jew from a working-class suburb of Paris, was stalked and kidnapped by a gang that assumed, because he was Jewish, he would be rich. Halimi was then tortured to death over the course of three weeks. Residents from throughout the building joined in with

the gang in a game-like atmosphere of torture. Halimi's mother warned French police of several recent kidnapping attempts on local Jews, but they told her to ignore the daily threats to kill her son, and the orders to collect ransom from synagogues. After Halimi's murder, the government resisted acknowledging it as an anti-Jewish killing.

Ukraine, August 2005: Halimi's was only the most publicized of periodic street attacks on Jews. Visibly recognizable Jews were most vulnerable, with frequent attacks on rabbis near synagogues. When rabbinic student Mordechai Molozhenov was beaten, stabbed and sent into a coma by skinheads shouting anti-Jewish slurs, top Ukrainian police officials declared it a case of mere 'hooliganism,' not antisemitism. Thirty rabbis begged for action, saying, "Calls to violence against Judaism and Jews are published in the press, freely distributed and sold. On the walls of synagogues, buildings, bus stops and along the road, anti-Semitic symbols appear more and more often."

Argentina, July 2005: In Latin America's largest Jewish community, where the country's only major terror attacks have targeted Jewish sites, more news emerged about the bombing of the country's central Jewish community center in 1994, which killed 86

and injured 300. The government had resisted investigating, and police and officials are widely suspected of permitting or aiding in the bombing. In

July, the president admitted that officials had for ten years been actively destroying evidence from the case. To this day, every suspect has gone free. Not hard to imagine in a country where eleven years earlier, the military dictatorship that killed 30,000 people disproportionately targeted Jews for arrest and disappearance, and reserved special torture for Jewish prisoners.

In 2007, what is anti-Jewish oppression?

It's centuries of institutional anti-Jewish doctrines that get catalyzed in public when the mood hits. It's a perverse form of street cred: a political consensus that crosses boundaries, used by mainstream politicians and rebel forces alike who expose "the Jews" to prove they will speak truth to power. Even in the U.S., where Jews have had 200 years of exceptional physical safety, it's a background hum: be it rumors placing Jews or Israelis behind 9/11, the hit film that restaged the "Passion plays" which sparked annual Easter massacres of Jews in medieval Europe, or theories arising amid growing public disenchantment with the Iraq war that it was fought for Jewish or Israeli interests.

The point is not that the sky is falling, or that the Holocaust is on its way back; in fact, several other oppressed groups are in more imminent danger as we speak. But a status quo in which anti-Jewish theories are 'common sense' in countries around the world is a serious thing. It's not an issue the Left can afford to 'put off' until later.

The past didn't go anywhere. Antisemitism didn't somehow naturally disappear after its worst outbreak. Our whole activist lives are based on the understanding that *oppression doesn't go away by itself*. You have to take action. Whole peoples' movements have to, collectively, for a real shift to occur. When was there a mass effort by radical movements to educate ourselves and the world and overturn antisemitism?

Oh. Well...then when will there be?



"But Jews are one of the most well-off groups in this country!"

How could Jews be oppressed?!

What comes to mind when you think of oppression? Poverty? Mass imprisonment? Exploitation of a group's labor? Theft of a country's resources? If you expect every oppression to look like those things, it may be hard to spot this one. The oppression of Jews often looks very different. But when you know the signs, you can see how the oppression of Jews today is alive and working the way it has for centuries.

A DEFINITION: **Antisemitism**, or **anti-Jewish oppression**, is the system of ideas passed down through a society's institutions to enable scapegoating of Jews, and the ideological or physical targeting of Jews that results from that.

The oppression of Jews has a lot in common with the oppressions that all kinds of other people are struggling with today. Racism, classism, sexism, homophobia and all oppressions serve twin functions: they control, endanger and disempower the targeted group, and at the same time, they help to keep a wider system of exploitation and inequality running smoothly. With antisemitism, **it works like this:**

- **Jews are isolated**, especially from other exploited groups - people who might normally be expected to team up with them and defend them in times of danger.
- **Other oppressed groups** get manipulated out of identifying and fighting the sources of their exploitation, instead being encouraged to **channel their anger at Jews**.
- **Jews are targeted** for violence or other danger, whether intentionally by local rulers, or spontaneously at the grassroots of society.
- In hopes of gaining safety, Jews are **pressured to cooperate** with rulers, to silence themselves and to not rise up against the powerful, for fear of greater targeting.

In the basic ways that it plays out, antisemitism is not so different from the ways that many diaspora communities get scapegoated throughout the world.

Every oppression is also unique in some ways. In antisemitism's case, it's how the oppression was born: Early Christian leaders portrayed the Jews as the killers of Jesus, an idea that got institutionalized when, in every land Roman imperialism conquered and converted, a popular conception was spread of **Jews as the "killers of God" in league with secret, diabolical forces**. Later, as European societies modernized and grew more secular, images remained of Jews as the source of ultimate evil.

Antisemitism as we know it, with its images of special, evil Jewish power, **began as a Christian, European phenomenon**; though Jews faced mistreatment in Muslim lands, it was a more generic 2nd-class citizenship applied to all non-Muslims. However, with European colonization and inroads the Nazis made, European-style antisemitic theories have increasingly also entered Arab, Asian and other societies.

Over its history, **anti-Jewish oppression has shifted forms** between **religious, racial and political** persecution based on the times. But some beliefs have become fairly consistent:

- Jews are mysterious, or act secretly behind the scenes
- Jews have abnormal or supernatural amounts of power
- Jews are disloyal to, or seek the destruction of, the society they live in
- Jews are disproportionately the cause of harm in the world
- Jews are unlike the rest of humanity (at best); or inherently evil, or tied to the devil (at worst)



RIGHT: A classical image of Jewish power.

- Jews are wealthy or greedy
- Jews are the "brains" behind the action

In a world that's very difficult to change, antisemitism makes things seem easy to solve. It lets us fix our gaze on an imagined group of greedy, powerful Jews at the root of the world's problems, and moves our eyes right past the *systems* that actually keep injustice in place: capitalism, weapons dealers, oil companies, you name it... and the overwhelmingly *non-Jewish* ruling classes who benefit from it all.



(And what exactly are Jews, anyway?)

Jews are a globally-dispersed, multi-ethnic culture which is linked by a shared history of diaspora, and a religion (Judaism). Many Jews practice the religion; others are ethnic, **secular (=non-religious)** Jews.

Within the culture are many Jewish ethnic groups, such as: **Mizrachim** (communities of Jews who never left the Middle East after ancient Israel was destroyed by conquest, but settled in regions such as today's Iraq, Iran, Syria, etc.). **Ashkenazim** (whose ancestors made their way to Europe and founded communities there), **Sephardim** (whose ancestors formed communities in Spain and Portugal before being dispersed worldwide by the Inquisition), the **Cochin Jews** of India, **Beta Israel** of Ethiopia, **Ibo Jews** of Nigeria, and **many more**. *Within* each ethnicity lie plenty of differences as well.

Still other Jews share the religion but not the family lineage, and through conversion have become part of the Jewish people. Although orthodox religious law defines a Jew as one who has a Jewish mother or has had an orthodox conversion, many Jews reject this - believing, for instance, that a person who has some Jewish ancestors and who identifies with and cares about the culture, is a Jew.

Due to how often in history Jewish communities have had to hide their identities to escape persecution, there are also millions of people globally with unrecognized Jewish ancestry. In recent years, relative safety for Jews has allowed more open conversation about Jewish origins, and a growing number of communities are "coming out" as Jews.



Protesting forced registration in the U.S.

Often, people hear the word 'antisemitism' and they shut down. They say, "You talk about antisemitism like it's just about Jews..."

"But Arabs are Semites!"

That's right: the term 'Semite' has gotten used on both Arabs and Jews.* And **Arabs and Muslims** - plus groups within them, like Palestinians - **are targets of intense violence and oppression.**

- After 60 years of fostering dictators and repressing democratic movements in Arab countries, the U.S. now has made it clear to Arab citizens worldwide that they are subject to U.S. bombing and occupation at will. Hundreds of thousands of Iraqi civilians have been killed without the U.S. so much as counting the dead; hundreds of prisoners tortured; and the U.S. calls it a gift: democracy for the benighted Arabs.

- U.S. Arabs and Muslims since 9/11 have faced forced registration, thousands of detentions without charges, deportation, and popular violence.

- Israel continues its violent 40-year occupation of Palestinian land illegally held since 1967. As Israel today annexes even more West Bank land, the U.S. government funds it, cheered by America's powerful Christian Right. Meanwhile, Israel responds to Hizbollah by bombing Lebanon's infrastructure to pieces, killing more than 1,000 and forcing more than one million Lebanese people into exile.

- And Europe, where the legacy began, with Crusader massacres of Muslims and Jews from Europe to the Middle East. Modern times brought 150 years of European colonialism to Arab lands, and immigrants from the former colonies have suffered decades of racist violence and scapegoating in Europe. New French laws purportedly aimed at pacifying tensions have now outlawed Muslim dress in schools.

All this has worsened the burden already faced by many Arabs and Muslims who struggle with severe repression and inequality under their own governments.



Iraqi families protest and pray outside of Abu Ghraib prison.



Palestinian photographer Nasser Ishaaya holds his newborn daughter, Duma. She died after Israeli roadblocks stalled her ambulance for 3 hours.

Arabs and Muslims worldwide are experiencing a seriously dangerous time. What does this mean, for talking about the threats facing Jews?

That two oppressions can happen at the same time.

Maybe this should be obvious. But it is hard to grasp, and even harder to know how to act on.

Every oppression is different, and every oppressed group deserves our time and commitment to learning what their specific experience is like, and how we can best support their struggle for liberation.



ABOVE: Sign outside U.S. church; Florida, 2005. BELOW: Young Muslim women protest the French laws, 2004.

A term we didn't freely choose:

"Antisemitism" was a word popularized in 1879 by someone who was neither Arab nor Jewish, Wilhelm Marr. From the beginning it was chosen as a **new scientific word** to show that Jews were an inferior race (not a religion that they could convert out of), and to replace the word Jew-hatred (Judenhass) so that Jew-haters could enjoy sounding more sophisticated.

Marr and his colleagues used the term antisemitism for themselves as something to be proud of. They built an organization to advocate discrimination against Jews, the Antisemitism League. When Marr and his movement designed this term to degrade a whole people, they couldn't care less that they were using it inaccurately by designating it for Jews specifically.

Although Jews didn't get to choose the term for their oppression -and oppressed groups rarely do- over years being attacked by it, they have accepted the term to describe the historical experience of being targeted for being Jews.

There isn't really one oppression that targets all those who were labeled "Semites" in a similar way.** But there is a larger oppression that both groups experience: **Orientalism**. From the Chinese Exclusion Act and the Third Reich to the Red Scare and the War on Terror, **the "West" has historically targeted Asians, Arabs and Jews** as mysterious, dishonestly and manipulatively intelligent, overly sensual, warlike, and barbarically loyal to their 'tribe' instead of to humankind.

* It is somewhat misleading to distinguish between Arabs and Jews. Millions of Jews are of Arab (& Persian) descent, and experience the profiling other Arabs are subject to, as well as racism in the Jewish community.

** The term 'Semite' was itself an invention of European Orientalists, imposed on Jews and Arabs.

Meet the Amazing, Disappearing Oppression

Anti-Jewish oppression has been around a long time - it became government practice in Christian society about 1,700 years ago and only stopped having official Vatican approval in 1965. But **when anti-Jewish oppression isn't at its most brutal, it can be really hard to see.** How come this oppression can seem so invisible?

Partly it's that it allows Jews success. Many oppressions rely on keeping a targeted group of people poor, uneducated, designated non-white, or otherwise 'at the bottom.' Anti-Jewish oppression doesn't depend on that. Although at many times it *has* kept Jews in poverty or designated non-white, these have been "optional" features. **Because the point of anti-Jewish oppression is to keep a Jewish face in front,** so that Jews, instead of ruling classes, become the target for peoples' rage, **it works even more smoothly** when Jews are allowed some success, and can be perceived as the ones "in charge" by other oppressed groups.

Partly it's that it moves in cycles. Because it can allow Jews to 'move up,' antisemitism is cyclical: Attacks come in waves; but each time things calm down and Jews are able to blend in or succeed in society again, it gives **the appearance that antisemitism is 'over.'** In some of the most famous examples of anti-Jewish expulsion and mass murder (ie, medieval Spain or modern Germany), just prior to the attacks, Jews appeared to be one of society's most successful, comfortable, well-integrated minorities.

Internalized Oppression

Another factor that keeps anti-Jewish oppression under wraps is internalized oppression: the false negative views that members of oppressed groups come to believe about ourselves and our people, and the ways that we act in the world to accommodate our oppression as normal or acceptable, instead of challenging it.

Internalized oppression affects all oppressed groups. The form it takes depends on each group's history. **For instance, on an individual level,** Jewish people - especially men - often perceive themselves as physically weak. We were legally banned from being allowed to carry weapons for substantial periods under Christian and Muslim rule. European society excluded us from mainstream professions (farming, etc.) that strengthened the body. We were literally unable to protect ourselves and our families from mass violence and rape. Jewish people - especially women - often feel disgust about ourselves and our bodies, because, as the main racial 'Other' in Europe, European society and popular culture created its images of what was ugly and disgusting based on our Jewish faces, and its fantasies of what our bodies looked like.

Our political decisions are also affected. Historical attitudes toward Jews taught us to believe our own struggle was not worthwhile. Gentle European intellectuals, including thinkers who heavily influenced the Left, like Hegel, taught that Jews were a people 'outside' of history; prominent theories held that because Jews had no land of our own, we were a deformed group without a role to play in history and revolution.

The "Useful Jew"

For centuries, Jewish communities could be expelled from European towns at any time, for any reason and made homeless. Permission for any ruler as long as an area's rulers saw local Jews as 'useful.' Ruling classes developed and passed down strategies to make good use of Jews' vulnerability. Today, it's important for us to look for the ways these strategies are still being used.

the "middleman" - Rulers used Jews for "middlemen" jobs that put Jews in direct contact with the unpopular kings who managed to save exploited, disgruntled peasantry, shielding rulers their asses by turning the crowds against from the backlash for their unjust policies. A peasant a trusty (but disposable) Court Jew. As a might live a lifetime without seeing the nobleman king's agent, a Court Jew might gain who decided her fate; it was Jews were the face of great personal privilege, even some power at her door collecting taxes and rent, Jews counted on being able to divert mass blame and violence to the Court Jew. lence when peasants in poverty decided to resist.

the buffer zone - Since Jews needed special permission to live in European areas, many rulers took advantage of them by settling them of an area's Jews were a ruler's handy tar- in the areas most vulnerable to military attack, or get. When the economy or other conditions where restless subjects were likely to rebel. For became unbearable, Jewish homes provided the privilege of a home, Jews had to accept their ed a whole neighborhood where gentle role as the population that could be sacrificed. masses could riot and let off steam.

the "pressure valve" - Only a few might be tax collectors or Court Jew. But all of an area's Jews were a ruler's handy tar- get. When the economy or other conditions became unbearable, Jewish homes provided a whole neighborhood where gentle masses could riot and let off steam.

In addition, much developing revolutionary theory saw the groups that mattered in creating social change as the industrial laborers or peasants. But European Jews, having been excluded from many traditional trades, often didn't fit neatly into those categories.

From both directions, Jews learned we didn't matter; our only meaningful role in changing the world would be supporting *other* peoples' struggles; in making ourselves useful. All this has compounded the biggest piece of internalized antisemitism: After centuries of experiencing other people not coming to our defense when we were targeted by violence and persecution, Jews have internalized the idea that **there's no hope of getting other people to stand with us.**

I know what antisemitism can be and do, when we internalize it. Antisemitism humiliates, isolates, and silences us; mutes our loud proud Jewish energy. How can we fight injustice powerfully if we fear our power?

For Jews who struggle for social justice, that means we often stay quiet about anti-Jewish oppression: We learn to fight in support of other groups without requesting the solidarity we, ourselves, need.

For Jewish communities, it means **we lose sight of building a strategy for our liberation** by finding allies in other grassroots communities. Instead, we depend on those in power, hoping that if we are useful to them, they will protect us. At times that leads us to cooperate in the oppression of others.

- Melanie Kaye/Kantrowitz

Let's look at an example of how antisemitism works.

In the 1980s, as agribusiness gobbled up more and more profits, family farms across the Midwest failed. With farmers in desperate straits, white supremacist groups stepped in and saved the day by organizing relief. Along with aid, they provided farmers with vital information: It was "Jewish bankers" who were at fault for the farm crisis, and that's who poor, white Americans would have to target for a real end to their problems.

I couldn't help but think of this while walking the streets of Argentina, a country that collapsed after drowning in debt to the IMF, where amazing social movements have blossomed in response to crisis, but also where graffiti throughout Buenos Aires proclaims, "IMF = ☆Jews." Sometimes you want to say, "Pssst! It's not Jews... It's capitalism."



That's the nature of anti-Jewish oppression: To cover up the roots of injustice. To make people think they've figured out who's really pulling the strings. This is one of the biggest reasons why it's important for social justice movements to figure out and confront anti-Jewish oppression, for the movement's own sake: because anti-Jewish oppression is designed as a way to keep people from understanding where the power lies. And it works.

"FMI= ☆udios," July 2005.

It's also why you'll see more manifestations of anti-Jewish oppression popping up as social justice movements around the world grow stronger, and more people come to believe that radical change is necessary: People are seeking ways to liberate themselves and trying to identify who has caused the injustice around them.



LEFT: Graffiti, Buenos Aires: "Kircner Fucking Jew of the IMF." Argentina's president, is not Jewish.

And, though it's painful to acknowledge, antisemitism

The Adbusters magazine issue that ran a list of 50 prominent neo-cons and proudly exposed its investigation of which of them were Jewish, marking each Jew with a symbol.

The World Conference Against Racism in 2001, where activists, in the name of solidarity with Palestinians, handed out virulently anti-Jewish flyers and caricatures of demonic, money-hungry Jews.

The examples range from the high-profile...

If you liked COINTELPRO, you'll love the Protocols of the Elders of Zion.

Remember COINTELPRO, the US government's covert campaign to wipe out the most promising movements of the '50s, '60s and '70s? It used strategic rumors, forged letters and other tactics to successfully divide and destroy vital parts of the Black Power movement, the American Indian Movement, and others.

The Protocols of the Elders of Zion was the same thing, 60 years before. A forged text claiming to be minutes from a secret meeting of powerful Jews, it was circulated by officers of Russia's Czarist secret police, who were worried about the growing revolutionary movement in Russia. Knowing how much of the movement's grassroots momentum was coming from Jews, and knowing how easily they could divide the masses if they kindled already-existing antisemitism, police agents plagiarized another author's work of fiction and rewrote it as the imaginary proceedings of a secret Jewish planning meeting for world domination. The Protocols, in distribution since around 1903, describe their plan to take over the world through communism, capitalism, immorality - all possible angles. **In fact, it's from this document that the modern version of the myth of Jewish world domination got its start.**

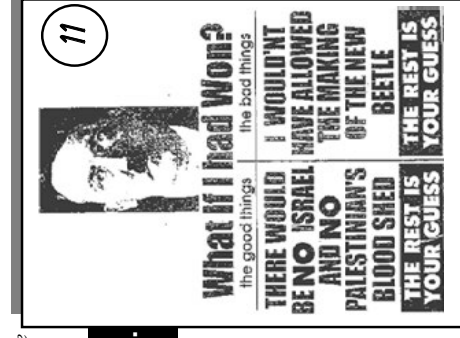
Experienced activists will caution you not to assume COINTELPRO's tactics ever ended. Well, you needn't even wonder about the Protocols. They are being put to use around the world: in some countries taught as state-sanctioned truth, but sold worldwide, and bought by record numbers of people. But **the gravest insult to activists is that this fraud**, created with the specific intent to destroy activists and movements like ourselves, **is parroted** by some of our very own colleagues, in our own spaces.

RIGHT: One of the anti-Jewish flyers that made the rounds at the U.N.'s World Conference Against Racism in Durban, Aug. '01.

is already here in our movements.

The radical U.S. artist, whose posters fill the anti-globalization movement, who created an entry about Palestine for Iran's Holocaust-denial cartoon contest.

NOTE: In this pamphlet, I have chosen, where possible, not to show peoples' faces or use activists' and organizations' names. First, many perpetuate anti-Jewish behavior unintentionally; second, our goal should be not to shift blame to individuals, but to deal with the whole pattern.



...to the everyday:

RIGHT: List published by Adbusters with the article, "Why Won't Anyone Say They Are Jewish?" (March/April 2004)

■ NORMAN POD
 ■ IRVING KRISTI
 ■ MIDGE DECTE
 ■ JEANE KIRKP
 ■ PAUL WOLFO
 ■ DOUGLAS FEI
 ■ PETER RODM
 ■ STEPHEN CAI
 ■ DONALD RUM
 ■ DICK CHENEY
 ■ I. LEWIS LIBB
 ■ ELLIOT ABRA
 ■ ZALMAY KHA
 ■ JOHN BOLTO
 ■ DOV ZAKHEI
 ■ ROBERT B. ZI
 ■ RIC HARD PER
 ■ R. JAMES WC
 ■ ELLIOT COHEN
 ■ ROBERT W. I
 ■ FRANCIS FUK
 ■ WILLIAM KRI
 ■ ROBERT KAG
 ■ GARY SCHMI
 ■ ELLEN BORK
 ■ DAVID WURN
 ■ JOSHUA MUF
 ■ REUEL MARC
 ■ MICHAEL NO
 ■ FR. RICHARD
 ■ MEYRAV WU
 ■ IRWIN STELZ
 ■ RUPERT MUR
 ■ RICHARD ME

The activist filmmaker, welcomed by KPFA radio and La Peña Cultural Center for her work on Palestinian rights, who sells videos on how Jews have designed everything from Marxism to Neo-Conservatism to covertly advance their own interests, publishes articles on Jewish exaggeration of the Holocaust, and argues for quotas to limit Jews in journalism.

The economic justice organization that shows a video which purports to explain wealth inequality -- but instead focuses largely on the Rothschilds* and paints major (gentile) financiers and whole nations as mere pawns of a devious Jewish family.

The anti-police brutality demonstration where an invited community group calls for Jews and queers to be killed, and no one speaks out -- not the demo's leaders, not any members of the audience.

The statements made in public meetings and on Indymedia, to little or no critical response, that the genocide in Darfur is an act of the Zionists, and that efforts to get people to fight against the genocide are plays by the Zionists to distract attention from Palestine.

The comments one grows numb to: how we don't get media coverage because the Jews, or the Zionists, control the media... how the D.A. who's destroying this community is, by the way, Jewish...and so on.

But the number of Leftists with real anti-Jewish beliefs is tiny. What has the bigger impact is not those individual Leftists who promote anti-Jewish beliefs, but the way that institutionally, people and organizations on the Left are so **silent, uncomfortable, defensive, and even accusatory** when someone brings concerns about antisemitism up.

It's the eye-rolls, insults or changes of subject when someone raises antisemitism in a meeting or event... The refusals to include antisemitism on the list of oppressions a coalition stands against... Our correct work to prevent war on Iran, but our dead silence about the antisemitism Iran's leaders are promoting to the world...

Critics have suggested that incidents like these on the Left mean there's a "new antisemitism" afoot.

Is all this "the new antisemitism" that some observers have made so much of?

* A Jewish family, highly prominent in banking, particularly in the 19th century.

Not really - because it's not so new.

Unfortunately, antisemitism hasn't just been a tool of elites. Radicals and resistance movements have taken part in it at many times in history. Check out a few examples:

- Some of the most important early figures in the Left perpetuated antisemitism. Anarchist forefather Pierre Proudhon's treatises on capitalism used antisemitic imagery that calls to mind fascist theory more than modern-day anarchism. Karl Marx, in an early debate against an antisemitic colleague, made use of virulently racist images of Jews, painting a detailed picture of Jews as collectively greedy, soul-less and loyal only to money,* and insulted opponents with antisemitic and racist jibes in his private writings.



- In the 1880s, leading radicals and socialist newspapers in Russia encouraged Russian peasants engaging in pogroms (mass violence against Jewish towns). *Narodnik* intellectuals wrote that anti-Jewish pogroms were a first step toward real anti-capitalist consciousness, and should be celebrated.

- In WW2, as armed Jewish resisters fought back against the Nazis and Eastern Europeans resisted the German occupation, significant numbers of gentile fighters acted out anti-Jewish oppression at the Jews fighting beside them - refusing to team up in battle, even murdering Jews as they sought hiding places in their vicinity.

- In the early 20th century, growing Arab self-determination movements (including Arab Jews) struggled to wrest independence from their European occupiers. But with Hitler's rise, key anti-colonial forces sought to bolster their anti-British resistance by bonding with the Nazi regime. Some, like Iraq's Rashid Ali al-Kaylani, integrated antisemitic rhetoric, and several Arab Jewish communities suffered massacres. Anti-colonial governments came to power, but instead of bringing the pan-Arab equality of which so many had dreamt, many used Israeli actions as an excuse to target their indigenous Jewish populations. Facing violence and scapegoating, hundreds of thousands of Jews fled - often stripped of their property and sometimes, forcibly expelled.

Nor is Leftist avoidance, denial and silence new.

For years, proud radicals dismissed charges of anti-Jewish oppression in the USSR. People raising concerns were ridiculed as bourgeois or accused of being anti-Communist propagandists. When official revelations finally started emerging in the 1950s about specially-targeted political violence and cultural repression against Jews in the Soviet Union, it shattered a generation of Jewish progressives.

* See www.pintalevid.com/marx. Marx words contrasted sharply with Jews' reality: Jews in Marx's own Prussia had still been in vast poverty as of the early 1800s. Marx himself had been baptized Christian by his Jewish parents to avoid the anti-Jewish discrimination that so often barred Jews from employment.

What's really new isn't about the Left - it's about the Right. Ever since Israel won the '67 war, and suddenly looked to the U.S. like a handy little friend in the Middle East, the Right has put on a new costume: Defenders of Israel and the Jews.

It would be, shall we say, an understatement to note that in the vast sweep of history, Jewish liberation has not exactly been a pet cause of the Right. So why have they gotten away with making fighting antisemitism into a noble Right-wing issue?

The Revolution, the Jews,

We see the Right acting appalled at antisemitism, and think of it as a Right-wing issue. We don't realize, the Right got to take it because the Left was silent.

We see the Left not taking on anti-Jewish oppression, and we assume that means it's not a significant social justice issue. **We forget that every oppressed group we talk about today** - people of color, women, queers - **got on the agenda only after they fought** like hell against the established voices of the Left **to show that their oppression mattered.** The Old Left's perspective that all struggles were second to the class struggle meant all kinds of groups were shut up, dismissed and disrespected... all in the name of unity for the revolution.



Black Panther women, on the front lines of multiple struggles.

Things have begun to change only due to the struggles and contributions of Black people asserting their autonomy and building independent liberation movements, feminists, womanists who forced the white-dominated feminist movement to face *its* racism, the American Indian Movement, Chicano/as, queers, and so many others on the New Left who, empowered by their examples, asserted rights to space, respect and support from others.

The Left's problem of silencing oppressed groups comes in part from **how Western European gentle revolutionaries** responded to **oppressed groups on their home turf.** When French Revolutionaries looked at the Jews, who had, for fourteen centuries, suffered violence, expulsions, poverty and locked ghettos, and decided to liberate them, a century of debates began in Western Europe about whether to grant equal rights to Jews.

But no matter how passionately Christian Europeans discussed freedom, equality and human rights, **they assumed that to be free, equal and human meant looking and acting like them.** Jews might be permitted their religion, but they'd be expected to trade in Jewish languages, clothing and distinctive cultures if they wanted real membership in the superior culture that was European civilization.

Because the Left hasn't taken anti-Jewish oppression on. Whenever the Left is quiet about an issue that matters to people, it leaves a vacuum for the Right to walk into. They use it to their advantage, to draw in people worried about that issue, and as moral ammunition for their crusades.

JERRY FALWELL, who preaches that the Anti-Christ is alive as a male Jew: One of many Right-wing figures who paint themselves as friends to Israel.

and the "Generous Offer"

It was a bargain no self-respecting liberation movement today would touch - and the only offer Jews had. Jews kept working to assimilate for the next 150 years, as chances at integration slipped in and out of their hands. At the same time, they sought freedom by other means: through consistently high involvement in movements for reform and revolution. From Salomica to Moscow, Baghdad, Buenos Aires and New York, Jews helped form the base of revolutionary movements. There, they were allowed to succeed and welcomed into leadership as had never occurred in jobs and universities - but it was assumed they had to transcend their petty Jewish roots. In radical circles, as among their liberal emancipators, Jews were told that their Jewish identities should be a remnant of the past.

1950s - American Jews Push Their Ethnicity Underground

In the 1930s and 40s, Jewish culture - religious and irreligious - could be seen and heard on the streets of any American city with a Jewish presence. **In the aftermath of World War II and the Holocaust,** this was to change.

The U.S., now home to the world's largest remaining Jewish population, appeared to be the safest country left. American Jews knew they'd better not rock the boat. Plus, with the G.I. Bill, many were finally making it to the middle class. In the new suburbs, where Jews lived on the inside of white society for the first time, it was fine to have a different religion, but not to seem too "ethnic." Even for atheists, synagogues became the place to go to hang out with other Jews. Jewish identity was being molded into the guise of a mere religion, with the ethnicity and culture that had nourished Jews shoved out of sight.

Then, just as American Jews were still reeling from news of the European genocide, **McCarthyism exploded.** Progressive Jews became one of the central targets. Jews around the U.S. came under suspicion at work; many lost their jobs or whole careers. In one of world history's most publicized trials, two Brooklyn Jewish Communist parents, Ethel and Julius Rosenberg, were charged and executed as spies.

The once-large and active Jewish Left was hit hard. Rifke Feinstein of the Congress of Secular Jewish Organizations remembers that when McCarthyism hit, **"whole communities of us** [Leftist, Yiddish-speaking, secular Jewish schools and organizations] **just tried to go underground, to disappear.** But when it was over and we poked

In 1903, Jews were a radical force so threatening that the Protocols were published to neutralize them. 100 years later, the Left sees Jews as privileged and apolitical at best, or Right-wing oppressors at worst. Something happened in between.

our heads up, no one else was there." Despite all this, the next generation of Jews were again disproportionately involved in justice movements. An amazing 1/2 to 2/3 of the white Civil Rights workers who went South, for instance, are estimated to have been Jews - despite Jews being 2-3% of the U.S. population. Except **now they tended not to identify as Jews**. 'Jews are a religion,' said many, 'and I'm not religious.'

Those Jewish activists, and Jews who became active in the later '60s, are now vital leaders and mentors in many of our movements. When they don't feel connected to their Jewishness, or understand anti-Jewish oppression as ongoing, it has an impact on how we all think - or don't think - about this oppression.

An Open Request From a Jew On the Left

Most historians agree that Jews have had a disproportionately large presence in almost every major social justice movement within their reach. So why, today, are Jews off in distant suburbs, seemingly more conservative all the time? The answer we on the Left usually give is, "Privilege." Jews became white, rose to middle class, and - boom! No longer directly affected, Jews lost their moral passion & abandoned their old progressive causes. The full story has much more to teach us.

Over the last few centuries, hundreds of thousands of Jews around the world have fought in social justice struggles. **We fought not only because we longed for a better, more beautiful world**, but out of deep faith that freedom for all peoples would also, finally, bring freedom and safety to Jews.

The punishment for this revolutionary activity has been shared not only by radical Jews, but by quiet Jews who tried not to make waves. We have collectively been followed around the globe by the accusation that we're subversives tearing up the societies we live in. For our real and imagined radical activities, we've been jailed, tortured, and murdered by governments and anti-Jewish tinged movements around the world.

Yet Jewish communities are filled with people who once made their home in the Left, only to back away after continual encounters there with antisemitism. We've now had three generations of Jewish activists pull back from the Left for this reason: First in the '50s, coming to terms with Soviet antisemitism; next, those discouraged by the New Left's ignorance of Jewish oppression; now, young activists starting to feel hopeless about the tolerance of anti-Jewish rhetoric in the anti-globalization, anti-war and Palestine solidarity movements.

There's still tons of Jews on the Left. But it's a lot easier to be there if you don't feel so Jewish (or if you shape your Jewish identity around criticizing bad actions by Jews); a lot harder when your Jewishness makes you notice the daily manifestations of anti-Jewish stuff around you. **Because we no longer have what so many Jews had in**

1903: the faith that our liberation was coming together with all the others. We've seen too much evidence that when the times gets confusing, we better watch our backs.

When the Left walks out on Jewish liberation, it isolates Jews from the one real strategy that can protect us from anti-Jewish targeting: Grassroots solidarity from people around the world. Without that, we turn to short-term tactics we can manage alone. That's why you'll see Jews pour their energy into building up a militarized Israel, with rights reserved for Jews. It's the half-baked protection of having somewhere to go - of being able to flee every time we need to. **But the Left also loses big.**

The Left mistakenly writes current-day Jewish oppression off as fake or minor because it's not based on poverty, skin color or colonized status. *But it's exactly that difference in our oppression that makes Jews a revolutionary force.*

Oppressed groups (including us) can often be fooled into thinking that if they just obtain surface reforms they'll be on their way to freedom: getting their group out of poverty, electing leaders who look like them, even winning a country. **But in the case of Jews, it is clear that the dangers to us will exist as long as there are 'haves' and 'have-nots' in the world at all.** That's because we're not just oppressed by the people at the top - we are continuously made vulnerable to violence and used as the 'pressure valve' whenever oppression grows worse for other groups. We can't escape the cycle of our oppression as long as systems of inequality run the world.

Jewish oppression affects all Jews, in all economic classes, and our oppression cannot be ended without fighting and transforming social injustice as a whole. What does this mean? It means that *we are a reserve of revolutionary potential -- in all classes, at all times.* If ruling classes don't have this in mind as a reason to repress Jews, they probably should.

Any Jew who comes to understand the nature of their oppression - and who realizes that the liberation of their people touches them more deeply than any clinging attachment to the status quo - **cannot help but become a radical.** Plenty of Jews haven't yet had that "click" of awareness. But a great many of us Jews already do understand this reality. One big thing that keeps us from mobilizing ourselves as a people is that we don't have the safety and backup of a Left that will defend us when anti-Jewish targeting rears its head in the world. For this, the Left needs to be brought to deeper awareness.

It will benefit social change everywhere when the Left takes up for Jewish liberation. When Jews have one direction in which we no longer have to look over our shoulders, that's when significant numbers of us will be able to stop clinging to stopgap measures and tap into our community's revolutionary potential. This will require both Jews on the Left deciding that we're worthy of solidarity and acting to get it, and gentiles facing up to their historic responsibility to end anti-Jewish oppression.



Time

A Word to Jews:

For those of us who are burned out on dealing with the Left's ignorance toward Jews, hearing our concerns affirmed can feel like a huge relief. But, as Jews, we've got problems of our own to fix. Jewish communal institutions are supposed to serve *us* - to help us maintain our identity in a culture full of pressures to assimilate, to aid our families in times of crisis, to give us ways to express our ethics together. But **we're being rep-resented by a mix of official Jewish leaders, who we don't elect, and business leaders and philanthropists**, the informal leaders whose desires shape our community's agenda because they can make or break Jewish non-profits that depend on their support.

We have a lot to correct - both in the American Jewish community, and in Israel, home to almost half of the world's Jews. We need to talk about the Occupation of the Palestinian people, the suppression of dissent about it inside the organized Jewish community, and the denials in many of our families that it's *quite that bad*. We need to expose those Jewish leaders buddying up to the Christian Right.

We need to commit ourselves to **fighting racism now in the U.S.** - even as we take pride in the active role of many Jews in the Civil Rights era. (One of the ways we could start is to help open discussions about America confronting and making reparations for the damage done by slavery. We could model for other Americans what it looks like to take this issue on, by acknowledging that there *were* Jews who participated in the transatlantic slave trade. *) We need to awaken to our own diversity, and **bring Jews of color, working-class, queer and secular Jews into the heart of our community**, where they belong.

Facing the Occupation is the greatest challenge; especially because Jews *do* face danger, and Israel is supposed to be the one thing that keeps us safe. Many of us have been trained to think the best way to protect ourselves is to go along uncritically with Israeli policy, and channel our energy into halting any criticism of it. Let us begin to confront antisemitism itself - and call unjust policies what they are, while we search for solutions that could really make us safe. **We have the right and the duty to stand up for this.**

**A segment of primarily Spanish and Portuguese Jews took part, alongside white gentiles, in the slave trade. Jews' discomfort with acknowledging this has held back our ability to build alliances of trust with African American activists, and some in those communities have channeled their disappointment into antisemitism, blaming Jews for slavery as a whole.*



Out!

A Word to White

People :
(white Jews included)

Up until now this pamphlet has assumed that we all already care about fighting racism against people of color. But the reality is, most of our organizations on the Left don't reflect that. Our organizations exist within a wider, institutionalized system of white supremacy, and ego, fear, resentment and confusion keep individual white activists from facing up to our obligation to prioritize racism as a political, and an everyday, concern.

Today the U.S. government's most high-profile target is Arab and Muslim people and nations. However, **all people of color remain under heavy attack**, from the government's willful abandonment of and even blatant aggression toward New Orleans' Black community, to the impending government plans to execute political prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal, to the militarized Mexican border, police brutality, and targeted recruitment of youth of color to be cannon-fodder for U.S. wars.

When white gentiles or white Jews have trouble confronting white privilege, it can look more attractive and less uncomfortable to make an issue of antisemitism. Sorry - it won't be possible to choose between the two. **Anti-Jewish oppression cannot be dealt with in a movement that isn't also utterly dedicated to fighting the oppression of people of color**, both in the larger world and in our movements.

A Word to Everyone:

For most activists, it is ideally already common sense that criticizing Israeli policy or the ideology of Zionism is in no sense inherently antisemitic. But **in many places outside the Left, it's not common sense.** It's vital that activists - particularly those concerned about anti-Jewish oppression - take a stand when scurrilous charges of antisemitism are targeted at progressive organizations and scholars. That includes doing hard, long-term education and communication with activists who are unfairly attacked but who do have some antisemitism to rectify (a job for gentile allies). **19**

"You're not pro-Palestinian.."

...You're antisemitic!" If you work to support Palestinian self-determination, you've heard this sort of thing countless times. Sometimes it comes from Right-wing ideologues whose aim is to shut down debate about Palestinian rights. Other times it comes from Jews who are so scared of real antisemitism that they can't tell when a criticism of Israel is not driven by hatred of Jews. Either way, it's insulting to activists and - above all - to Palestinians.

Yet instances of anti-Jewish behavior do come up in Palestine work more than many parts of the Left: **Why?** It's not because Palestinian or Arab activists are more anti-Jewish than other people. In fact, they often have a sharper eye than others for catching and interrupting anti-Jewish thinking.

One reason is simple: Any issue where Jews are very visible will bring out the antisemitism that already exists in the world. **Another is more complex:** In an issue where some Jews *do* have real power; it can get hard to tell what's an accurate observation of unjust actions they have done, and what's antisemitic thinking. For instance, if Israel gets continually allowed to flout international law; if pro-Palestine activists suffer censorship or are ruled out for funding or jobs because of controversy this issue raises, some activists start to mistake Jews for a vast powerful network, or a conspiracy that calls all the shots.

A third problem arises from normal activist tactics. We often fight campaigns by making our opponents look as bad as possible. The Left doesn't have tons of money, or muscle on Capitol Hill. One of the strengths we do have is moral power to make the other side look bad enough that the world shames them into reversing their policy. In campaigns for AIDS funding, fair housing, prison rights, you name it, one of our main tactics is to make our opponents out to be **cold, cruel and inhuman.**

But when you use tactics like that on a group that's historically been portrayed as evil and inhuman, where that image has been used for centuries as a tool to incite mass violence against them, **you tap into a larger historical power.** A power that's bigger than the Left, and has its own momentum.

At the very birth of the Palestinians' catastrophe lies antisemitism, the force that created the Jewish search for a modern state. And building a world that fights the oppression of Jews, and all humans, is the ultimate solution to today's condition, in which Jews cling so hard to a tiny place of safety for themselves at the cost of oppressing Palestinians. **Yet Palestinians don't have the luxury** of waiting for antisemitism to be eradicated to struggle for their own freedom. So let's guarantee the short-term battle supports the long-term goals, by consciously building safeguards to Jews into tactics for Palestinian liberation.

It's absolutely possible to critique Israel without being antisemitic - but it's not automatic. You keep things clear when you **describe accurately and specifically**

what you oppose, and critique actions and policy as unjust -- not people or nations as evil. And when people suggest that they see targeting of Jews in something you're saying or doing, don't shoot them down; seek out useful information in what they're saying that might help you give your message even more clarity and impact.

Clear criticisms of Israeli policy & its backers	Antisemitic ideas often repeated by activists with no anti-Jewish intentions	Lines emerging directly from neo-nazi & antisemitic organizations
Israel has a repeated & ongoing record of human rights offenses.	"Israel is a worse humans rights violator than most or all other countries."	"Israel is the root of the world's problems."
Many Israeli soldiers justify their actions toward Palestinians by saying they're 'just following orders.'	"Israelis are just like Nazis."	"Israel is worse than the Nazis." "This wouldn't have happened if the Nazis were successful," etc.
The Zionist movement has included elements of racism from its early days, such as the claim that Palestine was "a land without a people for a people without a land." Major Zionist factions have implemented conscious, intentional racist policy. Regardless of individual Zionists' intentions, <i>Zionism as a whole has had racist & oppressive results</i> for the Palestinian people.	"Zionism is racism."	"The Zionist conspiracy is behind this." "Zionism is the root of the world's problems today," etc.
AIPAC,* weapons lobbies & others give U.S. politicians incentives to push anti-Palestinian policies, & attempt to silence & intimidate both Jews & non-Jews who raise alternatives.	"The 'Israel Lobby' is what is pushing America off track & away from its true interests, or caused us to go to war."	"Israel / The Zionists / The Jews / The Jewish Lobby... is controlling the U.S. / the world."
In this issue, as in so many, the corporate media provide one-dimensional, sensationalized coverage, usually biased toward whatever side the U.S. government is backing - when they cover it at all.	"The media, controlled by Zionists, never talks about the plight of the Palestinians."	"Zionist control of the media is part of a vast web of Zionist power over banks & world governments, in their conspiracy to rule over humanity."
Lack of a resolution between Israel & Palestine is one of several major regional conflicts preventing justice & stability in the Middle East. Outside powers such as the U.S. & Europe have played & play a role in sparking & perpetuating these conflicts.	"The Israel-Palestine conflict is the root of violence & instability in the Middle East / of America's bad relationship with Arab countries."	"Everything would be better if Israel was destroyed," etc.

* American Israel Public Affairs Committee, a major Right-wing, pro-Israeli expansionism lobby group.

It's true - everything in Column 1 takes longer to say, and is less catchy. But when you choose to make accurate, specific criticisms of Israeli policy, you do your small part to decrease the likelihood that I will be killed in a synagogue by someone who, misguided by anti-Jewish oppression, thought they would be helping Palestine.

it was a good try, but time to rethink.

on targeting "Zionism"

A lot of activists work to avoid anti-Jewish oppression, and to make a **distinction between Jewish people and Israeli misdeeds**, by targeting their comments at "Zionists," not Jews, and "Zionism," not Judaism or Jewish culture. Unfortunately, this shortcut doesn't work.

First, it backfires because major, organized antisemitic movements also use the term, for the opposite purpose: to spread anti-Jewish ideology without looking so bad. That's why 2005's international conference, "Zionism As the Biggest Threat to Modern Civilization" was co-chaired by neo-nazi politician David Duke. For many antisemitic groups, "Zionists" are the demonic Jews controlling the world, Protocols-style; and "Zionism" is the general body of evil-doing by Jews. Because we activists are only suspicious of Jew-bashing, not attacks on "Zionists," their antisemitic imagery makes its way right into our circles. Second, because it **replaces one one-dimensional image of a 'bad guy' with another**. It bypasses the actual work of avoiding anti-Jewish oppression: reshaping how we think and talk about Jews and Israelis to see them as 3-dimensional human beings, capable of wrongdoing like any others. **Finally**, using the term "Zionists" **doesn't protect Jews**. It just makes people who bomb Jewish schools, synagogues, etc., call the people they're killing Zionists.

Principled anti-Zionism has little to do with the fake "Zionism" that antisemites like Duke attack. There are many rational reasons why some people are opposed to the philosophy that there should be a Jewish state, just as lots of rational reasons motivate others to believe a Jewish state is necessary.*

Zionism is not an insult. It's not a **catch phrase, a code word for racism or imperialism**, or the name for unpleasant things done by Jews. **It's a nationalism**, and, as often happens with nationalisms, it has not fully liberated its people and has oppressed others in the process. It stands for a huge range of beliefs and believers: from the Right-wing racist who wants to 'transfer' (forcibly expel) all Palestinians, to the person who wants Jews to have a self-determined state in the only land to which Jewish diaspora ethnicities around the world have shared a cultural tie, to the person who wants to keep living as a Jew in the "Land of Israel" but is open to living in a binational, Palestinian-Jewish state.

There's no shame in thinking critically toward Zionism. But in a world of unresolved antisemitism, there's also no getting out of fighting this oppression head on.

* For instance: An anti-Zionist might rationally oppose Zionists' having consciously established a state where they did, knowing that this would lead to dispossessing the Palestinian people. A Zionist might observe that Jews' vulnerability was linked to being a permanently small minority and support Jews having one place where they are the governing majority.



Sign, 9/24/05 anti-war mobilization, D.C.

innoculate your Palestine work against antisemitism

- **If you're white, understand:** When you take no action to stop anti-Jewish patterns in our movements, **you set Palestinians, Arabs and Muslims up to take the fall**. Though historic Left mistreatment of Jews has largely been a legacy of white, European/American movements, Arabs and Muslims are the ones who today get publicly scapegoated for charges of Left antisemitism. Don't let them pay the price. Take the struggle on.

- **Beware of saying Israel is the only country doing anything, or the worst case of any given injustice;** it's often not true, and it gets used to justify global violence against Jews. **Know and speak about countries** guilty of similar offenses. This not only guard against danger to Jews; it brings a **global perspective that strengthens the fights of all peoples**, even while we focus on Palestinians.

- **Be specific** about the injustice you're talking about. For instance, don't jump into generalizations like "Israelis are like Nazis." Focus on the original thought that led there; ie, "Israeli policies like [blank] treat Palestinians as if they're not human."

- Remember that, **as with every oppression**, it's possible to spread antisemitic ideas without necessarily harboring any ill will toward Jews. **Stay open** to re-evaluating tactics, even though you know your intentions are positive and just.

- **Don't casually use** one-dimensional, caricatured portrayals of cruel Israelis. Rather than sensationalizing Israelis, and compounding anti-Jewish oppression in a world that already paints Jews as evil, help people **see** Palestinians: real people, suffering daily injustice, both mundane and extreme, and deserving of global attention.

- **At the center of Palestinians' struggle for freedom and human dignity** is their human and legal **Right to Return** to their land. But there are real reasons why Jews around the world fear losing majority control of Israel. (See p. 25.) If you fight for the Right to Return, understand the **implications it could have for Jews** in a world where anti-Jewish oppression has not been solved. **Consider what role** you can play in bringing about global safety for Jewish people.

- **If people use opposition to the term 'antisemitism'** to shut down discussion, by all means, **speak of anti-Jewish oppression**. But **speak of it**. Don't let fellow activists silence conversation about antisemitism by complaining that the word is wrong, and blaming Jews for the problem. (See page 6.)

Above all, remember:

Taking care to resist antisemitism is not about walking on eggshells or acquiescing to pressure. It's about making a **greater commitment to refusing to take part in oppression** - and building movements that can win.

A final word about this twisty subject...

The foundation of Israel, and Israel's ongoing policies, have contributed to massive suffering for the Palestinian people.

And the country's actions, as well as its alliance with the U.S., fuel anger around the world at Israel.

But Israel did not, and does not, cause antisemitism.

Being angry at or critical of the actions of a country is different from buying into racist mythologies about a people. **If there are people who believe not only that Israel acts unjustly, but that Jews control the world or that the Holocaust never happened, there are deeper anti-Jewish influences at work.** Israel doesn't indoctrinate people in Kiev, Denver or Paris to think that Jews are all rich, in league with the devil, or that they bake with children's blood. Israel doesn't make New York, Damascus and Mexico City vendors sell the Protocols, or fund local movie industries to televise them. It doesn't make Americans (activists included) so unaware of the world beyond our borders that we believe Israel is the only country committing the violations it has. It doesn't need to; because long before Israel or Zionism existed, the targeting of Jews was well entrenched in these lands.

One problematic way this occurs on the Left is when activists teach that things for Jews in Arab lands were fine until Israel came along. Jews *did* live in greater harmony in Arab lands than in Europe. But as religious minorities, they also experienced oppression which could range from mild, routine degradation to violent mob attacks. This legacy was compounded by colonizing regimes, who brought European antisemitic theories into the region. But the story was different in each country and each time; and in the hearts of many of the Jews who lived there, Arab culture will always remain home.

When Americans beat up Arabs and Sikhs after 9/11, it wasn't 'because of' what Saudi hijackers did; it was because of our society's pre-existing bigotry and lust for a scapegoat. Likewise, when Arab governments took advantage of growing conflict with Zionism and Israel to seize Jews' homes and savings and expel them; when people beat and murdered Jews in the streets in Syria and Aden in 1947, Libya in 1967, and elsewhere, it wasn't 'because of' Israel. So **don't tell us** that the global attacks on Jews will end when Israel stops what it's doing. Israel needs to stop oppressing the Palestinians because it's wrong - no further reason is needed. But when it does, anti-Jewish oppression will still be here, because it didn't start in '48. If it's going to end, you're going to have to help end it.

24



credit: Goran Tomasevic

A Palestinian girl searches for her family's belongings in the rubble of their home after the Israeli invasion of Jenin.

Why do many Jews fight so hard against the Right to Return? (See p. 23.)

The fact that many Jews fiercely oppose the Palestinian Right to Return, and the related vision of a peaceful bi-national state, befuddles many activists, who see a shared democracy where both Jews and Palestinians receive respect as one of the most hopeful and just solutions imaginable. But, along with Israel's denials of its responsibility for the refugee crisis, there is a second, and deeper issue involved: Jews have had convincing experiences that lacking a place to run to can have life-or-death consequences.

In 1938, 32 nations met in Evian-les-Bains, France to discuss whether to allow European Jews, desperate to flee the Nazis, into their countries. 31 of them - all but the Dominican Republic - refused. Evian was an awful culmination of centuries of Jews' attempts to flee forced conversion, violence and expulsion; to which Jews were vulnerable, partly because as a small diaspora they were minorities in every place, at the mercy of elites. Many fear that if Palestinians achieve Return inside Israel's 1948 borders, win true democratic rights and grow to be a majority, it might end Jewish control over immigration to Israel, which many see as their safeguard in case of an anti-Jewish resurgence.

No matter how frightening a physical implementation of Return may sound, Jews must take the fundamental step to acknowledge Palestinians' human Right to Return.

Deconstructing common myths

It helps to get familiar with basic anti-Jewish myths. How many activists know, when they see images of Sharon eating babies, Israeli vampires, or protest signs picturing "Palestinian baby-meal," "slaughtered with American \$ according to Jewish rites," that they're viewing an anti-semitic myth, the Blood Libel, in action since medieval times? Here are a few common myths.



Controlling the World / the Government

The idea that Jews control the government or the world began with traditional Church authorities passing down images of Jews as a group in league with the Devil, with special powers from the Devil that gave them evil control over earthly events. Christian rulers furthered the myth that Jews were in control, by sticking Jews in the 'face of power' roles with which everyday peasants interacted (ie, tax collectors).

As European culture grew more secular, the idea was modernized, and brought to a new level of worldwide fame in the form of 1903's Protocols of the Elders of Zion forgery. During the Nazi years, this European propaganda was imported to non-European cultures, such as Arab countries, where oppression of Jews had previously been based *not* on myths of Jewish world power, but on simpler notions that Jews ought to stay in their place as 2nd-class citizens.

Left Examples: Activists expanding criticism of the 'Israel Lobby' to present Israel as the 'tail wagging the dog' that controls U.S. policy. The grassroots news websites and protestors' signs that joined in spreading false internet rumors of an Ariel Sharon quote on Israeli radio: "We, the Jewish people control America, and the Americans know it."

25



Sign, Feb. '03 anti-war protest, S.F.

Causing the Wars /

Somebody should write a pamphlet for activists just about how to respond when Jews get blamed for wars - it happens so regularly you can set your watch to it. Jews were the default "outsider" group in so many societies; always handy to target when things went wrong. What's more, Jews were treated so badly in many of these societies, it was usually easy for people to imagine that the Jews wished another country would take over and change their conditions. We can see this as early as 711, when the Muslim Moors conquered Spain. Christian Spaniards thereafter claimed the Jews had invited the Moors in.

In the past century alone we've had the 1894 Dreyfus Affair (high officers framed a Jewish captain for treason, and France exploded with anti-Jewish vitriol); the 1918 accusations by Germans that they had lost the World War because the country's Jews had conspired a "**stab in the back**" against Germany; populist agita

Causing the Loss of Wars

tion before WW II in the U.S. and after it in Europe, blaming Jews for bringing them into "**the Jews' war**" (in places like Poland, Holocaust survivors were murdered as they left the camps by Poles who blamed them for the war); 1950s anti-Communism, which drew attention to Jewish progressives as a suspected "**fifth column**" seeking America's downfall to the Reds, and executed the Rosenbergs for supposedly giving away 'the Bomb' to the Soviets; Arab Jews being treated as an **enemy within** by their governments; and everywhere, suspected of "**dual loyalties**." Jews have so often been accused of **shirking** wartime duty that Jews in many countries maintain committees which defend Jewish veterans and keep records of the names and numbers of Jews who served and died in the line of duty, knowing they will literally need to prove their sacrifice next time the accusations return.

Left Example: Claims that the U.S. wouldn't be in Iraq if it weren't for a nefarious Jewish influence (the state of Israel and its lobby controlling us, a clique of Jewish neo-cons who've gotten the nation all off course, etc.). Anyone who's been paying attention to Bush's own vision, or to U.S. foreign policy since 1898, could have guessed we'd be trying to score one for the empire -- with or without those neo-cons. As always, the big winner from these accusations is the corrupt government at fault for the war.

With all the time they save by not running the world, what do Jews think about?

as **mixed** Jews, wanting to honor *all* sides of our heritage.

as **secular** Jews, fighting assumptions that Jewishness and Judaism are one and the same.

as **Jews of color**, confronting Ashkenazi dominance in Jewish society, organizing ourselves to get just treatment, and preserving and cherishing our own cultures.

as **questioning** Jews, asking ourselves: am I a secular Jew, a synagogue Jew - or both?

26

as **Israeli** Jews, facing everyday economic worries, decisions about army service; and finding words to explain to outsiders that Israel isn't just a bad occupier or someone's imaginary, idealized holy land, but the real place we come from... with all its shades of gray.

as **Jews living outside of large Jewish communities**, figuring out how to even find other Jews - and gaining courage to 'come out' as Jews at work & school, when the reactions may not always be positive

as **working class** Jews, fighting our invisibility in the American Jewish community (and, among non-Jews, in general)

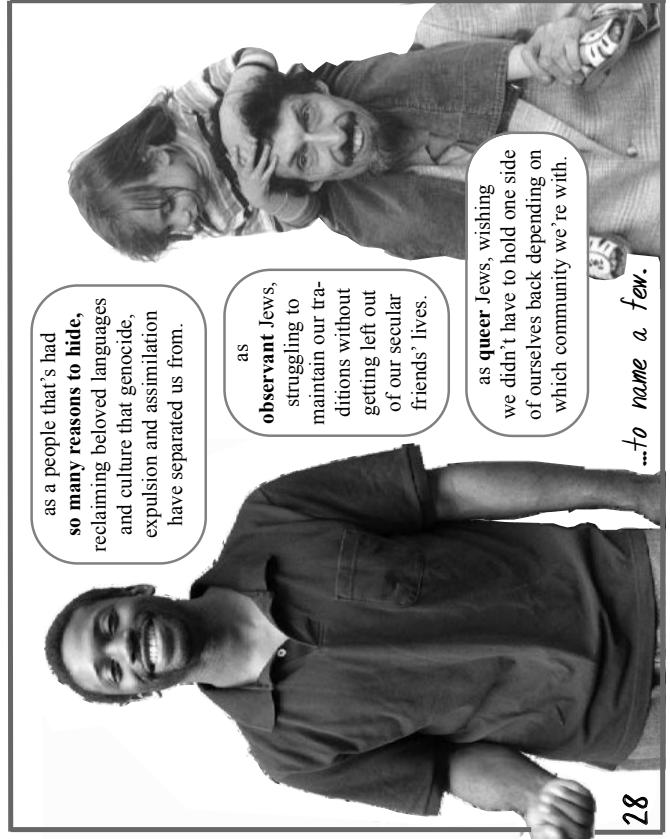
27

Controlling the Banks

Many myths, such as that Jews control the media, the banks and Hollywood, came from the concentration of Jews in certain fields due to institutional discrimination. For centuries in Christian empires, Jews were not legally permitted in mainstream professions. They often survived by working at trades forbidden to, or considered 'beneath' Christians - like professional acting, or collecting taxes or rent. One such job was moneylending. Although some Jews were moneylenders and benefited from economic privilege, most remained poor, and the classic dynamic of anti-Jewish oppression went on: Jews who got to work did so at the price of everyday exposure to the violence and anger of poor peasants in debt; rulers got to use them as scapegoats in times of economic instability. The attacks that got channeled toward Jews were absorbed by the few money-lenders and the poverty-stricken majority alike.



Learn more: It gets easier to identify and reject antisemitism when you recognize the classic myths and their history. Take time to educate yourself on myths such as: that Jews control Hollywood or the media, that Jews killed Jesus, that Jews kill and/or eat gentle children (the Blood Libel), that Jews were at fault for the creation of racism (the 'Hamitic curse' charge), and more.



28

Tips for every activist

- **Whether you're a Palestine activist or not,** 1) Help activists around you follow the tips from p. 19. 2) **Don't think using the word "Zionist"** instead of "Jew" means you've avoided antisemitism. 3) When people raise talk of antisemitism, **train your mind to not go automatically to the Israel/Palestine conflict;** consider the issue in its own right. Both are separate, vital issues that demand our concern.
- **Fighting anti-Jewish oppression does not equal organizing against bad things Jews do** and saying that will help end hatred of Jews. It means actively combating both anti-Jewish actions and beliefs, whether they come from overtly antisemitic movements or groups you think are cool and want to team up with politically.
- Mainstream Jews often feel more entitled than they should to accuse your work of antisemitism. But many **radical Jews** have the opposite problem: **We tend to doubt and dismiss ourselves** when we notice anti-Jewish patterns happening. This holds our whole movements back. Help us out: **Give us the space** all oppressed groups should get, by **letting us err on the side of noticing antisemitism "too much"** as we figure it out.
- **Understand that Jewishness** is a cultural identity, an ethnic identity and a religious (or non-religious) identity. **Understand that racism plays a key part** in anti-Jewish oppression, even if you retain the word racism to refer to people of color.
- **Learn about and support Jews of color.** Educate yourself about **global Jewish communities and histories**, and speak out in your organizing to ensure that the voices of Jews of color are heard -- including the Jews of color who are sitting in front of you, asking you to listen. Don't assume that the Jew you're speaking to is Ashkenazi, or that the person of color you're speaking to is not Jewish.
- **In antiracism trainings,** acknowledge that antisemitism has historically been a major form of racism, and can still take the form of racism, as when people characterize Jews as sub-human or demonic. Don't assume that someone bringing up antisemitism is trying to avoid focusing on racism. **Taking a moment to affirm** the importance of radical organizing against antisemitism strengthens your analysis, and allows you to maintain your chosen focus on racism against people of color.
- **Have a plan** in your organizations **for what happens when** it appears **something antisemitic** (or racist, homophobic, etc.) **has been said or done.** What will be said and who will say it? How will people check in with the Jews present later to support them and/or correct harm done? Be serious about carrying it out every time.
- Jewish internalized oppression is intense, and it's often invisible to those of us who are most affected by it, or whose ancestors were deeply impacted by it. **Don't tokenize Jews by choosing ones who don't think antisemitism is a big deal to represent the Jewish perspective** in your events.
- **Recognize that either antisemitism will be fought and ended by the Left,** by our grassroots justice & liberation movements, or it will not be ended. **No matter what the Right pretends to care about, it is not in the Right's interest to end anti-Jewish oppression. Stop waiting for someone else to do it.** 29

What
will happen if
our movements
don't act?

If we remain passive about anti-Jewish actions in our ranks and the world, we will put **Jews in increased danger**. That's all the reason we need to change.

In the larger world, our passivity will also help to strengthen **white supremacy** - its organized movements, and the whole culture that sees whites as good and pure, and Others (like people of color and Jews) as the ones messing everything up. We'll help Europe evade responsibility for the damage done by **colonialism**, as Europeans blame Israel for anti-Western feelings and instability around the world. We'll aid **reactionary regimes and movements** everywhere that seek to boost themselves by blaming their own actions on Israel, as the President of Sudan does when he claims the Darfur genocide is a hoax perpetrated by Israel.

"UNCLE SHAM WANTS You": A Neo-Nazi anti-war poster uses Jewish-control mythology to depolarize the Iraq war. Seen in New York City, 11/06.



Inside our movements, overlooking attacks on Jews will lure us into **alliances with Far Right** movements and visions. We will **lose effectiveness** at challenging the global systems we're up against, as our perceptions of new social developments are clouded by misjudgments of who are our allies and enemies. New activists, and people on the edges of our movements, will be allowed to hold onto **wrong analyses** of who has power in this world and where problems stem from.

We will **lose valuable activists** in our ranks who are uncomfortable with the targeting of Jews they're noticing around them. And on the most every-day level, we'll continue to enable **jerk-dominance** of our movements, attracting the sorts of activist leaders who used to get a kick out of making rude comments about people of color, and now enjoy getting to shock everyone with anti-Jewish declarations, without getting 'caught.'

Most immediately, we'll leave Jews without hopes for solidarity, for alternative means of self-defense. As Jews flounder for ways to protect themselves, we'll continue to push them into the waiting arms of the Right, with its visions of empire and Armageddon. **That's dangerous to Palestinians, to Jews, and to the world.**

Nov. '03: The bloody prayer shawl of a Jewish victim in the simultaneous bombing of Istanbul's two most active synagogues. 27 people were killed and 300 injured by bombs set to go off during services.

But there's another future in our grasp. One that follows in the footsteps of the many radicals who *have* stood up against antisemitism, like French Socialist Jean Jaures and lesbian feminist Black radical Barbara Smith.

But
what if
we succeed
in this?

Clearsighted activists for generations have understood that **there's a bonus that comes from taking this struggle on**: Antisemitism is a warning sign that tells us we're not giving people a clear answer about where injustice originates, and what would solve it. Fighting it sharpens our analysis and forces us to get better at articulating our beliefs to a mass audience. If we say, 'The problems in the world do not come from the Jews,' it forces us to answer: What *do* they come from? **When the Left takes on antisemitism, it will be strength training** to help us gain the abilities we need to reshape the world.

A truly radical remaking of the world will include Jewish liberation: the condition in which Jews in every place in the world will live free from fear, free from threat of being targeted as Jews, and where our safety never depends on pleasing or remaining useful to any 'side', be it powerful elites or peoples' movements. In which we will live free of pressure (from ourselves or others) to blend in or assimilate; unashamed of our Jewish looks, languages, rituals and distinctive behaviors; and Jewish culture will be nurtured in all its diversity. In which those Jews who wish to will be able to participate in collective self-determination as a people, and/or live in autonomous Jewish space. In which Jews will be capable of defending ourselves, but will be defended and shown solidarity by groups around the world.

True Jewish liberation requires the commitment and action of both Jews and non-Jews worldwide, and is incompatible with the oppression of any other group: because no human group is expendable in revolutionary change.

When the Left finally gets that - not just about Jews but about liberation itself - then our efforts will truly make another world possible. Because the Left is not a mercenary army: We're not just in this to win, choosing sides and then fighting blindly for whatever side we're on. We're in this to make a different world. And taking on anti-Jewish oppression is the act of building a Left not confined to reaction, but propelled by a deeper vision of a world we would actually want to *live* in.

See you there!

antisemitism - The system of ideas passed down through a society's institutions to enable scapegoating of Jews, and the ideological or physical targeting of Jews that results from that. The term was first popularized in 1879 by German anti-Jewish racists who sought to build specific movements against Jews as an inherently inferior and threatening race (versus a religion, which could be escaped through conversion). **For how it works, see p. 4-5.**

Ashkenazi - Refers to descendants of Jews who settled in Europe, in countries such as Russia, Poland, Germany, Hungary and others, and shared common cultural features such as Yiddish language. Ashkenazi Jews currently make up the majority of Jews in the U.S., Latin America and Canada.

Blood Libel - The anti-Jewish myth, beginning in the 1100s, that Jews seek out and kill non-Jewish children. In its classic form, it accuses Jewish communities of seeking the blood of gentiles to use in Jewish religious rituals; for instance, as an ingredient in Passover matzah.

diaspora - refers to the breaking up and separating of the members of a people, and the geographically scattered communities that they create in the course of their travels.

gentile - (noun) A non-Jewish person; (adjective) non-Jewish. [From the Latin *gens*, clan.]

internalized oppression - The effects of a group's oppression and dehumanization, as manifested within the oppressed group itself, in its individuals or its communities. A Jew coping with internalized oppression might believe stereotypes about Jews, point undeserved blame at other Jews, feel shame or disgust at parts of their looks or behavior that they think of as Jewish, feel general low self-esteem, find it hard to take a stand against antisemitism, or feel a desire to emphasize to others how different or separate they are from other Jews. **See p. 6.**

Jews - A globally-dispersed, multi-ethnic culture linked by a religion, Judaism. Many Jews practice the religion; others are ethnic, *secular* Jews. **See full definition on page 5.**

Jewish liberation - The condition in which Jews in every place in the world will live free from fear, free from threat of being targeted as Jews, and where our safety never depends on pleasing or remaining useful to any 'side', be it powerful elites or peoples' movements. In which we will live without pressure (from ourselves or others) to blend in or assimilate, unashamed of our Jewish looks, languages, rituals and distinctive behaviors, and Jewish culture will be nurtured in all its diversity. In which Jews will be capable of defending ourselves, but will be defended and shown solidarity by groups around the world. In which those Jews who wish to will be able to participate in collective self-determination as a people, and/or live in autonomous Jewish space. True Jewish liberation requires the commitment and action of both Jews and non-Jews around the world, and is incompatible with the oppression of any other group.

Jews of color - Jews and Jewish communities who are excluded from white privilege generally, and/or from Ashkenazi privilege in the Jewish community. Includes Mizrahi Jews, Sephardi Jews, Jews from other non-European communities worldwide, people of color who have embraced Judaism, and Jews of mixed heritage whose ancestry includes Jews of color. Jews of color currently make up the majority of Jews in the state of Israel.

the Left / Leftist - The diverse spectrum of social change movements, organizations and individual activists who seek to transform society into one which distributes resources justly, and lacks hierarchies of race, gender, religion, etc.

Mizrahi - Refers to Jews descended from the longest continuous Jewish communities in the world, founded after the destruction of ancient Israel, in countries such as today's Iraq, Iran, Yemen, Syria and Lebanon, and spoke languages such as Judeo-Arabic and Judeo-Persian.

Old Left - Refers to the mass movements and party organizations that flourished into the 1930s and '40s in the U.S. and were greatly wounded by McCarthyism. Old Left groups largely defined themselves in relation to European movements and theories, as opposed to the New Left which emerged after McCarthyism and Civil Rights, and took particular inspiration from global anticolonial struggles.

Orientalism - A discourse that portrays peoples and cultures of "the East" (Arabs and Jews, East Asians, South Asians, etc.) as essentially different from Europeans. Frequent themes include portraying them as dishonestly or manipulatively intelligent, overly sensual, warlike, mysterious, having 'primitive' tribal loyalties, etc. Also the term for classical Western study of "Oriental" cultures.

pogrom - A mass action of planned or spontaneous violence and property destruction directed against a marginalized community. The word was first widely used to describe government-condoned mob attacks on East-European Jewish towns.

Protocols of [the Elders of] Zion - A forgery written around 1897, first published in 1903, and used by Czarist secret police for years as a tool to inspire mass mistrust of the growing revolutionary movement and modernization. The text presents itself as minutes of a secret meeting of world Jewish leaders who lay out their plans to use both capitalism and anti-capitalist revolution to seize control of the world. A continual bestseller, it is often summarized or cited by antisemitic political leaders and social movements.

the Rosenbergs - Ethel & Julius, z"l. Jewish Communist couple executed in 1953 based on largely fabricated evidence that they gave nuclear secrets to the USSR. The case, which targeted their politics, was highly publicized to inspire fear and hysteria against Leftists.

secular - Non-religious.

Semite / Semitic - Linguistic term created by European Orientalists for the language family that includes Arabic, Amharic, Hebrew, Tigrinya, Maltese, Aramaic and others, which was then imposed on groups like Arabs and Jews to categorize them as a separate race.

Sephardi - Refers to the worldwide descendants of Spanish and Portuguese Jews who, when made refugees by the Inquisition, fled to, and founded new communities in, places such as North Africa, Turkey, the Americas, and parts of Europe. Examples of Sephardic languages are Judezmo/Ladino and Hakitia.

Zionism - One form of Jewish nationalism, based on the philosophy that a Jewish state (or cultural center, in some forms of Zionism) ought to exist, as a refuge for Jews and/or to 'normalize' Jewish existence, and that it should exist on or within the area of ancient Israel.

z"l - Abbreviation for *zichrono* (or *zichrona*) / *bracha*: May their memory be for a blessing. Saying used in Jewish custom to commemorate the lives of loved ones.



Ilan Halimi, z"l, killed at 23. Paris, Jan. '06.

Further Resources:

Note: Second dates indicate most recent editions.

*= Good starters for a basic collection

Anti-Jewish oppression's history: *The Devil and the Jews* by Joshua Trachtenberg (1944/1984); *Toward the Final Solution: A History of European Racism* by George Mosse (1985); *Protocols of Zion* [documentary] by Marc Levin (2005); *Constantine's Sword* by James Carroll (2001); *Russian Antisemitism, Pamyat, and the Demonology of Zionism*, by William Korey (1995); **"The Longest Hatred,"* in *New Internationalist* 372 (2004) [See links]; *Antisemitism in America*, by Leonard Dinnerstein (1994/1995)

Jewish history: *A Historical Atlas of the Jewish People*, Eli Barnavi, ed. (1992/2002); **The Jew in the Modern World: A Documentary History*, Paul Mendes-Flohr & Jehuda Reinharz, eds. (1980/1995); *Power and Powerlessness in Jewish History*, by David Biale (1986); *Torn at the Roots: The Crisis of Jewish Liberalism in Postwar America*, by Michael Staub (2002); www.newjewishagenda.org, [website] by Emily Nepon (2006); **The Holocaust in American Life*, by Peter Novick (1999); **Jewish Issues in Multiculturalism: A Handbook for Clinicians and Educators*, by Peter Langman (1999);

Radicals on antisemitism: "That's Funny, You Don't Look Anti-Semitic: An anti-racist analysis of left anti-semitism," by Steve Cohen (1984/2005) [See links]; **"The Cyclical Nature of Jewish Oppression,"* [skit] by Progressives Challenging Anti-Semitism Among Progressives (1998) [See links]; **Yours in Struggle: Three Feminist Perspectives on Anti-Semitism and Racism*, by Elly Bulkin, Minnie Bruce Pratt & Barbara Smith (1984/1991); "Anti-Semitism," [speech] by Cherie Brown (2004) [See links]; *The Socialism of Fools: Anti-Semitism On the Left*, by Michael Lerner (1992); *Reframing Anti-Semitism: Alternative Jewish Perspectives*, Jewish Voice for Peace, eds. (2004/6th ed.)

Jewish identity & liberation: **Chutzpah: A Jewish Liberation Anthology*, Steven Lubet & the Chutzpah Collective, eds. (1977) ; **The Flying Camel: Essays on Identity by Women of North African and Middle Eastern Jewish Heritage*, Loolwa Khazzoom, ed. (2003); **The Issue is Power: Essays on Women, Jews, Violence & Resistance*, by Melanie Kaye/Kantrowitz (1992); *The Colors of Jews*, by Melanie Kaye/Kantrowitz (forthcoming); *Davita's Harp* [novel] by Chaim Potok (1985/1996); **"I'm Not White, I'm Jewish": Standing As Jews in the Fight for Racial Justice,*" [speech] by Paul Kivel (1998), [See links]; "How Did Jews Become White Folks?," [short essay version] by Karen Brodtkin (Sacks) from *Race*, Steven Gregory and Roger Sanjek, eds. (1994)

Bringing an understanding of Jewish oppression into Israel/Palestine/Jewish-Arab work: **"A Big Piece is Missing From This 'Peace,'"* by Loolwa Khazzoom, in *Clamor* #5 (2000) [See links]; "O Havruta O Mituta: How to Strengthen the Palestine Solidarity Movement By Making Friends With Jews," by Guy Izhak Austrian (2003) [See links]; *Jews and Arabs*, by Albert Memmi (1975/1976)

Organizations (from varying perspectives): Facing A Challenge Within, www.facingachallenge.com; Political Research Associates, www.publiceye.org; Engage, www.engageonline.org.uk/home; Catalyst Project, www.collectiveliberation.org

Deconstructing anti-Jewish myths: See a list of excellent web-based articles, broken down by myth, at www.pinteyid.com/myths.html

See links for all web resources at
www.thepast.info, under "Links"



COUNTRY PROFILE: ARMENIA

ANTISEMITISM TRAINING
L'TAKEN
לְטַקֵּן to repair

HISTORY OF THE JEWS & ANTISEMITISM IN ARMENIA:

- According to tradition, Jews began to settle in what is today Armenia in the 6th century BCE after the capture of Judea by the Babylonians. A larger community (according to legend some 10,000) were taken there by Tigranes in the 1st century BCE and this was followed by waves of migration up to the 4th century making Armenian towns were predominately Jewish. The region was then captured by the Persian Shapur II who deported most of the Jewish community to modern Iran.
- Archaeology has revealed a small Jewish community continued to exist in Armenia (recently a Jewish cemetery was discovered near the city of Eghegis from the 14th century). However the community was incredibly small and isn't mentioned in records from the time.
- After the region was annexed to the Russian Empire in 1828, Jewish settlers from both the Ashkenazi (those who trace their lineage and customs to Medieval Central Europe) and Sephardi/Mizrahi (Jews who trace their lineage and customs to Medieval Middle East/ North Africa/ Spain) set up communities in Yerevan. Their numbers grew to approximately 300 by 1900.
- During and following WW2 the Jewish population of Armenia grew considerably to 10,000 by 1959. Many Jews were attracted to the region as it offered a more liberal society than Ukraine or Russia.
- Most of the Jews of Armenia emigrated following Armenia's political isolation and economic depression of the 1990s. Today the community numbers around 500 – these are mostly the descendants of Jewish migrants from the 20th century.

ARMENIA JEWISH COMMUNITY:

Despite having a sizable Jewish population up to the 4th century CE for much of its history Armenia had very few Jews living in it.

A community developed in the 19th and 20th centuries but largely emigrated away during problems in the 1990s.

Today around 500 Jews live in Armenia, nearly all in Yerevan.

ANTISEMITISM IN ARMENIA TODAY:

- Antisemitism has been a problem in Armenia in recent years. A 2018 Pew Research Center survey found that 32% of Armenians would not accept Jews as fellow citizens. This was the highest rate in the survey of Central and Eastern European countries, and is believed to be due to the close ties between the Armenian Apostolic Church and the state. Antisemitic attitudes within the Church and national-religious identity both contribute to antisemitism.
- According to the Anti-Defamation League (the US based global antisemitism organisation) a 2014 survey revealed 58% of respondents held antisemitic attitudes. The most held antisemitic beliefs were that 72% believed Jews had too much power in the business world and 68% felt they had too much power in international financial markets and were more loyal to Israel than their own country.
- There is anger that Israel refuses to recognize the Armenian Genocide despite having a sizeable Armenian population.

COUNTRY PROFILE : AZERBAIJAN

HISTORY OF THE JEWS & ANTISEMITISM IN AZERBAIJAN :

- Two main groups make up the Jewish community of Azerbaijan. The first are the Mountain Jews. This is a community who trace their origins back to Jewish migration to Ancient Persia from the 5th century BCE onwards. They lived in the mountainous areas of Persia and then the Caucasus, adopted the local language which evolved into Judeo-Tat and have maintained a distinct ethnic identity for over two-thousand years. For much of their history this community lived in isolated villages and maintained a military tradition to defend themselves. They wore the dress of their Muslim neighbours and created a unique cuisine that merged Kosher traditions with the cuisine of the Caucasus. Still today many of the traditions of the Mountain Jews continue including decorating their synagogues with oriental rugs and removing their shoes for worship.

AZERBAIJAN JEWISH COMMUNITY:

Jews have lived in Azerbaijan for thousands of years. The oldest community, and today the largest, are the Mountain Jews. They have lived predominantly peacefully with their neighbours since the 5th century BCE, and maintained distinctive cultural traditions.

Today the Jewish community numbers between 8000-16000, mostly in Baku.

- According to their own traditions the Mountain Jews trace their lineage back to the 10 lost tribes of Israel (the people exiled by the king of Assyria when he destroyed the Kingdom of Israel in the 8th century BCE). Recent genetic testing has revealed the community have Mediterranean origins and are closely linked to other Jewish groups around the world.
- The majority of the Mountain Jewish population now live in Israel with the second largest (and longest standing) community in Azerbaijan (they have been there since at least the 5th century BCE).



Mountain Jews of Krasnaya Sloboda celebrating an engagement, circa 1910. (Krasnaya Sloboda archives)

- The Mountain Jewish community historically lived around the north-eastern Azerbaijani border with modern Russia. However in the 18th century a war between local groups led to the destruction of the largest settlement, Aba-Sava, and many mountain Jews subsequently moved to urban centres. Today the community still maintain many of their distinctive traditions and the village of Krasnaya Sloboda is the world's only all-Jewish town outside of Israel and the US. It is known as the Jerusalem of the Caucasus.

For much of their history the Mountain Jews appear to have lived a somewhat separated but peaceful existence with their neighbours and there are no major outbursts of antisemitic violence against them.

- The other main group in Azerbaijan's Jewish community are the Ashkenazi (those who descend from Central European medieval Jews) who arrived in Baku in 1811. By 1910 their numbers had risen to such an extent they outnumbered the local Mountain Jewish population. Baku became a major centre of the Zionist movement and many Jews were involved in local politics and business. By 1926 the entire Jewish community numbered approximately 60,000.
- As per other areas effected by Sovietization, the Jewish communities of Azerbaijan found their religious and cultural identities curtailed. This was felt particularly by the Mountain Jewish communities who had maintained their own

distinctive traditions for thousands of years. Their language was banned and they were forbidden to use the Hebrew alphabet. In 1937 five rabbis were executed for disobeying these orders. However following relaxation in local laws in the 1960s, Baku became the first place in the Soviet Union to permit Hebrew courses and a Jewish revival occurred.

- Despite this, after the fall of the Soviet Union much of the community emigrated. From a high of around 80,000 in the early 1990s, by 2002 around 90% had left leaving a population of around 8,000. The majority of the remaining Jewish population are Mountain Jews.

ANTISEMITISM IN AZERBAIJAN TODAY:

- The Azerbaijan constitution grants religious freedom and asserts there is no state religion so Jews have been given full rights. The government also has a reputation of religious tolerance and has returned buildings nationalized under the Soviets to the Jewish community.
- However cases of antisemitism still occur and are often linked to attitudes towards Israel (officially Azerbaijan and Israel have maintained strong bilateral relations making Azerbaijan one of Israel's major predominantly Islamic allies).
- In 2001 47 Jewish tombstones were desecrated.
- Generally the country is considered to have very low levels of antisemitism. Azerbaijani Jewish leader Alexandr Sharovskiy claimed in 2018 it was, "a country with zero antisemitism."
- According to the Anti-Defamation League (the US based global antisemitism organisation) a 2014 survey revealed 37% of respondents held antisemitic attitudes. The most held antisemitic beliefs were that 53% believed Jews have too much power in the business world and 52% thought Jews only care what happened to their own kind.



COUNTRY PROFILE : BELARUS

ANTISEMITISM TRAINING
L'TAKEN
«לשם» to repair

HISTORY OF THE JEWS & ANTISEMITISM IN BELARUS:

BACKGROUND:

- Jewish settlement in Belarus began in the 14th century and for the following centuries was marred with antisemitism. The community were expelled at the end of the 15th century and, when allowed back, prevented from many employment opportunities and prohibited from building synagogues. There were also attacks by Christian communities, forced conversions and murders. The Jewish community were also targets of the 1648 Khmelnytsky Uprising, a Cossack led revolt, originating in Ukraine, that had the eradication of the Jewish community as one of its principal aims.
- As the survivors rebuilt, and Jewish immigration continued, by 1766 the Jewish population had risen to 62,800. The community largely came from Central Europe, spoke Yiddish and were connected to their fellow Jews in the Lithuania area. Collectively this North-Eastern European Jewish community are known as Litvak Jews. Given economic prospects in the region remained poor for the Jews they were largely an impoverished community living in small market towns known as *Shtetls* and maintained traditional Jewish life-cycle practices.

BELARUS JEWISH COMMUNITY:

Belarus was an important Jewish centre in the 19th century.

Today there are between 10-25,000 Jews, the majority live in Minsk.

UNDER THE RUSSIAN EMPIRE:

- In 1791, after Belarus became part of the Russian Empire, the Jews were incorporated into the Pale of Settlement, a region stretching from the Baltic to the Black Sea where Jews were permitted to inhabit (they were forbidden to settle elsewhere). It would last until the fall of the Russian Empire in 1917. By 1897 around 5 million Jews lived there, over 43% of the global Jewish population.
- Belarus was a major Jewish centre in the 19th century. It was the birthplace of Chabad Hasidism, a form of Judaism that combined Jewish mysticism, folk practices and charismatic spiritualism. The Chabad movement today is one of the largest Jewish organisations in the world now centred in the United States. It was also a major centre of the Jewish Enlightenment (the Haskalah). Jewish Secularist movements founded Bundism (Jewish socialism) and were influential in other forms of secular Judaism including Zionism.
- By 1897 the Jewish population of Belarus had soared to 910,900 (14.2% of the total population). New social and economic opportunities led to mass migration to urban centres and Jews from across Europe headed to the region. Many cities became over 50% Jewish (including Minsk, Pinsk, Mogilev, Bobruisk, Vitebsk and Gomel).
- The Belarussian Jewish community were caught up in the waves of antisemitic, and often state-sanctioned, violence known as pogroms that shook the Pale of Settlement. The worst occurred from 1881 onwards. Whilst they were more frequent in the Ukraine region, in the Belarus area a period of terrible pogroms occurred between 1903 and 1905. Then, antisemitic scapegoating blaming Jews for Russia's failures in the Russo-Japanese war, combined with religious resentment from the Orthodox Church and ideas that Jews were anti-Russian led to attacks. In October 1905 alone there were 660 attacks, around 4,000 people were killed, 10,000 wounded and over 60 million rubbles of damage carried out.

- During the First World War the Belorussian Jews found themselves caught on the frontline between Russia and Poland. They were accused of spying for both sides, and there were antisemitic massacres by both Polish and Russian troops.

UNDER SOVIET, POLISH & NAZI RULE:

- When Belarus was divided in 1921, religious suppression under the Soviet Union led many traditional Jews to flee westwards to the new Polish ruled areas. The western community therefore became dominated by more conservative Jewish practices and tended to be poorer and rural.
- Other Jews embraced the Soviet Union and a large number became involved in Communist party activities, there was even a Jewish chapter of the Communist Party. The local authorities enforced assimilationist policies. For those wishing to maintain traditional Jewish practices under the Soviet Union, they had to take their religious practices underground – several Jewish study institutions (Yeshivot) were organised in secret.
- During the Second World War the Soviet Union initially annexed Western Belorussia. Jews were targeted for non-communist activities and records indicate over 10,000 were sent to Gulags.
- When the German army invaded in 1941 690,000 Jews fell under Nazi occupation. Many attempted to flee, some with assistance from local authorities. Around 140,000 Jews managed to escape but the remainder were dealt with by ghettoization, deportation and murder. Minsk became the largest ghetto in German-Occupied Soviet Union with over 100,000 Jews. Other Jews were brought from the Baltic states into the ghettos and it is estimated that approximately 800,000 Jews were killed in the Belarus area. The majority of murders in Belarus are believed to have occurred through shooting squads. The Nazis utilised local resentment to assist with this. However Israel's official Holocaust memorial also lists 641 Belarusians as Righteous Among the Nations – those who risked their lives to save Jews during the Holocaust.
- Many of the Jewish survivors of the Holocaust were those who joined the partisan movement (Belarus was a major centre with approximately 20,000 Jews fighting) or fought for the Soviet Union. However on their return in the post-war years they faced continued antisemitism. The only surviving Jewish cultural institution, the Belorussian State Jewish Theatre was forcefully shut down in 1949. Synagogues had to operate in secret due to Soviet oppression towards religion and widespread policies of assimilation and antisemitism made it difficult to maintain a Jewish lifestyle. As a result mass Jewish emigration occurred where possible. Despite 150,084 Jews returning to post-war Belarus by 1959, by 1999 just 27,810 Jews remained.

ANTISEMITISM IN BELARUS TODAY:

- Alexander Lukashenko has been accused of making antisemitic comments on several occasions. In 2007 he caused international outrage in a speech where he blamed Jews for problems in the city of Bobruisk. He said, *"this was founded as a Jewish city and you know how Jews treat the place they live in"* before also making complaints about Israel.
- There have been reports of antisemitic rhetoric rekindling Nazi ideology that communism was a Jewish-dominated regime and ideology. As a result those wishing to find someone to blame for atrocities committed by the Soviet Union have carried out antisemitic attacks.
- According to Dr Yakov Basin of the Union of Belarusian Jewish Organizations and Communities, speaking in 2008, he claimed in 20 years not a single person had been punished for antisemitic vandalism.
- However since 2008 there have been attempts to deal with antisemitism. There have been convictions for vandalism and antisemitic hate crimes. Some Holocaust sites have also begun the process of memorialisation and the victims of a mass grave discovered in 2019 received a dignified burial by local authorities.

- According to the Anti-Defamation League (the US based global antisemitism organisation) a 2014 survey revealed 38% of respondents held antisemitic attitudes. The most held antisemitic beliefs were that 66% believed Jews were more loyal to Israel than Belarus and 52% believed Jews thought themselves better than other people .



COUNTRY PROFILE : GEORGIA

HISTORY OF THE JEWS & ANTISEMITISM IN GEORGIA:

BACKGROUND:

- Jewish history in Georgia is claimed to date back to the 6th century BCE when the Jews fled the Babylonian conquest of Judea.
- Although there is minimal source material, it is thought a small Jewish community continued to exist in Georgia throughout the Middle Ages. They are mentioned by Marco Polo in 1272 and appear to survive the destruction brought on the Mongol Invasion.
- The Georgian Jews developed into a distinctive community. They were predominately very poor and, as the feudal system enveloped Georgia from the 14th century, the Jews became part of the serf class. This made Jewish communal life difficult to maintain as serfs could be sold or moved by their masters. It also made the region less attractive for immigration, so the community remained a few thousand. Although Jews were treated no differently to other serfs, there is some evidence to suggest they were less able to social advance out of serfdom. The few examples of this occurring usually follow a Jew being baptised as a Christian
- Throughout Georgian pre-modern history there are very few reports of antisemitism occurring and attitudes prevalent in nearby countries do not appear to have led to antisemitic violence in Georgia. The Georgian church did not play on antisemitic tropes.

UNDER RUSSIAN RULE:

- When Georgia was annexed by Russia in 1801 antisemitism was encouraged by new local government officials and the Russian Orthodox Church. It led to several blood libels. They continued until 1965.
- When serfdom was abolished in 1863-71 former Jewish serfs moved to towns and villages and established new Georgian Jewish communities. There was also an influx of Ashkenazi Jews (those descendant from medieval Central Europe) who were relocated to the region by the Russian government. The region was made part of the Pale of Settlement, a region where Jews under the Russian Empire were permitted to live but forbidden to live outside of. The local Georgian Jews, whose customs were similar to the Persian Jewish community, were culturally quite different to the newcomers and tensions existed between the two groups. They tended to come together only when discussing Zionism.
- After Georgia declared its independence in 1918 and was invaded in 1921 there was a mass exodus of Jews from the region. Around 2,000 left – mostly to Israel and Istanbul (where a Georgian Jewish community still exists today).
- Soviet authorities attempted to assimilate Georgia's Jewish population and so tried to disband the relatively small Jewish communities. In the 1930s the Jewish population was 'redistributed'. Zionist organisations were targeted with its leadership arrested and executed. By 1950 the last Jewish institution was shut down. However a Jewish presence remained and the Georgian Jewish community reported the lowest rates of intermarriage throughout the USSR.

GEORGIA JEWISH COMMUNITY:

Jews have lived in Georgia since the 6th century BCE but in relatively small numbers.

For most of Georgia's history there was little antisemitism. However following the annexation of the region by Russia new attitudes were encouraged by the authorities that resulted in blood libels and waves of violence.

Georgia's Jews are made of those who lived in the region for millennia (known as Georgian Jews) and an Ashkenazi community who arrived in the 19th century.

Georgia's Jews were at the centre of an international campaign to allow Jews to emigrate out of the USSR (mostly to Israel).

Today there are approximately 6,000 Jews in Georgia, mostly in Tbilisi.

Continually attempts at community reorganisation took place and a report in 1979 revealed nearly half of the 90 synagogues (at that stage permitted due to a relaxation of anti-religious laws) across the Soviet Union were in Georgia.

- Georgian Jews became prominent in the demand to leave the USSR for Israel in the 1960s and 1970s. Those who were refused emigration became known as 'refuseniks' and a global campaign for their free movement became a major international human rights campaign. During the 1970s almost 50% (30,000) of Georgian Jews left, mostly for Israel. By 1989 Georgia's Jewish population was just 24,800 and that has fallen with continued migration to around 6,000 today.

ANTISEMITISM IN GEORGIA TODAY:

- Following its independence the Georgian government have made attempts to curtail antisemitism and improve conditions for Georgia's Jewish population. This began in 1994 with a decree to protect Jewish religious, cultural and historic monuments. In 1995 religious freedom was made constitutional and religious persecution formally illegal. In 2001 an agreement was signed between the Georgian Orthodox Church and the Jewish community aimed at mutual respect and peace. Several Jews have taken up positions in the Georgian government and Jewish community leaders are involved in state activities and events.
- According to the Anti-Defamation League (the US based global antisemitism organisation) a 2014 survey revealed 32% of respondents held antisemitic attitudes. The most held antisemitic belief was that 67% believed Jews had too much power in the business world and 62% felt they had too much power in international financial markets.

COUNTRY PROFILE : KAZAKHSTAN

HISTORY OF THE JEWS & ANTISEMITISM IN KAZAKHSTAN:

- There are two groups of Jews in Kazakhstan. There are a few small communities of Central Asian Jews who lived in the region for thousands of years. These are Bukharan Jews (who arrived from neighbouring Uzbekistan) and Mountain Jews (who mostly arrived from Azerbaijan). Mountain Jews are a community who trace their origins back to Jewish migration to Ancient Persia from the 5th century BCE onwards. They lived in the mountainous areas of Persia and then the Caucasus, adopted the local language which evolved into Judeo-Tat and have maintained a distinct ethnic identity for over two-thousand years. From the 17th century onwards Ashkenazi Jews (those living in Eastern Europe who descend from Central European medieval Jews) also began to settle in the region. Many were Jews who had been forced to serve in the Czar's army. However numbers remained incredibly small.
- During the Holocaust around 100,000 Jews passed through Kazakhstan as they fled the Nazi invasion of Eastern Europe. Some 8,000 are believed to have stayed in Kazakhstan.
- Stalin forcibly moved thousands of Jews from other parts of the Soviet Union to the Kazakh SSR. These were mostly Jews who failed to accept restrictions on their religious or cultural practices. Most famous of these was Levi Yitzchak Schneerson whose son was the Lubavitcher Rebbe (one of the most important Jewish religious figures of the 20th century who went on to lead the Chabad-Lubavitch movement). Levi Schneerson is buried in Almaty and a synagogue has been built near his gravesite.
- As a result of Jews moving into the region the number of Jews living in Kazakhstan grew from 3,600 in 1936 to 28,000 in 1959. Following the fall of the Soviet Union many Jews have emigrated so the community is today between 3,000-6,000.

KAZAKHSTAN JEWISH COMMUNITY:

Between 3,000-6,000 Jews live in Kazakhstan. They are mostly Russian-speaking and the descendants of those who arrived in the 20th century. The largest community is in Almaty.

There are also communities of Mountain and Bukharan Jews who have lived in central Asia for thousands of years.

ANTISEMITISM IN KAZAKHSTAN TODAY:

- There is not a prevalent history of antisemitism in Kazakhstan. In 2006 the American based National Coalition Supporting Soviet Jewry made this statement, "Anti-Semitism [sic] is not prevalent in Kazakhstan and rare incidents are reported in the press. None have been reported in the last two years."
- According to the Anti-Defamation League (the US based global antisemitism organisation) a 2014 survey revealed 32% of respondents held antisemitic attitudes. The most held antisemitic belief was that 54% believed Jews are more loyal to Israel than their own country.



COUNTRY PROFILE: KYRGYZSTAN

HISTORY OF THE JEWS & ANTISEMITISM IN KYRGYZSTAN:

- Whilst there is evidence of some Jews settling in the region from the 4th century, the history of the Jewish community mostly begins in the second half of the 19th century after Russia annexed Central Asia.
- Two different Jewish communities moved to Kyrgyzstan at this time. Both Ashkenazi (those living in Eastern Europe who descend from Central European medieval Jews) and Bukharan Jews (those living in Uzbekistan who descended from Persian Jews) moved into the region. The Russian Empire forbade them to settle in villages so they moved to the major urban areas. The two communities maintained a distance from each other with almost no intermarriage or collective institutions.
- Around 20,000 Jews fled to the region during the Second World War. In 1941 the authorities allowed the construction of Kyrgyzstan's first synagogue in Bishkek. Others followed in Osh and Kant. The community enjoyed freedom to practice religion until the 1950s when religious services were prohibited under Soviet policies. However the communities continued to practice in secret.
- After WW2 most of the Jews who had fled moved away from Kyrgyzstan. Those who remained gradually moved away from the region or stopped identifying as Jewish. By 1989 the Jewish community stood at just 5,800 and following continued emigration it now stands at 600, mostly based in Bishkek.

KYRGYZSTAN JEWISH COMMUNITY:

The Kyrgyzstan Jewish community numbers around 600 most of which live in Bishkek.

ANTISEMITISM IN KYRGYZSTAN TODAY:

- After independence in 1991, the Kyrgyzstan constitution guarantees equal rights and freedoms to citizens of any religion and the country remains officially secular.
- There has been a rise of fundamentalist activity and some of these groups have distributed antisemitic propaganda but this has also been met with opposition by the general public and the Kyrgyz government.
- There have been antisemitic attitudes published in the Kyrgyz press. In 2010 a newspaper headline read, "Will the Jews leave us with Nothing?" that claimed Jews develop anti-state policies all over the world. The same day a Molotov cocktail was thrown into the country's only synagogue. Later that year the synagogue was targeted again and "Death to the Jews" was spray-painted near the Jewish Agency office in Bishkek.
- The rise of Kyrgyz nationalism is also a concern to the Jewish community as nationalists have tended to blame the country's problems on the role of other ethnicities.



COUNTRY PROFILE: MOLDOVA

HISTORY OF THE JEWS & ANTISEMITISM IN MOLDOVA:

BACKGROUND:

- Jewish merchants from Spain and North Africa (known as Sephardi Jews) began to settle in the Bessarabia region (that includes Moldova) in the 16th century. Some moved here following the expulsion of the Jews from Spain in 1492. The descendants of these Jews continue to be known as Bessarabian Jews.

MOLDAVAN JEWISH COMMUNITY:

Today there are around 10,000 Jews in Moldova.

Half live in Chisinau (Kishinev).

UNDER RUSSIAN RULE:

- When Russia annexed the area in 1812 many Jews from nearby communities moved into the region. By 1836 the Jewish population was around 20,000. By 1897 it rose to 228,620. 88% of the new arrivals were Jews from the Yiddish speaking Ashkenazi communities that originated in Central Europe before moving eastwards to areas such as Ukraine.
- The Moldovan Jewish community then faced the same realities facing other Jews of the Russian Empire. They found themselves incorporated into the Pale of Settlement, a region stretching from the Baltic to the Black Sea where Jews were permitted to inhabit (but forbidden to settle outside of) that would last until the fall of the Russian Empire in 1917. By 1897 around 5 million Jews lived there, over 43% of the global Jewish population.
- As the region's independence was eroded, Russian anti-Jewish laws were increasingly applied to the Moldavan Jews. These were followed by waves of antisemitic violence known as pogroms.
- In Moldova these reached their height in massacres in Kishinev in 1903 and 1905 known as the Kishinev pogroms. They began on Easter following the death of a Ukrainian boy (who was later found to be killed by a family member). Local antisemites accused the Jewish community of murdering him for the purpose of using his blood in the preparation of matzah (ritual bread) for Passover (this antisemitic trope is known as blood libel). Headlines published in newspapers included, "Death to the Jews!" and "Crusade against the Hated Race!". After Church services on Easter Sunday two days of rioting took place where Jews were murdered and property destroyed. Local authorities did not intervene until the third day. The pogrom resulted in global outrage and led to US trade restrictions against Russia.
- In the wake of the pogroms thousands of Jews left Moldova largely for North America. During the 19th century North America was seen as a place of social and economic opportunity. Before mass emigration around half of Kishinev was Jewish.
- The remaining community continued to face antisemitism under Romanian then Soviet rule.
- The German invasion of the Soviet Union resulted in the region falling under Nazi control in 1941. Jews were murdered in mass shootings, placed in ghettos and sent to concentration camps. There was a high level of local collaboration with the Nazis and over 100,000 Jews perished in the region.
- Under Soviet rule, antagonism towards religion resulted in hardships for the Jewish community. Many Jewish practices and organisations were banned. In 1961 the Jewish coming of age ceremony for boys, a Bar-Mitzvah was banned.

- During the Civil War an estimated 12,000 remaining Jews were evacuated and most left the region to Israel. Further emigration has occurred resulting in the community dwindling from 80,000 in 1979 to between 2,000 and 20,000 today. Most Jewish demographic studies believe the number to be between 5,000-10,000. Demographics are hard to confirm in this region because of Soviet policies of assimilation mean many people have one Jewish parent but their level of knowledge of this, and Jewish observance varies greatly. One-quarter to one-half of the community is elderly, and nearly 80 percent of Moldovan Jews report significant economic hardship.

ANTISEMITISM IN MOLDOVA TODAY:

- The Moldovan government has undergone a campaign to preserve Jewish heritage in the country. This has included restoration of Jewish cemeteries and adopting the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance definition of antisemitism.
- However the government battles antisemitic attitudes often linked to Romanian Far-Right groups who praise Fascist figures from the 1930-40s such as Ion Antonescu or Corneliu Zelea Codreanu who both held antisemitic views. Many antisemitic incidents include the use of Nazi or fascist imagery being vandalised onto Jewish memorials or graves.
- There was a wave of antisemitism in 2019 when Israel-born Moldovan Jewish businessman, Ilan Shor who was sentenced to more than seven years in prison for bank fraud fled the country likely to Israel.
- According to the Anti-Defamation League (the US based global antisemitism organisation) a 2014 survey revealed 30% of respondents held antisemitic attitudes. The most held antisemitic belief was that 60% believed Jews had too much power in the business world.

COUNTRY PROFILE: RUSSIA

HISTORY OF THE JEWS & ANTISEMITISM IN RUSSIA:

BACKGROUND:

- Jews have lived in what today is Russia since the 7th century.
- For much of Russia's history Jews were officially banned from settling within its borders, and the few that did were frequently expelled.
- Despite not having a sizeable Jewish population, antisemitism remained rife within Russia first through religious attitudes and then with the emergence of Russian nationalism.
- Russia took on a large Jewish population following the partition of Poland in 1772 but these communities, whilst in the Russian Empire, today mostly fall under areas of Ukraine, Moldova, Belarus, Lithuania, Latvia and Poland. To deal with its new Jewish population the Pale of Settlement was created – an area where Jews were permitted to live and forbidden from settling outside of. Antisemitism within the Pale was widespread. There were several waves of violence (some instigated by Russian Imperial authorities) against Jews known as pogroms.
- In 1903 the first of what would become the Protocols of the Elders of Zion were published by Znamya, a nationalist newspaper in Russia. This fabricated antisemitic text purported to demonstrate a global Jewish conspiracy for domination that included subverting the morals of gentiles, controlling the press and the world's economies. It is arguably the most influential antisemitic text ever written and still circulates today.

RUSSIAN JEWISH COMMUNITY:

The Russian Jewish community numbers around 200,000.

The Russian Jewish community are amongst the most elderly in the world and are still struggling with Soviet attempts at assimilation..

Approximately half of Russia's Jews live in Moscow, 20% in St Petersburg and most of the others in major cities.

THE RUSSIAN REVOLUTION & EARLY SOVIET ERA:

- After 1917 upheavals on the war front in the First World War, crises caused by the Russian and local civil wars and the dissolution of the Pale of Settlement led to Jews moving eastwards into the borders of modern Russia.
- They mostly settled in the growing urban centres. By 1939 there were around a million Jews in the RSFSR with the largest community (250,100) in Moscow.
- Under the Bolshevik government a complex relationship with the Jewish community developed. The general Bolshevik anti-religious policies resulted in the nationalisation of religious and cultural property and Jewish communal and political organisations were banned. Yet previous anti-Jewish laws were removed, and pogroms were banned. On an individual level Jews received equality for the first time in Russia.
- To deal with the rise of Zionism and mass Jewish unemployment, a Jewish autonomous region was created by Soviet authorities in Birobidzhan in the Far East. It never became a success with the Jewish community (at its height only 50,000 moved there), and was noted for such hard working conditions that many who moved there later returned home. However Yiddish remains an official language even today and continual efforts throughout the Soviet period were made to promote it.
- Some Jews of Russia fell under Nazi occupied areas following their invasion in 1941. Whilst many escaped (mostly eastwards) those who remained suffered in the Holocaust. Approximately 140,000 were murdered. Initially much of this

work was done through shootings and death squads. Later the Nazis collected the Jews into ghettos and deported them to extermination camps.

THE POST-WAR PERIOD:

- Under Stalin's purges thousands of Jewish cultural and political leaders were tried, exiled and executed. His campaign against 'cosmopolitanism' was directed primarily against assimilated Jewish intellectuals and professionals. Khrushchev later exposed plots such as the Doctor's Plot (where a group of predominantly Jewish doctors were accused of a conspiracy to assassinate Soviet leaders) as a fabrication and various staff and later historians identified a long history of antisemitic comments made by Stalin indicative of a belief in a 'Jewish world conspiracy' that influenced his policies.
- In 1957 Khrushchev launched a new campaign against religion which utilised propaganda claiming the Jewish faith encouraged a love of money, promulgated the hatred of other peoples and promoted allegiance to another reactionary state (Israel). He later blamed 'Jewish individualism' for the failure of the Jewish autonomous region.
- The USSR became allies with Egypt and Syria in the 1950s and played a key role instigating the Six Day War in 1967. The Soviet Union launched an anti-Zionist and anti-Israel campaign that targeted Russian Jews. However many Russian Jews saw the Six Day War as evidence Israel was a sustainable state and earlier feelings of Zionism within the community increased. As a result a large number of Jews requested to leave the Soviet Union and emigrate to Israel. The authorities refused the vast majority. Those who were refused became known as 'refuseniks' and triggered an international human rights campaign that advocated Soviet Jews should be free to emigrate. A number of Jews were put on trial for their Zionist beliefs. However international pressure grew and the issue became part of Soviet-American diplomatic relations. Eventually pressure forced the Soviet Union to allow some emigration. Close to 80,000 left between 1971-1973. Emigration continued until 1983 when a state-sponsored anti-Zionist Committee was established to denounce Zionism, Israel and the US.
- With Gorbachev's leadership and his policy of glasnost the Jewish community experienced a cultural revival with greater freedoms and practices of their culture and religion. In 1990 religious discrimination was made illegal. Many of the refuseniks were released from prison and emigrated to Israel. Between 1971-1993 nearly 400,000 Russian Jews left (roughly 50% of the Jewish community). Another 150,000 continued to leave over the next decade.
- When the Russian Federation was established a study was carried out on its Jewish population. It revealed the Jewish community had one of the oldest average ages in global Jewry (largely due to emigration of younger members) and was among the most assimilated and intermarried (73.2% of Jewish men and 62.8% of Jewish women). Given the suppression of religion under the USSR and largescale assimilation, Jewish community and religious models had to be imported from Europe and the US. Still today these imported community models have not been entirely accepted and Jewish identity remains a complex issue. Today the community numbers around 200,000.

ANTISEMITISM IN RUSSIA TODAY:

- Many people with Jewish backgrounds took up opportunities in economics and politics in the Russian Federation. Several Prime Ministers, Deputy Prime Ministers, a high proportion of oligarchs and those working in the newly created private commercial banking system have at least one Jewish parent. The success of these individuals has been used by those still holding beliefs about a global Jewish conspiracy to carry out antisemitism towards the entire Jewish community.
- Human rights monitors have identified that antisemitic incidents rise sharply with economic problems. There was a large spike of reported antisemitism after the 1998 Russian financial crisis and during recent economic troubles.

- Antisemitic comments have been reported in slogans, speeches and rhetoric of nationalist parties. In 2005 twenty Members of the Duma published a statement accusing Jews of being anti-Christian, inhumane, committing ritual murder and that, "the entire democratic world today is under the financial and political control of international Jewry."
- According to the Anti-Defamation League (the US based global antisemitism organisation) a 2019 survey revealed 50% of Russians questioned believe Jews have too much power in the business world. Overall the ADL claim 31% of Russians questioned harboured some kind of antisemitic attitude.
- Attitudes linking Jews to power and money continue. In 2019 a billboard campaign (below) was removed that featured a Haredi Jew as a money lender extending one hand with the words, "goodbye rent!" The company, Novoselye, set up a poll to defend the billboard where 64% believed it should be able to remain. However following pressure from journalists and politicians it was eventually removed.
- The Russian Jewish Congress publishes a report into antisemitism annually. In its 2019 report they indicate a decrease in antisemitism among the media, greater negative reaction towards antisemitic comments made in politics and the media and a low level of antisemitic violence.
- A 2018 Pew Research poll found that 14% of Russians would not accept Jews as fellow citizens. The Levada Centre (a Russian independent polling and sociological research organisation) 12% of Russians want to limit the number of Jews living in Russia.



A 2019 billboard campaign by Novoselye depicting a Haredi Jew as a money lender extending one hand with the words, "goodbye rent!"

COUNTRY PROFILE: TAJIKISTAN

HISTORY OF THE JEWS & ANTISEMITISM IN TAJIKISTAN:

- The Jews of Tajikistan consist of two groups. Ashkenazim (Jews who trace their customs back to medieval central Europe) who fled the Holocaust and arrived during the Second World War; and Bukharan Jews who trace their lineage and customs back thousands of years in the region and mostly lived in neighbouring Uzbekistan. (for more information see Uzbekistan Country Profile)
- The Bukharan Jewish community mostly arrived following Soviet attempts to encourage migration. They settled primarily in Dushanbe. They were joined by Ashkenazim in the late 1930s and 1940s and by 1959 numbered around 15,000. However the community faced issues caused by Soviet anti-religious laws. In 1952 the Dushanbe synagogue was nationalised and Jews were only permitted to use it six years later.
- Throughout the 20th century the Jews of Tajikistan faced growing tensions with their Muslim neighbours. This worsened with the rise of nationalism and following the establishment of the State of Israel in 1948. The situation worsened as Israel-Soviet relations became tense and post the Six Day War (partly instigated by the Soviet Union, then a key ally of Egypt and Syria).
- Many Jews attempted to leave, mostly for Israel. Whilst some managed to make the trip others had their exit visas refused and became known as refuseniks. The issue of free movement for Soviet Jewry became a global human rights campaign and a major part of US-Soviet relations.
- After independence, and throughout the Civil War, almost all of the Jews of Tajikistan fled the country. In 1992 Israeli agents orchestrated an emergency airlift. From 14,836 Jews in 1989, by 2002 there were just 200 left.

TAJIKISTAN JEWISH COMMUNITY:

There are around 200 Jews in Tajikistan.

The community grew from those who moved from Uzbekistan and those fleeing the Nazis during the 20th century.

After independence and the Tajikistan Civil War almost all of the Jews left.

ANTISEMITISM IN TAJIKISTAN TODAY:

- The few remaining Jews of Tajikistan face two main issues. Rahmon has continued attacks on religious freedoms under the guise of preventing Islamic extremism. At the same time Islamic extremists openly espouse antisemitic attitudes.
- In 2006 the Dushanbe synagogue (which also included the community's only ritual bath, kosher butcher and school), was ordered to be shut as it was to be demolished to make way for a new presidential palace. Despite global protests to protect the 19th century building it was demolished in 2008. The president's brother-in law donated a new building for a synagogue which opened in 2009.
- According to the human rights group, Freedom House, the government wants to be seen as tolerant and supportive to the Jewish community as they feel it will result in better foreign relations.



COUNTRY PROFILE: TURKMENISTAN

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ANTISEMITISM TRAINING
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HISTORY OF THE JEWS & ANTISEMITISM IN TURKMENISTAN:

- There is archaeological evidence of Jews settling in the Merv region around the 4th century but they did not establish a long-standing community.
- Persian Jews fleeing persecution in Iran settled in Turkmenistan in the late 1830s. They were joined by Jews from the USSR, some who fled during the Holocaust and others who arrived throughout the Soviet period. At its height in the 1980s the Turkmenistan community is thought to have a population of around 2,500.
- However suppression of religion meant these new immigrants failed to establish Jewish institutions and as a result there is no organized Jewish community in Turkmenistan. The only synagogue known to have existed was in Ashkhabad and was converted under Soviet rule into a gymnasium.

TURKMENISTAN JEWISH COMMUNITY:

It is thought there are around 1,000 Jews in Turkmenistan. They live mostly in Ashkhabad.

They face religious persecution and human rights abuses and have been advised to leave the country by the Jewish Agency for Israel.

ANTISEMITISM IN TURKMENISTAN TODAY:

- Those with Jewish ancestry are often forced to hide their background due to Turkmenistan's repressive human rights freedoms. Sunni Islam and the Russian Orthodox Church are the only legal religions.
- The Turkmenistan Jewish Agency functions in secret and faces opposition from the government. The former Chairman of the Jewish Agency for Israel advised all Jews to emigrate for their own safety.

COUNTRY PROFILE: UKRAINE

ANTISEMITISM TRAINING

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HISTORY OF THE JEWS & ANTISEMITISM IN UKRAINE:

BACKGROUND:

- Jews first settled in what is today the Ukraine around the 4th century BCE in the Crimea and Black Sea coastal towns.
- The Jewish community grew as many fled Byzantine persecution. Under the Khazar Khaganate (7th-9th centuries) the Jewish community became an important and prosperous community. Stories even developed that the Khazars converted to Judaism in the 8th century but whether this is historically accurate is doubtful. It is important to note that it became a popular antisemitic myth from the 19th century onwards to claim that all Eastern European Jewry descended from the Khazars (and thus not the biblical Israelites) but this has been widely disproved.

UKRAINIAN JEWISH COMMUNITY:

The Ukrainian Jewish community numbers around 110,000. The largest Jewish population centres are in Kiev, Dnepropetrovsk, Kharkov, Odessa, and Donetsk,

Ukraine has been a major Jewish centre. In particular in the 8th, 18th and 19th centuries.

It also has a long history of antisemitism.

- Instead, what became the Ukrainian Jewish community was the result of waves of migration from Central Europe (predominantly modern-day Germany). These Jews are known as Ashkenazi Jews and spoke a dialect of medieval German and Hebrew that became known as Yiddish. Violence triggered by the Crusades led to a first wave of arrivals in the 11th century and tens of thousands made the journey from the 13th-16th centuries.
- They were attracted to the Grand Duchy of Lithuania and then the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth as both countries created opportunities that attracted Jews to settle in, and colonise, the region. Whereas in Central Europe Jews had been exiled and banned from cities, in the East they received royal protection, were allowed to self-govern and often took up prosperous positions in the *arend* (leasing system) becoming managers, money lenders and tax collectors.
- As the Jewish community grew, so too did resentment against them. They were increasingly targeted by peasants, Cossacks and urban Orthodox Ukrainians. Religion tensions and dissatisfaction with difficult conditions erupted in 1648 into the Cossack led Khmelnytsky Uprising. Jews were one of the principal groups blamed for poor living conditions, their eradication was one of the aims of Khmelnytsky, and over 20,000 (around half the Jewish population) were massacred. Khmelnytsky remains a folk hero in Ukraine having founded a Cossack state and is regarded as fighting a war of national liberation. His statue stands in the centre of Kiev and he is depicted on the five-hryvnia banknote.
- Resentment against the Jews for being supporters of the Polish crown continued to lead to violence. In 1768 another Cossack led revolt, the Koliyivshchyna rebellion occurred and around 50,000 Jews were murdered.
- Despite these waves of violence the Jewish community continued to grow. By the mid-18th century there were 300,000 Jews in the Ukraine and along with fellow communities in Eastern Europe the region had become one of the major Jewish centres in the world.



Statue of Khmelnytsky, Kiev

UNDER THE RUSSIAN EMPIRE:

- When Poland was partitioned in 1772 the vast majority of Ukraine, and the Jewish community, fell under Russian rule (approx. 15% of modern Ukraine was ruled by the Hapsburgs in Vienna). However, since the 15th century the Russian Czars had forbidden Jews from settling in their realm. Suddenly Catherine II found herself the ruler of the largest Jewish population in the world. Instead of adhering to the demands of religious conservatives who wanted the expulsion of the Jewish population, she created the Jewish Pale of Settlement in 1791. It was a region stretching from the Baltic to the Black Sea where Jews were permitted to inhabit and it would last until the fall of the Russian Empire in 1917. By 1897 around 5 million Jews lived there, over 43% of the global Jewish population.
- In 1800 Jews were divided between a more affluent urban community and those living in small market towns or villages known as *Shtetls*. They experienced waves of antisemitism but also many years of peaceful co-existence alongside their non-Jewish neighbours, living a life dictated by the Jewish calendar and Ashkenazi practices. So called Shtetl-culture created the vibrant folk culture of the Yiddish world later immortalised by, Ukrainian-born Shalom Aleichem (his work is best known to most in the UK from the musical adaptation, *Fiddler on the Roof*).



Jewish Pilgrims in Uman

- During the 18th and 19th centuries the Ukrainian Jewish community also went through a transformation. Yisrael ben Eliezer, known as the Baal Shem Tov combined Jewish mysticism, folk practices and charismatic spiritualism in what would become known as Hassidic Judaism. This Jewish revivalist movement spread through the Pale and still today the towns of Medzhybizh and Uman remain major pilgrimage sites for Hasidic Jews (recent pilgrimages have drawn over 30,000 adherents -left). At its height in the 19th century, it is estimated that roughly half of Eastern European Jews were Hasidic.

- Throughout the 19th century the fortunes of the Jewish community of the Pale were dependent on Czarist laws. Whilst some eased restrictions, it was more common to persecute or attempt to assimilate the Jewish population. Nicholas I (1825-55) ran a campaign of assimilation that led to a mandatory 25 year conscription for Jewish children, expulsions from cities (including Kiev) and the banning of the public use of Hebrew and Yiddish.
- In 1871 tensions between Jewish and Greek merchants in Odesa led to what is considered one of the first pogroms (widespread assault on the Jewish population in response to larger crises in the Russian Empire). From 1881 several pogroms became state-sanctioned, Jews were blamed for the problems in the Russian Empire, accused of ritual murder (blood libel), expelled from major urban centres, and targeted in waves of violence.
- Pogroms broke out in response to Alexander II's assassination in 1881. Then, false rumours spread that the Jews were responsible and, to retaliate, that the new Czar had given people the right to, "beat Jews." In 1903 pogroms occurred after Imperial authorities responded to losses in the Russo-Japanese War by encouraging nationalists to agitate against 'Jewish machinations'. Jews were attacked during Passover in Kishinev which gave its name to the wider pogrom. Another wave of pogroms took place following the 1917 Russian Revolution.
- There were several Jewish responses to these events. Some felt Jews needed their own self-determination and their own nation. They became divided into Autonomists seeking self-rule in the Pale, others were the founders of Zionism who sought an alternative homeland, some joined revolutionary circles and socialist movements (eg/ Trotsky) and others decided to emigrate. In 1900 Ukraine had the highest concentration of Jews in the world.
- Between 1881 and 1914, largely in response to pogroms, 2.75 million Jews left Eastern Europe. That was a third of the Jews of the region and over a quarter of the entire global Jewish population.

- The remaining community became increasingly urban. Kiev, Kharkiv, Dnipropetrovsk, Lviv and Chernivtsi were major Jewish centres with around 30% of the total population being Jewish.

UNDER SOVIET & NAZI RULE:

- When Tzarism collapsed in 1917, the Ukrainian provisional government declared Jews were equal citizens, the Pale was abolished and Yiddish was even briefly introduced as a national language. However as Ukraine became gripped by civil war, the inter-war period was marred with pogroms. Jews were caught between competing factions and were divided as to whether to support the new Soviet government.
- Jews in Western Ukraine fell under Nazi control in September 1939. The remainder of the country was occupied in June 1941. Whilst some managed to escape eastwards into the Soviet Union, the majority faced Nazi persecution. To begin with they were targeted by the death squads (Einsatzgruppen). One of the worst atrocities occurred in September 1941 at Babi Yar outside Kiev where 33,771 Jews were murdered in two days then buried in the ravine. Others were placed in ghettos and deported to death camps. It is now believed 1.5 million Ukrainian Jews were killed, 60% of the pre-war population. Professor Dieter Pohl estimates around 100,000 Ukrainians collaborated. However there are also notable Ukrainians, such as Archbishop Andriy Sheptyts'kyi who hid Jews and helped them escape. So far more than 2,500 Ukrainians have been recognised as assisting the Jewish community by Israel's official Holocaust memorial body, Yad Vashem.
- In the post-war years the remnant of the Jewish population suffered further hardships. There was antisemitic violence as Jews attempted to reclaim homes and property. Yiddish and Hebrew were prohibited, and hundreds of Jewish leaders were arrested in 1948.
- The USSR became allies with Egypt and Syria in the 1950s and played a key role instigating the Six Day War in 1967. The Soviet Union launched an anti-Zionist and anti-Israel campaign that targeted Jews. However many Soviet Jews saw the Six Day War as evidence Israel was a sustainable state and earlier feelings of Zionism within the community increased. In addition, continued antisemitism in the Ukraine region and the anti-religious laws of the USSR led to a large number of Jews requesting to leave the Soviet Union (mostly to emigrate to Israel). The authorities refused the vast majority. Those who were refused became known as 'refuseniks' and triggered an international human rights campaign that advocated Soviet Jews should be free to emigrate. A number of Jews were put on trial for their Zionist beliefs. However international pressure grew and the issue became part of Soviet-American diplomatic relations. Eventually pressure forced the Soviet Union to allow some emigration. Between 1970-2001 around 400,000 Ukrainian Jews left Ukraine, some ¾ of the community.

AFTER INDEPENDENCE:

- The remaining community is centred in Kiev and numbers around 100,000. With several prominent Jews, Ukraine became the only other country other than Israel to have both a Jewish head of Government (Groysman) and head of state (Zelensky) between May and August 2019.

ANTISEMITISM IN UKRAINE TODAY:

- Since Ukrainian independence, the government has officially recognised Jewish cultural and religious institutions and legislation has been passed to return confiscated Jewish religious institutions and property including 20 synagogues.
- There are debates relating to remembrance of the holocaust. Currently Ukrainian students are only expected to learn about the topic in a one-off 55 minute session. Many sites of mass killings have not been commemorated.
- Jews continue to find themselves targets of groups who strive to seek an ethnic basis for nationhood. In the 2014 crisis both pro-Russian and pro-Ukrainian groups were accused of antisemitic attacks.

- Several Ukrainian folk heroes who continue to be revered held strong antisemitic beliefs.
- The Ukrainian nationalist Svoboda Party has been widely accused of antisemitism
- According to the Anti-Defamation League (the US based global antisemitism organisation) antisemitic attitudes are increasing in Ukraine (up 14% from 2015-2019) and following a survey in 2019 they estimate 46% of people currently harbour some kind of antisemitic attitude today. 72% of those asked said Jews have too much power in the business world.
- However the Pew Research Center found in 2016 only 5% of Ukrainians would not accept Jews as fellow citizens, a number much lower than nearby countries (22% of Poles for example said they would not be accepted).

COUNTRY PROFILE : UZBEKISTAN

ANTISEMITISM TRAINING
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HISTORY OF THE JEWS & ANTISEMITISM IN UZBEKISTAN:

BACKGROUND:

- The Jews of Uzbekistan are divided into two main subgroups. The Ashkenazim (Jews who descend from medieval central Europe) who arrived from other Soviet territories in the 20th century, and a much older community known as Bukharan Jews.
- The Bukharan Jews trace their history in Uzbekistan back thousands of years. Different legends claim they are the descendants of Jews who settled during the time of King David (10th century BCE), those who moved under the Persian King Cyrus (6th century BCE), or that they may be the descendants of the so-called Lost Tribes, the people of the Northern Kingdom of Israel which was destroyed in the 8th century BCE. Whatever the historical reality, they are one of the oldest ethno-religious groups of Central Asia and have developed their own distinct culture including speaking a Tajik dialect of the Persian language known as Bukhori.

UZBEKISTAN JEWISH COMMUNITY:

There are around 3,000-4,000 Jews in Uzbekistan today.

The region has a rich and ancient Jewish history with the Bukharan Jewish community tracing its roots in Uzbekistan back thousands of years.

Today the Jewish community are made of a remnant of the Bukharan Jews and Ashkenazi Jews who arrived in the 20th century fleeing the holocaust. Most of the Jews in Tashkent are Ashkenazi, Bukhara has more Bukharan Jews, and the community of Samarkand is more or less equally divided.



Bukharan Jews in Traditional Dress

- The Bukharan Jews were part of a wider Persian-Jewish community. They prospered under the Parthian Empire (3rd century BCE-2nd Century CE). When the region was conquered by the Sassanids in 224 they faced persecution as the Sassanid Empire attempted to force all its inhabitants to embrace Zoroastrianism. Under early Islamic rule the community was treated well and whilst they faced the same hardships as others in the region following the Mongol Invasion, under Timur (14th century) the community thrived in Samarkand and Bukhara.

- From the 15th century the Uzbek community were cut off as tensions rose between Shi'ite Persia and the Sunni Uzbeks. As they fell under the Emirate of Bukhara they became known as Bukharan Jews. From then on the

Bukharan Jews developed their own distinctive culture and language separate from other Persian Jews.

- The Bukharan Jews faced differing waves of tolerance and discrimination over the following centuries. Rulers seeking to promote Islam over other religions forced Jews to wear exclusively yellow and black dress, prohibited Jews from living outside a Jewish quarter, forced Jews to build their gates and shops lower than those of Muslims and refused to accept the witness testimony of Jews in court. A tradition developed that the Jews had to collect a tax and upon handing it over their leader would be slapped on the head to humiliate the community. Many Jews were also forcefully converted to Islam, they became known as Chala Jews. Most returned to Judaism under Russian rule.

- In 1793 a Moroccan Rabbi, Rabbi Joseph Maman Maghribi arrived in Bukhara. He transformed the religious practices of the community bringing them in-line with other Sephardi Jews (those who trace their lineage back to medieval North Africa and Spain).

RUSSIAN RULE:

- In 1868 the region was taken over by the Russian Empire. They brought in equal rights for Jews and Muslims and allowed Jews more rights than in other parts of the Russian Empire. In Uzbekistan Jews were allowed to freely acquire property for the first time in centuries – a practice limited to a strict area known as the Pale of Settlement in the West of the Russian Empire. Laws that discriminated against the Jews were also removed. At that time there were an estimated 50,000 Jews in Samarkand and 20,000 in Bukhara. Jews also began to migrate to Tashkent.
- Russian rule saw a rise of antisemitic propaganda. The first blood libels in Uzbekistan took place in 1926 and 1930.
- Under Soviet rule the Jewish communities of Bukhara and Samarkand faced similar issues to other Jews in the USSR caused by anti-religious laws. Synagogues and community institutions were shut down and Jewish leaders arrested. From 30 synagogues in 1917, by 1935 Samarkand only had one.
- As Jews fled the Nazi invasion of Soviet territories in the Second World War, Ashkenazi Jews began to arrive in huge numbers into the region. During WW2 more than a million Jewish refugees passed through Uzbekistan. Whilst most moved on or returned after the war had ended, by 1959 the size of the Jewish community had doubled from 50,000 in 1939 to 95,000. Almost all of these new arrivals were Ashkenazi.
- Throughout the 20th century the Jews of Uzbekistan faced growing tensions with their Muslim neighbours. This worsened with the rise of nationalism and following the establishment of the State of Israel in 1948. The situation worsened as Israel-Soviet relations became tense and post the Six Day War (partly instigated by the Soviet Union, then a key ally of Egypt and Syria).
- Given problems maintaining a Jewish life in Uzbekistan, in the face of rising Uzbek nationalism (during nationalist riots in 1990 there were attacks on the Jewish community) and religious tensions many members of the Jewish community decided to leave. Between 1989 and 2002 around 90,000 Jews left Uzbekistan, over 90% of the community.
- The remaining community numbered 6,000 but continued to decrease with economic difficulties and continued tensions after independence. Today Bukhara, once a major Jewish city has around 200 Jews.

ANTISEMITISM IN UZBEKISTAN TODAY:

- Understanding antisemitism in Uzbekistan has been a complicated issue since independence. Under Karimov the strict control over mass media meant no stories were reported and no statistics were published for the outside world. Most monitoring organisations believe that whilst Islamic fundamentalists were targeted by the government, the Jewish community were by-and-large left to their own devices.
- There is a high-degree of antisemitism among Uzbek Islamic extremists. An antisemitic conspiracy theory was spread that Karimov had Jewish origins and was part of a wider conspiracy to make global conditions worse for non-Jews. In 2004 the Israeli embassy was bombed in Tashkent.
- It is unclear yet how the political and economic reforms of Mirziyoyev have affected the remaining Jewish population. On one hand cordial relations have been struck up with traditional religious communities and guarantees have been offered of religious pluralism. However Uzbekistan continues to battle Islamic extremism. Some feel Mirziyoyev's attempts at a tolerant, "enlightened Islam" may lead to reduced religious tensions, others feel it may lead to new outbursts of violence and with them likely antisemitic attacks.