

European Antisemitism Brief Timeline

Consider: “From the earliest days, from the fourth century, ...the missionaries of Christianity had said in effect to the Jews: ‘You may not live among us as Jews’. The secular rulers who followed them from the late Middle Ages then decided: ‘You may not live among us,’ and the Nazis finally decreed: ‘You may not live.’”

Raul Hilberg, *Shoah: An Oral History of the Holocaust*, 1985

Terms:

Antisemitism- hostility toward or discrimination against Jews as a religious, ethnic, or racial group.

Secular- not overtly or specifically religious.

Blood libel- false and sensationalized allegations that a person or group engages in human sacrifice, often accompanied by the claim that the blood of the victims is used in various rituals and/or acts of cannibalism.

Three stages of antisemitism:

- 1) religious
- 2) secular
- 3) racial

Timeline

Religious

325 C.E. First Council of Nicaea: the Church announces: *We ought not therefore, to have anything in common with the Jews. We desire to separate ourselves from the detestable company of the Jews...in their blindness...*

354-430 Augustine, Bishop of Hippo states: *The true image of the Hebrew is Judas Iscariot who sells the Lord for silver. The Jews can never understand the scriptures, and forever bear the guilt of the death of Christ.*

Secular

1171 First ritual murder accusation (“blood libel”)- The Jews of Blois, France are accused of crucifying a Christian child during Passover and throwing the corpse into the Loire. Over thirty Jewish men and women were burned at the stake.

1182-1198 King Phillip Augustus expels the Jews (who had been settled for over a thousand years) from France.

1215 “Jew badges”: Pope Innocent II ordered that all Jews: *whether men or women, must in all Christian countries distinguish themselves from the rest of the population in public places by a special kind of clothing...So henceforth in case of such criminal [sexual] intercourse no mistake can be alleged as an excuse.*

- o England, France, Germany, Latin territories all adopt

- 1347-1360 The Black Death: Jews are accused of poisoning Christians' wells and causing the bubonic plague.
- 1492 Ferdinand and Isabella order that all Jews who refuse to convert to Christianity must leave Spain.
- 1543 Martin Luther writes *The Jews and Their Lies*
He writes:
- *First, to set fire to their synagogues or schools and to bury and cover with dirt whatever will not burn, so that no man will ever again see a stone or cinder of them. This is to be done in honor of our LORD and Christendom.*
 - *Second, I advise that their houses also be razed and destroyed.*
 - *Third, I advise that all their prayer books and Talmudic writings, in which such idolatry, lies, cursing, and blasphemy are taught, be taken from them.*
 - *Fourth, I advise that their rabbis be forbidden to teach henceforth on pain of loss of life and limb.*
 - *Fifth, I advise that save conduct on the highways be abolished completely for the Jews. For they have no business in the countryside, since they are not lords, officials, tradesmen, or the like. Let them stay at home. [We might well ask "What home?" since they are all presumably burned in point two!]*
 - *Sixth, I advise that usury be prohibited to them, and that all cash and treasure of silver and gold be taken from them, and put aside for safekeeping.*
 - *Seventh, I recommend putting a flail, an ax, a hoe, a spade, a distaff, or a spindle into the hand of young, strong Jews and Jewesses and letting them earn their bread in the sweat of their brow.*
- 1862 General Ulysses S. Grant expels all Jews from Kentucky, Tennessee and Mississippi.

Racial

- 1881 Eugen Dühring wrote *The Jewish Question as a Question of Race, Manner, and Culture*. He makes antisemitism a natural science and treats it like biology, arguing that because Jews belonged to another race they would always remain parasites and could not be converted through baptism.
- 1893-1905 *The Protocols of the Learned Elders of Zion*: The manuscript for this forgery finds its way from France into Russia. It is alleged to be the minutes of a secret society of Jewish notables described as "*learned men [who] decided by peaceful means to conquer the world for zion with the slyness of the symbolic serpent*" - that is, by secret conspiracy.
- 1920 *The Dearborn Independent*, a newspaper owned and published by Henry Ford Sr., published its first attack on Jews and will continue to do so in 91 subsequent editions. Antisemitic articles included: "The International Jew, the World's Foremost Problem", "Jewish Activities in the United States", "Jewish Influences in American Life", and "Aspects of Jewish Power in the Untied States".