

Scholars Circle Resource Guide

Double-sided

Antisemitism, Old and New:

Understanding Persistence and Change in Today's World



ABOUT THE SCHOLAR

Dr. Shale Horowitz is a professor in the Department of Political Science at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. His research has examined international and ethnic conflict; the politics of international trade and finance; and the politics of market transition and institutional change. He is the author, co-author, or co-editor of five books and over 50 academic articles. His current research interests include ethno-territorial wars and Chinese politics. He regularly visits Israel.

Dr. Shale Horowitz

Professor of Political Science at University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee



Contact Shale Horowitz

Email: shale@uwm.edu

Learn more at

chaimitzvah.org

Common Q&A's

What is antisemitism?

Negative, hostile double-standards directed at individual Jews, Jews as a group, or the Jewish nation-state (Israel).

What is distinctive about antisemitism?

Cosmic-level evil and power are attributed to Jews. This leads to an obsessive, disproportionate focus and hostility and to more discriminatory and punitive antisemitic goals and treatment.

What explains antisemitism's changing forms?

- 1) Characteristics of Jews, such as being a “covenantal” people with a religion at the root of Christianity and Islam, and a diaspora people often living separately and functioning as a “middleman” minority or having unusual economic and cultural prominence.
- 2) Characteristics of antisemites, such as holding exclusivist or supremacist ideologies.
- 3) Situational historical conditions, which often make Jews a vulnerable and politically useful scapegoat.

Key Takeaways

- ✓ Ancient antisemitism, whether Graeco-Roman, Christian, or Islamic, often reacted negatively to Jews clinging to their “covenantal” identity rather than adopting or adequately submitting to the dominant identity or ideology. At the same time, Jews were both weak and prominent, thus serving as useful scapegoats.
- ✓ Modern antisemitism is most intensely associated with powerful supremacist ideologies—especially Nazism, Marxism and its far-left spinoffs, and Islamic extremism. Again, Jews have been both weak and prominent, serving as useful scapegoats.
- ✓ This can be seen in today’s global “red-green” alliance between the far left and Islamic extremists. The alliance explicitly aims to destroy Israel and its Jewish population. In the short run, this also means harassing and intimidating “Zionist” Jews in the diaspora. In the longer run, the alliance also seeks to eliminate Jews as a distinct people via forced assimilation.

The views expressed by the speaker don't necessarily reflect Chai Mitzvah's official position.