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Phyllis Goldstein. *A Convenient Hatred: The History of Antisemitism.* Brookline: Facing History and Ourselves, 2012. Illustrations. 405 pp. $17.95 (paper), ISBN 978-0-9819543-8-7.

Albert S. Lindemann, Richard S. Levy, eds. *Antisemitism: A History.* Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010. vi + 288 pp. $95.00 (cloth), ISBN 978-0-19-923503-2; $31.95 (paper), ISBN 978-0-19-923502-5.

Reviewed by Jonathan Judaken (Rhodes College)
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Defining Antisemitism

The two texts under review present two contrasting styles of books to use when teaching a course on the history of antisemitism. *Antisemitism: A History* is a collection of essays by some of the leading scholars in each respective specialty within the history of Judeophobia, while *A Convenient Hatred* is a single author monograph written for a general audience. Albert S. Lindemann and Richard S. Levy's anthology (*Antisemitism*) augurs in the direction of discontinuity in the periodization of antisemitism, while Phyllis Goldstein (*A Convenient Hatred*) tells a straightforward narrative. *Antisemitism* is a densely written set of essays, synthesizing in fifteen chapters, each of about fifteen pages (perfect for a semester college course), the main claims made by scholars in the respective periods that they cover (pre-Christianity; from Jesus to Constantine; the Middle Ages; late medieval and early modern era; the Enlightenment; and the modern period, broken down into national or regional histories, with individual chapters on Nazism, Judaism within the Islamic world until 1948, and Israel and antisemitism). *A Convenient Hatred* tracks much the same territory, but the history of Jews and Islam is integrated into the broader story. *A Convenient Hatred* also offers a lot of the social history of Jews digested to inform as large an audience as possible, starting with smart high school students, who are part and parcel of Facing History and Ourselves target audience.[1] Little of this general background makes it into the Lindemann and Levy volume. This makes *A Convenient Hatred* about double the length of *Antisemitism*, but nonetheless far more easily digested than the shorter, but more academically oriented chapters in *Antisemitism*.

Lindemann and Levy's volume is a superb collection of acute, synthetic statements by experts in their individual fields. But the structure of the volume creates its own problems. The many scholarly voices represented mean that some of the core debates within the broader field remain unresolved. The first of these is the question of definition. This knotted issue, which raises some meta-questions for scholars, is entirely sidestepped by Goldstein. Since this will be my focal point, I concentrate far more on *Antisemitism* in this review. Lindemann and Levy in their Introduction maintain that when it comes to defining antisemitism, "boundless difficulties arise" (p. 1). But other contributors to the book undermine this claim. Benjamin Isaac, for example, is less vexed: antisemitism "is briefly defined as a proto-racist set of ideas, a collective prejudice with delusional aspects" that "attributes to the Jews, as a collective group, negative traits that are unalterable, the result of hereditary factors. Anti-Judaism and antisemitism can be distinguished, in that the one is hostility based on religion, the other on race" (p. 34). Rather than attempting to summarize the contents of each chapter then, I want to pick up on how different contributors address the question of how to define antisemitism generally or within their individual eras. For as Lindemann and Levy state in their Conclusion, "all the authors grapple with that problem, implicitly or explicitly" (p. 250).

Lindemann and Levy want to complicate how antisemitism is understood. Much of the Introduction and Conclusion takes the form of a series of approaches to antisemitism that really function as straw men to be batted down as irremediably simplistic. Antisemitism, they maintain, has been ascribed to "the nature of Jews" on the one hand, while on the other hand it has been regarded as entirely independent of Jewish activities or "Jewish nature." Neither of these antipodes will do. Religious

thinkers–Jewish and non-Jewish–have claimed that anti-Jewish hatred "reflects God's will," another viewpoint they state is simply beyond the pale. While "scholars accept that hard times–plagues, wars, revolutions, economic depressions, natural disasters–have constituted … a common background to the most important episodes of antisemitic passion and violence," this also "tends to work in the direction of minimizing personal responsibility and maximizing the role of impersonal forces," write Lindemann and Levy (p. 12). They also problematize the "often puzzling disconnect between antisemitic attitudes and anti-Jewish action," offering as examples Lord Balfour, Winston Churchill, Harry Truman, and most tellingly Georges Picquart, the general with strong antisemitic prejudices who nonetheless broke open the Dreyfus affair by refusing to acquiesce to his commanders wishes to overlook the improprieties in the case (p. 13).

Following a chapter that squelches simple formulations about antisemitism and its causes, Isaac's chapter, "The Ancient Mediterranean and the Pre-Christian Era," begins with his definition of antisemitism and he maintains that both anti-Judaism and antisemitism were evident in the ancient Mediterranean. His approach is akin to Peter Schäfer's *Judeophobia: Attitudes towards the Jews in the Ancient World* (1997), treating the period in terms of the myths that were produced by a coterie of writers divided into three categories: Hellenistic Egyptians, Hellenistic non-Egyptians, and Romans.[2] Advanced by Hellenistic Egyptians was a pathologizing counternarrative to the Exodus story, charges that Jews were atheists and claims that they worshipped a donkey, engaged in cannibalism, and practiced human sacrifice. Non-Egyptian Hellenes maintained that Jews cut themselves off from the rest of humanity, were cowards, and mocked the Sabbath. While some Romans were impressed by Jews, many thought the exclusive monotheism of the Jews was bizarre, that their dietary restrictions separated them from others, and that Jewish rites like circumcision made Jews soft and effeminate. Ancient Judeophobia thus prepared the soil of Jewish opprobrium with a collection of stereotypes in the three centuries before Christ. But Isaac ends by stating that what grew in this soil was wholly different from the key tropes about Jews and Judaism that emerged in the Christian and modern periods (emphasizing usury and conspiracy, for example). One real limit to Isaac's chapter is that he provides little background to those unfamiliar with the subject, as will be the case for most of our students. This is where *A Convenient Hatred* is a useful supplement.

Philip Cunningham is better at trying to explain the context that he analyzes. Unlike Isaac who opens with definitional concerns, Cunningham in his chapter, "Jews and Christians from the Time of Christ to Constantine's Reign," does not take up the definitional issue until the conclusion of his careful overview of the parting of the ways between Judaism and Christianity: "If antisemitism is technically defined as a racialist hatred of Jews simply for being alive," he writes, "then such antisemitism cannot be said to have existed during the first through fourth century CE." He continues, "In comparison to racial antisemitism, the delegitimization of Jewish traditions represented by Christian supersessionism is more properly termed anti-Judaism–opposition to Jewish religious tenets and practices. Even anti-Judaism is difficult to ascribe to those earliest Jewish church leaders who debated fiercely with Jewish contemporaries. They understood themselves to be part of an eschatologically empowered Jewish community and contended with other Jews who disbelieved this. Their polemical assertions assumed a more anti-Jewish character when reiterated and assembled by later Gentile Christians" (p. 61). In summing up his chapter thus, Cunningham is likely not using the same definition of proto-racism as Isaac, for whom "negative traits that are unalterable" is the tipping point for antisemitism. Contra Isaac, this actually seems like thin grounds on which to maintain that racism already existed in the ancient world. Cunningham's careful delineation of the fissures among Jews in the first three centuries of the Common Era helps to illustrate this. Cunningham operates instead with a notion more like "contestant enmity," which is Zygmunt Bauman's term for groups that constitute a powerful threat to a way of life. This is what characterized the identity struggle and boundary drawing between the growing Jesus movement and the establishment of Christians as wholly separate and in competition with the scorned Pharisees of the New Testament.[3]

Alex Novikoff's excellent overview of the Middle Ages does not raise these thorny issues of definition. He marches quickly across a thousand years of anti-Jewish ideology from Augustine's formative role in establishing the doctrine of Jewish witness as part of the Christianization of the Roman Empire to the expulsions of Jews in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. Novikoff sums up neatly what he recounts: "The compound influence of Crusading violence, polemical and institutional attacks, and defamatory popular charges [blood libel, host desecration, and well poisoning]–as well no doubt as other resentments such as against Jewish usurers and moneylenders–yielded some of the most famous manifestations of late medieval anti-Jewish legislation: municipal and royal expulsions" (p. 75). As close as we

get to how to define antisemitism in the medieval period, which Novikoff refuses to do since the Middle Ages were "decidedly not monolithic," is his overview of the recent historiography on this topic, which closes his chapter (p. 76). He discusses Gavin Langmuir's formative contribution, *Toward a Definition of Antisemitism* (1990), whose chapter of that same title is where I begin my class on antisemitism. This allows us to develop a conceptual vocabulary that distinguishes between stereotypes, prejudice, discrimination, racism, and genocidal antisemitism, among other terms, so that these are not all collapsed, which is the abiding problem with the term "antisemitism" and why these definitional matters need to be taken up once more. Novikoff also parses Jeremy Cohen's *The Friars and the Jews: The Evolution of Medieval Anti-Judaism* (1984), which focuses on how "the mendicants … attacks on rabbinic literature in the thirteenth century contravened the hitherto prevailing Augustinian view." He also addresses the contributions of R. I. Moore, Anna Sapir Abulafia, and Robert Chazan. They are each singled out for their work elucidating "the complex nature of medieval anti-Judaism and antisemitism" (p. 77). For Novikoff, like others in Lindemann and Levy, neither anti-Judaism nor antisemitism is singular, undifferentiated, or uncomplicated. But as such, attention to definitions merits more of our attention.

When Ralph Keen comes down to defining how anti-Jewish animus operated in the late medieval and early modern periods, he states that these years "are grounded in a religious view of the relation of Judaism to Christianity, they are obviously related–and equally distinct from the racial antisemitism that would follow in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries" (p. 92). In saying this, Keen indirectly locates this period as the moment of transition in the discourses, practices, and institutions that racialized anti-Judaism. Like Keen, there is little bother with conceptual matters in Jonathan Karp's nonetheless excellent chapter, "Antisemitism in the Age of Mercantilism." Instead, he zeros in on a crucial organizing trope in this era: "While no single motif encompasses all of the important antisemitic trends during the early modern period, the image of Jews as infidels granted power to rule Christians by means of economic privilege is among the most potent and pervasive" (p. 105).

If Keen's and Karp's chapters implicitly allow one to locate the early modern period as transformational in the shift of anti-Judaism to antisemitism as I would contend, then Adam Sutcliffe explicitly denies this in his summation in his chapter "The Enlightenment, French Revolution, Napoleon." He maintains, "Attitudes to Judaism in the Enlightenment era were, above all, highly ambivalent. Although some prominent figures–most notably Voltaire–were particularly venomous towards Jews and Judaism, in general it makes little sense to attempt to identify a lineage of pure antisemitism running through this period. Hostility toward Jewish religious traditionalism was often combined with an idealization of the past glory and future potential of the Jews, while disdain for the cultural, economic, and physical condition of contemporary Jewry was a ubiquitous hallmark of the proponents of Jewish emancipation. It is also largely misleading to search in this period for the bridge between medieval religious antisemitism and modern secular antisemitism" (p. 119). But perhaps Sutcliffe comes to this conclusion because he does not spend enough time correlating the development of Enlightenment thinkers' attitudes toward Jews and toward race. He is fully aware of "the fraught interrelation, from the outset, of two currents of thought that emerged almost simultaneously in the final quarter of the eighteenth century: the debate on Jewish emancipation and the classification and hierchization of 'race"' (p. 114). But the only figure he mentions in this regard is Johann Friedrich Blumenbach. Blumenbach fits nicely into Sutcliffe's emphasis for he was ambivalent about Jews since "Jewish diasporic diversity problematized these scholars' [like Blumenbach's] general analytical drive to align geography with race and culture." As Sutcliffe also maintains, however, "the debate on Jewish emancipation immediately emerged as a key test case for theories of racial immutability" (p. 115). So he might well have put Immanuel Kant into this conversation, for example, since he was such a central thinker for the German Enlightenment, and his writings on physical anthropology were integral in the development of a scientific conception of "race" even as Kant insisted that the entry of Jews into modernity required "'the euthanasia of Judaism"' (p. 117). At the very least, Kant's writings raise the issue of the need for further attention to how the secularization of religious categories worked in bringing about systems of racial classification and antisemitism concomitantly.

In making the turn from chronology into national and regional histories, Levy discusses the origins of the construct "antisemitism" in his chapter, "Political Antisemitism in Germany and Austria, 1848-1914." He notes that "the neologism *antisemitism* dates from the last stages of the struggle for Jewish equality," more specifically from the pen of Wilhelm Marr, and it spread quickly as a term by "allies, enemies, and bystanders" (p. 123). As Levy shows, organized, systematic, politicized, and racialized forms of Jew hatred coalesced into a political movement in central and western Europe in this pe-

riod, launching campaigns slinging this new word. The new vocabulary indicated a new context: with new discourses, new technologies, and a new mass politics that undergirded new forms of state power.

Richard Golsan's wonderful treatment in his chapter "Antisemitism in Modern France" takes aim at a key explanatory model for understanding antisemitism in France in these years. He rejects the conventional model of "two Frances" at war within French culture, opting instead for the categories developed in Jean-Paul Sartre's *Anti-Semite and Jew* (1946), which condemned not only the antisemitism aimed at Alfred Dreyfus and during the Vichy era, but also the more subtle anti-Jewish rhetoric of the French Republican social contract. Wrote Sartre: "'whereas the former wishes to destroy him as a man and leave nothing but the Jew … the latter wishes to destroy him as a Jew and leave nothing in him but the man, the abstract and universal subject of the rights of man and the rights of the citizen"' (p. 142). So, concludes Golsan, "Sartre's analysis in *Anti-Semite and Jew* acts as a better guide than the two France theory," since it was "the complacency and accommodation of the so-called democrat, tinged with antisemitism himself, that paved the way for the horrors of Vichy" (pp. 145, 147).

William Rubinstein, for his part, insists that "throughout the English-speaking world, the forces of liberalism were sufficiently strong to marginalize and minimize serious or violent antisemitism. Neither ideological antisemitism nor visceral folk hatred of the Jews became significant in the English-speaking world" (p. 164). But in making this statement, he downplays a spate of new historiography that has turned away from the template of central and even western Europe in thinking about antisemitism to locate a unique cultural form of anti-Jewish bias in the English-speaking world that was quite powerful, even if it made little impact on political or ideological movements, since it was characterized more by codes of behavior and modes of thought.

Like several of the other chapters, Heinz-Dietrich Löwe is more committed to covering the diversity of antisemitism in Russia and the Soviet Union rather than locating its central motifs or its essential political arrangements, which varied considerably in the long period that he treats. But Doris Bergen's treatment in "Antisemitism in the Nazi Era" once more raises meta-definitional questions. She problematizes "the linear equation often assumed (extreme antisemitism–>Nazism–>Holocaust) to consider instead how antisemitism *functioned* within the Nazi system of destruction" (emphasis added). Her approach is therefore to understand antisemitism from a functionalist perspective–what an insightful twist on the intentionalist-functionalist divide! She insists that "antisemitism must be understood as not only a set of convictions and rituals but as specific policies and practices that targeted Judaism and Jews, individually and collectively." And her chapter deftly navigates how this unfolded through the "three stages of Nazi antisemitism" (p. 198).

Norman Stillman opens his chapter, "Anti-Judaism and Antisemitism in the Arab and Islamic World prior to 1948," by reminding readers that "like nationalism, socialism, fascism, and other modern intellectual and political movements, antisemitism is a European import of fairly recent vintage into the Muslim world" (p. 212). Nonetheless, "the birth of the state of Israel, the Palestinian refugee problem, and the resounding military defeats of 1948, 1956, and 1967 hardened and embittered Arab attitudes toward Jews generally. All of the labels and canards of European antisemitism now took on a greater resonance than ever and became commonly accepted in both elite and popular circles. Antisemitic literature in Arabic grew exponentially, always drawing upon the intellectual and literary foundations of the nineteenth and the first half of the twentieth centuries. This imported ideology was combined in a more or less integrated fashion with the most negative aspects of traditional Islamic anti-Judaism" (p. 220).

That István Deák's excellent piece, "Antisemitism in Eastern Europe," appears between two chapters that concentrate on the Islamic world and the Middle East is an organizational blunder in the book. But it makes little difference when you are assigning chapters on a syllabus. Still, it really does not make much sense that Meir Litvak and Esther Webman's "Israel and Antisemitism" does not follow from Stillman, especially when he already presaged many of the points that they elaborate.

These minor quibbles aside, for a short, concise, academic overview, Lindemann and Levy's *Antisemitism* is a perfect volume for teaching this long history. Students are introduced to each era and to the national differences in the modern world by specialists, who also include a bibliography for further reading. The attributes of Goldstein's *A Convenient Hatred* are quite different, including the readability of her book, the flow of her narrative, and the embedded images and maps. Goldstein does make small errors throughout her book and several of her chapters are not based on the latest academic historiography. But her monograph explains so much that would otherwise remain opaque even for sharp students that I am glad I decided to use both of these works in my re-

cently taught course. Despite mandating more reading, I think my students appreciated it as well. This combination of secondary reading allowed us to better raise some of the definitional and historiographical quandaries that are so central for us as scholars, which really only stood out once the students were asked to stew in the primary sources themselves in order to differentiate regional differences, distinguish antisemitism from anti-Judaism, and attempt to understand their commonalities. I would submit that as scholars it is time for us to engage with these definitional and meta-historical concerns more deliberately since our area of research lags behind others in its self-consciousness about the central terms that define our enterprise.

Notes

[1]. For full disclosure, I should note that I am on the National Board of Scholars of Facing History and Ourselves, but I had no direct input into *A Convenient Hatred*, which was long underway when I was asked to step onto the board.

[2]. Isaac explains that the charge of atheism "did not mean that Jews denied the existence of any gods at all but rather that they rejected the legitimate and commonly recognized gods of civilized society" (p. 35).

[3]. Zygmunt Bauman, *Modernity and the Holocaust* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1989), chap. 3.

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