

# Journal of Philosophy, Culture and Religion (JPCR)

**Antisemitism in the Muslim World: An Analytical Review of Middle Eastern Dimensions of  
Antisemitism and Political Impact on the West**

Dr. Zack Harvey



**Antisemitism in the Muslim World: An Analytical  
Review of Middle Eastern Dimensions of  
Antisemitism and Political Impact on the West**



Dr. Zack Harvey

**Article History**

*Received 10<sup>th</sup> May 2024*

*Received in Revised Form 7<sup>th</sup> June 2024*

*Accepted 9<sup>th</sup> July 2024*



How to cite in APA format:

Harvey, Z. (2024). Antisemitism in the Muslim World: An Analytical Review of Middle Eastern Dimensions of Antisemitism and Political Impact on the West. *Journal of Philosophy, Culture and Religion*, 7(3), 1–18.  
<https://doi.org/10.47604/jpcr.2779>

**Abstract**

**Purpose:** This study aimed to increase the understanding of antisemitism in the Muslim world by conducting an analytical review of Middle Eastern dimensions of antisemitism and its political impact on the West.

**Methodology:** The analytical review applied a literature review approach, including primary documents (the Koran and Hadiths), books, and peer-reviewed literature. Data was extracted from the sources and subjected to content analysis, which generated relevant sections that depict antisemitism from different perspectives.

**Findings:** Findings from the review revealed antisemitism is becoming politically controversial due to different authors' varied interpretations of what it constitutes. Fundamentally, antisemitism is depicted as a type of prejudice emerging from the history Muslim hatred to the Jews. Hadith were also found to influence antisemitism especially when they pronounce negative words about Jews. The study further revealed that antisemitism manifests itself in the world today through racial antisemitism and religious antisemitism. The historical Jewish persecution and genocides or pogroms in the Muslim world indicate deep-rooted antisemitism. The dangers associated with antisemitism have motivated many nations to respond to antisemitism through policies and actions intended to create a discrimination-free world. The lack of evidence of success is disputed based on the observation that while negative stereotypes and hostility persist in some areas, there are also significant efforts towards reconciliation and mutual respect.

**Unique Contribution to Theory, Practice and Policy:** The study contributes to the understanding of the foundations of the persistent antisemitism in the Muslim world. Moreover, the study suggests that scholars may consider intensifying research in comparison with other forms of hatred or racism to develop new concepts, paradigms, and practices under which antisemitism may be studied.

**Keywords:** *Antisemitism, Koran, Hadith, Jews, Muslims, Middle East*

©2024 by the Authors. This Article is an open access article distributed under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution (CC BY) license (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>)

## INTRODUCTION

The resurgence of antisemitism remains an unfolding factor of the twenty-first century at a time when interfaith dialogues are becoming central discussions in the world of religion. Historically, the Jewish people have allegedly continued to face increasing antisemitism that affects their success in social, political, academic, and economic spheres. Despite the intensifying levels of antisemitism, Tobin et al. (2009) argued that few people have expressed unquestionable willingness to confront the issues with the forcefulness it deserves. Moreover, not many in the communities have grasped the systemic connections among the various incidents of antisemitism identified and the influence on humanity's interactions. Although Christian antisemitism has been well-studied, the documented scholarly evidence does not address antisemitism in the Muslim world. Moreover, relatively few scholars focus on the Middle Eastern dimensions of Christian antisemitism in religious and cultural terms, much less the political impacts in the West.

Antisemitism is a sensitive field in the world of research, policy, and practice. However, the persistent lack of an agreed-upon definition is a scholarly concern (Judaken, 2018), which has caused inconsistencies in understanding and fueled actions that deter the world from becoming a global village. Regardless of the intellectual attempts to develop an accurate definition of antisemitism, Judaken (2018) argued that its central concepts and terms lack concrete definitions, which produces the shadow of the Holocaust and the continuing Israel-Palestine conflict. Dictionary definitions aver antisemitism as a form of hostility to or prejudice towards or discrimination against the people of Jewish origin. As a form of racism, its key motivation is negative sentiment towards Jews driven by the views of Jews' racial distinction and religious suppression.

Jews' description in the Koran and Hadith reflects an intensified sense of Muslim antisemitism. Shrentzel (2018) argued that the question of the Koran's attitude toward Jews is not merely a theoretical-academic matter due to the centrality of the Koran in the past and present life of individual Muslims and Muslim communities. The question has a fundamental influence in the formation of attitudes towards Jews in the past and the present. Dozens of verses in the Koran speak about Jews; some are positive and others negative. The negative expressions of Jews in the Koran and Hadith (and those who do not believe in Islamic teachings) provide evidence of antisemitic perspectives among the Muslims. Jews' encounter with Muslims dates back to the beginning of Islam during which the sour Muslim-Jewish relationship began (Cohen, 2008). Cohen recognizes the ambivalent attitude towards the Jews of Medina as recounted in the Koran and the aggressive assault by Prophet Muhammad of Jewish tribes, which reflect the 'gulf between Muhammad's expectations for Jews' acceptance of his message and their rejection' (p 58). Since then, a sour relationship has existed between Muslims and Jews, mostly spread by the antisemitic verses of the Koran.

The historical context of antisemitism is pegged on the debate of antisemitism that encompasses a dispute between "eternalists" and "contextualists". Whereas externalists believe in the perpetual continuity of anti-Jewish sentiments throughout history, the contextualists regard each instance of antisemitism in its own time, place and situation (Consonni, 2022). The differences characterizing the externalism-contextualism debate creates a sense of contention in developing a comprehensive



explanation of the realities of antisemitism. Concurrently, antisemitism incidents are increasing in the world. While history shows that most the global violent antisemitic events have occurred in Europe, a sharp rise in antisemitic occurrences have swept across the Arab world since the early 20<sup>th</sup> century (Spoerl, 2020). Herf (2009) attributed the rise to the aegis of European antisemitic conspiracy theories.

Incidents that depict antisemitism have been rampant in the recent past. The San Francisco State University saw an angry mob chasing away Jewish students and faculty who were conducting a peace protest under police escort into the nearby Hillel (Tobin et al., 2009). The documentary, *Columbia Unbecoming*, by David Project showed that students were being intimidated by Columbia's Middle East and Asian Languages and Cultures (MEALAC) department, with Israel students being publicly denigrated and being told that they do not have 'a voice' because 'they are not Semite but Jew. Towards the end of 2004, the U.S Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights received a complaint from the Zionist Organization of America (ZOA) that described existence of an extraordinary pattern of antisemitic intimidation, harassment, threats, and vandalism at the University of California, Irvine (3). In contrary to the expectation that concerned institutions should have become attentive to these incidents, Tobin et al. (2009) expressed a that the Jewish and higher education communities are reluctant to confront the problems despite the increasing severity. Judaken's (2018) exploration of theories and debates about antisemitism exposed three salient observations about the field of antisemitism, including lack of an agreed-upon definitions of its central concepts and terms, the unresolved comparison between Islamophobia, anti-black racism, and other forms of suppression, and the vagueness that characterize the periodization of antisemitism.

The study aims to explore the evolution and manifestation of antisemitism in the Muslim World. The study further intends to provide an analytical review of Middle Eastern dimensions of antisemitism in religious and cultural terms, much less the political impacts in the West. The significance of the study is founded on the urgent necessity of Jews understanding what Islam says about them because what Islam speaks about them will have a long-term impact on their groups as Islam spreads.

## **METHODOLOGY**

The study adopted a literature-based research approach. Literature-based studies extract and analyze secondary data to answer research questions and make recommendations about the phenomenon being investigated. The study followed a secondary research approach in which data was collected from published sources. The main sources of data included primary documents, which included the Koran and Hadith. These were supplemented by books, peer-reviewed journals that included both online and offline sources. Access to data involved searching for keywords in both online and physical library catalogues. The keywords included "antisemitism", 'antisemitism in the Muslim world', 'prejudice of Jews', 'history of antisemitism', and 'ways of addressing antisemitism'. The search processes generated several sources but not all sources were relevant to the study. The sources were filtered using the inclusion/exclusion criteria for publication date, relevance, and author credibility. Sources that satisfied the selection criteria were read reiteratively

to make sense of the content. The data analysis technique was content analysis, which generated relevant sections that depict antisemitism from different perspectives.

### **Theoretical Frameworks**

Judaken (2018) expressed concerns about the study of antisemitism becoming politically controversial due to its differing interpretations of the Holocaust and the conflict between Israel and Palestine. The two competing views of antisemitism include externalism and contextualism. Based on the assertion by Consonni (2022), externalists believe that antisemitism is a distinct hostility, which is separate from other forms of racism and prejudice. Under the externalist view, antisemitism is a transhistorical force with teleological roots culminating in the Holocaust (Judaken, 2018; Consonni, 2022). Ury (2018) noted the difference between Zionist thinkers and antisemites about external hatred of Jews, in which antisemites expressing that it proves the inferiority of Jews while for Zionists it implies Jews' need of their own state as a refuge.

The contextual perspective is based on the view that antisemitism is a type of racism that emerged from the history of hatred of Jews (Consonni, 2022). Judaken (2018) expressed that restricting antisemitism to refer exclusively to the era of modern racism is common among some contextualists, which treats anti-Judaism as a separate phenomenon. However, David Engel, a renown historian, has challenged the antisemitism definition project through the argument that it essentializes the history of Jews as a 'persecutive' and 'discriminative' endeavor (Consonni, 2022). Engel's rejects the use of the term 'antisemitism' in the historical analysis of Jews due to the view that it implies existence of links between anti-Jewish prejudices expressed in varied contexts without providing solid evidence of such connection. The question that emerges from Engel's position on contextualism is whether existence of evidence a connection between the prejudices could allow contextualists to use the term 'antisemitism' in the historical analysis of the Jews.

### **Koranic Expressions of Antisemitism**

The Koran is the foundation of Islamic faith (Venkatraman, 2007). Islam's high regard for the Koran implies strict adherence to its teachings. This means that the Koranic content viewing Jews from the negative perspective intensifies Muslims' negative attitudes towards Jews. The Koran has 114 chapters referred to as suras. Each sura has subsections with varied types of religious content. In Koran 2.62, a warning is given that only Jews (Christians and Sabians) who believes in Allah and the Last day shall receive reward from their Lord if they do good. Doing good in this context implies strict adherence to the Muslim faith teaching. The exclusion of the Muslim from the list of those who should do good for them to receive their reward exposes the Koranic believe that all Muslims are 'pure' but others (Jews, Christians, and Sabians) should change their ways. Verse 2.88 refutes other faiths acceptance of what Islam knows to be the truth. The verse implies that God has condemned Jews because they have denied the truth. The Koran further views Jews as unbelievers. In this sense, the Koran recites that Allah is the enemy of the unbelievers (Verse 2.98) and whoever disbelieves the Koran is a loser (Verse 2.121).

One of the most famous suras in the Koran is the animalization of Jews and other faiths considered nonbelievers from the Islamic viewpoint. Quran 5.60 states He [Lord] became angry and made them [Jews] apes and pigs and slaves of deities. Such passage that it being taught in mosques all

over the world are not kind, particularly to the Jews. According to the Koran, the apes and pigs (swines) and slaves are placed in a worse position and further distanced from reality. In Surah Al-Baqarah 2:65, it is stated:

And you had already known about those who transgressed among you concerning the sabbath, and We said to them, “Be apes, despised.”

Apes and pigs are known to be the dirtiest creatures and the worst punishment would have been turning Jews into these to act as a threat to anyone who does not comply with the Islamic faith. The greatest threat within the Muslim traditions was a transformation into apes and pigs. In the Muslim community, ordinary sinners were not threatened with being turned into apes and pigs, but those whose sins featured some degree of Jewishness or Christianity. Animalizing the Jews could spur prejudice among the Muslims, enabling the continuity of antisemitism.

The Koranic writings extend antisemitism by looking at the Jews as hypocrites. Verse 2.135 says, “And they say: Be Jews or Christians, you will be on the right course. Say: Nay! (we follow) the religion of Ibrahim, the Hanif, and he was not one of the polytheists.” Verse 3.23 says that Jews were a portion of the Book of Allah that it might decide between them, then a part of them turn back and they withdraw. Moreover, the Koran speaks of Jews saying that fire shall them but for a few days (Verse 3.24). According to the Koran, “what they (the Jews) have forged deceives them in the matter of their religion.” In Verse 5.82, the Koran says, “most violent of people in enmity for those who believe (to be) the Jews and those who are polytheists.” The perceived hypocrisy makes the Koran to warn Muslims against taking Jews as allies because they are allies to Christians and Allah does not guide wrongdoing people (Verse 5.51).

Denying that Ibrahim was not a Jew (nor a Christian) introduces a new element of separationist in which religious personalities who exemplified good deeds are placed in the Muslim side rather than the Jewish side. In the Family of Imran 3:67, the Koran emphasizes that “Ibrahim was not a Jew nor a Christian but he was (an) upright (man), a Muslim, and he was not one of the polytheists.” However, most existing accounts consider Ibrahim neither a Jewish nor a Christian nor a Muslim, but a *hanif* person, somebody who essentially and intrinsically believed in only one God (Sidiqqi, 2009). Despite this, Muslims strongly fight for Ibrahim to his side because he was a righteous man.

The writer of the Koran explained how Jews are disallowed the good things that have been made lawful for them and for their hindering many people from Allah’s way (Verse 4.160). Disallowing Jews the good things extend the roots of prejudice or discrimination against the Jewish community by the Islamic community. According to Koran (Verse 16.118), it is narrated that those who were Jews were prohibited from relating to the Muslims; the Muslim did not do injustice to them but the Jews remained unjust to themselves. Thus, the Koran recounts that Islam had made known to the children of Israel in the Book that they “will make mischief in the land twice, and most certainly they will behave insolently with great insolence.” Similarly, Verse 5.64 says that the Lord will certainly make many of them (Jews) increase in inordinacy and unbelief, and “We have put enmity and hatred among them till the day of resurrection; whenever they kindle a fire for war Allah puts it out, and they strive to make mischief in the land; and Allah does not love the mischief-makers.”

A prominent element of the Koran's material on the Jews is accusations that the Jews were responsible for the killings of the prophets sent to them. Tottoli (2013) identified nine Koranic passages reporting that the Jews killed the prophets. The Koran repeatedly reports that Jews killed the prophets but does not name specific prophets that were skilled. This suggests that Koran is not concerned with any particular incident, treating it as a matter of common knowledge that the Jews killed the prophets and makes certain religious arguments in this light. Reynolds (2012) quoted several Koran passages, including passage A and E that speaks of abasement and poverty of the Jews, passage C that posits Jews as should not be believed despite claiming that they are faithful because they killed prophets, and Passage F that spells punishment in hell for Jews because they killed prophets among other regions. It seems that Muhammad's rivalry with the Jews of Medina caused him to develop increasingly anit-Jewish polemic.

During this fateful time, fraught with tension after the Hidjra, when Muhammad encountered contradiction, ridicule and rejection from the Jewish scholars in Medina, he came to adopt a radically more negative view of the people of the Book who had received earlier scriptures (Stillman 11:240 cited in Reynolds, 2012, p. 15).

The Koran spells painful chastisement (severe criticism or punishment) to the Jews in several verses. To begin with, verse 5.33 explains that "the punishment of those who wage war against Allah and His apostle and strive to make mischief in the land is only this, that they should be murdered or crucified or their hands and their feet should be cut off on opposite sides or they should be imprisoned." The chastisement is intended to act as a "disgrace for them in this world, and in the hereafter, they shall have a grievous chastisement." In addition to denying them the good things, the Koran expresses that the Jewish taking "usury though indeed they were forbidden it and their devouring the property of people falsely has necessitated the preparation of a painful chastisement for the unbelievers among them (Verse 4.160). The unbelievers in this context include the Jews who have rejected conversion to Islam.

Verse 5.41 explains that the unbelievers (Jews) have limited chances to be purified because "those are they for whom Allah does not desire that He should purify their hearts". The consequence is that "they shall have disgrace in this world, and they shall have a grievous chastisement in the hereafter." The Koran expresses displeasure to the holy trinity by stating that certainly the Jews say that Allah is the third (person) of the three (Verse 5.73). Such a religious practice can ignite a strong sense of prejudice from the Muslims who believe in only one God (Allah). Failure to desist from what they (Jews) say will subject them to a painful chastisement shall befall those among them who disbelieve (Verse 5.73). The insistence of the Koran that it has been revealed that the chastisement will surely come upon him who rejects and turns back increases the intensity of sentiment to the Jewish community. The greatest punishment for Jews is death, as Verse 62.6 specifies speaks to the Jews that if they think they are favorites of Allah to the exclusion of other people, then they can try to invoke death If you are truthful.

Further antisemitism in the Muslim world is evidenced by curse that the Koran spells to the Muslims. The Koran spells a curse for Jews because it considers them to be unbelievers. Verse 88 says, "Allah has cursed them for their disbelief, so little is what they believe." Based on Verse 5.13, the children of Israel were cursed and their hearts made hard because they broke their

covenant. Given the intensity of a curse in the religious context, Muslims who holds tightly to the Koranic teachings tend to express sentiment to the Jews due to viewing them as an unblessed community. The Koran specifies that only those who believe in the Islam teachings will see the lord and those who do not believe are cursed (Koran 2.62, 2.98). This means that anyone else apart from the Muslims (mostly the Jews) will not see lord. In Verse 5.64, the Koran accuses Jews of saying that Allah's hand is tied up and specifies it is Jews' hands that shall be shackled and be subjected to curses for what they say. Verse 5.78 explains that "those who disbelieved from among the children of Israel were cursed by the tongue of Dawood and Isa, son of Marium" due their disobedience and exceeding the limit.

Verse 5.13 accuses the Jews for altering the words from their places and neglecting a portion of what they were reminded of. Additionally, it mentions that the Muslims will "always discover treachery in them excepting a few of them." Due to this accusation, Muslims are asked to "pardon them and turn away" because Allah loves those who do good (to others). What this means is that the Jews do not do good and that the Islamic community should avoid them. The insistence to pardon Muslims is repeated in Verse 5.51, where the Koran warns those who believe (Muslims) not to take Jews for friends because "whoever amongst them takes them for a friend, then surely he is one of them; surely Allah does not guide the unjust people." The strong attachment of Muslims to the Koran and strict adherence to its teachings compels them to comply with its teaching, increasing their levels of hatred towards the Jews.

### **Hadithic Expressions of Antisemitism**

Hadiths are records of the words, actions, and silent approvals of the Islamic prophet Muhammad as transmitted through chains of narrators. Muslims believe that hadith is a central source of Islamic theology and law. In terms of importance hadith is second only to the Koran. Due to its significance to the Muslim faith, hadith influences the actions, perspectives, and attitudes of Muslims, including the Jews. Abbasi et al. (2010) argue that hadith supplement and elaborate the Koranic verses by providing examples of teachings and actions of Prophet Muhammad, thus, serving as a model for Muslims to follow. Hence, hadith influences antisemitism especially when they pronounce negative words about Jews.

Although Muhammad's cause of death is disputable, the Hadiths suggest one of the surviving Jewish widows might have poisoned him at Khaybar and eventually succumbed to the poison (Sahih Bukhari Volume 3, Book 47, Number 786).

As narrated by Anas bin Malik,

"A Jewess brought a poisoned (cooked) sheep for the Prophet who ate from it. She was brought to the Prophet and he was asked, "Shall we kill her?" He said, "No." I continued to see the effect of the poison on the palate of the mouth of Allah's Apostle (Sahih Bukhari Volume 3, Book 47, Number 786).

The allegation that a Jewish poisoned the Islamic prophet might spur hatred from the Muslim community. The terms that the hadith use to refer to the Jews, such as *Banu Israil* and *Yahud* are becoming more frequently used and appear mostly in negative context. Several verses, including, Sahih al-Bukhari, 4:54:524, Sahih Muslim, 42:7135-7136 displays Jews as a community that was



cursed and changed into rats. Hadith singled out Jews in Medina as men with malice and enmity aimed God's Apostle. Using the word 'Yahud' to refer to Jews appeared malicious, deceitful, cowardly, and totally lacking resolve (Reynolds, 2012).

Hadith considers Jews as a community that God has debased, cursed, anathematized forever to the extent that their repentance cannot be heard.

They are cheats and traitors; defiant and stubborn; they killed the prophets; they are liars who falsify scripture and take bribes; as infidels they are ritually unclean, a foul odor emanating from them – such is the image of the Jew in classical Islam, degraded and malevolent (Schweitzer, 2016, p. 232).

Hadith further specifies that the Day of Judgement will not come about before the Muslims defeat Jews in a fight until they hide behind stones and trees (Sahih Muslim, 41:6985, Sahi al-Bukhari, 4:56:791).

The last hour would not come unless the Muslims will fight against the Jews and the Muslims would kill them until the Jews would hide themselves behind a stone or a tree and a stone or a tree would say: Muslim, or the servant of Allah, there is a Jew behind me; come and kill him (Sahih Muslim, 2922, Book 54, Hadith 6985).

Muhammed (peace be upon him) was said to him to show that there would be conflicts among the Muslim and the Jews to achieve victory. It is said that even stones will reveal Jews' presence of them hiding behind to the Muslim suggesting that they should be killed. The hadith says that the anti- Christ will pass by the salty barren area (Madinah) most that will come out will be women man will come to intimate wife and tied with the rest. Muslims will be afflicted to kill him and his followers, jews will hide behind the tree and rock but it will betray them saying to the Muslim to kill them.

The Palestinian Authority cited the above passage of the Hadiths when they called for the killing of all Jews in 2012. This happened during the event celebrating the 47<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas' Fatah movement. The authority, Mufti Mohammed Hussein, claimed that the earth's end days will not happen until Muslims kill all Jews in a religious battle. The introducing moderator at the Fatah event said that the war with the descendants of the apes and pigs (referring to the Jews) is a way of religion and faith (Kais, 2012). Netanyahu had condemned the mufti's comments posted in YouTube by an Israel watchdog group as heinous, the message had already sunk into the ears of the Islamic community, given that the extremist Muslim Imam who made the comment is inspired by the Nazi Germany.

### **Contemporary Manifestations of Antisemitism**

The plaguing of antisemitism in the world for centuries, with the most far-reaching and violent extremist being the Holocaust, has caused significant disruption to lives, decimation of religious communities, creation of social and political cleavages, and complication of relations between countries as well as the work of international organizations (U.S Department of State, 2005). This has made antisemitism an intolerable burden for an increasingly interdependent world. Antisemitism manifests itself in the world today thorough racial antisemitism and religious antisemitism. The primary driving factor of racial antisemitism is the belief that Jews constitute a

distinct race characterized by repulsive or inferior traits incoherent with the preferred traits or characteristics within a particular society. In religious antisemitism, a person's hostility is caused by religious perception of Jews or Judaism. The perception typically encompasses doctrines of supersession that prescribes Jews' need to turn away from Judaism and submit to successor faith of Judaism. This study concentrated mostly on religious antisemitism and analyzed antisemitism from the Muslim world, as detailed in actions and attitudes of the Muslim towards Jews.

Venkatraman (2007) explained that religious interpretations of the Koran and the movement of Islamic Revivalism has continued to influence the emergence and progression of violent jihad in contemporary times. The legitimization of Islamic terrorist movement as an act of violent jihad is based on the perceived Koran permission. In the Islamic context, terrorists believe that religious sanctions permit using violence acts to defend and preserve God's will in Islamic communities. The Koran's systemization of the use of violence in relation to Shariat aspects through the revivalism discourse permits excessive aggression as a compliance with the Koranic principle of *ijtihad* ordained by God for Shariat preservation in the Islamic community.

### **Islamic Actions And Expressions Depicting Antisemitism**

One of the sources of antisemitism that the U.S Department of State (2005) identified is anti-Jewish sentiment expressed by some in Europe's growing Muslim population. The expression is based on longstanding antipathy toward both Israel and Jews, as well as Muslim opposition to developments in Israel and the occupied territories, and more recently in Iraq.

### **Jewish Persecution and Genocides or Pogroms**

Shoemaker (2011) traces the historical antecedents of the Jewish persecution to the era of prophet Muhammad. Muhammad had left his home town of Mecca in the year 622 as part of his *hijrah* or immigration in response to the invitation by the Aws and the Khazraj to unite them because they were quarrelling. A war broke between his new and the Meccans after Muhammad moved to Medina. Although the Jewish clans had maintained neutrality, Muhammad accused them of siding with the Meccans and attacked them after the unsuccessful siege of Medina in 627, killing 600 able-bodied men (Donner, 2010). In 629, Muhammad and his followers expelled the Jewish population (oasis of Khaybar north of Medina) from their homes. Although the Jews continued to exist in the Arabian Peninsula for a long time, the last remnants disappeared completely between the 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> centuries.

The 20<sup>th</sup> century saw the unraveling of the Jewish life in Iraq, which had accelerated post-advent of Nazism to power in Germany and the proliferation of anti-Jewish propaganda. The pro-Nazi Iraqi regime was defeated in June 1941, spurring an anti-Jewish attack in Baghdad amid Shavuot (the Jewish festival). Jews' sense of safety and security was shattered by occurrence of the attack (Farhoud) (The U.S. National Archives and Records Administration, n.d). The increased arrest and persecution of Iraq Jews during the 1948 war against the newly founded State of Israel and the eventual public execution of a prominent Jew for treason allegations compelled about 120,000 Jews to leave Iraq. The departure left only a small number of Jews behind to continue the community's 2,600-year-old-presence in the country. The 1941 Farhoud ended the comfort, safety and continuity of Iraq Jewry. The community was reduced significantly, which was worsened by

ongoing persecution of Jews after the revolution of 1958 and the rise of Baathist Party in 1963. This was followed by public hanging of nine Jews in 1969.

Hostility and discrimination were based on the Jewish holiday of Shavuot, June 1-2, 1941 (5701 on the Hebrew calendar), the Muslim residents of Baghdad carried out a savage pogrom against their Jewish compatriots. In this pogrom, known by its Arabic name al-Farhoud, about 200 Jews were murdered and thousands wounded, leading to destruction of property (Cohen, 2017). The violence was led by the propaganda spread through the first Arab-language Nazi radio station launched in Berlin prior to the outbreak of the Second World War, broadcasting anti-British, anti-American, anti-Soviet Sentiments. The multi-blamed the Iraqi Jews for the failure of the pro-Nazi “revolution” (which in turn forced him to flee to Tehran, whence he came to Berlin where he spent the rest of the war years), thus implicitly justifying the Farhoud. As he wrote:

Hostility that campaign not only delegitimizes the idea of Jewish statehood but also propagates the murder of Jews simply for being Jews. And if history teaches us anything, it is that the translation of such words into action is all too easy (p. 3).

Only about 15,000 Jews remain in Iran and other Arab countries because the establishment of the State of Israel has forced majority of the Jewish population in Muslim lands to flee their homes (World Jewish Congress, 2021). Despite the Jews having lived in North Africa, the Middle East and the Gulf region for more than 2,500 years after settling there at least 1,000 years prior to the arrival of Islam, Jews have been subjected to various forms of discrimination and ranked lower in societal status than Muslim. Nevertheless, their loyalty and significant contribution to the culture and development of their respective countries has remained constant. It could be expected their positive influence could make them likeable but history reveals that more than 850,000 Jews were forced to leave their homes in Egypt, Lebanon, Syria, Iraq, Yemen, Libya, Morocco, and several other Arab countries in the 20 years that followed the Arab-Israeli war of 1948 (Gruen, 2018). The 1979-80 Iranian revolution also rendered about 70,000 more Jews refugees World Jewish Congress, 2021. The drafting of a Law by the Political Committee of the Arab League that recommended a coordinated strategy of repressive measures against Jews was the initial cause of Jewish persecution.

The Holocaust between (1933–1945) was the systematic, state-sponsored persecution and murder of six million European Jews by the Nazi German regime and its allies and collaborators. The Holocaust was the attempt by the Nazis and their collaborators to murder all the Jews in Europe. From the time they assumed power in Germany in 1933, the Nazis used propaganda, persecution, and legislation to deny human and civil rights to German Jews. They used centuries of anti-Semitism (a anti-Jewish hatred) as their foundation. The murderers were not interested with destroying the communities; they traced each hidden Jew and hunted down each fugitive (Bartrop & Paul, 2019).

The crime of being a Jew was so great, that every single one had to be put to death, the apostates; the healthy and creative, the sickly and the lazy all were meant to suffer and die, with no reprieve, no hope, no possible amnesty, nor chance for alleviation. In 1939 during the World War II Germany invaded Poland therefore subjecting around two million Polish Jews to violence and forced labor the first months of occupation Jews were murdered Jews were later on confined into

specific neighbor known as ghetto's the living conditions in the ghetto was so wanting and so the Nazi also attempted hood to cause hundreds of thousands of Jews deaths. This same approach was also manifested across the Eastern Europe in other countries occupied by Elish Jews. By the end of the Holocaust, 6 million Jewish men, women and children had been murdered in ghettos, mass-shootings, in concentration camps (Bartov & Omer,2023).

The Hamas Terrorist Attack is an Islamist militant movement that has controlled the Gaza Strip for nearly two decades. The Hama terrorist attack on October 7, 2023 will go down as one of the worst terrorist attacks in history, recognizing its impact it involves understanding the dimensions of the attacks consequences as well for a small state like Israel and a small area like the Gaza strip (Byman et al., 2023). Hamas terrorists waged the deadliest attack on Jews since the Holocaust, leading to slaughtering babies, raping women, burning whole families alive, and taking hundreds of innocent civilians hostage. Since then, more than 1,200 Israelis have been killed and terrorists are still holding 132 men, women, and children in captivity. A fence wad built at the border by Israel in 1971 as a security barrier and has been upgraded and rebuilt ever since. They constructed it so that it can control movement of people and goods between the Gaza strip and Israel which it could not achieve by normal border crossing.

Hamas said its attack was in due to the continued Palestinian territories, the blockade of the Gaza Strip, the expansion of illegal Israeli settlements ,while some Arab and Muslim countries blamed Israel's occupation of the Palestinian territories as the root cause of the attack. The day was labelled the bloodiest in Israel's history. Egypt also said it warned Israel days before the attack that "an explosion of the situation [was] coming, and very soon, and it would be big. Israel denied receiving such a warning, although Michael McCaul, Chairman of the US said that warnings were given three days before the attack. Before the attack, Saudi Arabia warned Israel of an "explosion" as a result of the continued occupation, Egypt had warned of a catastrophe unless there was political progress, and Palestinian Authority officials gave similar warnings. openly practicing storming Israeli settlements.

### **The Israeli-Palestinian Question**

The Israeli-Palestinian question is a hot debate in the global centerstage. Judaken (2018) emphasized that how one understands anti-Semitism is now thoroughly wound into the Israel-Palestinian dispute.

What we witness today in the case of the Palestine-Israel conflict, is not necessarily a Muslim-Jew conflict, but rather an Arab-Zionist combat where the former would be a clash on religious beliefs, the latter on geopolitical struggle (The Weekly Al Hakam, 2003).

The ways in which Jews, Israel, and antisemitism fit into the struggles about identify and power exhibit vociferous contestation in the United States, particularly on college campuses. In the recent campus melees, activists depicted Israel as the embodiment of a colonial and racial state; Israel's treatment of the Palestinians has been likened to the White supremacy of apartheid South Africa. On the other side, some Jews have intensified complains of malicious harassment because they defend Israel and Zionism. The consequence of this has been several Title VI lawsuits based on the claims of civil rights violations against Jews (Tobin et al., 2009). In Netherlands, it was revealed that antisemitism, particularly among Muslims is linked to several cases of the ongoing



conflict between Israel and Palestinians. Similarly, some members of the Jewish community in Sweden believe that increases in attacks have a direct link to the Israel-Palestinian conflict and increased tensions that characterize the Middle East.

It has been revealed that most antisemitic incidents were nonviolent, including abusive languages, hate mail, verbal insults that occurred at soccer matches, internet chat room discussions, and persistent historical revisionism (such as the denial of the Holocaust (U.S Department of State, 2005). However, the assaults and intimidations targeting identifiable Jews have become evident from pockets of militant young Muslims, mostly Moroccans. Additionally, relatively small groups of Arab youths that formed the Arab European League and the Stop the Occupation movement have contributed to the creation of atmospheres of antisemitism in some locations. Reports by the U.S Department of State (2005) have shown that Muslims throwing stones at employees of the Jewish Burial Society at the Jewish cemetery in Malmo and the football match that ended with Muslim Somali players attacking Jewish players in June 2000 indicated heightened levels of antisemitism in the Islamic

Violent attacks are occurring continuously especially in areas primarily inhabited by Muslims. For example, February 2005 saw youths from the neighborhood primarily inhabited by immigrant Muslims assault a group of students at a Jewish school in Brussels (U.S Department of State, 2005). Several incidents of physical attacks on Jewish citizens were reported in Belgium towards the end of June 2003. The media covered a June 2024 incident in which North African youths assaulted four Jewish students departing from a Jewish school in an Antwerp suburb with student being stabbed and injured seriously. On the same day, three youths beat a 13-year-old Jewish boy; they were a Moroccan and Belgians, who were later arrested and charged with racially motivated assault and battery. In November, simultaneous suicide attacks against two of Istanbul's major synagogues killed 23 persons and injured more than 300 others, including many passersby.

### **Non-violent Expressions of Hatred or Discrimination against Individual Jews**

Several incidents that occurred in 2003 showed that antisemitism could take non-violent expressions directed toward the Jews (U.S Department of State, 2005). These included:

- Greece: Vandalism of Jewish monuments, including three times desecration of Jewish monuments in Ioannina, desecration of Holocaust memorial in Thessaloniki, and the painting and removal of antisemitic graffiti.
- Russia: Distribution of radical-nationalist newspapers that contained antisemitic leaflets and the increased featuring of antisemitic themes in some local publications. Although in cases Jewish or other public organizations attempted to take legal action against the publishers, the courts did not exhibit significant willingness to recognize the presence of antisemitic content. Some NGOs claimed that the same local authorities that refuse to take action against offenders owned many of the publications.
- UK: Literature distributed or speeches given by members of the far-right political parties and some extremist Muslim organizations expressed antisemitic beliefs, including denials that the Holocaust occurred.

- Iran: inclusion of antisemitic content in the media content, which included articles and editorial cartoons. Demonstrations that took place in Iran intensified the threatening atmosphere for the Jews due to the inclusion of the denunciation of Jews.
- Brazil: Continued appearance of anti-Semitic material on Internet websites compiled by neo-Nazi and "skinhead" groups and anti-Semitic graffiti at synagogues, Jewish cemeteries, and Jewish community centers in Campinas, Curitiba, and Recife. Moreover, reports of harassment, vandalism, and several anonymous bomb threats and threats of violence via telephone and e-mail have been rampant in Brazil.

### **The Intersection of Antisemitism and Western Politics**

Recent writers have presented the idea that a variation of antisemitism referred to as 'new antisemitism' has emerged in several occasions (Malik, 2019; BBC, 2016). The view of new antisemitism is founded on the observation that the state of Israel is a Jewish state such that anti-Zionistic position expressions could harbor antisemitic sentiments. Spoerl (2020) demonstrated that both Nazism and Islamism posit a Jewish enemy with genocidal intentions against non-Jews, thus, meriting a genocidal response in return.

The key question that continues to elicit unsatiable scholarly attention is the impact of Middle Eastern dimensions of Christian antisemitism on the politics of West. A complex interplay exists between religious understandings and geopolitical events that influence the emergence of Islamic violence in contemporary times (Venkatraman, 2007). Recent events in Western Europe displays that traditional far-right groups still account for significant portion of the attacks against Jews and Jewish properties.

Evidence shows that disadvantaged and dissatisfied youths are responsible for most of the incidents (U.S Department of State, 2005). The trend is likely to persist, given that the number of Muslims in Europe is continuously growing while Muslim communities are having limited access to education and economic prosperity. Europe's geopolitics is required to respond to the events through legislation, policy and legal actions.

### **Global Efforts to Combat Antisemitism**

The perils associated with antisemitism has motivated several countries to respond through policies and actions intended to create a discrimination-free world. Belgium's concern with antisemitism the Muslim community to vocally condemn antisemitic acts and have even participated in events organized by the Jewish community (U.S Department of State, 2005). The Germany authorities have engaged in running several tolerance-education programs, many focusing on anti-Semitism and xenophobia. The cooperation of government agencies with NGOs have paved way for implementing programs and compiling best practices for curbing antisemitism.

Netherlands introduced stricter instructions to prosecutors and the police in April 2003 to ensure proper attention to incidents of discrimination. The government's promotion of dialogue and support for initiatives has been instrumental in creating a better understanding between Jews and Muslims (U.S Department of State, 2005). The Moroccan government officials have actively tolerance and unprecedented citing of religious tolerance as the foundation of the country's tradition. In Malaysia, Prime Minister Abdullah Badawi, subsequently emphasized religious

tolerance towards all faiths. The Malaysian Government has actively promoted Islam "Hadhari", which emphasize tolerance towards other religions and a moderate, progressive interpretation of Islam. The Turkish government condemned the bombings and assisted victims and families.

Notable programs, such as the Building Bridges for Combating Antisemitism Together (Bridges) and the European Network on Monitoring Antisemitism are aimed at monitoring and eliminating antisemitism. The European Union to Counter Antisemitism is an EU strategy published in October 2021 intended to prevent and combat all forms of antisemitism, protect and foster Jewish life in the EU, and support education, research, and Holocaust remembrance (U.S Department of State, 2023). The Germany, Canadian, and Romanian initiatives, including Networks Overcoming Antisemitism (NOA) offers a pioneering approach to tackling the problem of rising antisemitism in Europe. Initiative: Appointment of Municipal Antisemitism Commissioner, Berlin Plan to Advance Antisemitism Prevention, Words into Action to Address Intolerance, and Province's Plan to Fight Racism, Hate, and Prejudice in the Classroom have been initiated to combat antisemitism by the Muslims.

## CONCLUSIONS

The resurgence of antisemitism remains an unfolding factor of the twenty-first century at a time. Increased desire international relations that define nations' relationships with the West are also becoming the central discussions in the world of religion. Antisemitism remains a sensitive aspect of interest in research, policy, and practice despite it lacking an agreed upon definition. Literature shows that Jews' description in the Koran and Hadith reflects an intensified sense of Muslim antisemitism. The historical context of antisemitism is pegged on the debate of antisemitism that encompasses a dispute between "eternalists" and "contextualists". Increasing incidents that depict antisemitism in the recent past has spurred reactions, especially considering that the Koran is the foundation of Islamic faith and its writings are tailored in a way that they extend antisemitism by giving Jews a negative outlook.

The Koran mentions that Jews are disallowed the good things that have been made lawful for them and for their hindering many people from Allah's way. A prominent element of the Koran's material on the Jews is accusations that the Jews were responsible for the killings of the prophets sent to them. Hadith supplement and elaborate the Koranic verses by providing examples of teachings and actions of Prophet Muhammad, thus, serving as a model for Muslims to follow. The plaguing of antisemitism in the world has caused significant disruption to lives, decimation of religious communities, creation of social and political cleavages, and complication of relations between countries as well as the work of international organizations.

Antisemitism has always been manifested through Jewish persecutions, genocides and pogroms, with some incidents being nonviolent. Despite the nature of antisemitism, it has far-reaching political, economic, and social negative effects on the Jewish communities. The study also showed that a complex interplay exists between religious understandings and geopolitical events that influence the emergence of Islamic violence in contemporary times. Due to this, several countries are making unprecedented efforts to address antisemitism in their endeavors to create a religious tolerance world.

### **Contribution to the Field of Antisemitism Studies**

The current review has shown that there are mostly negative references to Jews in the Quran and Hadith, and that Islamic regimes treated Jews in degrading ways. Thus, it contributes to supporting the assertion that the Koranic verses mostly provide a basis for propagating antisemitism. Given that Muslims consider Hadiths as a major source of religious law and moral guidance, their propositions can potentially affect their attitudes towards the persons it speaks about.

### **Practical Implications**

The study identified various Koranic and Hadithic passages that provide a basis for perpetuating antisemitism. There is need seeking audience with the Muslim terrorists to change their behavior and attitudes toward the Koran and Hadith concerning the Jews. Based on the study results, insistence on clarifying the context of the Koran during which the verses and passages were developed. Proper interpretation of the Koran is important to enable Muslims understand and contextualized the Koranic and Hadithic statements that sound antisemitic, thus, enhancing the positive views of Jews from the Muslims. Due to the Koran's timely process of story-telling, some scholars argue that all references to Jews or other groups within the Quran refers to only certain populations at a certain point in history. Government authorities have recognized the need to collect and maintain information of anti-Semitic incidents and other hate crimes. Moreover, the study insists that while there have been several attempts to combat antisemitism, government efforts to limit or reprimand antisemitic expressions have been infrequent in the near East and North Africa region. Governments in the region may need to increase the efforts to promote anti-bias and tolerance education.

### **Limitations of the Study**

The study relied mainly on published accounts of antisemitism. Given that antisemitism is a historical event, some data may have been published long time ago despite several changes having taken place in the recent past. The researcher attempted to filter the data sources and ensure only suitable sources are included; nevertheless, obsolescence and possible transfer of biased information may have occurred. The study also used quotes from the translated Koran and Hadiths. Messages may be distorted during translation due to word selection. Moreover, the study did not analyze modern interpretations of the Koran because the key aim of the study was to analyze the Koranic and Hadithic expressions that may contribute to the perpetuation of antisemitism in the Muslim community.

### **Recommendations for Future Research**

Scholars who embark upon the path of studying anti-Semitism alongside or in comparison to other forms of hatred and racism may consider creating and implementing a new set of key concepts, basic questions, scholarly paradigms, research practices, and narrative strategies that can collectively liberate the study of anti-Jewish animus from contemporary political concerns, and in doing so, move it to an autonomous, protected academic space (Ury, 2018). Future research may focus on evaluating the global efforts to combat antisemitism. Existing literature only focuses on



what activities that have been implemented so far but their success or failure and the extent to which they have influenced changes in antisemitism remains scarcely studied.

The discourse on Islamic violence and counterterrorism needs to be urgently studied given the numerous instances of violent Jihad in contemporary times (Venkatraman, 2007). The existence of a complex interplay between religious understandings and geopolitical events has remained the greatest influence of the emergence of Islamic violence in contemporary times. The interpretations of the Koran by informed Muslims have revealed that psychological and sociological factors intrinsic to the Jihadis influence the religious choices that cause violent Jihad. However, the ability to address these movements effectively requires studying them from all possible dimensions, especially from the cultural contexts from which they emanate. Adopting primary research to study the antisemitism phenomenon will help future researchers to generate more robust findings that will further inform theory, policy, and practice.

### **Conflict of Interest**

The research was not conducted in any commercial or financial relationships that could be construed as a potential conflict of interest.

## REFERENCES

- Abbasi, A. S., Rehman, K. U., & Bibi, A. (2010). Islamic management model. *African Journal of Business Management*, 4(9), 1873-1882. <https://ssrn.com/abstract=1866804>
- Anderson, L., & Stansfield, G. (2014). *The Future of Iraq: Dictatorship, Democracy or Division?* St. Martin's Press.
- Bartov, O. (2023). *Genocide, the Holocaust and Israel-Palestine*. N.p
- Bartrop, P. (2019). *The Holocaust: the basics*. Routledge.
- Byman, D., McCabe, R., Alexander, P., Catrina, D., Mackenzie, H. & Delaney, D. (2023). *Hamas's October 7 Attack: Visualizing the Data*. Retrieved 13 June 2024, from <https://www.csis.org/analysis/hamass-october-7-attack-visualizing-data>
- Cohen, E. (2017). The Farhoud Remembered. BESA Center Perspectives Paper No. 484, June 2, 2017.
- Consonni, M. (2022). Upping the Antis': Addressing the Conceptual Ambiguities Surrounding 'Antisemitism. *Society*, 59(1), 25-33. <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s12115-022-00665-4>
- Donner, F. M. (2010). *Muhammad and the Believers*. Harvard University Press.
- Gaunt, D. (2006). *Massacres, Resistance, Protectors: Muslim-Christian Relations in Eastern Anatolia during World War I*. Gorgias Press.
- Gruen, G. E. (2018). The Dwindling Jewish Communities in the Muslim Countries of the Middle East: Their Current Status and Reasons for Mass Emigration. In *Still Moving* (pp. 355-398). Routledge.
- Herf, J. (2009). Nazi Germany's propaganda aimed at Arabs and Muslims during World War II and the Holocaust: old themes, new archival findings. *Central European History*, 42(4), 709-736. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S000893890999104X>
- Judaken, J. (2018). Rethinking Anti-Semitism: Introduction. *American Historical Review*, 123(4), 1122-1138. <https://doi.org/10.1093/ahr/rhy024>
- Kais, R. (2012). *PM: Probe Jerusalem mufti who encouraged killing of Jews*. Retrieved 25 June 2024, from <https://www.ynetnews.com/articles/0,7340,L-4179044,00.html>
- Kohen, M.R. (2008). Islamic Policy toward Jews from the Prophet Muhammad to the Pact of 'Umar I. *Islamic Policy toward Jews from the Prophet Muhammad to the Pact of 'Umar*, 1-15.
- Philologos (2003). The Jews of Old-Time Medina. Retrieved 26 June 2024, from <https://forward.com/news/9510/the-jews-of-old-time-medina/>.
- Reynolds, G. S. (2012). On the Qur'an and the Theme of Jews as "Killers of the Prophets". *Al-Bayan: Journal of Qur'an and Hadith Studies*, 10(2), 9-32. [https://www3.nd.edu/~reynolds/index\\_files/jews%20as%20killers%20of%20the%20prophets%20final.pdf](https://www3.nd.edu/~reynolds/index_files/jews%20as%20killers%20of%20the%20prophets%20final.pdf)

- Sahih Bukhari Volume 3, Book 47, Number 786. Retrieved 26 June 2024, from [http://www.sahih-bukhari.com/Pages/Bukhari\\_3\\_47.php](http://www.sahih-bukhari.com/Pages/Bukhari_3_47.php)
- Sanders, K (2014). Sean Hannity: The Koran says 'don't take Christians and Jews as your friends. *Politifact*. Retrieved 15 December 2019.
- Schweitzer, F. M. (2016). 12 Antisemitism and Law. In *Antisemitism in North America* (pp. 223-300). Brill.
- Shoemaker, S. J. (2011). *The Death of a Prophet: The End of Muhammad's Life and the Beginnings of Islam*. University of Pennsylvania Press.
- Shrentzel, I. (2018). verses and Reality: what the Koran Really says about Jews. *Jewish Political Studies Review*, 29(3/4), 25-39. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/26500684>
- Spoerl, J. S. (2020). Parallels between Nazi and Islamist anti-semitism. *Jewish Political Studies Review*, 31(1/2), 210-244. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/26870795>
- Stillman, N. "Yahūd," *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 2nd Edition, 11:240
- The U.S. National Archives and Records Administration (n.d). After Millenia. Retrieved 12 June 2024, from <https://www.archives.gov/exhibits/ija/exhibit/after-millenia>
- Tobin, G. A., Weinberg, A. K., & Ferer, J. (2009). *The uncivil university: Intolerance on college campuses*. Lexington Books.
- Tottoli, R. (2013). *Biblical prophets in the Qur'an and Muslim literature*. Routledge.
- U.S. Department of State (2023). Report on Policies, Programs, and Actions Across the Globe to Combat Antisemitism. Retrieved 23 June 2024, from <https://www.state.gov/report-on-policies-programs-and-actions-across-the-globe-to-combat-antisemitism/>
- Ury, S. (2018). Strange Bedfellows? Anti-Semitism, Zionism, and the Fate of "the Jews". *The American Historical Review*, 123(4), 1151-1171. <https://doi.org/10.1093/ahr/rhy030>
- Venkatraman, A. (2007). Religious basis for Islamic terrorism: The Quran and its interpretations. *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*, 30(3), 229-248. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10576100600781612>
- World Jewish Congress (2021). The expulsion of Jews from Arab countries and Iran – an untold history. Retrieved 29 June 2024, from <https://www.worldjewishcongress.org/en/news/the-expulsion-of-jews-from-arab-countries-and-iran--an-untold-history>

**Dr. Zack Harvey**

Doctor of Management in Organizational Leadership

CEO & Research Director of NorCal Research Consulting.



Executive Member of NSLS. Dr. Harvey is also a member of Delta Mu Delta International Honor Society in Business and the Association for the Study of the Middle East and Africa. His recent research includes several studies on:

- 1."The Future Use of Cloud-based Virtual Technologies to Enhance Project Management in West Coast Governments: A Delphi Study" (Published on: 2024-05-11)
- 2."Best Practices of Using Cloud-based Virtual Technologies to Improve Management in West Coast Governments" (Published on: 2024-06-06)
- 3."The Potential of Cloud-based Virtual Technologies to Enhance Project Management: A Delphi Study of the West Coast Governments" (Published on: 2024-05-20)