From the Powerful and Evil Jew to the Zionist as Racist, Oppressor and Imperialist: Continuity and Change in Antisemitic Falsehoods from Ancient Times to the Present

Register: tinyurl.com/bahai-herf

Antisemitism is a variety of hatreds that has nothing to do with the central aspect of racism as Americans understand it. Because it does not have its roots in the color of skin or the cultural issues associated with color by racists, it cannot be understood through the conventional lenses that we use to understand the central injustice of American history, that aimed at African-Americans. Rather, antisemitism is rightly called “the longest hatred” because it has its origins in the Christian accusation of deicide in the story of the crucifixion of Jesus. In modern times, antisemites gave this originally religiously rooted hatred a secular form of conspiracy theories of a powerful and evil “international Jewry.” Since the middle of the twentieth century, Jew-hatred has been expressed by the extreme right, the far left, and by radical Islamists. This lecture examines the broad contours of the history of a hatred that became a form of racism not based on skin color but whose genocidal consequences flowed directly from very old beliefs, deeply embedded in Western culture of the alleged power and evil of “the Jew.” The fight against this longest hatred is central to all efforts to combat all forms of racism and intolerance.

PROFESSOR JEFFREY HERF
Distinguished University Professor, Department of History
University of Maryland, College Park