Critical Thinking Assignment: Jews perceived to have too much Power & Game Theory

The explanation of *ideology* and extracts on anti-Semitism below, along with the notes for lectures 10 and 11, will help to answer the following question: What is the common ideological impetus behind Jews being blamed for the Black Death (1348-1351), "Harvard's Jewish problem" (1922), Henry Ford's critique of Jews in the *Dearborn Independent* (1920-21), the Protocols of the Learned Elders of Zion, and the Jewish "Doctor's Plot" of 1953? What were the obstacles to assessing the evidence that would disconfirm the storylines (generally arguing that Jews had too much power) in each of these situations? How does game theory help to explain why Jews were viewed as a threat then and why they are viewed differently today in the U.S. and Europe?

What is "ideology?" Although there are several competing definitions, *ideologies* commonly refer to systems of ideas that legitimate claims to propriety, power, or privilege (Domhoff, 1983; Sartori, 1969). As such, ideologies are indispensable and ubiquitous, underlying and guiding all aspects of human endeavor. They are cognitive maps that simplify "a reality too huge and complicated to be comprehended, evaluated, and dealt with in any purely factual, scientific, or other disinterested way" (Higgs, 1987, pp. 37-38). In bestowing *legitimacy* to a position or vantage point where there may be conflicting interests, ideologies typically provide justification for "what is good, who gets what, and who rules" (Hinich & Munger, 1994, p. 11). This justification is inevitably imbued with moral and ethical judgments (North, 1981; Lodge, 1976). Although shaped by *interests,* the most successful ideologies become so ingrained in our lives that they are not questioned or even recognized as ideologies (Anthony, 2003). (Extracted from Chris Girard and Guillermo Grenier. 2008. "Insulating an Ideology: The Enclave Effect on South Florida's Cuban-Americans." *Hispanic Journal of Behavioral Sciences* 30: 530-43.)

More on *Ideology*

Below are extracts from Melvin Hinich and Michael C. Munger 1994. *Ideology and the theory of Political Choice.* University of Michigan Press.

Ideologies are collections of ideas with intellectually derivable normative implications for behavior and how society should be organized (Higgs and Twight 1987; Reichley 1981; North 1981, 1990a, 1994; Lodge 1976).

Ideologies are complex, dogmatic belief systems by which individuals interpret, rationalize, and justify behavior and institutions (Higgs 1987, 1990; Domhoff 1983; Jaravsky 1970; North 1990a, 1994; Sartori 1969, 1976). (Hinich and Munger, 1994: 10)

"Ideologies perform an important psychological service because without them people cannot know, assess, and respond to much of the vast world of social relations. Ideology simplifies a reality too huge and complicated to be comprehended, evaluated, and dealt with in any purely factual, scientific, or other disinterested way." (Higgs 1987: 37-38).

How can we explain the origin of ideologies? The most basic human disputes are over property rights, rights to food, shelter, and protection of the family from aggression. . . . In the earlier examples of robbers in the forest, the wealthy traveler would tell you he was attacked by unprincipled thugs. The "thugs" themselves, however, may assert, and even believe, their right to redistribute income from the

rich to the poor. We will argue that, while ideologies are used strategically in this fashion, they are created out of culture, history, and emotion. (Hinich and Munger, 1994: 13)

Life of its own: Once an ideology is seized upon and popularized, however, it takes on a life of its own, and politicians, clerics, or monarchs can contradict its precepts only at significant cost to themselves. (Hinich and Munger, 1994: 63)

As Patricia Marchak* (1988:2) notes, "Ideologies are screens through which we perceive the world. . . They are seldom taught explicitly and systematically. They are rather transmitted through example, conversations, and casual observation." (cited in Anthony, Peter D. 2003. *The ideology of Work.* London: Routledge., p. 27) . . . .dominant ideologies become ingrained in everyday discourse. They become rationalized as 'common-sense' assumptions about the way things are and the way things should be. (Paul Simpson. (1993) *Language, Ideology, and Point of View.* London: Routledge, p. 6)

*Marchak, Patricia. (1988) *Ideological Perspectives on Canada.* 3rd edition. Toronto: McGraw Hill-Ryerson.

Stereotypes as a component of ideology (Massey, 2007, *Categorically Unequal,* p. 11): "In making stereotypical judgments about others, human beings appear to evaluate people along two basic psychological dimensions: warmth and competence (Fisk et al. 2002). . . . In addition to subjective feelings of attraction and like [warmth], we also evaluate people in terms of competency and efficiency—their ability to act in a purposeful manner to get things done. . . . These two dimensions of social perception come together in the *stereotype content model,* which argues that human social cognition and stereotyping involve the cognitive placement of groups and individuals in two-dimensional social space defined by the independent axes of warmth and competence (Fiske et al. 2002). . . . Naturally, we think of members of our own social group as warm and competent, and hence, approachable and worthy of respect. The relevant emotion associated with in-group social perceptions is esteem or pride."

Apply the analysis of *ideology* to the extracts below:

Extract below is from Jewish Virtual Library (A Division of the American-Israeli Cooperative Enterprise):

http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/anti-semitism/harvard.html

Harvard's Jewish Problem

During and after World War I, American Jewry became the target of anti-Semitism. . . . Ivy League universities were no exception, and several of these venerable schools moved to restrict Jewish enrollment during the 1920s. . . .

Nativism and intolerance among segments of the white Protestant population were aimed at both Eastern European Jews and Southern European Catholics. In higher education, Jews were particularly resented. By 1919, about 80% of the students at New York's Hunter and City colleges were Jews, and 40% at Columbia. Jews at Harvard tripled to 21% of the freshman class in 1922 from about 7% in 1900. Ivy League Jews won a disproportionate share of academic prizes and election to Phi Beta Kappa but were widely regarded as competitive, eager to excel academically and less interested in extra-curricular activities such as organized sports. Non-Jews accused them of being clannish, socially unskilled and either unwilling or unable to "fit in."

In 1922, Harvard's president, A. Lawrence Lowell, proposed a quota on the number of Jews gaining admission to the university. Lowell was convinced that Harvard could only survive if the majority of its students came from old American stock. . . . Lowell argued that cutting the number of Jews at Harvard to a maximum of 15% would be good for the Jews, because limits would prevent further anti-Semitism. Lowell reasoned, "The anti-Semitic feeling among the students is increasing, and it grows in proportion to the increase in the number of Jews. If their number should become 40% of the student body, the race feeling would become intense."

Harvard's overseers appointed a 13-member committee, which included three Jews, to study the university's "Jewish problem." The committee rejected a Jewish quota but agreed that "geographic diversity" in the student body was desirable. Harvard had been using a competitive exam to determine who was admitted, and urban Jewish students were scoring highly on the exam. . . .The special committee recommended that the competitive exam be replaced by an admissions policy that accepted top-ranking students from around the nation, regardless of exam scores. By 1931, because students from urban states were replaced by students from Wyoming and North Dakota who ranked in the top of their high school classes, Harvard's Jewish ranks were cut back to 15% of the student body.

In the late 1930s, James Bryant Conant, Lowell's successor as president, eased the geographic distribution requirements, and Jewish students were once again admitted primarily on the basis of merit.

Source: American Jewish Historical Society

Henry Ford [founder of Ford Motor Company] was . . .an anti-Semite, who railed incessantly against "the Jewish plan to control the world" in his newspaper, the Dearborn Independent (circulation allegedly 700,000), which Ford dealerships distributed free of charge. A collection of Ford's ghostwritten columns was published as *The International Jew: The World's Foremost Problem* — a best-seller in Germany. (From "Masterpiece" on PBS: http://www.pbs.org/perilousfight/social/antisemitism/)

Power, Ignorance, and Anti-Semitism: Henry Ford and His War on Jews

by Jonathan R. Logsdon (*Hanover Historical Review* 1999)

http://history.hanover.edu/hhr/99/hhr99_2.html

On May 22, 1920 . . . the front page of Ford's newspaper [*The Dearborn Independent*] carried the headline: "The International Jew: The World's Problem." It was the first in a series of articles which were to last for 91 consecutive issues. Ford assigned the writing to William J. Cameron, [a] veteran of the Detroit News, [whom he had hired] to ghostwrite.[Ford appears as author]

[William] Cameron soon found a source for his anti-Jewish articles in the form of "The Protocols of the Learned Elders of Zion." The Protocols was a work that purported to be a transcription of

plans concocted at an 1897 Zionist conclave. At this secret meeting, high ranking Jewish officials, the "Elders of Zion," came up with 24 Protocols which were designed to enslave the Christian world through various sinister means. The Tenth Protocol represents a typical excerpt, proclaiming that it was the duty of Jews to wear everyone out by dissentions, animosities, feuds, famines, inoculation of diseases, want, until the Gentiles see no other way of escape except to appeal to our money and power.[25]

If The Protocols appeared outlandish, it may have been because they were a Russian forgery plagiarized from a 1869 German novel which, itself, was plagiarized from a 1864 French political satire. The original French work, entitled Dialogue aux enfers entre Machiavelli et Montesquieu, was intended by its author; journalist Maurice Joly, to be a savage indictment of Napoleon III. [26] The German novel, To Sedan by Herman Goedsche, replaced Joly's world domination plan of Napoleon III with one schemed by a group of Jews in Prague. Eventually, Czarist agent, Sergei Nilius incorporated this work into his 1905 effort entitled The Great in the Small. Nilius' work was designed to deflect the misery of Nicholas IIs policies onto a scapegoat, the Jews of Russia. This work was, in turn, further elaborated on in 1917 by a group of Czarist officers living in Berlin and re-titled The Protocols of the Learned Elders of Zion.[27] . . . . By mid 1921, The Protocols of the Learned Elders of Zion had been publicly exposed as a forgery. Philip Graves had researched the subject for The London Times and Herman Bernstein had written a book on the subject entitled *The History of a Lie*.[78]

More significant and damaging, however; was the publishing of a number of articles from the 1920-1921 campaign in book form. Collectively titled *The International Jew*, the articles were spread over four volumes which averaged 250 pages and which sold for $0.25 apiece. Volume I was subtitled "The World's Foremost Problem," Volume II: "Jewish Activities in the United States," Volume III: "Jewish Influences in American Life," and Volume IV: "Aspects of Jewish Power in the United States." The books would eventually be condensed into a single volume also entitled *The International Jew*. It was through these publications that Ford's message was able to reach an enormously large global audience.

In March of 1923, a reporter from Ford's old nemesis, The Chicago Tribune, interviewed Hitler himself concerning the matter. When the subject came to Ford's possible presidential run, Hitler commented, "I wish I could send some of my shock troops to Chicago and other big American cities to help in the elections. We look on Heinrich Ford as the leader of the growing fascist movement in America. We admire particularly his anti-Jewish policy which is the Bavarian fascist platform. We have just had his anti-Jewish articles translated and published. The book is being circulated to millions throughout Germany."[152] The newsman, upon investigation, found that Ford's books were, indeed, being distributed "by the car loads" and were "displayed in every bookshop in southern Germany."

References

25. Henry Ford (Introduction by Gerald L.K. Smith), *The International Jew: The World's Foremost Problem* (Los Angeles: Christian Nationalist Crusade, 1964), 144

26. Howard M. Sachar, *A History of Jews in America,* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1992), 312.

27. Howard M. Sachar, *A History of Jews in America*, (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1992), 312.

78. Howard M. Sachar, *A History of Jews in America*, (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1992), 313.

152. *Chicago Tribune*, 8 March 1923, 2.

BELOW IS ARTICLE FROM: ENCYCLOPAEDIA BRITANNICA

http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/167427/Doctors-Plot

Doctors' Plot, (1953), alleged conspiracy of prominent Soviet medical specialists to murder leading government and party officials; the prevailing opinion of many scholars outside the Soviet Union is that Joseph Stalin intended to use the resulting doctors' trial to launch a massive party purge.

On Jan. 13, 1953, the newspapers *Pravda* and *Izvestiya* announced that nine doctors, who had attended major Soviet leaders, had been arrested. They were charged with poisoning Andrey A. Zhdanov, Central Committee secretary, who had died in 1948, and Alexander S. Shcherbakov (d. 1945), who had been head of the Main Political Administration of the Soviet army, and with attempting to murder several marshals of the Soviet army. The doctors, at least six of whom were Jewish, also were accused of being in the employ of U.S. and British intelligence services, as well as of serving the interests of international Jewry. The Soviet press reported that all of the doctors had confessed their guilt.

The trial and the rumoured purge that was to follow did not occur because the death of Stalin (March 5, 1953) intervened. In April *Pravda* announced that a reexamination of the case showed the charges against the doctors to be false and their confessions to have been obtained by torture. The doctors (except for two who had died during the course of the investigation) were exonerated. In 1954 an official in the Ministry of State Security and some police officers were executed for their participation in fabricating the cases against the doctors.

In his secret speech at the 20th Party Congress (February 1956), Nikita S. Khrushchev asserted that Stalin had personally ordered that the cases be developed and confessions elicited, the "doctors' plot" then to signal the beginning of a new purge. Khrushchev revealed that Stalin had intended to include members of the Politburo in the list of victims of the planned purge.

FROM: http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/167427/Doctors-Plot

Fordham University's
Jewish History Sourcebook:
The Black Death and the Jews 1348-1349 CE

In 1348 there appeared in Europe a devastating plague which is reported to have killed off ultimately twenty-five million people. By the fall of that year the rumor was current that these deaths were due to an international conspiracy of Jewry to poison Christendom. It was reported that the leaders in the Jewish metropolis of Toledo had initiated the plot and that one of the chief conspirators was a Rabbi Peyret who had his headquarters in Chambéry, Savoy, whence he dispatched his poisoners to France, Switzerland, and Italy. (http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/jewish/1348-jewsblackdeath.asp)

Excerpt below is from JewishEncyclopedia.com: *(unedited full-text of the 1906 Jewish Encyclopedia)*

http://www.jewishencyclopedia.com/articles/3349-black-death

BLACK DEATH:
Myth of Well-Poisoning.

A violent pestilence which ravaged Europe between March, 1348, and the spring of 1351, and is said to have carried off nearly half the population. It was brought by sailors to Genoa from south Russia, whither it had come from central Asia. During March and April, 1348, it spread through Italy, Spain, and southern France; and by May of that year it had reached southwest England. Though the Jews appear to have suffered quite as much as their Christian neighbors (Höniger, "Der Schwarze Tod in Deutschland," 1882; Häser, "Lehrbuch der Gesch. der Medizin," iii. 156), a myth arose, especially in Germany, that the spread of the disease was due to a plot of the Jews to destroy Christians by poisoning the wells from which they obtained water for drinking purposes.

At Strasburg . . . more than 2,000 Jews of the city were put to death (Feb. 16, 1349). The deeds belonging to the latter were seized and destroyed (showing the real motive of the act); and the debtors of the Jews gave assurances to the citizens of protection from the consequences of the massacre (Stobbe, "Juden in Deutschland," p. 189). . . . The largest number of victims is recorded at Mayence, where no less than 6,000 are said to have been slain Aug. 22, 1349. Here the Jews for the first time took active measures against their oppressors, and killed 200 of the populace; but finding the task of freeing themselves hopeless, they barricaded themselves in their dwellings, and when the alternative of starvation or baptism faced them, set fire to their houses and perished in the flames. Two days afterward the same fate befell the Jews of Cologne; and, seemingly in the same month (though other records assign March 21 as the date), the Jewish inhabitants of Erfurt, 3,000 in number, fell victims to the popular superstition and hatred.

Voigtlander, Nico and Hans - JoachimVoth (2012). "Persecution perpetuated: the medieval origins of anti-semitic violence in Nazi Germany."
Quarterly Journal of Economics 127(3): 1339-64.

Pogroms and Jewish Settlements in the Middle Ages Jews first settled in Germany during the Roman period. The documentary record begins around 1000, when there are confirmed settlements in major cities like Worms, Speyer, Cologne, and Mainz (Haverkamp 2002). By the fourteenth century, there were almost 400 confirmed localities with Jewish communities. Pogroms against Jews began not long after the earliest confirmed settlements were established. The crusades in 1096, 1146, and 1309 witnessed mass killings of Jews in towns along the Rhine (1346).

By far the most widespread and violent pogroms occurred at the time of the Black Death. One of the deadliest epidemics in history, the plague spread from the Crimea to southern Italy, France, Switzerland, and into Central Europe. The disease killed between a third and half of Europe's population between 1348 and 1350 (McNeill 1975). Faced with a mass epidemic of unprecedented proportions, Christians were quick to blame Jews for poisoning wells. Once confessions were extracted under torture, the allegations spread from town to town. (1346)

VI. Conclusion

At the time of the Black Death, Jews were burned in many (but not all) towns and cities across Germany. . . . .The same places that witnessed violent attacks on Jews during the plague in 1349 also showed more anti-Semitic attitudes more than half a millennium later: their inhabitants engaged in more anti-Semitic violence in the 1920s, were more (1385) likely to vote for the Nazi Party before 1930, wrote more letters to the country's most anti-Semitic newspaper, organized more deportations of Jews, and engaged in more attacks on synagogues during the Reichskristallnacht in 1938. We also present evidence that towns and cities that attacked their Jews in 1349 had more pogroms before the Black Death; they were also more likely to display anti-Semitic sculptures in public and attack Jews in the early nineteenth century. Violent hatred of Jews persisted at the local level despite their virtual disappearance from Germany for centuries after 1550. By the same token, tolerance also persisted over the long term. (1386)

We show that not only initial Jewish settlement patterns but also Black Death pogroms were partly influenced by medieval economic factors. However, the same factors do not explain twentieth-century anti-Semitism. We find no evidence that geographical isolation—as proxied by ruggedness, access to river transport, and the distance to larger cities—is a predictor of the stability of anti-Semitic actions and beliefs. There is also no evidence that eastern versus western locales, large cities versus small towns, or Protestant versus Catholic areas witnessed strongly different degrees of persistence. Instead of reinforcing persistence, we argue that economic factors had the potential to undermine it. In our data, persistence disappears in locations where the costs of discriminating against outsiders was high—among members of the Hanseatic League in northern Germany, which specialized in long-distance trade. The same is true for towns and cities in southern Germany that were more open to trade. In contrast to other papers documenting the effect of deep-rooted cultural factors on present-day economic

outcomes (such as the slave trade's impact on trust and economic performance in Africa today), we find evidence for the link also operating in the opposite direction: economic incentives modified the extent to which attitudes stayed the same. We cannot be certain that vertical transmission from parents to children was crucial, yet the decline in persistence of anti-Semitism in trading cities is more in line with models of parental investment in children's attitudes that emphasize utilitarian motives (Doepke and Zilibotti 2008; Tabellini 2008). Our results also lend qualified support to Montesquieu's famous dictum that trade encourages "civility." Results from the Hanseatic cities demonstrate a link between trade openness and growing tolerance on average. (1387)

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