

ANTISEMITISM

The term “antisemitism” refers to prejudice against or hatred of Jews. “Christian antisemitism” is a specific type of discrimination, which refers to intolerance toward the Jewish religion. Antisemitism existed in Europe for many centuries, but it became widespread in the 1870s. At that time, riots against Jewish populations were often sparked by anything from negative economic conditions to epidemics to natural disasters.

For centuries, the Jewish population in Eastern Europe and Russia endured *pogroms*. Pogroms were violent attacks carried out by local non-Jewish populations. These directed assaults were organized locally, sometimes with the support of the government, and continued throughout, and after, the Second World War.

In Germany, the National Socialist German Workers’ Party (Nazi Party) gained popularity by disseminating propaganda that blamed the Jews for Germany’s loss in the First World War. They also blamed the Jews for the country’s economic problems during the Weimar Republic era of the 1920s and 1930s. Unlike Christian antisemitism, however, Nazi antisemitism defined Jews as an “inferior” racial group.