

EXPRESSIONS OF ANTISEMITISM OVER TIME

THE PROTOCOLS OF THE ELDERS OF ZION BOOK COVERS (1911-2006)

The Protocols of the Learned Elders of Zion was first published in 1905. It was said to be the secret minutes of a Jewish council plotting world domination. In reality it was a hoax carried out by the Russian secret police. Over the past century, this forgery has been translated into dozens of languages and spread throughout the world in order to keep alive antisemitic ideas. For instance, Henry Ford (the founder of Ford Motor Company) distributed 500,000 copies throughout the U.S. in the 1920s. In Nazi Germany, teachers were instructed to assign the book to school children.

View the Protocols book covers, which span almost a century and a dozen countries.

- What stereotypes and beliefs about Jewish people are conveyed through these images?
- How have these ideas changed or stayed the same over time?
- What conclusion do you come to about how strong the roots of this stereotype are?



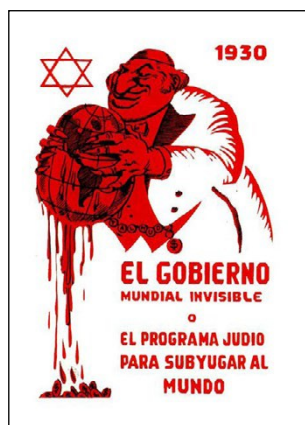
Original Russian edition, 1911



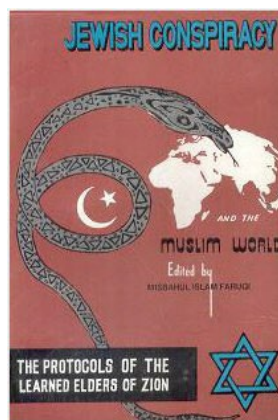
Poland, 1943



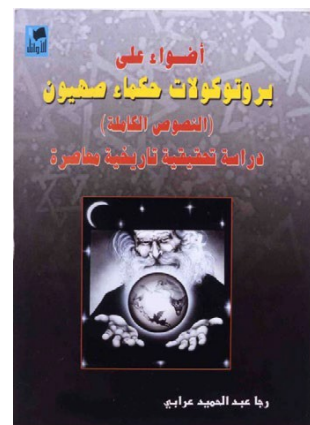
Japan, 2004



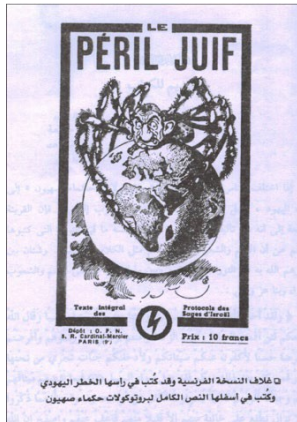
Spain, 1930: "The Invisible World Government, or the Jewish Program to Subjugate the World"



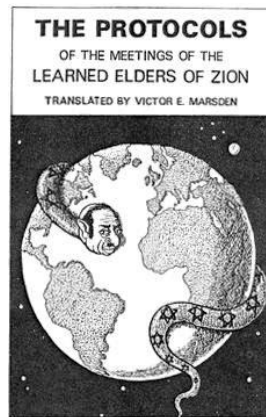
Pakistan, 1969



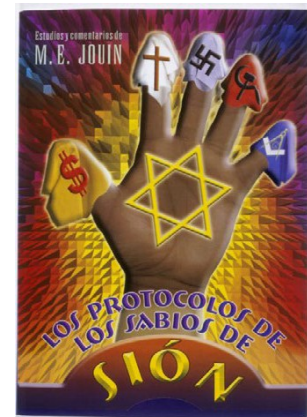
Syria, 2005



France, 1934: "The Jewish Danger"



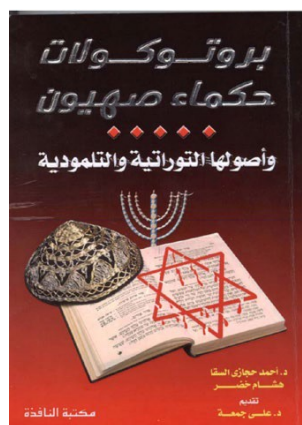
Great Britain, 1978



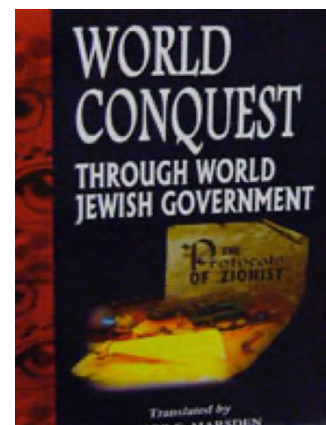
Mexico, 2005



Brazil, 1937



Egypt, 2003: "The Protocols of the Elders of Zion and their Biblical and Talmudic Origins"



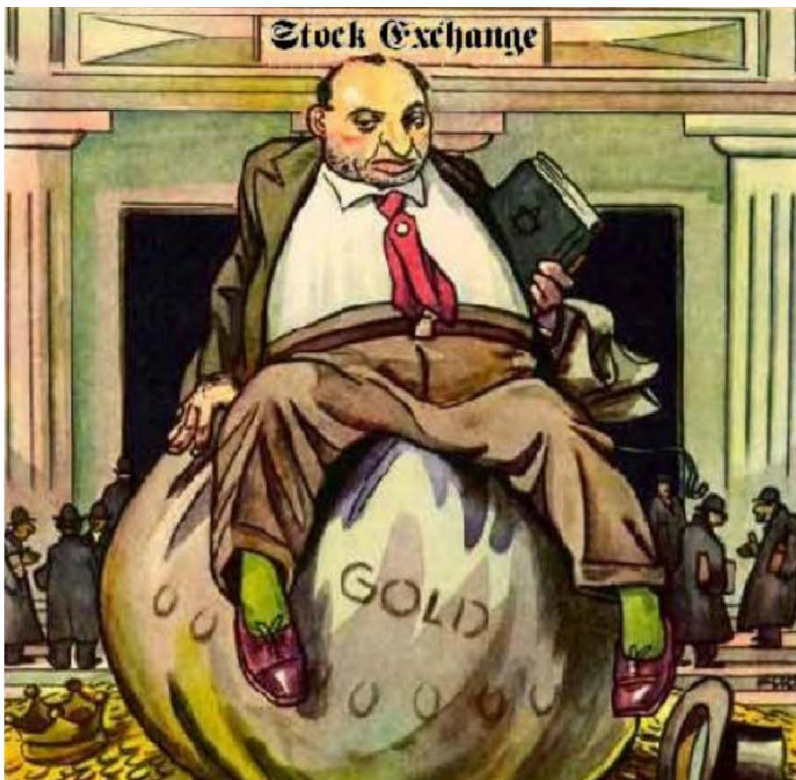
Malaysia, 2006

THE POISONOUS MUSHROOM (GERMANY, 1938)

Der Giftpilz or The Poisonous Mushroom was a book published in 1938 to spread and normalize antisemitic ideas. It was written for children and often used in school settings. The book is premised on the following idea: “Just as it is often hard to tell a toadstool [a poisonous mushroom] from an edible mushroom, so too is it often very hard to recognize the Jew as a swindler and criminal.” The book goes on to warn German children about the dangers of Jews with sections including “How to Identify a Jew,” “How Jewish Traders Cheat,” and “How Jews Torment Animals.”

In addition to books like *The Poisonous Mushroom*, antisemitic and white supremacist toys, dolls, and board games were produced in Nazi Germany and indoctrinated children with racist and hateful ideas. Some of the children exposed to these materials went on to become leaders in Hitler Youth organizations and many served in the military.

The excerpt below is from the chapter of *The Poisonous Mushroom*, “Money is the God of Jews.”



The god of the Jews is money. To earn money, he commits the greatest crimes. He will not rest until he can sit on a huge money sack, until he has become the King of Money.

The Jew is quite indifferent when the cheated non-Jew goes hungry. Jews have no pity. They strive for one thing: money. They do not care two hoots how they get it.

The Jew is not a person like us. The Jew is a Devil. And a Devil has no sense of honor. A Devil deals only in meanness and crime.

The god of the Jews is gold. There is no crime he would not commit to get it. He has no rest until he can sit on the top of a gold sack. He has no rest till he has become King Money. And with this money he would make us all into slaves and destroy us.

A NIGHT AT THE GARDEN (NEW YORK, 1939)

Read about the “Pro-American” rally below and watch the footage [at this website here](#).

In February 1939, Adolf Hitler was finishing construction of his sixth concentration camp and was just months away from launching World War II. That same month in New York City, 20,000 people gathered in Madison Square Garden for a Nazi demonstration billed as a “pro-American rally.” The event was organized by the German American Bund, a group supportive of Hitler and white supremacist ideas. Among other activities, the Bund sponsored Nazi summer camps for youth, many of whom were there that night.

The Bund chose the birthday of George Washington to stage this event and participants saluted a giant portrait of Washington flanked by swastikas and U.S. flags. Banners hung in the auditorium with slogans such as “Stop Jewish Domination of Christian America.” When the group’s leader, Fritz Kuhn, addressed the crowd, he demanded a “socially just, white, Gentile-ruled United States.” He railed against “job-taking Jewish refugees” and Jewish-Moscow domination, and called for the government to be returned “to the American people who founded it.” He referred to President Roosevelt as “Rosenfield” and Manhattan District Attorney Thomas Dewey as “Thomas Jewey.”

When Isadore Greenbaum—a 26-year-old Jewish plumber from Brooklyn—rushed the stage shouting “Down with Hitler!,” he was tackled by the Bund’s police force, dressed like Nazi storm troopers. They beat and bloodied Greenbaum, and even ripped his pants off his body. Greenbaum was arrested and fined for disorderly conduct while, outside the Garden, police kept 100,000 protesters at bay.



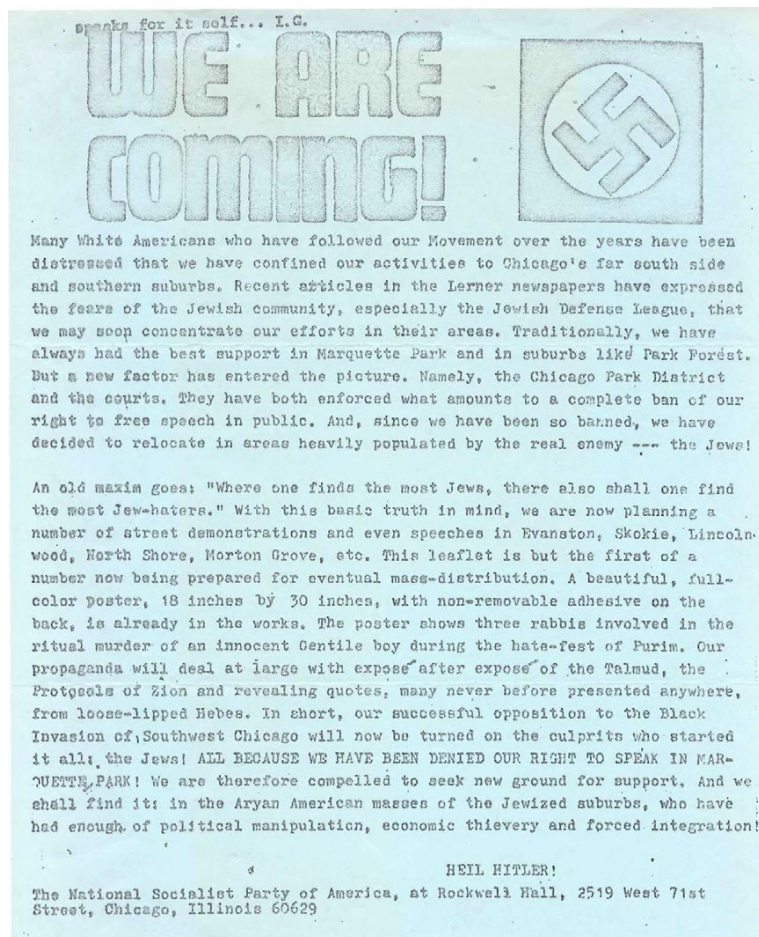
The day after the rally Greenbaum explained, “I went down to the Garden without any intention of interrupting. But being that they talked so much against my religion and there was so much persecution, I lost my head and I felt it was my duty to talk.” The Magistrate asked him, “Don’t you realize that innocent people might have been killed?” Greenbaum replied, “Do you realize that plenty of Jewish people might be killed with their persecution up there?” (New York Times, February 22, 1939).

Image from Wikimedia Commons

HATE SPEECH IN SKOKIE (SKOKIE, 1978)

In 1978 the National Socialist Party of America (NSPA), a neo-Nazi group, requested permission to hold a demonstration in the town of Skokie, IL. The NSPA had a history of promoting hatred against blacks, Jews, and other minority groups. Skokie was approximately 60 percent Jewish; its population included more than 5,000 Holocaust survivors. Terror swept across the community at the thought of a Nazi group marching through town. The community attempted to block the march by passing orders banning the distribution of printed hate materials or marching in military style uniforms. The NSPA argued in court that these laws violated their constitutional right to free speech and assembly. The case went all the way to the U.S. Supreme Court, which ruled that the Nazi group could not be prohibited from marching peacefully due to the content of their message. The court said that the feelings of town residents were not valid reasons to prohibit speech and that displaying the swastika did not constitute “fighting words.” The NSPA did not hold its demonstration in the end, but the court decision sparked an ongoing debate over the limits to hate speech in the U.S.

Review the National Socialist Party of America “We are Coming” flyer (October 1976)¹ to better understand the antisemitic beliefs that animated them.



¹ Source: Skokie Public Library Digital Collections (1976, October). National Socialist Party of America “We are Coming” Flyer

UNITE THE RIGHT RALLY (CHARLOTTESVILLE, VA, 2017)

Read about the rally below and watch “White Nationalists Chant in Charlottesville Again: ‘You Will Not Replace Us’” [at this link here](#).

In August 2017, ‘Unite the Right’ convened one of the largest and most violent gatherings in decades in the U.S. that brought together white supremacist groups including the alt-right, neo-Nazis and the Ku Klux Klan. The gathering’s stated goal was to save the statue of Confederate General Robert E. Lee after the Charlottesville City Council voted in favor of its removal. In Charlottesville, as in other places in the South, there are still monuments celebrating leaders of the Confederacy.

Hundreds gathered to broadcast their viewpoints and ideologies, carrying torches, homemade shields, weapons, and Confederate flags. After continued clashes with their opponents, a car plowed into a crowd of peaceful counter-protesters, killing one person and injuring nineteen. A state of emergency was declared by Virginia’s Governor.¹

Though the rally was seemingly focused on protecting “white culture” and the legacy of the Confederacy, antisemitism was on display alongside hateful demonstrations of anti-black racism. The protesters wore shirts with quotes from Adolf Hitler, waved banners with swastikas, and brandished Nazi salutes. They chanted “Blood and Soil!” the English version of the Nazi slogan “Blut und Boden!” One banner read “Jews are Satan’s children.” A demonstrator told a reporter that “This city is run by Jewish communists.” Nazi websites posted a call to burn down a local synagogue.



Angry mobs also repeatedly chanted the curious phrases, “You will not replace us!” and “Jews will not replace us!” which helps us to understand the connections between antisemitism, racism, and other forms of hate. According to the Anti-Defamation League, these slogans reflect the worldview that unless immediate action is taken, the white race will turn into a powerless minority — or even become extinct — due to the growing number of people of color in the U.S. This fear is associated with the equally irrational belief that Jewish people are all-powerful, that they control the levers of media and government that are causing the “rising tide of color.” When marchers in Charlottesville shouted, “Jews will not replace us!” they were condemning Jews for betraying the “white race” and branding Jews as “globalists” and foreigners who need to be removed.

¹ Source: ADL (n.d.). *After Charlottesville: Teaching about Racism, Anti-Semitism and White Supremacy*. Retrieved from adl.org/education/resources/tools-and-strategies/after-charlottesville-teaching-about-racism-anti-semitism.

¹ Source: ADL (2017, June 9). *White Supremacists Adopt New Slogan: “You Will Not Replace Us.”* Retrieved from adl.org/blog/white-supremacists-adopt-new-slogan-you-will-not-replace-us.