

1. Prof. Joseph Frank, Foreword to *Dostoyevsky and the Jews*, pp. xi, xiv
Dostoyevsky's anti-Semitism, in my opinion, should perhaps not be taken to be as much all of one piece as Goldstein tends to assume. He never admits the possibility that Dostoyevsky might have had conflicting feelings over the issue or be caught up, regarding the Jews, in the same sort of inner conflict that we know him to have wrestled with on so many other important matters... [W]hat distinguishes his anti-Semitism from all his other national, ethnic and religious hatreds is that, here and here alone, he appears to betray a certain sense of guilt. Perhaps in this respect also, as in the case of his novels, it is necessary to invent a new category for Dostoyevsky – the category of *guilty* anti-Semite.

2. Prof. Salo Wittmeyer Baron, *Ghetto and Emancipation*, Menorah Journal 14, 1928
Surely it is time to break with the lachrymose theory of pre-Revolutionary woe, and to adopt a view more in accord with historic truth.

3. Rabbeinu Nisim, Derashot haRan 1
Doubtless, those righteous people, unique in those generations, benefited from the division of the nations and empires. When a nation in one empire oppressed them, they wandered to another land where they could worship Gd as they wished, as happens for us in our exile today. When forced assimilation was renewed in the Land of Yishmael, their refugees fled to another land, and from there to Yishmael. This provides some life in the time of our troubles and enslavement.

4. Prof. Salo Wittmeyer Baron, *Ghetto and Emancipation*, Menorah Journal 14, 1928
First of all, it is certainly significant that despite minor attacks, periodic pogroms, and organized campaigns of conversion, the numbers of Jewry during the last centuries preceding Emancipation increased much more rapidly than the Gentile population.* The Jewish population in the middle of the seventeenth century probably did not exceed 650,000 out of the more than 100,000,000 inhabitants in Europe. In 1900 the Jewish population of Europe exceeded 8,500,000 while the general population was about 400,000,000. That is, the Jewish rate of increase from 1650 down to the beginning of the twentieth century (when the mass of Jewry was still unemancipated) was three times the rate of Gentile increase. Furthermore, in the same period European Jewry built the great American center.
* Pre-Revolutionary population figures given here are by no means certain. I arrived at them after a careful study of all available source material. It is impossible, of course, to give these sources here or to explain the methods of textual criticism and synthesis used in arriving at the conclusions. It has long been apparent, however, that figures given by our classic histories are far from reasonably exact, which is all that mine pretend to be.

5. Prof. Salo Wittmeyer Baron, *Ghetto and Emancipation*, Menorah Journal 14, 1928
What of the economic situation of the Jew? Despite all the restrictions placed on his activities, it is no exaggeration to say that the average Jewish income much surpassed the average Christian income in pre-Revolutionary times. This is hard to prove, and certainly excessive wealth was rare except among high nobles and clergy. But is it not remarkable that the most typical ghetto in the world, the Frankfort Judengasse, produced in the pre-Emancipation period the greatest banking house of history? And even before Rothschild's day, such Central European *Hofjuden* as the Oppenheimers and Wertheimers, and such West European bankers as the Pintos, Modonas and others, were not far behind rich Christians in their financial power.
Paradoxical as it may seem, the very restrictive legislation proved in the long run highly beneficial to Jewish economic development. It forced them into the money trade, and throughout the Middle Ages trained them in individual enterprise without guild backing, compelled them to set up wide international contacts (the banking house of Lopez was established by five brothers in Lisbon, Toulouse, Bordeaux, Antwerp and London), and equipped them with vast sums of ready cash. With the dawn of early capitalism, and the need for ready money for the new manufactures and international trading ventures, the Jew fitted readily into the new economic structure.

6. Prof. Salo Wittmeyer Baron, *Newer Emphases in Jewish History*, Jewish Social Studies 25:4 (1963)

All my life I have been struggling against the hitherto dominant 'lachrymose conception of Jewish history' because I have felt that an over-emphasis on Jewish suffering distorted the whole picture of the Jewish historic evolution and, at the same time, badly served a generation which had become impatient with the nightmare of endless persecutions and massacres.

Fyodor Dostoevsky: Anti-Semite?

7. Prof. Joseph Frank, Foreword to *Dostoyevsky and the Jews*, pg. xi

Jews were invariably depicted in Russian literature of the nineteenth century, from Pushkin to Chekhov, in the most uncomplimentary fashion and solely as objects of ridicule, contempt and derision.

8. Dr. David Goldstein, *Dostoyevsky and the Jews*, pg. 4

Again, according to [M. P.] Alexeyev, Dostoyevsky was undoubtedly indebted to his literary mentor Gogol for the subject of his play. It is even quite possible that Gogol's Jew Yankel in *Taras Bulba* served as the model for Dostoyevsky's hero. At any rate, Alekseyev is convinced that the Yankel of the young Dostoyevsky was patterned on the Jewish stereotype that one finds in the Russian literature of the first half of the nineteenth century, and later on, in the works of Dostoyevsky himself...

9. Fyodor Dostoyevsky, *The House of the Dead* V (<http://www.gutenberg.org/files/37536/37536-h/37536-h.htm>)

I was saying that the Poles formed a group by themselves. They lived together, and of all the convicts in the prison, they cared only for a Jew, and for no other reason than because he amused them. Our Jew was generally liked, although every one laughed at him. We only had one, and even now I cannot think of him without laughing. Whenever I looked at him I thought of the Jew Jankel, whom Gogol describes in his *Taras Boulba*, and who, when undressed and ready to go to bed with his Jewess in a sort of cupboard, resembled a fowl; but Isaiah Fomitch Bumstein and a plucked fowl were as like one another as two drops of water. He was already of a certain age—about fifty—small, feeble, cunning, and, at the same time, very stupid, bold, and boastful, though a horrible coward. His face was covered with wrinkles, his forehead and cheeks were scarred from the burning he had received in the pillory. I never understood how he had been able to support the sixty strokes he received.

10. Fyodor Dostoyevsky, *The House of the Dead* X (<http://www.gutenberg.org/files/37536/37536-h/37536-h.htm>)

Isaiah Fomitch held in his hand a bag containing the things given to him, and some other things of his own. He put down his bag, took his place at the plank bedstead, and sat down there with his legs crossed, without daring to raise his eyes. People were laughing all round him. The convicts ridiculed him by reason of his Jewish origin. Suddenly a young convict left the others, and came up to him, carrying in his hand an old pair of summer trousers, dirty, torn, and mended with old rags. He sat down by the side of Isaiah Fomitch, and struck him on the shoulder.

"Well, my dear fellow," said he, "I have been waiting for the last six years; look up and tell me how much you will give for this article," holding up his rags before him.

Isaiah Fomitch was so dumbfounded that he did not dare to look at the mocking crowd, with mutilated and frightful countenances, now grouped around him, and did not speak a single word, so frightened was he. When he saw who was speaking to him he shuddered, and began to examine the rags carefully. Every one waited to hear his first words.

"Well, cannot you give me a silver rouble for it? It is certainly worth that," said the would-be vendor smiling, and looking towards Isaiah Fomitch with a wink.

"A silver rouble! no; but I will give you seven kopecks."

These were the first words pronounced by Isaiah Fomitch in the convict prison. A loud laugh was heard from all sides.

"Seven kopecks! Well, give them to me; you are lucky, you are indeed. Look! Take care of the pledge, you answer for it with your head."

"With three kopecks for interest; that will make ten kopecks you will owe me," said the Jew, at the same time slipping his hand into his pocket to get out the sum agreed upon.

"Three kopecks interest—for a year?"

"No, not for a year, for a month."

"You are a terrible screw, what is your name?"

"Isaiah Fomitch."

"Well, Isaiah Fomitch, you ought to get on. Good-bye."

The Jew examined once more the rags on which he had lent seven kopecks, folded them up, and put them carefully away in his bag. The convicts continued to laugh at him.

In reality every one laughed at him, but, although every prisoner owed him money, no one insulted him; and when he saw that every one was well disposed towards him, he gave himself haughty airs, but so comic that they were at once forgiven.

Luka, who had known many Jews when he was at liberty, often teased him, less from malice than for amusement, as one plays with a dog or a parrot. Isaiah Fomitch knew this and did not take offence.

"You will see, Jew, how I will flog you."

"If you give me one blow I will return you ten," replied Isaiah Fomitch valiantly.

"Scurvy Jew."

"As scurvy as you like; I have in any case plenty of money."

"Bravo! Isaiah Fomitch. We must take care of you. You are the only Jew we have; but they will send you to Siberia all the same."

"I am already in Siberia."

"They will send you farther on."

"Is not the Lord Gd there?"

"Of course, he is everywhere."

"Well, then! With the Lord Gd, and money, one has all that is necessary."

"What a fellow he is!" cries every one around him.

The Jew sees that he is being laughed at, but does not lose courage. He gives himself airs. The flattery addressed to him causes him much pleasure, and with a high, squealing falsetto, which is heard throughout the barracks, he begins to sing, "la, la, la, la," to an idiotic and ridiculous tune; the only song he was heard to sing during his stay at the convict prison. When he made my acquaintance, he assured me solemnly that it was the song, and the very air, that was sung by 600,000 Jews, small and great, when they crossed the Red Sea, and that every Israelite was ordered to sing it after a victory gained over an enemy.

11. Fyodor Dostoyevsky, *The House of the Dead* X (<http://www.gutenberg.org/files/37536/37536-h/37536-h.htm>)

The eve of each Saturday the convicts came from the other barracks to ours, expressly to see Isaiah Fomitch celebrating his Sabbath. He was so vain, so innocently conceited, that this general curiosity flattered him immensely. He covered the table in his little corner with a pedantic air of importance, opened a book, lighted two candles, muttered some mysterious words, and clothed himself in a kind of chasuble, striped, and with sleeves, which he preserved carefully at the bottom of his trunk. He fastened to his hands leather bracelets, and finally attached to his forehead, by means of a ribbon, a little box, which made it seem as if a horn were starting from his head. He then began to pray. He read in a drawling voice, cried out, spat, and threw himself about with wild and comic gestures. All this was prescribed by the ceremonies of his religion. There was nothing laughable or strange in it, except the airs which Isaiah Fomitch gave himself before us in performing his ceremonies. Then he suddenly covered his head with both hands, and began to read with many sobs. His tears increased, and in his grief he almost lay down upon the book his head with the ark upon it, howling as he did so; but suddenly in the midst of his despondent sobs he burst into a laugh, and recited with a nasal twang a hymn of triumph, as if he were overcome by an excess of happiness.

12. L. P. Grossman, *Dostoyevsky i yudaizm*, cited in Goldstein pp. 29-30

The prisoner-buffoon – though maybe the author didn't intend it that way – evokes the profound sympathy of the readers of *The House of the Dead*. We see this frail, sickly, almost-old man innocently hurled into the penal hell of Siberia, amidst a pack of criminals brimming with scorn and derision for his national origins, steadfastly and openly upholding the faith of his forefathers.

13. P. A. Berlin, *Dostoyevsky i yevrei*, cited in Goldstein pg. 17

Dostoyevsky could very well have rendered this pitiful and repulsive type with disgust and left it at that. But he devotes an entire chapter to him that is tinged with benevolence and curiosity... We can find no other explanation for it except that Dostoyevsky, living side by side with this pathetic Jew, hearing him pray with passion and fervor... discovered that the Jews were not just moneylenders... he began to perceive the Jew as the bearer of an ancient heritage, with its prophets, the long-suffering Job...

14. Prof. Robert L. Jackson, *A footnote to Selo Stepancikovo*, cited in Goldstein pg. 17

Isaj Fomic, for all his entertaining vanity and posturing, was clearly the epitome of that moral and spiritual disfigurement that Dostoyevsky had observed in the "insulted and injured"... Yet Dostoyevsky... did not lift even a corner of the comic curtain that concealed the *tragic* life of the Jew Isaj Fomic Bumstein.

15. Anna Dostoyevskaya, *Diary 1867*

The hotel cost about 8 rubles. When we were ready to leave, some Yid came to our room and asked us to buy something from him. We had forgotten to bring along soap, so I bought from him a piece of egg soap for 15 kopecks. A friend of his offered to us some kind of Polish icon, that, according to his words, cost him 15 rubles, but he was willing to sell us for much cheaper; all the same, we declined to buy it. Before long, our entire room became full of Yids who wanted to help us; everyone was saying farewell and rushed to move our luggage, and, in the end, all of them of course asked for a tip. We were already sitting on the coach and started to move, when suddenly we were besieged by another Yid; he wanted us to sell two amber cigarette holders - we told him to get lost.

16. Dr. David Goldstein, *Dostoyevsky and the Jews*, pp. 50-51

Now that it fell to the great Russian nation to fulfill the Messianic idea, it was essential to disqualify that people who had given the idea to the world. Thus, in this new period and to the end of his life, Dostoyevsky's attitude toward the Jews would take on a new dimension: Jews are no longer just an object of derision and contempt, they represent a dark and sinister force detrimental to the accomplishment of Russia's historical mission.

17. Dr. David Goldstein, *Dostoyevsky and the Jews*, pg. 91

As originally conceived, Slavophilism was based on two fundamental principles: on the one hand, the rejection of Western ideas... on the other, the affirmation of Russia's originality, its specificity... But toward the close of the sixties and, particularly, in the decade that followed, Slavophilism would assume – among a certain segment of its supporters – a more militant and chauvinistic character; it would discover and proclaim the brotherhood of all the Slav peoples and their aspirations for unity and thus become endowed with a third principle: Pan Slavism...

18. Fyodor Dostoyevsky, *Diary of a Writer* (1876)

Now the Yids are becoming landowners, and people shout and write everywhere that they are destroying the soil of Russia. A Yid, they say, having spent capital to buy an estate, at once exhausts all the fertility of the land he has purchased in order to restore his capital with interest. But just try and say anything against this and the hue and cry will be at once raised: you are violating the principles of economic freedom and equal rights for all citizens. But what sort of equal rights are there here if it is a case of a clear and Talmudic *status in statu* above all and in the first place; if this is not only the exhaustion of the soil but also the future exhaustion of our peasant, who, having been liberated from the landowners, unquestionably and very soon will be driven—as a *commune in corpore*—into a much worse slavery of far more pernicious landowners—those same landowners who have already drained the sap out of the peasant in Western Russia; those who are now purchasing not only estates and peasants, but who have begun to buy liberal opinion, and who continue to do so quite successfully... As I see it, it is by no means due to our inaptitude or our incapacity for action, but rather to our continuing ignorance of Russia, of her essence and individuality, of her meaning and spirit...

19. Fyodor Dostoyevsky, *Diary of a Writer* (1877) – "The Jewish Question"

I know that in the whole world there is certainly no other people who would be complaining as much about their lot, incessantly, after each step and word of theirs – about their humiliation, their suffering, their martyrdom. One might think

it is not they who are reigning in Europe, who are directing there at least the stock exchanges and, therefore, politics, domestic affairs, the morality of the states... Now, how would it be if in Russia there were not three million Jews, but three million Russians, and there were eighty million Jews – well, into what would they convert the Russians and how would they treat them? Would they permit them to acquire equal rights? Would they permit them to worship freely in their midst? Wouldn't they convert them into slaves? Worse than that: wouldn't they skin them altogether? Wouldn't they slaughter them to the last man, to the point of complete extermination, as they used to do with aliens in ancient times, during their ancient history?

20. Attributed to Fyodor Dostoyevsky, *The Nineteenth Issue of Day*, Time 2 (1862)

Day makes itself a laughing stock, it alone lays itself open to shame and ridicule... What, then, are the Jews after all? Are we to suppose that they are not human beings but wild beasts dangerous to the moral order and to all private, public and governmental life? Pitiably friends who do more harm to Christianity than do its enemies!...

Inimical! Contrary! In what way inimical? In what way contrary? Could anyone who was really interested in the question and really sensed a danger confine himself to such a hollow allegation?

21. Dr. David Goldstein, *Dostoyevsky and the Jews*, pg. 44

In short, Dostoyevsky conceived of *pochvennichestvo* as a synthesis of Slavophile and Westernizing thought. And *Time*, by and large, reflected this idea and aspiration: to be neither Western nor Slavophile, but Russian.

To introduce into the polemical and radically oriented atmosphere of Petersburg journalism a doctrine that was vague, ill-defined and heavily obligated to Slavophilic thought was, however, a hazardous venture... He realized that not only the success but the very survival of his program depended on his ability to avoid clashing with the prejudices of the audience he was trying to reach... *Time*, therefore, had no choice but to join battle with the forces of conservatism and reaction while scrupulously avoiding engaging – and even supporting – the forces identified with progress.

What do we do?

22. Prof. Joseph Frank, Foreword to *Dostoyevsky and the Jews*, pg. xiv

In relation to the Jews, I would suggest, he could never reconcile himself inwardly to his own violation of what he knew very well were the commands of JC in whom he believed... From such a point of view, his anti-Semitism should certainly not be overlooked or excused; but at least it need not be considered ignoble or repugnant... And one can thus continue to read Dostoyevsky's work, where both guilt and the love ethic of JC play so large a part, without any gnawing doubt as to whether his anti-Semitism does not really turn all this into a fraud and a sham.

23. Cecil Roth, cited in Rabbi J. David Bleich, *Contemporary Halakhic Problems*, I pg. 208

Professor Cecil Roth, *Jewish Life*, Adar 5717, cites religious sanctions imposed upon visitors to Spain and Portugal. These sanctions were incorporated in the regulations of the "Society for Dowering the Brides" promulgated in Leghorn in 1727. In 1785 similar sanctions were included in the "*Ascamof*" of Congregation Sahar Asamaim of London. Roth states that such sanctions were based upon earlier regulations of the Sephardic communities of Amsterdam and Venice.

24. Rabbi Abraham Isaac Kook, Letters, 2:632

Regarding living in Spain: I have not yet found a clear statement of whether it was a decree or an oath. Presumably, they were not stricter than the rule regarding living in Egypt, which prohibited only established life. It did not prohibit living there for business, planning to leave.

25. Rabbi Meshulam Roth (20th century Israel), Kol Mevaser 1:13

Regarding the proposal in the Council of Rabbis to declare a ban in the name of the Rabbis of Israel, prohibiting Jews from walking the earth of Germany. Some of the rabbis agreed with the proposal. In truth, from a political, logical and ethical perspective, this proposal is quite correct. There is no doubt that after the upheaval and destruction that Germany brought upon us with such great and entirely unprecedented cruelty, even without a rabbinic declaration, every Jew would keep himself away, and his heart would trouble him in stepping foot on their impure earth.

Nonetheless, I must object that the declaration of a rabbinic ban, as proposed, would be inappropriate from a legal perspective, and would even be against halachah, for two reasons...

26. Rabbi Menachem Mendel Schneerson (The Lubavitcher Rebbe) <http://www.lchaimweekly.org/lchaim/5772/1225.htm>

I am in receipt of your letter in which you ask my opinion "as to whether it is a weakness or impropriety" to avoid the purchase of goods made in Germany. You add that you ask this question as a Jew, in light of Jewish law and custom. Surely this is more a matter of feeling rather than a question of Jewish law and custom. Consequently, as in all matters of sentiment, it is difficult to express an opinion that would have universal application.

At any rate it certainly cannot be categorized as a "weakness." On the contrary, a decision of this kind bespeaks strength of will, all the more so since it entails some inconvenience.

Nor can it be considered an "impropriety," since it is based on a principle which may be considered to come under the category of "Remember what Amalek did unto you." For, as is well known, the inhuman atrocities, etc., against our defenseless and innocent brethren were not perpetrated by a small group, but were carried out with the knowledge, consent and even cooperation of the vast majority of the German nation. Moreover, I do not think that anyone seriously believes that the Germany of today is entirely different from the Germany of two decades ago...

27. Rabbi Aharon Lichtenstein, *Torah and General Culture: Confluence and Conflict* (1997)

In "sage and serious" works, elements of motifs that might be problematic in their own right are depicted within a context, grounded in the artist's ethical vision, which passes implicit judgment upon them and provides moral perspective... Modern literature, in particular, often seeks not only to arouse passion but to provide moral and philosophic sanctions for acceding to it... In many respects, a novel in which authority is invariably vested in the hands of rigid pedants while its opponents are imaginative and gentle is more insidious than nihilist manifestos. Precisely because it is less perceptible, subliminally insinuated influence may be doubly nefarious.