



Semites and Anti-Semites: An Inquiry into Conflict and Prejudice

Bernard Lewis

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"A powerful book. It combines the coolness of scholarship with conclusions that cannot fail to engage the passions."—Saul Bellow

The Arab-Israeli conflict has unsettled the Middle East for over half a century. This conflict is primarily political, a clash between states and peoples over territory and history. But it is also a conflict that has affected and been affected by prejudice. For a long time this was simply the "normal" prejudice between neighboring people of different religions and ethnic origins. In the present age, however, hostility toward Israel and its people has taken the form of anti-Semitism—a pernicious world view that goes beyond prejudice and ascribes to Jews a quality of cosmic evil. First published in the 1980s to universal acclaim, *Semites and Anti-Semites* traces the development of anti-Semitism from its beginnings as a poison in the bloodstream of Christianity to its modern entrance into mainstream Islam. Bernard Lewis, one of the world's foremost scholars of the Middle East, takes us through the history of the Semitic peoples to the emergence of the Jews and their virulent enemies, and dissects the region's recent tragic developments in a moving new afterword. "A powerful and important work, beautifully written and edited, and based on a range of erudition (in the best sense) that few others, if any, could command."—George Kennan



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