Anti-Semitism: Past and Present

Prof. Lihong Song (宋立宏)
(Department of Religious Studies, Glazer Institute of Jewish and Israel Studies)
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Course Description

Anti-Semitism, or whatever names it takes, seems to locate both within and beyond the historical process, and its various interpretations in the wake of the Holocaust appear to be hardly escapable from being categorized as either apologetic or politically incorrect. It is arguably a pivotal, pervasive, thorny, and keenly-felt theme in Jewish studies. This survey course for graduate students will address various anti-Semitic manifestations from the Greco-Roman antiquity through medieval Christendom and Islam down to the contemporary world, trying to draw attention to the contexts in which they were emerged and to probe their historical, religious, economic, social, political, and psychological roots. The assigned readings are intended not only to form a holistic understanding of anti-Semitism in its temporal and spatial evolution and mutations, but also to offer the bibliographical knowledge necessary for independent research.

Some of the over-arching questions for the course are as follows and please be prepared to relate the reading assignments to these questions in our class discussion.

(1) In scholarly writings we frequently encounter terms like “Judeophobia”, “anti-Judaism”, “anti-Israel”, “anti-Zionism”, so on and so forth. Are they interchangeable with “anti-Semitism”? Why is it necessary to coin a plethora of terms?
(2) What is the pattern of continuity and change in various anti-Semitic manifestations?
(3) Is anti-Semitism unique? How is anti-Semitism similar to and different from other prejudices or ethnic hatred?
(4) How is anti-Semitism connected with and affected by imperialism, colonialism, (trans-)nationalism, racism, and globalization?
(5) What can we do when facing anti-Semitic or similar discourses and praxes?

Requirements and Evaluations

- Reading: Students MUST attend class having read the assigned readings each week and having prepared thoughtfully to discuss the issues raised. This will be measured through summarizing the major points and arguments of the readings.
- Attendance: One absence will be considered unremarkable. More than two absences will require explanation and will affect the final grade.
- Participation: The course will emphasize discussion. Full participation is expected.
- Presentation: Each student will make a presentation of at least 30 minutes on a topic of his/her choice.
- Final paper: The paper, with minimum 4,000 Chinese characters, should be based on the presentation. It is expected to be fully annotated and included with a bibliography.
- Grading: attendance 10%, class participation 30%, presentation 20%, and final paper 40%.
Required Texts:
(1) Xu Xin, Studies in Antisemitism, Shanghai Sanlian Shudian, 1996.

Suggested Readings:
(3) Institute for the Study of Global Antisemitism and Policy (ISGAP) http://isgap.org
(Note its “Publications”)

Week 1: Reflections on Definitions and the Disciplinary Framework

Week 2: Judeophobia in the Greco-Roman World

Week 3: Kata Ioudaion/Adversus Judaeos of the Christian Fathers

Week 4: Anti-Judaism in the Medieval Christendom
(2) Xu Xin, Studies in Antisemitism, Related Part.
(3) Selected medieval artistic representations of ritual murder, desecration of the hosts, blood libel, etc.
(4) Hyam Maccoby, Judaism on Trial: Jewish-Christian Disputations in the Middle Ages, Shanghai Daxue Chubanshe, 1996. Recommended

Week 5: Antisemitism in Modern Europe
(1) Paul Mendes-Flohr and Jehuda Reinharz, eds. The Jew in the Modern World: A

(2) Jacob Katz, From Prejudice to Destruction: Anti-Semitism, 1700-1933, Cambridge, Mass.: 1980, selections

Week 6: Jewish Self-Hatred
(1) 奥托・魏宁格：《性与性格》(Otto Weininger, Sex and Character), 译林出版社，2011年，第13章（esp. Chapter 13）。
(2) Robert Wistrich, Laboratory for World Destruction: Germans and Jews in Central Europe, Chapter 12 (Karl Kraus: an anatomy of self-hatred)

Week 7: Muslim and Anti-Semitism I: Overview and Roots

Week 8: Muslim and Anti-Semitism II: Contemporary Manifestations

Week 9: Jews and the Modern Economic Life: Is Sombart Antisemitic or Philosemitic?
(1) 桑巴特：《犹太人与现代资本主义》(Werner Sombart, The Jews and Modern Capitalism)，上海三联书店，2015年[1911]。Chapters 10-11。
(2) Milton Friedman, “Capitalism and Jews,” Chinese version is available.

Week 10: Shtadlanim: A Pattern of Jewish Exilic Engagement with Politics
(1) 张礼刚： “论17、18世纪德意志地区的宫廷犹太人”（Zhang Ligang, “The Court Jews of Germany in 17th and 18th centuries”），载《世界历史》2006年第6期。

Week 11: New Antisemitism: Anti-Zionism
(2) Ernest Sternberg, “The Origin of Globalized Anti-Zionism: A conjunction of hatreds

**Week 12: Anti-Semitic Iconography: Continuity and Change**
(2) Joël Kotek, *Cartoons and Extremism: Israel and the Jews in Arab and Western Media*, Portland, Oregon, 2009. selections

**Week 13: Contemporary Concerns: Documentary Screening**
(1) “Crossing the Line 2: The New Face of Anti-Semitism on Campus,” [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tNDcsH_wgU](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tNDcsH_wgU)
(2) “Breaking the Silence: Israeli Soldiers Talk about the Occupied Territories,” DVD

**Week 14: Philosemitism or Antisemitism?**
(2) 张倩红：《犹太人视野中的当代中国——兼评宋鸿兵的<货币战争>》（Zhang Qianhong, “Review of Song Hongbin’s *Currency War*”），载《世界民族》2010年第1期。

**Weeks 15-16**
Presentations