

PREPARATORY DOCUMENTS

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Judeophobia, singular and manifold

The word Antisemitism is trapped: it appeared in 1879 in the German language to name a specific kind of Judeophobia. Judeophobia speaks the language of every given epoch : the language of religion (Pagan, Christian, Muslim), then the language of science. It is not to be confused with Racism, Xenophobia, religious intolerance, even though it has something to do with them. The difficulty in defining Judeophobia mirrors the complexity of Jewish identity, which is a source of aggressivity against the Jews in times of trouble, of anxiety among some Jews, but also of creativity for many, Jews and non-Jews.

Christianity's very closeness to its Jewish sources was at the source of its polemics against Judaism. The Church Fathers condemned the Jewish error but refused to have it eliminated by force. The Church was to be substituted to the Synagogue in the Covenant with God, but the latter could remain alive until it was made to understand its error. It is only after the XIth century that Christianity began to persecute the Jews, accusing them of terrible misbehaviors: blood libel, host desecration, poisoning of wells ...

In the XIXth century, a new emerging science, Linguistics, coupled with the erroneous racial theories in Biology, asserted the existence of a Semitic race foreign to Europe, as opposed to the supposed Aryan/Indo-European race. The Jews being thus defined as a race and not as a religion, conversion did not offer an exit possibility. Until 1938, leaving Europe was the only way out. After the world had then closed its doors, Hitler concluded at the end of 1940 that he had to implement mass extermination.

Today's Judeophobia relies mainly on Conspiracy theories like the Protocols of the Elders of Zion and Holocaust denial. Jewish-Zionist conspiracy provides an ultra-simplistic explanation for all the ills of the humankind. It is an obstacle to peace between Israel and the Palestinians. The Christian churches have elaborated a new theology acknowledging the Covenant between God and the Jews as remaining valid, thus allowing a new relationship based on friendship to prevail. The Muslim world still has to rethink its attitude, either paternalistic or oppressive, towards Jewish and Christian dhimmis, and its theological criticism of Jewish and Christian supposed falsification.