

On Discourse Practices of Jews in the Theory of Racism

——The Management of Self-identity in the Scientific Age

Zhang Chengye

Abstract: the paper collates discourse practices of Jews who contributed to the theory of racism between the late 19th century and the early 20th century and demonstrates the construction of Jews self-identification in the process of examining the science of knowledge in the scientific age when the capital identity died. The raising of the problem of Jewish language means that the possibility to communicate did not exist in the identity of Jews proposed by traditional Judaism and because of that Jews were considered as a community without language. However, the scientific discourse helped Jews to form a new discourse identity which enabled the examining of knowledge centring on the identity of Jewish community. Firstly, Jewish anthropologist built a panoramic view of Jewish community and their bodies by measuring and examining their physical features. Secondly, Jewish scholars depicted a myth of the strength of Jewish life for the first time using pathological knowledge and life data and demonstrated an advantage of physical features of Jewish people by combining the sufferings of Jews and social Darwinism. Thirdly, particular diseases and crimes represents civilization in the relations between Jews and the modern society. Jewish scholars began to object to the research on pure facts and to ask for the answers to the questions about values and culture like the historic contribution of Jews and the country-building in the future.

Keywords: Jewish race; discourse practices; self-identity; science of knowledge