

**HIST 230-401 2013. Fall Semester 2013**  
**Secular Judaism and Secular Jews: Lives and Choices 1789 to 2005**  
**Instructors: Marion Kant and Jonathan Steinberg**  
**Tuesdays 1.30 to 4.30 PM**

Course Description: Can Judaism exist without the religion? Are there secular Jews? Is it possible for people to consider themselves to be Jewish without any formal affiliation with either a religious or other specifically Jewish institution? If so, what sort of Jews are they? These questions trouble all those interested in the history, present position and future prospect of the Jews as a people. There have been many answers: Zionist, non-Zionist, cultural, ethnic, sociological, theological (both Christian and Jewish) and others less respectable. We have no answers but we have a different way to put the question, a biographical way, which may help to define the parameters of a possible answer. We ask how have individual Jews defined themselves and how have they chosen to live their lives. Such choices only became possible in the Western world after the Enlightenment, the American and the French Revolutions had created the category of “citizen”, a new, free, universal, abstract person, who had the right to be what he or she chose. Some Jews thought that they could simply shed their old identities and become members of the new community of citizens. In many countries, whatever Jews thought they were, the host populations saw them as Jews. The most violent and terrible of those rejections ended in the Holocaust, which made “Jews” of Catholic priests and nuns, Protestant pastors, communists, socialists, believers and non-believers, rich and poor, assimilated and orthodox. A national home for the Jews arose out of the ashes but it could not agree on a definition of Jewish identity to ground its Law of Return and the “Jewish” identity of many groups of immigrants to Israel remains contested. In the USA and Western Europe, inter-marriage rates have risen. In what sense can mixed couples or their children still be “Jewish”? This course will try to address these questions in a strictly historical way, following a selection of lives of important Jews who at different times and places attempted their own answers to these questions. These lives will be drawn mainly from Western Europe, where until the Second World War, the majority of Jews lived. We shall also consider some American lives since during the Twentieth Century the American Jewish community became the place where choice of identity became an unusually important issue. We shall also look at the lives of some who chose Israel as the “national” answer to the question of Jewish identity and some who chose socialism or communism as the way to “solve the Jewish Question” and find a new identity.

**1. Response Papers:** Twice during the semester, students will be asked to submit response papers of not more than 1000 words on the readings. For research students the requirements as outlined by the History Department pertain.

**2. Final Essay or Oral Exam:** The final essay [ca 1200 words] or an oral exam will give students a chance to come to a conclusion about what the main issues in the course have been and how they assess them now that they have covered the material. The instructors will set the question or questions well before the end of the semester.

Response papers	25%+25%
Final Essay/Exam	30%
Class Participation	20%

### **“Double Marking”/Grades:**

Both instructors read all the students’ formal work independently, compare notes and arrive at a comprehensive mark, a system known as “double-marking”. This has two advantages for students: each reader checks the other’s grades for fairness and students get two opinions instead of one. Both instructors will be happy to help to improve technique, discuss questions and consider where problems have arisen. Improvement in thought and/or style over the semester will always be rewarded.

### **Note on the Readings for each topic:**

Since this course is unconventional, we cannot rely on conventional textbooks. The only source book which suits our needs is **Paul Mendes-Flohr, and Jehuda Reinharz (eds.): *The Jew in the Modern World. A Documentary History***, Second Edition, New York and Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1995. We shall use it to provide English versions of many crucial texts. If students want to buy the book, copies will be available at the Penn Book Centre. The rest of the readings will be posted on Blackboard.

### **Calendar:**

#### **Week 1**

September 3 , 2013    **Introduction**                      JS/MK

#### **Readings**

Jacob Katz, *Out of the Ghetto: The Social Background of Jewish Emancipation*, Syracuse University Press, 1998, pp 1-41

**Enlightenment: Moses Mendelssohn and Immanuel Kant    MK**

#### **Readings**

Excerpt from G.E. Lessing, Nathan the Wise [Parable of Toleration]. In: Mendes-Flohr, Paul and Reinharz, Jehuda (eds.): *The Jew in the Modern World*, Oxford University Press Oxford and New York 1995. pp.p.62.

Mendelssohn, Moses. On the question: what does “to enlighten” mean? in: *Philosophical Writings*. Ed. by Daniel O. Dahlstrom. CUP Cambridge 1997. pp.313-317.

Immanuel Kant. What is Enlightenment? in: *Foundations of the metaphysics of morals, and What is enlightenment?* Translated, with an introd., by Lewis White Beck. Publisher: Indianapolis, Bobbs-Merrill [c1959] Or Modern History source Book online: <http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/mod/kant-whatis.html>

Immanuel Kant. Letter to Markus Herz. In: Mendes-Flohr, Paul and Reinharz, Jehuda (eds.): *The Jew in the Modern World*, Oxford University Press Oxford and New York 1995. p.68.

Moses Mendelssohn. The right to be different. In: Mendes-Flohr, Paul and Reinharz, Jehuda (eds.): *The Jew in the Modern World*, Oxford University Press Oxford and New York 1995. pp.68-69.

Dohm, Christian Wilhelm von: *Concerning the Amelioration of the Civil Status of the Jews*, in: Mendes-Flohr, Paul and Reinharz, Jehuda (eds.): *The Jew in the Modern World*. pp.28-36.

Moses Mendelssohn . Response to Dohm/Remarks concerning Michaelis' response to Dohm. In: Mendes-Flohr, Paul and Reinharz, Jehuda (eds.): *The Jew in the Modern World*, Oxford University Press Oxford and New York 1995. pp.44-48

## **Week 2**

September 10, 2013    **French Revolution: Robespierre and the Religion of Virtue**  
**Edmund Burke and the Critique of the Revolution**                      JS

### **Readings**

The process of Political Emancipation in Western Europe. Mendes-Flohr, Paul and Reinharz, Jehuda (eds.): *The Jew in the Modern World*, pp. 114-144

[Tocqueville, Alexis de](#): *The State of Society in France Before the Revolution of 1789, and the Causes Which Led to That Event* ([third edition, 1888](#)), trans. by Henry Reeve (HTML at GeoCities) Book 1 (URL: <http://www.geocities.com/danielmacryan/ancientregime.pdf>)

Edmund Burke, *Reflections on the Revolution in France* And on the Proceeding in Certain Societies in London Relative to That Event in a Letter Intended to Have Been Sent to a Gentleman in Paris. 1790 Harvard Classics, Vol. 24, Part 3 (on-line: <http://www.bartleby.com/24/3/>) Paras. 75-99

## **Week 3**

September 17, 2013    **The Rothschild Family**    JS

### **Readings**

Carlo Cattaneo, “*The civil restrictions on the Jews*” (1835). Interdizioni israelitiche / Carlo Cattaneo ; prefazione di Roberto Jarach ; introduzione di Angelo Ara ; a cura di Giovanni Luseroni ; presentazione di Ettore A. Albertoni. Milano : Oscar Mondadori, c2002. Translation Jonathan Steinberg.

**Heinrich Heine**

MK

### **Readings**

Heinrich Heine. A Ticket of Admission to European Culture. In Mendes-Flohr, Paul and Reinharz, Jehuda (eds.): *The Jew in the Modern World* pp.258-259

Heinrich Heine, The Gods in Exile. in: *The Sword and the Flame*. Selections from Heinrich Heine's Prose. Ed. and with an introduction by Alfred Werner. Thomas Yoseloff New York, London 1960. pp. 541-584.

Hannah Arendt. *The Jew as Pariah: Jewish Identity and Politics in the Modern Age*. Ed. With an introduction by Ron H. Feldman. Grove Press New York 1978. pp.67-75

#### **Week 4**

September 24, 2013 **Karl Marx**

MK

#### **Readings**

Karl Marx, "On the Jewish Question" (1844) (+Lasalle/Bernstein)  
<http://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1844/jewish-question/>

**Benjamin Disraeli**

JS

#### **Readings**

Isaiah Berlin, *Against the current: essays in the history of ideas*. "Marx and Disraeli" edited and with a bibliography by Henry Hardy ; with an introduction by Roger Hausheer. London: Hogarth Press, 1979.

[also in: Isaiah Berlin, "Benjamin Disraeli, Karl Marx and the Search for Identity" *Transactions of the Jewish Historical Society*, Vol. XXII, Sessions 1968-1969, London, 1970 pp. 1 -20]

#### **Week 5**

October 1, 2013

**Jewish Salons in Berlin: the emancipation of women**

MK

#### **Readings**

Rahel Varnhagen. O how painful to have been born a Jewess. in: Mendes-Flohr, Paul and Jehuda Reinharz (eds.): *The Jew in the Modern World. A Documentary History*, Oxford, New York 1995. pp.260-261

[Hannah Arendt. Rahel Varnhagen : the life of a Jewish Woman; translated by Richard and Clara Winston.](#) 74

[chapters: Jewess and Schlehmil pp.3-25 and One does not escape Jewishness pp.216-228]

Hannah Arendt. Writing Rahel Varnhagen. From a Letter to Karl Jaspers. in: *The Portable Hannah Arendt*. Ed. by Peter Baehr, Penguin Books 2000. pp.68-72

**Giacomo Meyerbeer and Richard Wagner**

MK

#### **Readings**

Meyerbeer letters to Heine, letters re Wagner. in: Heinz and Gudrun Becker. Giacomo Meyerbeer. A Life in Letters. Christopher Helm London 1989

Richard Wagner, *Judaism in Music (1850) and other essays*. Transl. by William Ashton Ellis. Lincoln Nebraska and London 1995.

<http://users.belgacom.net/wagnerlibrary/prose/wagjuda.htm>

Houston Stuart Chamberlain. *The Foundations of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century*. John Lane London, New York 1909. in: Mendes-Flohr, Paul and Jehuda Reinharz (eds.): *The Jew in the Modern World*. pp. 356-359

### **Week 6**

October 8, 2013

***Wissenschaft des Judentums (Science of Judaism)***

MK

### **Readings**

Modern Jewish Studies. Chapter V. Mendes-Flohr, Paul and Jehuda Reinharz (eds.): *The Jew in the Modern World*. pp.207-248

*Abraham Geiger and liberal Judaism; the challenge of the nineteenth century*. Compiled with a biographical introd. by Max Wiener. Translation from the German by Ernst J. Schlochauer. Philadelphia, Jewish Publication Society of America, 1962  
A Series of 34 Lectures, Breslau 1865. pp.149-157, pp.265-269, pp.283-293

**Mordecai Kaplan**

JS

### **Readings**

Mordecai M. Kaplan, *The Greater Judaism in the Making. A Study of the Modern Evolution of Judaism*, New York, The Reconstructionist Press, 1960, pp.450-511

### **Week 7**

October 15, 2013

**Emile Durkheim and Alfred Dreyfus**

MK/JS

### **Readings**

Émile Durkheim, "Concerning the definition of religious phenomena" (1899) in *Durkheim on Religion*, ed. W.S.F. Pickering, London/Boston: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1975, pp.74-98

Émile Durkheim, *The Rule of Sociological Method*, ed with an introduction by Steven Lukes, London/Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1982 pp.31-59

### **Readings**

Emile Zola. J'accuse. In: Mendes-Flohr, Paul and Jehuda Reinharz (eds.): *The Jew in the Modern World*. pp.351-356

Making Sense of the Rennes Verdict: The Military Dimension of the Dreyfus Affair

[Robert E. Kaplan](#). In: *Journal of Contemporary History*. [Vol. 34, No. 4](#) (Oct., 1999), pp. 499-515

### **Week 8**

October 22, 2013

### **Theodor Herzl & Zionism**

MK

#### **Readings**

Theodor Herzl. *The Jewish State*. Translated from the German by Sylvie D'Avigdor, This edition published in 1946 by the American Zionist Emergency Council, <http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsourc/Zionism/herzl2.html>

Carl Schorske. *Fin de Sciècle Vienna. Politics and Culture*. Cambridge University Press 1981. chapter Politics in a New Key. pp.146-175.

Steven Beller. *Vienna and the Jews. 1867-1938. A Cultural History*. Cambridge University Press 1989. pp.11. [also on <http://books.google.com>]

### **Week 9**

October 29, 2013

### **Sigmund Freud**

MK

#### **Readings**

Sigmund Freud. *The History of the Psycho-analytic Movement*. German original first publ. in *Jahrbuch der Psychoanalyse*, 4. Transl. first publ. in the *Nervous and Mental Disease Monograph Series* (No. 25). New York: Nervous and Mental Disease Pub. Co.

<http://onlinebooks.library.upenn.edu/webbin/book/search?author=Freud&amode=words>

Sigmund Freud. *Moses and Monotheism*, New York: Vintage Books 1939/1967. Section II. pp.131-176

Carl Schorske. *Fin de Sciècle Vienna. Politics and Culture*. Cambridge University Press 1981. chapter Politics and Patricide in Freud's *Interpretation of Dreams*. pp. 181-207

L.J. Rather, "Disraeli, Freud and Jewish Conspiracy Theories", *Journal of the History of Ideas*, Vol. No. 1 (Jan.-Mar., 1986) pp 111-131

Gay, Peter, 1923, *A Godless Jew: Freud, atheism, and the making of psychoanalysis*. New Haven: Yale University Press; Cincinnati: Hebrew Union College Press, 1987.

### **Week 10**

November 5, 2013

### **Cesare Lombroso and the Science of Crime**

MK/JS

#### **Readings**

Cesare Lombroso and William Ferrero, *The Female Offender*, London 1959 pp 1-26

Cesare Lombroso, *Man of Genius*. London: W.Scott, 1891 Preface, pp v-xi, Part One, Ch II pp 5-37, Part Two, Ch III pp. 133-150

Nancy A. Harrowitz, "Villifying Difference: Lombroso and the Jews" in Nancy A. Harrowitz, *Antisemitism, Misogyny and the Logic of Cultural Difference: Cesare Lombroso and Matilde Serao* pp. 41-61

**Albert Einstein, Fritz Haber and "Jewish" Science** JS

**Readings**

Fritz Stern, „Fritz Haber and Albert Einstein" in *Einstein's German World* (Princeton, N.J., Princeton University Press, 1999), pp. 60-164

Gershom Gerhard Scholem, *From Berlin to Jerusalem: memories of my youth*, translated from the German by Harry Zohn. (New York: Schocken Books, 1980), "Jewish Milieu", pp.21-35

**Week 11**

November 12, 2013

**Leon Trotsky**

JS

**Readings**

Yuri Sleskine, "The Jewish Century" (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2004). pp. 105-188

Leon Trotsky. My Life

<http://www.marxists.org/archive/trotsky/works/1930-lif/ch01.htm>

**Walther Rathenau and Rosa Luxemburg**

MK

**Readings**

Walther Rathenau. Hear, O Israel! [originally in: Die Zukunft. Published: Berlin.] excerpt in: Mendes-Flohr, Paul and Jehuda Reinharz (eds.): *The Jew in the Modern World. A Documentary History*, Oxford, New York 1995. pp.267-268.

Walter Rathenau. The New Society. Authorized translation by Arthur Windham.

Publisher: New York, Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1921.

<http://fax.libs.uga.edu/HN449xR2/#>

Fritz Stern. "Walter Rathenau and the Vision of Modernity" in *Einstein's German World*. (Princeton, N.J., Princeton University Press, 1999), Chapter 4. pp.165-196

Rosa Luxemburg. No Room in my heart for Jewish suffering. in: Mendes-Flohr, Paul and Jehuda Reinharz (eds.): *The Jew in the Modern World. A Documentary History*, Oxford, New York 1995. pp.261

Robert S. Wistrich. Rosa Luxemburg, Leo Jogiches and the Jewish Labour Movement, 1893-1903. pp.529-545. in: Jewish History. Essays in Honour of Chimen Abramsky. Ed.

Ada Rapoport-Albert and Steven J. Zipperstein. Foreword Isaiah Berlin. Peter Halban  
London 1986

Hannah Arendt. Rosa Luxemburg (1871-1919). book review of J.P. Nettle's Luxemburg  
biography] in: The Portable Hannah Arendt. Ed. by Peter Baehr, Penguin Books 2000  
pp.419-437

### **Week 12**

November 19, 2013

**Saul Bellow**

MK

**Readings** "The Bellarosa Connection" in Saul Bellow, *Collected Stories*, New York: Viking  
Penguin, 2001, pp. 35-89

**Primo Levi**

JS

### **Readings**

Primo Levi, *Survival in Auschwitz. The Nazi Assault on Humanity*. Translated by Stuart  
Woolf ; London : Abacus, 1987 (1997) pp.9-11, 87-150

*Down among the Dead Men: Levi and Dante in Hell.* [Lynn M. Gunzberg](#). In: Modern  
Language Studies [Vol. 16, No. 1](#) (Winter, 1986), pp.10-28

### **Week 13**

November 26, 2013

**Responses to the Holocaust: Secular and Theological**

### **Readings:**

Hannah Arendt. *Eichmann in Jerusalem. An exchange of letters between Gershon Scholem  
and Hannah Arendt.* The Jew as Pariah. pp.240-551

Hannah Arendt. The Jew as pariah : Jewish identity and politics in the modern age / Hannah  
Arendt ; edited and with an introd. by Ron H. Feldman. New York: Grove Press : distributed  
by Random House, 1978. pp.240-251.

Theodor W. Adorno. Can One Live after Auschwitz? A Philosophical Reader. Ed. by Rolf  
Tiedemann. Stanford University Press 2003. Heine the Wound. pp.205-210, Wagner's  
Relevance Today. pp.314-332, Elements of Anti-Semitism. Limits of Enlightenment.  
pp.391-426.

Theodor Adorno. Critical Models. Interventions and Catchwords. Columbia University  
Press New York 2005. Introduction Lydia Goehr. Education after Auschwitz pp.191-204

Amos Funkenstein, "Theological Responses to the Holocaust" in *Perceptions of Jewish  
History*. Berkeley, Los Angeles, Oxford: University of California Press, 1993, pp.306-33



**Week 14**

December 3, 2013

**The “Jewish Mind”?  
Is there Secular Judaism?**

JS/MK

**Readings**

Stephen Pinker, “Why nature and nurture won’t go away” *Daedalus* Fall 2004, pp. 1-13

Yuri Slezkine, “The Jewish Century”, pp. 327 -371 (BP)