

Conference Programme

May 17

18.00 Opening of the Conference

Greetings:

Cilly Kugelmann (Jewish Museum Berlin)

Martin Salm (Foundation »Remembrance, Responsibility and Future«)

Roland Hain (German National Academic Foundation)

Raphael Gross (Leo Baeck Institute London, Jewish Museum Frankfurt a.M., Fritz Bauer Institute)

Introduction: Nitzan Lebovic (Tel Aviv Univ.)

18:30–20:30 Evening Session: A German-Jewish Critique?

German-Jewish scholars of the twentieth century often employed a refined system of critique to probe key ethical issues. Is it possible to define such critical attempts as a specifically German-Jewish ethics or culture? Was there a specifically German-Jewish perspective of critical thinking?

Presentations:

Steven Aschheim (Hebrew Univ.): Icons Beyond Their Borders: The German-Jewish Intellectual Legacy at the Beginning of the Twenty First Century

Amir Eshel (Stanford Univ.): Futurity: On Paul Celan's poetry and thought

Adi Gordon (Univ. of Wisconsin): »East« and »West« as Central European-Jewish Critique: The Case of Hans Kohn

Chair and Commentator: Thomas Meyer (Simon-Dubnow-Institute Leipzig)

20.30–22.00 Reception

May 18

10.00–12.00 Morning Session: German-Jewish Intellectual Positions from Mystical Traditions to Radical Politics

Modern German Jewry involved an unconventional alliance between mysticism and radical politics. Martin Buber, Gershom Scholem, Ernst Simon, Hans Kohn, and Hans Jonas are just a few of the twentieth-century figures who tried to reshape the heritage of Chassidism, Kabbalah, and Gnosticism to suit the new Jewish state.

Presentations:

Martin Kavka (Florida State Univ.): The Success of the Desire: Verification in Martin Buber

Eugene Sheppard (Brandeis Univ.): Taste the Forbidden Fruit: Reflections on Straussianism and the Homo-Erotics of Master-Disciple Circles

Christian Wiese (Sussex Univ.): No »Love for the Jewish People«? Hans Jonas's Controversy with Hannah Arendt over »Eichmann in Jerusalem« Revisited

Commentator: Udi Greenberg (Hebrew Univ.)

Chair: Cilly Kugelmann (Jewish Museum Berlin)

12.00–13.30 Lunch

14.00–16.00 Afternoon Session I: A Jewish Political Theology?

Jacob Taubes redefined Carl Schmitt's concept of political theology in terms of Jewish religious traditions, posing a series of questions: What is the task of political theology in a world very different from the one Schmitt knew? How did it become such a hotly debated topic? How should it be contextualized?

Presentations:

Vivian Liska (Univ. of Antwerp): Giorgio Agamben and the Legacy of Walter Benjamin's Messianism

Nitzan Lebovic (Tel Aviv Univ.): Between Bund and Borders: The Israeli Case

Menachem Lorberbaum (Tel Aviv Univ.): Two Concepts of Theocracy

Chair and Commentator: Martin Tremml (Centre for Literary and Cultural Research, Berlin)

16.00–16.30 Refreshments

16.30–18.30 Afternoon Session II: The Impact of German Jews on Political Culture and Constitutional Issues in Israel

Intellectual reflections on recent political developments often turn to the work of Leo Strauss on the one hand, and Hannah Arendt on the other. The history of law in the twentieth century was shaped by another figure: Hans Kelsen. Are the reflections of Kelsen, Strauss and Arendt on constitutionalism helpful in considering today's political problems? Are they relevant for the situation in Israel?

Presentations:

Mordechai Kremnitzer (Institute for Democracy Jerusalem): The Impact of German-Jewish Jurists on the Israeli Legal System

Izhak Englard (Hebrew Univ. em./Israeli Supreme Court em.): The Impact of Kelsen's Theory in Israel

Shai Lavi (Tel Aviv Univ.): Punishment and the Revocation of Citizenship in United Kingdom, United States and Israel

Commentator: Alexandra Kemmerer (Simon-Dubnow-Institute, Leipzig)

Chair: Dieter Grimm (Humboldt Univ. em./Federal Constitutional Court em./Institute for Advanced Study Berlin)

May 19

10.00–12.00: Workshops with Students I

1. Politics meets Halakhic and Chassidic traditions (with Menachem Lorberbaum)
2. Carl Schmitt and Jacob Taubes (with Martin Tremml)

12.00–13.30: Lunch

14.00–16.00: Workshops with Students II

1. Ethical considerations and aesthetic forms (with Vivian Liska)
2. An Israeli Constitution? (with Mordechai Kremnitzer)

17.00–18.30: Round Table Discussion: The End of German-Jewish History?

Is German-Jewish history at its final curve, dying with the generation that helped to shape it? Intellectual and political developments may suggest otherwise, but key academic institutions are quickly moving funds to other areas.

Contributions:

Steven Aschheim (Hebrew Univ), Martin Kavka (Florida State Univ.), Nitzan Lebovic (Tel Aviv Univ.), Vivian Liska (Univ. of Antwerp), Stefanie Schüler-Springorum (Hamburg Univ.)

Chair: Raphael Gross (Leo Baeck Institute London, Jewish Museum Frankfurt a.M., Fritz Bauer Institute)

19.00: End of the Conference