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University of Massachusetts
STPEC 493H, Syllabus

Thurs. 2:30-5:15, Herter 746
Office: Herter 732, x4464
Office Hours: Wed. 12:30-2:30
Fall 2008

**Religion, State, Secularization:
Negotiating Jewish Modernities**

Course Description:

Today, the question of the relation between Religion and State has returned to center stage. Contested issues such as the “right” to wear the veil in French public schools and the “right” to exhibit a massive sculpture of the Ten Commandments in an American Court of Law are but two recent examples of this return of religion to the secularized public square. The over-determined character of contemporary negotiations between Religion and State may in part be a result of the forceful, if unexpected, return of these issues to the national and international scenes. This return has seriously put in question classical secularization theory and has required its revision. We will be paying attention to the corresponding changes in the status of religion globally within civil societies and to developing secularization theories which take these new phenomena as their starting points.

Awareness of the contemporary global situation informs this course’s interest in the emergence of modernity in European cultures in which the relations between Religion and State have been negotiated differently across national boundaries and over time. This course will focus on the distinctive role of Jews (and Judaism) in shaping some of the basic terms of these negotiations during the rise of modern nation states as the primary minority culture and population in Europe during that time period. We will ask how the test case of Jews and Judaism has historically shaped the negotiations between Religion and State in Europe and how, in turn, the condition of Jews and Judaism has been correspondingly reconfigured, especially with the emergence of secularism and the modern nation states. We will be interested in how contemporary views and treatment of Muslims, especially but not only in Europe, resonates with and differs from the earlier negotiations with Jews as a minority religion and colonized culture within Europe. Central to these considerations is the development and shifting roles of the secular, secularity, and secularization both in these historical and current negotiations between Religion and State as well as in contemporary secularization theory.

Course Requirements:

This course is a four credit Honors STPEC senior seminar, meeting once a week for two and a half hours. Junior STPEC majors may petition to be admitted to the course. Students must be prompt and class attendance is mandatory. The attendance policy is spelled out in the Handbook on Undergraduate Rights and Responsibilities, pp. 59-60 (Section XIII). Students are required to read the appropriate assignments before each class and arrive in class ready to participate in class discussion (worth 15% of final grade). Students will be required to write a short paper for each class session answering questions raised by the professor for each week's reading assignment (worth 15% of final grade). There will be a midterm take-home essay exam (worth 30% of final grade) and a final take-home exam (worth 40% of final grade). If they wish, students may also write a paper for extra credit.

Required Texts:

All course texts may be purchased at the Amherst Bookstore. All course books will be available at the reserve desk in the DuBois Library. Assigned articles will be distributed a week in advance. (From time to time, additional course resources may be made available on e-reserve at the DuBois Library or through SPARK.)

William Shakespeare, The Merchant of Venice, ed. A.R. Braunmuller (N.Y.: Penguin Books, 2000).

Paul Mendes-Flohr and Jehuda Reinharz, eds. The Jew in the Modern World (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995).

Baruch Spinoza, Politico-Theological Treatise, trans. R. H. M. Elwes (New York: Dover Publications, 1951).

Moses Mendelssohn, Jerusalem, or on Religious Power and Judaism, trans., Allan Arkush, intro. and commentary by Alexander Altmann (Hanover, NH: University Press of New England, 1983).

Moses Hess, Rome and Jerusalem (Lincoln, NEB: University of Nebraska Press, 1995).

Joan Wallach Scott, Politics of the Veil (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2007).

Course Schedule and Assignments:

The assignments are due on the day they are listed on the syllabus. Bring texts to class. (The page numbers of articles on the syllabus reflect the original pagination of the texts.)

I. Setting the Stage: The Struggle for Emancipation and the Emergence of Modern Nation-States

Thurs. September 4: Introduction

Topic: Modernity and the Transformation of Jews and Judaism—the Emergence of Secularism and Judaism as Culture

Setting the Scene: Viewing 2005 film version of The Merchant of Venice.

Reading:

- *Shakespeare, The Merchant of Venice;
- *Sander Gilman, “Diaspora Judaism: a Model for Diaspora Islam in Europe Today?” pp. 1-16;
- *Talal Asad, “Reflections on Laïcité & the Public Sphere,” pp. 1-4, 1-5, 1-4, 1-5, 1-5.

Thur. September 11

Topic: Napoleon and the Question of Emancipation: Regulating Jews/Religion

Reading:

- *“The Acts of the Israelitish Deputies of France and Italy,” pp. 14-31;
- *Selected Documents Related to the “Acts”:
- * Napoleon Bonaparte, Emperor of the French, King of Italy, “Imperial Decree Calling for an Assembly of Jewish Notables (May 30, 1806),” JMW, Part III, pp. 123-124;
- * Count Molé, “Napoleon’s Instructions to the Assembly of Jewish Notables (July 29, 1806),” JMW, Part III, pp. 125-126;
- * Abraham Furtado, “Reply on Behalf of the Assembly to Count Molé (1806),” JMW, Part III, pp. 126-128;
- * The Assembly of Jewish Notables, “Answers to Napoleon (1806),” JMW, Part III, pp. 128-133;
- * Count Molé, “Summons for Convening the Parisian Sanhedrin (September 18, 1806),” JMW, Part III, pp. 133-135;
- * The Parisian Sanhedrin, “Doctrinal Decisions (April 1807),” JMW, Part III, pp. 135-136.
- *Selected Texts on Marriage and the Social Contract:
- * Carole Pateman, “Contracting In,” pp. 1-18;
- * Olympe de Gouges, “The Declaration of the Rights of Woman,” pp. 87-96;
- * “*Allegemeines Landrech*,” pp. 38-39;

- * “The Napoleonic Code,” pp. 39-40.
- * Wendy Brown, “Tolerance as Supplement: The “Jewish Question” and the “Woman Question,” from *Regulating Aversion: Tolerance in the Age of Identity and Empire*, pp. 48-77; 219-224.

Secondary Reading:

Pierre Birnbaum, “Between Social and Political Assimilation: Remarks on the History of Jews in France,” pp. 94-127;
 “A Petition to the National Assembly from Leaders of Jewish Communities,” pp. 130-135;
 The French National Assembly, “Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen (August 26, 1789),” JMW, Part III, p. 114;
 “Debate on the Eligibility of Jews for Citizenship (December 23, 1789),” JMW, Part III, p. 114;
 The Emancipation of the Jews of France (September 28, 1791),” JMW, Part III, p. 118.

Thurs. September 18

Topic: The Question of Jewish Emancipation and the relation of Religion and State in German Speaking lands

Reading:

- * Christian Dohm, “Concerning the Amelioration of the Civil Status of the Jews (1781),” Paul Mendes-Flohr and Jehuda Reinharz, eds., The Jew in the Modern World (JMW), Part I, pp. 28-36;
- * Joseph II, “Edict of Tolerance (January 2, 1782),” JMW, Part I, pp. 36-40;
- * Moses Mendelssohn, “Response to Dohm (1782),” JMW, Part I, pp. 44-47;
- * Moses Mendelssohn, “The Right to be Different,” JMW, Part II, pp. 68-69.

Secondary Reading:

Werner Mosse, “From ‘Schutzjuden’ to ‘Deutsche Staatsbürger Judischen Glaubens’: The Long and Bumpy Road of Jewish Emancipation in Germany,” pp. 59-93;
 Menasseh Ben Israel, “How Profitable the Nation of the Jews Are (1655),” JMW, Part I, pp. 10-13.

II. The role of Jewish political philosophy in the emergence of Modernity

Thurs. September 25

Topic: Reinvisioning the Politico-Theological: Judaism, Christianity and the State

Reading:

- * Baruch Spinoza, Politico-Theological Treatise, preface, chs. 4-5, 12-16, 18-20;

- * The Sephardi Community of Amsterdam, “The Writ of Excommunication Against Baruch Spinoza (July 27, 1656),” JMW, Part II, p. 57.

Secondary Reading:

Baruch Spinoza, Politico-Theological Treatise chs. 7-10 (recommended);
Hans Daalder, “Dutch Jews in a Segmented Society,” pp. 37-58; The Estates of
General of the Republic of the United Provinces, “Declaration Protecting the
Interest of Jews Residing in Holland (July 13, 1657),” JMW, Part I, pp. 17-18.

Thurs. October 2

* MIDTERM EXAM DISTRIBUTED

Topic: Mendelssohn’s response to the question of the relation of Religion and State, with special attention to Jews and Judaism

Reading:

- * Moses Mendelssohn, Jerusalem, Section I, pp. 33-75.
“Introduction,” pp. 3-29, “Appendix,” pp. 247-248, and “Commentary,”
pp. 143-240.

Secondary Reading:

Carole Pateman, “Feminism and the Marriage Contract,” pp. 189-218;

Thurs. October 9—No class, Yom Kippur

Thurs. October 16

Topic: Mendelssohn’s interpretation of Judaism as Legislation and its consequences for his understanding of the relations of Religion and State, with special reference to questions of marriage, gender, contract, and religious identity

Reading:

- * Mendelssohn, Jerusalem, Section II, pp. 77-139 and “Commentary,”
pp. 143-240.

*Eliezer Schweid, “The Impact of the Enlightenment on Religion”;

*Amir R. Mufti, “Jewishness as Minority: Emergence of a European Problematic,” pp. 37-90.

III. The Emergence of Modern Jewish Nationalism(s) and the renegotiation of the Relations of Religion and State

Thurs. October 23

* MIDTERM EXAM DUE IN CLASS

Topic: The Return of Jewish Nationalism After/Despite Marx

Reading:

- *Moses Hess, Rome and Jerusalem (Lincoln, NEB: University of Nebraska Press, 1995);
- *Bruno Bauer, "The Jewish Problem (1843)," JMW, Part VII, pp. 321-324;
- *Karl Marx, "On the Jewish Problem (1844)," JMW, Part VII, pp. 324-327.

Secondary Reading:

Melvin Urofsky, "Introduction" and "Translator's Introduction" in Moses Hess, Rome and Jerusalem, pp. v-xvii and pp. 9-34.

Thurs. October 30

Topic: Zionism as a Political Response to the Return of the Jewish Question: Reevaluating Assimilation and Integration in light of the failure of Emancipation

Reading:

- *Leo Pinsker, "Auto-Emancipation: An Appeal to his People by a Russian Jew," pp. 161-174;
- *Vicki Caron, "The Ambivalent Legacy: The Impact of Enlightenment on Zionism," pp. 502-516;
- *Sigmund Freud, "The Uncanny," pp. 19-60.

Secondary Reading:

Sigmund Freud, "Address to the Society of Bnai Brith (May 6, 1926)," JMW, Part VI, pp. 278-279;
Michael Stanislawski, "Russian Jewry, the Russian State, and the Dynamics of Jewish Emancipation," pp. 262-283.

Thurs. November 6

Topic: WWI & II and Competing Notions of "Home": Ethical Zionism versus National Messianism

Reading:

Prophetic or Ethical Zionism

- *Jean Améry, "How Much Home Does a Person Need?," pp. 41-61;
- *Paul Mendes-Flohr, "Realpolitik or Ethical Nationalism," pp. 168-178;

* Selections from Hermann Cohen, Reason and Hope:

- "Affinities between the Philosophy of Kant and Judaism," pp. 77-89;
- "The German and the Jewish Ethos I," pp. 175-184;
- "The German and Jewish Ethos II," pp. 185-189;
- "On Closing the Borders," pp. 189-192;
- "Thou Shalt Not Go About as a Slanderer," pp. 192-193;
- "I and Thou: Selfhood through Ethical Action," pp. 217-218;
- "Judaism's Relevance for Modern Man," pp. 219-220.

*Martin Buber and Hermann Cohen, "A Debate on Zionism and Messianism," JMW, Part X, pp. 571-577;

Selections from Hermann Cohen, Reason and Hope:

- "An Argument Against Zionism: A Reply to Dr. Martin Buber's Open Letter to Hermann Cohen," pp. 163-170;
- "Religion and Zionism," pp. 170-171;

Selections from Martin Buber, A Land of Two Peoples:

- "Nationalism," pp. 47-57;
- "A Proposed Resolution on the Arab Question," pp. 58-61;
- "Resolution on the Arab Question of the Twelfth Zionist Congress," pp. 62-63;
- "Notes From the Congress Concerning Zionist Policy," pp. 64-68;
- "Sidelights," pp. 68-70;
- "Respona on Zionist Policy," pp. 70-72;
- "Brith Shalom," pp. 72-75;
- "Soul-Searching," pp. 76-78;
- "No More Declarations," pp. 78-80;
- "National Home and National Politics in Palestine," pp. 81-91;
- "Israel and the Command of the Spirit," pp. 289-293.

Thurs. November 13

Topic: Renegotiating the Boundaries between Religion and State: The Return of the Problem in Modern Israel

Reading:

*Selections from Yehoshua Leibowitz, Judaism, Human Values, and the Jewish State:

*"The Social Order as a Religious Problem," pp. 145-157;

*"The Crisis of Religion in the State of Israel," pp. 158-173;

*"A Call for the Separation of Religion and State," pp. 174-184;

*Haim H. Cohn, "Religious Freedom and Religious Coercion in the State of Israel," pp. 27-61.

*Bernard Avishai, "Saving Israel From Itself: A Secular Future for the Jewish State," pp. 33-43;

Secondary Reading:

David Hartman, "The Challenge of Modern Israel to Traditional Judaism," pp. 31-53;

Eliezer Schweid, "Jewish religion and Israeli Democracy," pp. 7-29;

Rachel Elijor, "Judaism and Democracy—The Private Domain and Public Responsibility," pp. 123-139;

Talal Asad, "Secularism, Nation-State, Religion," pp. 181-201.

Abdullahi Ahmed An-Na'im, "Why Muslims Need a Secular State," pp. 1-44.

Thurs. November 20

Topic: Returning to the Question of Minority Religions and Cultures: Parallels and Differences between Jews and Muslims

Reading:

*Talal Asad, "Muslims as a 'Religious Minority' in Europe," pp. 159-180.

*Aamir Mufti, "Secularism and Minority: Elements of a Critique," pp. 75-96.

*Aamir Mufti, "Auerbach in Istanbul: Edward Said, Secular Criticism, and the Question of Minority Culture," pp. 95-125.

*Talal Asad, "Trying to Understand French Secularism," pp. 494-526.

Thurs. November 27—No Class, Thanksgiving

Thurs. December 4

* FINAL EXAM DISTRIBUTED

Topic: The Veil Controversy in France and the Return of the Question of Minority Religions and Cultures in Contemporary France

Reading:

*Joan Wallach Scott, Politics of the Veil (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2007).

Thurs. December 11

Topic: Secularization Theory Reconsidered

Reading:

*Jose Casanova, "Secularization, Enlightenment, and Modern Religion," pp. 11-39;

*Jose Casanova, "Private and Public Religions," pp. 40-66;

*Jose Casanova, "Deprivatization of Modern Religion," pp. 211-234;

*Talal Asad, "What Might an Anthropology of Secularism Look Like?," pp. 21-66;

*Jose Casanova, "Secularization Revisited: A Reply to Talal Asad," pp. 12-30.

Recommended:

William E. Connolly, "The Conceits of Secularism," pp. 19-46;

William E. Connolly, "Liberalism, Secularism, and the Nation," pp. 73-96.

Wed. December 17

* FINAL EXAM DUE AT NOON IN HERTER ROOM 732