UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN

Modernity Faith and Crisis:
20th century German-Jewish Identity and Thought
History 600
Spring 2006

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W 3:30-5:30 (5257 Humanities)
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Course Description

German-Jewish identity, thought, experience and heritage are a subject of ongoing historical attention and debates. In this course we will explore diverse aspects of the German-Jewish modern experience, by reading a wide range of texts written by German-Jewish thinkers. We will focus on questions of identity, nationality, religion and theology, which constituted the modern Jewish experience, and discuss the impact of the Holocaust on post-1945 German-Jewish identity and thought.

Required Readings

Rabinbach Anson, *In the Shadow of Catastrophe; German Intellectuals between Apocalypse and Enlightenment*, Berkeley 1997.

**Requirements**

1. Participation (40%).

2. Preliminary Drafts of Term Paper (30%).
   a. Bibliography (15%) due February 15.
   b. Review of Progress (15%) due on March 1.
   c. Thesis Statement and Outline (35%) due on March 20.
   d. Preliminary Draft (35%) due on April 12.

3. Term paper (30%) due on May 10.

**January 18. Introductory Meeting**

**Part I. Modern German Culture**

**January 25. The Crisis of Culture**

Part II. German-Jewish Identity and Thought

February 1. “German-Jewish Symbiosis”
Mosse, *German-Jews*, 1-41.

February 8. German-Jewish Experience
Mosse, *Confronting History*, 7-52.
Scholem, *From Berlin*, 1-35.

February 15. Crisis and Identity

February 22. Political Alternatives
Stone “German Zionist”

March 1. Theology and Modernity
Harnack, *What is Christianity*, 152-189, 268-301.

March 8. Jewish Perspectives
Leo Baeck, *Judaism*, 189-292.

March 22. Review of Thesis Statement and Outline
Part III. Post-1945 Identity and Thought

March 29. Émigrés
Stern Frank, “The Return”
Hacohen, “Dilemmas”
Breins, “Germans”

April 5. Political Thought
Aschheim, Arendt, 1-18, 93-104.
Arendt Hannah, The Origins, 11-116

April 12. Identity
Jonas, Mortality and Morality, 1-40, 131-143.
Scholem, On the Possibility, 3-24, 30-39, 93-100, 114-117.

Part IV. Term Paper
April 19. Review of Preliminary Draft
April 26. Class Presentations
May 3. Class Presentations

RECOMMENDED READINGS
-------- On Revolution, New York 1963
-------- Eichmann in Jerusalem; a report on the banality of evil, New York 1964
Diner Dan, Beyond the Conceivable: Studies on Germany, Nazism, and the Holocaust, Berkeley 2000.
Mosse, George L., *The Culture of Western Europe*, (Chicago, 1974).
---------- *The Culture of Western Europe: The 19th and 20th Century*, (Boulder, 1988).