

JS 2340: Contemporary Jewish Philosophy  
After Auschwitz: Contemporary Jewish Philosophy

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Office Hours:  
WF 12:30-1:30  
Or by appointment

The course examines post-Shoah Jewish Philosophy as a concrete response to cultural and political institutions and the corresponding modes of thought that made Auschwitz possible and continue to make it an imminent threat. The works of Benjamin, Adorno, Blanchot, Derrida, Leyotad, and Levinas will be read as critical responses to Kant, Hegel, and Heidegger.

Following a general introduction to Kant's and Hegel's political philosophy and the problem of Enlightenment Humanism, we shall briefly consider Marx and Freud as the first Jewish critics of the violence at the heart of European culture and its humanist claims. We shall then juxtapose these to Martin Heidegger's critique of the "same" problems in order to frame 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> century Jewish Philosophy as a political critical response to metaphysics and ontology.

#### Course Requirements and evaluations:

First Paper: 5-7 pages	20%
Second Paper: 12-15 pages	40%
Presentations	20%
Attendance and participation	20%

Attendance and participation are required and weighed heavily and deadlines are firm; unless you receive prior permission or present a letter from the Dean, late papers will be penalized a half grade per day.

N.B. Secondary sources must be approved by the professor.

All sources must be properly cited. *Plagiarism will result in an F for the course and will be reported to the Honor Council.*

#### Required Readings:

Adorno, Theodor, *Critical Models: Intervention and Catchwords* (ISBN: 0-231-07635-5)

Benjamin, Walter, *Selected Writings*. (Selections) Handout.

Blanchot, Maurice, *Writing of the Disaster* (ISBN: 9780803261204)

Derrida, Jacques, *The Gift of Death* 2<sup>nd</sup> edition (ISBN: 9780226142777)

Derrida, Jacques, *Of Spirit* (ISBN: 9780226143194)

Heidegger, Martin, *The Question Concerning Technology and Other Essays* (9780061319693)

\_\_\_\_\_, "The Rectoral Address" OAK

Levinas, Emmanuel, *Time and the Other* (ISBN: 0-820702330)

Leyotard, Jean-François, *Heidegger and the "jews"* (ISBN: 9780816618576)

Marx, Karl, "On the Jewish Question." OAK

Suggested Reading:

Freud, Sigmund, *Future Of an Illusion* and *Group Psychology and the Analysis of the Ego*.

