

Fall 2009

## History / Judaic Studies 384

This course will examine some of the multiple intersections between European (mainly, but not exclusively, German-speaking) culture and the modern Jewish experience. It will seek to analyze some of the complex and creative ways in which Jews sought to internalize, appropriate and re-negotiate aspects of European culture. It will attempt to map out the dynamics and ironies of these changing personal and collective self-definitions and relate them to various intellectual and artistic creations. We will also trace the multiple ways in which Jews were represented and the functions that these portrayals and stereotypes played within the broader culture. In addition, this course will examine some of the problematics of the “Jewish intellectual” and probe some of the surprising connections between “culture and catastrophe” that this encounter entailed. The seminar will examine these links as they manifested themselves in the work of such thinkers as Karl Marx (On the Jewish Question), Richard Wagner (Judaism and Music), Max Nordau (Degeneration), Friedrich Nietzsche (On the Genealogy of Morals), Sigmund Freud (Moses and Monotheism), Franz Kafka (Letter to His Father) and Ludwig Wittgenstein; in case-studies of Vienna and the Weimar Republic; in Zionism; and in anti-semitism and the Holocaust.

*Professor Steven Aschheim*

**Monday/Wednesday**

**2:30-4:00**

**120 Dennison**

**3 credits**