Jews facing the Modern World

“My blood is Jewish, my skin is Hungarian, I am a Human being”
Komlós Aladár
(1892-1980)

Moritz Daniel Oppenheim (1800-1882)

Maurycy Gottlieb (1856-1879)

Presenting
Dr. Chava Baruch
Yad Vashem
What is the Image of Judaism?
What do Traditional Jews learn?

Mitzvot: 248 Positive Commandments, 365 Prohibitions
2 part of the Torah:
Written: Pentateuch
Oral
( written down 200-700 CE)
Mishna, Talmud
Trinity: People, Land and Teachings
What about you?

- How do you combine your Religious, Cultural and National Heritage with Modernity in your Everyday life?
Who is the "real" Jew?
Who is the “real “ Jew?
Questions and dilemmas

- How to be a Jew in a Modern State, in a Modern Society?
- What is the price of Emancipation?
- Does Assimilation stop Anti-Semitism?
- Is Judaism a Religion a Nationality, a Culture, or a Civilization?
- What is the impact of Zionism on Jewish life?
Impact of Modernity on Jewish life

- Haskala- Religious tradition-Rituals
- Juristical Status- Emancipation
- Education
- Culture
- Loyalty to State
- New Secular Ideologies (Liberalism, Socialism, Nationalism)
- Zionism
What is the meaning of Enlightenment?
European Enlightenment- 18. Century

- Enlightenment according to Emanuel Kant: “Liberation of man from his self-incurred Immaturity”

In: Amos Elon: *The Pity of it all: A Portrait of the German-Jewish Epoch 1743-1933. p. 37"
How did Enlightenment challenge Judaism and Jewish life?
Are the Jews going to abandon their Tradition?
Is it possible to combine Jewish Tradition with Modernity?
Were all the Jews interested in changing their tradition?
What is the main message of Moses Mendelssohn for Jews and non-Jews?
European Enlightenment - Jewish Haskala
18. Century

Moses Mendelssohn (1729-1786)

“The Right to be different” Jerusalem (1783)
, trans., M., Samuels (London 1838) Vol. 1 pp. 170-172

“None of us feels and thinks exactly alike with his fellow man than wherefore impose upon one another by deceiving words? For your happiness’ sake and for ours, religious union is not toleration. It is diametrically opposite to it! … **Put wise bounds to prejudices.** Let everyone who does not disturb public happiness, who is obedient to the civil government…. **Be allowed to speak as he thinks fit, to pray to God after his own fashion…**” *As long as we rendering unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's render ye, yourselves, unto God the things which are God's. Love truth! Love peace!”*
What is Mendelssohn’s approach of Judaism?
“I believe that Judaism knows nothing of a revealed religion, in the sense in which it is taken by Christians, The Israelites has a divine legislation: laws, commandments, statutes, rules of life, instructions in the will of God, and lessons how to conduct themselves in order to attain both temporal and spiritual happiness: those laws, commandments were revealed to them through Moses, in a miraculous and supernatural manner, but no dogmas, no saving truths, no general self-evident propositions. As directions to general practice , and rules of conduct , both the written and written laws have public and private happiness for their immediate object. But they must also be considered as a mode of writting and as ceremonial laws, there is no sense and meaning in them. The ceremonial law was to offer inducements to personal intercourse, and social connection between the school and the professor.. And to excite and encourage competition…and that purpose it actually did answer in the first times, before the polity degenerated, and human folly again intermeddled to change by ignorance and misguidance, good to evil, and the beneficial to the hurtful.”
Haskala-and Jewish Religious tradition

- Moses Mendelssohn (1729-1786)
- “Ladies and Gentlemen! I am only going to the next room to receive my Shabbath and will soon rejoin you: in the meantime my wife will enjoy your company even more.”
- To Lessing he once wrote: “Tomorrow is Saturday so I cannot come to you.. If you who do not have to celebrate the Shabbath, are able, do come here.”.


- Mendelssohn respected Jesus as a historical figure, a critical first century Jewish rabbi who, unlike his disciples, never rejected Judaism or proclaimed his divinity. In Mendelssohn’s view, no religion, including Judaism was free of harmful man made features, of hypocrisy and superstition. Yet of the “essential core” of his own religion Mendelssohn was sure as Lavatar and Bonnet of theirs. Judaism in Mendelssohn’s view was a faith of reason. He could never abandon it for Christianity, whose revealed dogmas, in his views contradicted reason…. Christianity’s dependence on miracles was thoroughly alien to him. “

- In: In: Amos Elon: The Pity of it all: A Portrait of the German-Jewish Epoch 1743-1933 pp.47-48
What is the Precondition of accepting the Jews in modern society?
Heinrich Paulus (1761-1851)
Professor of Oriental languages and theology at the University of Heidelberg

“ The Jews must demonstrate that they belong solely to the country of their residence and accept the national identity of that country. They must demonstrate that they no longer consider themselves as a necessarily separate self-sufficient people of God.”
What is that Joseph II gave to the Jews in his Edict of Tolerance in 1782 and what was the meaning of this instruction for the Jews?
From the ascension to Our reign We have directed Our most preeminent Attention to the end that all our subjects without distinction of nationality or religion once they have been admitted and tolerated in Our States, shall participate in common in public welfare, the increase of which is Our care shall enjoy legal freedom and not find any obstacles in honest ways of gaining their livelihood and of increasing general industriousness.

As it is our goal to make the Jewish nation useful and serviceable to the State, mainly through better education and enlightenment of its youth…..We hereby grant an order …

Graciously, that he tolerated Jews may send their children to the Christian primary and secondary schools, so that they have at least the opportunity to learn reading, writing and counting.

Joseph II. Edict of Tolerance.1782.
Joseph II. Edict of Tolerance. 1782

- Grant to the Jewish co-religionists the completely **free choice** of all non civic **branches of commerce** and authorize them to apply for wholesale trade under the same conditions and with the same liberties as are obtained and carried on by Our Christian subjects.

- Considering the numerous openings in trades and manifold with Christians resulting the reform, the care for maintaining common confidence requires that the **Hebrew** and the so called **Jewish language** and writing of Hebrew intermixed with German shall be abolished.
The Impact of Joseph II. Edict of Tolerance. 1782 on Jewish Life

- **Education**: How can one keep his Jewish Identity in a Christian school?

- **Culture**: Does adapting the local language mean forgetting Hebrew, or Yiddish? How can one keep his original Cultural Heritage?

- **Commerce**: Will a Jew open his shop at Shabbat?
  - Will he open his shop in Christian Holydays?
What is that has to be change in Jewish life?

- What are the Preconditions of integration?
● Self criticism? Changing religious rituals?
● Acculturisation? Adopting local national culture?
● Assimilation? Neglecting Jewish Heritage?
● Conversion?
How the Jews look like in Christian Society? Leopold Zunz

- Only trade, mostly petty commerce or peddling, no artisans
- Shunning physical labor, no farming
- No physical activity
- Little desire to improve situation
- Superficial cleverness, hence misinformation
- Sham interest in enlightenment
- Uncouth language, comportment, social intercourse, manners
How to reconcile Jews and Germans

Wissenschaft- Leopold Zunz 1819

Judenübel

- Outline of Matters in Need of Improvement among Jews:
  - The inner world Ideas:
    - Religious concepts, especially God’s love and exclusive favoring of the Jews.
    - Superstition
    - Neglect of decent manual labor in favor of ascetic idleness or overly literal observance of ceremonies
  - The Cult:
    - Synagogue services
    - Forms of prayer
    - Overemphasis of ceremonial Law
  - Inner Constitution of the Communities:
    - Tyrannical rabbis, their power, fanaticism and uselessness
    - Bad schools or none at all
  - Education:
    - Disparity between teachings of the Law and its observance at home
    - Faulty and useless instructions at school: Talmud but no instruction in languages and sciences
The Verein für Cultur der Juden

- L. Zunz, while privately continuing his studies and eking out a livelihood by tutoring in German, Latin, and mathematics, he founded, together with Eduard Gans and Moses Moser, the Verein für Cultur und Wissenschaft der Juden (Nov. 17, 1819), a society intended "through culture and education to bring the Jews into harmonious relations with the age and the nations in which they live.". According to the, the new "science" comprised a study of the historical development and the philosophical essence of Judaism, although these two methods must be based on a critical understanding of Jewish literature.. on July 21, 1832, the "Gottesdienstliche Vorträge der Juden" appeared, destined to be the most important Jewish work published in the nineteenth century.. The work itself was a masterly exposition of the gradual growth and evolution of homiletic literature, traced through the Midrash, the Haggadah, and the prayer-book.

- Besides showing that the sermon was thoroughly Jewish, the book demonstrated that Judaism had a science which could justly claim equality with the studies admitted to university standing. It proved, furthermore, that Judaism was a growing force, not a crystallized law.

- The unedited full-text of the 1906 Jewish Encyclopedia
Why and how can Jews become citizens of a Modern State?
Gabriel Riesser (1806-1863)

After trying in vain to secure a university lectureship in Jurisprudence and after being barred from practice as a notary in his native Hamburg because of his Judaism he devoted his life to the struggle for Jewish Emancipation.

“To be sure, the Jews were once a nation. But they ceased to be one some two thousand years ago as have most other nations whose descendants constitute the states of present-day Europe. When they ceased to be a nation, they were dispersed throughout all the provinces of the Roman Empire and were subject to the same legal provisions that applied to other peoples subjugated to the Romans. Roma allowed non Romans the rights to preserve their own cult, and not see this a a basis of exclusion of non Romans from civil rights. The charge that our forefathers immigrated here centuries or millennia ago is as fiendish as it is absurd. We are not immigrants, we are native born. We are either German or we are homeless!! Religion has its creed: the state its laws. The confession of a creed constitutes a religious affiliation: obedience to laws determines citizenship in a state.”
How did Traditional Jews react to Reform trends of Judaism?
For nearly two thousand years they have been established in Israel and no one dared to open his mouth to protest. But now insignificant foxes have risen up to break the walls and destroy the fence (that has been erected around the Law). They seek to change the texts (of the prayers) and the benedictions and to alter the hours and times that have been appointed (for their recitation). Regarding matters of judgment, one court cannot abolish the ruling of another court unless it is greater in numbers and wisdom. Even if the ruling is invalid the regulation is not voided.

Therefore let them (the Reformers) stand up and counted with the sage of our generation... These men cannot make the choice to remove themselves from the congregation. If they will say" we do not accept the sages of the Talmud and their authority," they shall bear the burden of the words of Maimonides: “He who repudiates the Oral Law.. is classed with atheists whom any person has a right to put to death.”
Aaron Chorin (1766-1844)
The Rationale of Reform.
The rabbi of Arad in Hungary.
in P. R. Mendes- Flohr: The Jew in the Modern World
- A Documentary History. pp167-168

- The permanent elements of religion must be expressed
- in terms that appeal to the people and are consonant
- with the needs of life. If our religion and life appear to conflict with one another
this is due either to the defacement of sanctuary by foreign additions or to the
license of sinning will which desires to make its unbridled greed and its false
tendency authoritative guides of life. If we show ourselves as ready to strip
off unessential additions which is often forced themselves upon our
noble faith as the spawn of obscure and dark ages... we will be able to
resist successfully with the help of God all wanton, thoughtless and
presumptuous attacks which license o ignorance may direct against our sacred
cause”....

- In his congregation he abolished the “Kol Nidrei” prayer which opens the
Evening Service commencing the day of Atonement. He also permitted prayer
in the vernacular with uncovered head, approved of the use of an organ in
the Shabbath, curtailed the seven-day period of mourning, and allowed
riding and writing on the Shabbath.
What is the Essence of Emancipation?
Emancipation

- **NAPOLEON BONAPARTE**° (1769–1821), emperor of the French
- The principal influence exercised by Napoleon as emperor on Jewish history was in the years **1806 to 1808** when he convened the Assembly of Jewish *Notables and the (French) *Sanhedrin, and established the *Consistories. The programmatic documents formulated during this period and the institutions which then came into being embody the first practical expression of the demands made by a centralized modern state on the Jews who had become its citizens – "the separation of the political from the religious elements in Judaism."
- On March 17, 1808, however, Napoleon issued an order restricting the economic activity and the freedom of movement of the Jews in the eastern provinces of the empire for a period of ten years, an order which became known among Jews as the “**Infamous Decree.**"
How did European Jews react to Emancipation?
The Rabbinical Conference at Brunswick
“ The Question of Patriotism” June 12-19, 1844

- The purpose of the conference was declared to be "to consider the ways and means for the preservation of Judaism, and the awakening of the religious spirit ".
- The resolutions passed by the conference were as follows:
  - "The oath of a Jew is binding without any further ceremony than the invocation of the name of God. The prayer 'Kol Nidre' is unessential; and the members of the conference were to take steps to abolish it on the following Day of Atonement ".
  - The conference indorsed the responsa of the French Sanhedrin, with the exception of the third, which it changed to read as follows:
    - "The marriage of a Jew with a Christian—in fact, the marriage of a Jew with the adherent of any monotheistic religion—is not forbidden if the civil law permits the parents to raise in the Jewish religion the children issuing from such a union ".

What is new in Moses Hess and Leo Pinsker’s Approach of Judaism?
Moses Hess 1812-1875

- Moses Hess was born Moritz Hess in Bonn in 1812. He received a Jewish religious education from his grandfather, and later studied philosophy at the University of Bonn, but never graduated. As correspondent for a socialist newspaper that he helped to found, he lived in Paris, fleeing to Belgium and Switzerland temporarily following the suppression of the 1848 commune and again during the Franco-Prussian war. Hess was originally an assimilationist Jew who turned first to utopian and then to scientific socialism.

- “A thought which I believed to be forever buried in my heart, has been revived in me anew. It is the thought of my nationality, which is inseparably connected with the ancestral heritage and the memories of the Holy Land, the Eternal City, the birthplace of the belief in the divine unity of life, as well as the hope in the future brotherhood of men.”
Rome and Jerusalem

1862. Hess contemplated the rise of Italian nationalism and the German reaction to it, and from this he arrived at the idea of Jewish national revival, and at his prescient understanding that the Germans would not be tolerant of the national aspirations of others and would be particularly intolerant of the Jews.

- Judaism is not a passive religion, but an active life factor which has coalesced with the national consciousness into one organic whole. It is primarily the expression of a nationality whose history for thousands of years coincides with the history of the development of a humanity and the Jews are a nation which, having once acted as the leaven of the social world, is destined to be resurrected with the rest of civilized nations.

- We have to restudy our history, which has been grossly neglected by our rationalists, and rekindle in the hearts of our young generation the spirit which was the source of inspiration to our prophets and sages. Then, also, will we draw our inspiration from the deep well of Judaism; then will our sages and wise men regain the authority which they forfeited from the moment when, prompted by other motives than patriotism, they estranged themselves from Judaism and attempted to reform the Jewish law. We will then again become participators in the holy spirit, namely, the Jewish genius, which alone has the right to develop and form the Jewish law according to the needs of the people. And then, when the third exile will finally have come to an end, the restoration of the Jewish State will find us ready for it.
Judah Leib (Leon) Pinsker (1821-1891)

- Born in Russian Poland in **1821**. He inherited a strong sense of Jewish identity from his father, a Hebrew teacher and researcher. Pinsker firmly believed that the Jewish problem could be resolved if the Jews attained equal rights, but with the outbreak of anti-Jewish riots against Russian Jews in 1881, his views changed radically. He made a thorough study of Jews and Judaism, and in 1882 he anonymously published a rallying cry to Russian Jews - his German language pamphlet *Autoemancipation*, in which he urged the Jewish people to strive for independence, **national consciousness** and a **return to independent territorialism**.
Auto-Emancipation
By Leon Pinsker
(1882)

But it is different with the people of Israel. There is no such equality in the nations' dealings with the Jews. The basis is absent upon which treaties and international law may be applied: mutual respect. Only when this basis is established, when the equality of Jews with other nations becomes a fact, can the Jewish problem be considered solved. It lacks that autochthonous life which is inconceivable without a common language and customs and without cohesion in space. The Jewish people has no fatherland of its own, though many motherlands; no center of focus or gravity, no government of its own, no official representation. They home everywhere, but are nowhere at home. The nations have never to deal with a Jewish nation but always with mere Jews. The Jews are not a nation because they lack a certain distinctive national character, inherent in all other nations, which is formed by common residence in a single state. It was clearly impossible for this national character to be developed in the Diaspora; the Jews seem rather to have lost all remembrance of their former home. In seeking to fuse with other peoples they deliberately renounced to some extent their own nationality. Yet nowhere did they succeed in obtaining from their fellow-citizens recognition as natives of equal status. We must prove that the misfortunes of the Jews are due, above all, to their lack of desire for national independence; and that this desire must be awakened and maintained in time if they do not wish to be subjected forever to disgraceful existence -- in a word, we must prove that they must become a nation.
Why Jews joined Communism?
By its very nature, the Christian state is incapable of emancipating the Jew; by his very nature the Jew cannot be emancipated. So long as the state is Christian and the Jew is Jewish, the one is as incapable of granting emancipation as the other is of receiving it.
What was the Impact of Emancipation on Jewish Life?
Education

Alliance School 1909 Tangier
Jews in European Culture life

Danilo Kiš
Franz Kafka
Julian Tuwim
Ida Kaminska
Arthur Rubinstein
Loyalty to the State

- Serving in the Army
The impact of modernity on a Jewish family
Did Emancipation stop Anti-Semitism?
Did Emancipation stopped Anti-Semitism?

Outside silver, inside grime
Outside Fredrick, inside Ephraim"
A popular couplet in Prussia under Frederick’s reign 1701-1713

Figure 8c. “Solomon enjoys himself with two pretty Christian girls.” One of the many anti-Semitic caricatures by the English artist, Thomas Rowlandson (1756–1827).
How Zionism seeks to solve the "Jewish Problem"?
"We are one people- One People. We have honestly striven everywhere to merge ourselves in the social lives of surrounding communities, and to preserve only the faith of our fathers. It has not been permitted to us. In vain we are loyal patriots... vain do we strive to increase the fame of our native land in science and in art, or her wealth by trade and commerce. In countries where we lived for centuries we are still cried down as strangers... Let the sovereignty be granted us over a portion of the earth large enough to satisfy the requirements of the nation, the rest we shall manage for ourselves!"