

JEWISH TRAILBLAZERS IN THE MODERN ERA

THEIR IMPACT ON JUDAISM

Who are the most important Jews in the modern era? Einstein? Freud? Betty Friedan? Groucho Marx? The other Marx? Bob Dylan? Robert J Oppenheimer? Ruth Bader Ginsburg? Mark Zuckerberg?

The answer is: this is a trick question. If we are talking about 'important' to Jewish civilisation or to Judaism, then these Jews are not the best representatives. The real trailblazers of Jewry in the modern era might not be as well known, and not all of their contributions have been long-lasting, but their challenging ideas have helped make Judaism what it is today.

While certainly not exhaustive, this review of some of the major figures in the development of religious, intellectual and political Jewish thought will help us understand the wide range of movements and identities that characterise modern Judaism. These developments encompass: the beginnings of modernity (i.e. the Jewish Enlightenment); the creation of Jewish studies; the development of nationalism and Zionism; aspects of Jewish philosophy and thought; and the fragmentation of religious practices and beliefs.

This series will show how these trailblazers affected Judaism and helped create its different streams.

LECTURES

1. The Jewish enlightenment and the beginnings of modernity (Moses Mendelssohn and Isaac Baer Levinsohn)
2. The new learning: Jewish academic studies (Leopold Zunz, Abraham Geiger and Heinrich Graetz)
3. Jewish nationalism and Zionism (Theodor Herzl, Simon Dubnow, Louis Brandeis and Henrietta Szold)
4. Jewish philosophers and thinkers (Herman Cohen, Franz Rosenzweig and Martin Buber)
5. Jewish religious leaders – part A (Samson Raphael Hirsch, Isaac Mayer Wise, Solomon Schechter and Regina Jonas)
6. Jewish religious leaders – part B (Mordecai Kaplan, Abraham Joshua Heschel and Menachem Mendel Schneerson)

DATES

Six lectures on Wednesdays, 2 - 3:30pm, 7 AUG - 11 SEP, 2024.

SPEAKER

A/Prof Peter Schattner

FORMAT

Lectures, audience discussion and readings

LOCATION

U3A Stonnington and on Zoom (a 'hybrid' presentation)

ENROLMENT & ENQUIRIES

More information, including registration, available on website (<http://u3astonnington.org.au>) early July 2024