

The Bucerius Institute for Research of Contemporary German History and Society

"Scepticism towards Progress among Modern Jewish Philosophers"

Prof. Dr. Christoph Schulte

**Department of Jewish Studies and Religious Studies
University of Potsdam**

The first part of the lecture deals with Jewish scepticism towards the Christian philosophy of history and deals with Moses Mendelssohn, Heinrich Heine, Samuel Hirsch, Nachman Krochmal, Franz Rosenzweig, and Karl Löwith. It is thematically centred on how these modern Jewish philosophers from Mendelssohn to Löwith—arguing disparately and in diverse discourses while pursuing the same argumentative thrust—sceptically opposed the basic character of the Christian and Christian-oriented secular philosophy of history (esp. Voltaire, Lessing, Kant, Hegel), viz. the idea that Christianity intellectually and morally overcame and supplanted Judaism in world history. The second part of the lecture analyzes scepticism towards modern scientific, cultural, and technological progress (and the common belief in this progress) in the works of Jewish philosophers in the twentieth century. It sheds light on Theodor Lessing, Walter Benjamin, Max Horkheimer and Theodor W. Adorno, Günther Anders, and Leo Strauss.



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12:00-13:30

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