Book Prospectus

**Critiques of Theology**

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**1. Brief Description**

This book offers an unexpected account of the relation of critique to theology as manifested in selected and previously less discussed writings of four influential twentieth-century German-Jewish thinkers: Sigmund Freud’s book “Jokes and their Relation to the Unconscious”, published in 1905; Walter Benjamin’s early writings on youth (*Jugend*), composed between 1910-1917; Theodor Adorno’s analyses of education in the decade spanning 1959-1969; and Hannah Arendt’s political writings from the 1960s, in which she developed the concept of tradition.

It seems hard to imagine a concept more significant to modern western thought than that of critique. Particularly in the wake of the Enlightenment, critique came to denote not only a method of investigation, but also a form of understanding social constructs and historical processes, thereby becoming a central facet in the development of the social sciences. As a tool of reason, it came to be perceived – to quote Talal Assad’s compelling depiction – as “the essence of secular heroism.” This book argues that there is a common denominator in the work of these four intellectuals pertaining to the dialogue between critique and theology – even if it surfaces in different forms, within different intellectual disciplines, and different social-political contexts of the first and latter halves of the twentieth century. Rather than pointing to the separation between the critique of modern secularism and religious traditions, the book essentially shows that, at least with regard to this particular body of thought, there are in fact intricate links between them.

We are dealing here, then, with a puzzling contradiction. On the one hand, these thinkers were modern, decidedly secular thinkers. Not one of them was in any way religious, nor even sympathetic to religious ways of life. They indeed saw critique as epitomizing the “essence of secular heroism”, and this features in their work in two main ways: first, as an analysis of concepts, and second, as a means to interpret and thus examine social, historical, and political questions so as to offer critical accounts of modernity that address general human as well as specifically Jewish concerns. On the other hand, based on a close reading of the selected texts, the book shows that critique operates in the work of these modern Jewish thinkers in a way that is conscious of theology, often finding its expression within a predominantly religious frame of reference. The examination of selected texts across the century is important, for I aim to show how – to use a musical metaphor – we are dealing here with a great intellectual symphony on the critique of a modern secular world in crisis, whose overtones have always resonated with religion and theology. Touching upon Jewish and Christian theological traditions, twentieth-century modern and secular critique seems to present a much richer, and perhaps more composite phenomenon than previously assumed.

Within this conceptual framework, the book asks: (a) what does critique denote for each of the thinkers in question? (b) what religious or theological traditions inform each thinker’s thought? and (c) what are the ways in which critique, religion, and theology intertwine? Each of the four chapters of the book is therefore dedicated to one thinker, focusing either on one particular text or on a cluster of works and offering an analysis of how the thinker in question forged manifold interrelations between critique and theology.

I draw upon the concept of a “critique of theology” to capture the intersection of critique and theology in these thinkers’ works. By using this term, I wish not only to present the critical positions of these secular thinkers toward religion and theology; I also aim to demonstrate how their critical stance concurrently emerges out of theological traditions and can in many ways be traced back to them. A critique of theology is therefore distinct from political theology. It does not focus on the emergence of modern political concepts, but somewhat more broadly on what emerges from the interaction between the concepts of critique and theology, which may extend, but is not limited to, political categories.

**2. Contributions**

In the literature thus far, there has not been the suggestion to discuss the theories of these selected scholars in terms of *critiques of theology*. One important contribution of such an approach lies in contesting the common separation between the two concepts. Rather than highlighting the contrast or disconnect between modern and secular critique and religion, this book wishes to trace the connection between them. In lieu of treating critique as a testament to the disengagement from religion and religiosity, this book seeks to identify how the works of these prominent secular thinkers, although widely divergent, give expression to the complex relation between critique and its theological origins.

Another contribution lies in offering a new combination for the ongoing discussions surrounding the examined thinkers’ relationships to everything theological. Freud’s animosity toward religion, which he regarded as a delusion, as well as his self-perception as an “infidel Jew” (*ungläubiger Jude*), are well-known and have received considerable scholarly attention. Similarly, Hannah Arendt is commonly regarded as the “most secular” thinker of her generation. Many scholars see “critical theorists” (a term that includes Benjamin and prominently features Adorno) as participating in a progressive-enlightenment-secular project with debatable links to theology. In contrast, the book argues that it is nevertheless possible to identify links between critique and theological ideas in some of their writings. This is not to disregard the significant differences between them. It is the generational, historical, and disciplinary divergence between the works of these thinkers that highlights, when examined alongside one another, the significance of the shared theological elements in their concept of critique.

Finally, the selection of texts for analysis presents an additional novelty. The importance of the selected texts lies in offering a unique insight into the relation between critique and theology that has not yet been studied in other works. All the texts discussed (Freud’s book on jokes, Benjamin’s early writings, Adorno’s oral and written lectures on education, and Arendt’s political writings) have remained relatively less central in other scholarly investigations, with the additional implication that none of them have, to date, been read alongside one another. The book innovatively suggests how these specific texts and themes (jokes in the case of Freud, Benjamin’s youth, education for Adorno and Arendt’s conceptualization of tradition), offer rich and substantive content for gaining new knowledge about some of the most intimate operations of modern secular Jewish thought and its fascinating engagement with religion and theology.

The book fits well with the Chicago UP series “Studies in German-Jewish Cultural History and literature” and continues to engage with questions of modern secular thought and religion, critique and theology, faith and identity. In its specific discussion of Freud’s theological perspectives, the study also dovetails with Eric Santner’s pioneering study *On the Psychotheology of Everyday Life: Reflections on Freud and Rosenzweig* (2011). By engaging with Adorno’s works from the 1960s it is in dialogue with Martin Shuster’s Autonomy after Auschwitz: Adorno, German Idealism, and Modernity (2014). In arguing for the fundamental position of theology in critique this work also builds on Otfried Höffe’s recent analysis of the centrality of freedom in critique,*Critique of Freedom* (2020). Finally, by bringing together modern discussions and theological and religious traditions, the book also complements Robert Catalano’s *The Saint and the Atheist: Thomas Aquinas and Jean-Paul Sartre* (2020), which associates modern philosophy and Christian theology.

**3. Detailed Synopsis and Chapter Headings**

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**Introduction: A Handmaid’s Tale**

**Chapter I. Wit and Law**

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*The Road to Rome*

*Stories of Grave Importance*

2. Subversion, Resistance, Critique and Law

*A Mechanism of Social Critique*

*Brevity is the Body and the Soul of Wit*

*The Principle of Pleasure*

3. Critique and Theology

*Shortcut*

*A Critique of Theology*

*Transgression and Secularization*

**Chapter II. A Theory of Youth**

1. An Age of Youth

*Rebellion and Quest*

*Transcendence, Divinity and Eternity*

2. Mystical Allegories

*“Young man, I tell you, stand up!”*

*The Metaphysics of Youth*

3. Critique: A Modern*-*Mystical Approach

*A Critique of Theology*

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**Chapter III. Education Ex Machina**

1. Between Critique and Theology

*After Auschwitz*

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2.Ex Machina

*From Bildung to Halbbildung*

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*The Messianic Idea*

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**Chapter IV. Tradition**

1. All Roads Lead to Rome

*Tradition, Tradition, Tradition*

*Theologia Tripartita*

2. A Tripartite Critique of Modernity

*Critique and Theology*

*A Critique of Theology*

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*The Dialectics of Secularization*

*Radical Transcendence*

**Epilogue**

**The introduction** acquaints readers with the theoretical and methodological questions addressed throughout the book. The chapter opens with a discussion of the concept of critique and its importance to modern thought. With particular focus on Kant’s reiteration of Aquinas’ “philosophy is the handmaid of theology” (*philosophia ancilla theologiae*), the book shows how the analogy of the handmaid’s tale is not about the utter separation of critique from theology but rather its ongoing relation with its theological “other.” Drawing on this discussion, the introduction elaborates on the concept of theological critique and explains its analytic and methodological significance. It then provides an overview of the book’s arguments concerning the type of critique of theology that each of the German-Jewish scholars under discussion brings to the fore, including an explanation for the selection of these thinkers and of their specific texts.

**Chapter 1** demonstrates how Freud’s 1905 book *Jokes and their Relation to the Unconscious* offers a critique of the law that is informed by theology. The first section of the chapter is dedicated to a contextualization of Freud’s interest in questions of law and lawgiving that he associates with religion and theology in these early years. Against this broad background, the second section examines Freud’s analysis of jokes (*Witze*). I show that the common denominator of all jokes is that they offer social critique, and that such a critique, embedded in humor, attests to Freud’s recourse to the notion of “law.” In jokes, critique and law are thus interwoven to the extent of offering a critique of law. The third section concludes the discussion by pointing to the theological underpinning of Freud’s critique of law, showing how it echoes traditional Jewish Halachic discussions relating to divine law. A critique of law is in this way informed by theology. With respect to this last point, I demonstrate how the relation between critique and law embedded in jokes points to a critique of theology, for they secularize the theological concepts on which they are based.

C**hapter 2** presents Walter Benjamin’s theory of youth as a form of critique of theology in that it offers social criticism of mystical lore. In the first section of the chapter, I present a short overview of the centrality of youth for the young Benjamin, followed by an examination of the theological aspects that Benjamin ascribes to the concept. In the second part of the chapter, I explore how Benjamin’s theological understanding of youth gives expression to Christian mysticism, such as the spirituality of Meister Eckhart. In particular, Benjamin relates to divine “nothingness”, central to the mystical tradition, and connects this with his approach to Messianism. In the third section, I highlight the manner in which Benjamin’s mystical articulation of youth informs his social and political critique in these early years. This will explain how theological critique also denotes, in Benjamin’s case, a secularization of theology, for it reframes transcendence within independent human experience of the world. I then examine how Benjamin’s theological criticism informs his attitude toward Jewish assimilation and nationalism. In tying politics and theology together, I demonstrate how social criticism of mystical lore accentuates a Messianic expectation that for Benjamin can only be fulfilled inasmuch as it remains unfulfilled.

**Chapter 3** argues that Adorno’s postwar perspectives on education – broadly, and somewhat loosely regarded as the arena of human cultivation – constitute a site for charting his critique of theology “after Auschwitz.” In the first section of the chapter, I illustrate how critique for Adorno always remains dependent on theology and can be defined in this context as a secularization of theological concepts that is meant, however, to “rescue” them. The second section of the chapter explains how the transformation of the modern German educational tradition of *Bildung* into *Halbbildung* (which may also be understood as “pseudo-education”) epitomizes a distortion of this “rescue” mission of critique in Adorno’s view. As such, *Halbbildung* reflects a total “entrapment” of human beings in the existing, overwhelmingly oppressive, modern, social and, for Adorno, mechanized conditions. Yet if education is the arena of oppression, it also represents the opportunity for liberation – liberation from the machine. I conclude the discussion by presenting two main areas of theological criticism in which such a deliverance *ex machina* is revealed by Adorno. The first relates to the idea that education for “critical self-reflection” is still endowed with the mission of rescuing theology, a mission that discloses Adorno’s appeal for a negative critique of theology. Negativity here means that critique can only fulfill its theological calling by not fulfilling it. In other words, it is only possible to represent the divine by means of its non-representation. The second area concerns Adorno’s discussion of love in the context of education. I show how love is central to Adorno’s formation of the sort of critical education that battles against indifference to the suffering of human beings. He largely articulates this as a theological response to the “failure” of Kierkegaard’s theological doctrine, which Adorno discusses in his 1939 article “On Kierkegaard’s Doctrine of Love.”

**Chapter 4** underlines Arendt’s critique of the “crisis” of modernity and its roots in the Roman tripartite theological tradition (constituting a division between political theology, physical or philosophical theology and mythical theology). In the first section, I point to the manner in which tradition is, for Arendt, a religious concept, pertaining to the Roman tripartite theology. It is this tradition that, according to Arendt, Augustine absorbed into his own “hierarchy” of love. In the next section of this chapter, I discuss how the Roman-Augustinian theology gives Arendt’s critical analysis of the “crisis” of modernity a basis. Here I argue that such a theological tradition provides the foundation not only for Arendt’s argument regarding what modernity has lost, but more profoundly for her critical analysis of this loss. In such a way, Arendt presents a critique that depends on theology, to the extent of offering another version of a critique of theology. In the last section of the chapter, I bring such an understanding of Arendt’s theological critique to bear on her discussions of secularization and secularism, evil, and Messianism, central to her writings in the 1960s. Secularization implies not only the ongoing erosion of Christian dogma in public life, but also, and somewhat antithetically, a modern return to the Roman tradition (as in, for example, the context of modern revolutions). Evil and Messianism also demonstrate, albeit in widely different ways, how the Roman theological tradition informs her preference for a “banal” (and anti-gnostic) rather than “radical” approach to the question of transcendence.

**The epilogue** is designed to weave together the book’s engagement with the four different critiques of theology. Touching upon Jewish and Christian traditions, worldly and divine law, mysticism, negative theology, and tripartite theology, critique seems to denote a rich and composite phenomenon. Extrapolating from these specific cases, and bringing today’s return of religion and religiosity to the forefront of our social and political reality, the epilogue reflects on the focus placed on the immanent world in modern critique, the type of “secular theology” that it displays. Attention is also given to the modern Jewish intellectual legacy stemming from an ongoing tension between different perspectives and traditions of thought, which may serve as a basis for fruitful conversation (as opposed to antagonism and struggle), provided that none demand exclusivity in all matters human.

**3. Status of the Work**

I have completed the book’s introduction and four main chapters and I intend to finish writing the epilogue and to review the entire text (including professional editing) by January 2021. An early version of my reflections on Benjamin’s theory of youth was published 2019 in Sophia (vol. 58, pp. 175-195).

**4. Potential Audience and Market**

I expect this book to attract the attention of scholars interested in modern Jewish culture, history, philosophy and literature, who are especially attentive to the interplay between modern Jewish history and European history, Jewish thought and its complex relation with the tradition of the Enlightenment. The book will also appeal to academic specialists and students in the fields of Jewish studies, modern history and philosophy, European history, religious studies, theology, political science, German Studies, education and continental philosophy. My book should feed into the growing scholarly interest in the relation between secularism and religion, politics and theology, Messianism and modern social and political imagination. It may also be relevant to academic communities in general in Europe and the US, which are interested in questions regarding the relation between secular modernity, religion and theology.

**5. Competing and Comparable Books**

I am unaware of any book that might directly compete with *Critiques of Theology.* The book, however, is in conversation with the growing volume of works interested in the role of religion and theology in modern German-Jewish experience and thought, for example: Orr Scharf, *Thinking in Translation: Scriptures and Redemption in the Thought of Franz Rosenzweig* (2019); Paul Mendes-Flohr, *Martin Buber: A Life of Faith and Dissent.* (2019); Vivian Liska, [*German-Jewish Thought and its Afterlife: a Tenuous Legacy (*](https://haifa-primo.hosted.exlibrisgroup.com/primo-explore/fulldisplay?docid=972HAI_MAIN_ALMA21137804450002791&context=L&vid=HAU&lang=iw_IL&search_scope=books_and_more&adaptor=Local%20Search%20Engine&tab=default_tab&query=any,contains,German%20Jewish,AND&mode=advanced&pfilter=creationdate,exact,10-YEAR,AND&offset=110)2017); David Biale, *Not in the Heavens: The Tradition of Jewish Secular Thought* (2011); Pierre Bouretz, [*Witnesses for the Future: Philosophy and Messianism* (2010)](https://haifa-primo.hosted.exlibrisgroup.com/primo-explore/fulldisplay?docid=972HAI_MAIN_ALMA2177366410002791&context=L&vid=HAU&lang=iw_IL&search_scope=books_and_more&adaptor=Local%20Search%20Engine&tab=default_tab&query=any,contains,German%20Jewish,AND&mode=advanced&pfilter=creationdate,exact,10-YEAR,AND&offset=110). My book extends this volume of works with a much-needed analysis of four thinkers who have not, to date, been approached together by considering the relation between critique and theology in their work. In bringing together diverse critiques of theology, my book also complements the ongoing scholarly focus on the Jewish experience in the Weimar era, for example: David Marshall, *The Weimar Origins of Rhetorical Inquiry* (2020); Benjamin Lazier, *God Interrupted: Heresy and the European Imagination between the World Wars* (2008); Kerry Wallach, *[Passing illusion: Jewish Visibility in Weimar Germany](https://haifa-primo.hosted.exlibrisgroup.com/primo-explore/fulldisplay?docid=972HAI_MAIN_ALMA21140265550002791&context=L&vid=HAU&lang=iw_IL&search_scope=books_and_more&adaptor=Local%20Search%20Engine&tab=default_tab&query=any,contains,German%20Jewish,AND&mode=advanced&pfilter=creationdate,exact,10-YEAR,AND&offset=110)*(2017); and Peter Gordon, *Rosenzweig and Heidegger: Between Judaism and German Philosophy* (2003). However, rather than focusing on a Weimarian chapter, I present the vicissitudes of theology spanning an entire century.

This project comes closer to scholarly explorations of the role of religion and theology in the writings of each of the scholars under discussion. My book clearly relates to Eric Santner’s groundbreaking approach to Freud’s theology, *On the Psychotheology of Everyday Life: Reflections on Freud and Rosenzweig* (2011). The book, however, uniquely shows how Freud’s construction of “transcendence within immanence” was already developed in his early work on jokes that is not central to Santner’s study. By particularly exploring the birth of Freud’s interest in questions of law and lawgiving, my work incorporates a significant phase that is missing in other studies, which mainly focus on Freud’s last publication, *Moses and Monotheism* (1939), most notably Yossef Haif Yerushalmi’s, *Freud’s Moses: Judaism Terminable and Interminable* (1993); Jan Assmann’s *Moses the Egyptian: The Memory of Egypt in Western Monotheism* (1997); and [Gilad Sharvit and Karen S. Feldman](https://haifa-primo.hosted.exlibrisgroup.com/primo-explore/fulldisplay?docid=972HAI_MAIN_ALMA51211818630002791&context=L&vid=HAU&lang=iw_IL&search_scope=books_and_more&adaptor=Local%20Search%20Engine&tab=default_tab&query=any,contains,German%20Jewish,AND&mode=advanced&pfilter=creationdate,exact,10-YEAR,AND&offset=110)’s collection of essays, *Freud and Monotheism: Moses and the Violent Origins of Religion* (2018). My association of Freud’s recourse to the notion of “law” with Rabbinic Halachic vocabulary and theological imagination also clearly departs from the recent studies of William Parson, [*Freud and Augustine in Dialogue: Psychoanalysis, Mysticism, and the Culture of Modern Spirituality*](https://haifa-primo.hosted.exlibrisgroup.com/primo-explore/fulldisplay?docid=972HAI_MAIN_ALMA2177078780002791&context=L&vid=HAU&lang=iw_IL&search_scope=books_and_more&adaptor=Local%20Search%20Engine&tab=default_tab&query=sub,contains,Freud,AND&facet=lang,include,eng&mode=advanced&pfilter=creationdate,exact,10-YEAR,AND&offset=0) (2013) and Joseph H. Berke, *The Hidden Freud: His Hassidic Roots* (2015). Both scholars argue for the influence of Jewish (Berke) and Christian (Parson) mysticism on Freud’s psychoanalysis. By drawing attention to the relation between wit and law and revealing its critical-theological underpinning, this research also marks a clear conceptual innovation in relation to the small volume of works focusing on or relating to Freud’s theory of jokes, for example Elliot Oring’s *The Jokes of Sigmund Freud: A Study in Humor and Jewish Identity* (1984) and the recent publication by Ruth R. Wisse, *[No Joke: Making Jewish Humor](https://haifa-primo.hosted.exlibrisgroup.com/primo-explore/fulldisplay?docid=972HAI_MAIN_ALMA51132823650002791&context=L&vid=HAU&lang=iw_IL&search_scope=books_and_more&adaptor=Local%20Search%20Engine&tab=default_tab&query=any,contains,German%20Jewish,AND&mode=advanced&pfilter=creationdate,exact,10-YEAR,AND&offset=110)* [(2013](https://haifa-primo.hosted.exlibrisgroup.com/primo-explore/fulldisplay?docid=972HAI_MAIN_ALMA51132823650002791&context=L&vid=HAU&lang=iw_IL&search_scope=books_and_more&adaptor=Local%20Search%20Engine&tab=default_tab&query=any,contains,German%20Jewish,AND&mode=advanced&pfilter=creationdate,exact,10-YEAR,AND&offset=110)).

A wide range of recent publications explore Benjamin’s theology and Messianism. To take only a few examples: Colby Dickinson and [Stéphane Symons](https://haifa-primo.hosted.exlibrisgroup.com/primo-explore/fulldisplay?docid=972HAI_MAIN_ALMA51134743560002791&context=L&vid=HAU&lang=iw_IL&search_scope=books_and_more&adaptor=Local%20Search%20Engine&tab=default_tab&query=any,contains,German%20Jewish,AND&mode=advanced&pfilter=creationdate,exact,10-YEAR,AND&offset=110)’ collection of essays, *Walter Benjamin and Theology* (2016); Levine Michael G, *A Weak Messianic Power: Figures of a Time to Come in Benjamin, Derrida, and Celan* (2014); [Stéphane Symons](https://haifa-primo.hosted.exlibrisgroup.com/primo-explore/fulldisplay?docid=972HAI_MAIN_ALMA51134743560002791&context=L&vid=HAU&lang=iw_IL&search_scope=books_and_more&adaptor=Local%20Search%20Engine&tab=default_tab&query=any,contains,German%20Jewish,AND&mode=advanced&pfilter=creationdate,exact,10-YEAR,AND&offset=110), *Walter Benjamin: Presence of Mind, Failure to Comprehend* (2013); Peter Fenves, *The Messianic Reduction: Walter Benjamin and the Shape of Time* (2011); Eric Jacobson, *Metaphysics of the Profane* (2003); and Margarete Kohlenbach, *Walter Benjamin: Self –Reference and Religiosity,* (2002). None of these works, however, focus on Benjamin’s writings between 1910-1917, or provide a detailed analysis of his theory of youth. Johannes Steinzinger’s *Zwischen emanzipatorischem Appell und melancholischem Verstummen Walter Benjamins Jugendschriften* (2011) and *Revolte Eros und Sprache* (2013) are among the few works to offer such an in-depth examination. These studies, though, are available only in German, and they do not focus on Benjamin’s theological imagination but instead argue for the theory’s minor and instrumental importance for understanding Benjamin’s later works. My book challenges this marginalization by being the first to show how Benjamin’s theory of youth offers social criticism of mystical lore, vital to the understanding of his later writings.

My book is also comparable to topical accounts of Adorno’s theology, for example Gerhard Richter, *Thinking with Adorno: The Uncoercive Gaze* (2019); Peter Gordon, *Adorno and Existence* (2016); Wolfson Eliot R., *Poetic Thinking* (2015); Christopher Craig Brittain, *Adorno and Theology* (2010); Hent de Vries, Minimal Theologies: Critiques of Secular Reason in Adorno and Levinas (2005). These and many other books offer vital insights into several domains of Adorno’s negative theology (for example Gordon and Richter), his engagement with the mystical Jewish “passion for the impossible” (Wolfsohn) or his dependency on the theological “other” of reason (de Vries). My book complements these readings of Adorno’s theology by bringing to light his postwar approach to education and the portrayal of a critique of theology that had not yet been suggested by other works. It also offers a unique vista not found in these works of Adorno’s “negative theology” showing how, in the context of education, such negativity relates not to an inability to represent the divine (the so-called *Bilderverbot*) but rather to the possibility of representation by means of its non-representation.

None of the recent studies which argue for a residual theological vocabulary in Arendt’s thought discuss her concept of tradition, for example: Trevor Tchir’s *Hannah Arendt's Theory of Political Action: Daimonic Disclosure of the ‘Who'* (2017); and John Kiess’ *Hannah Arendt and Theology* (2016). The accentuation of Arendt’s concept of tradition and its relation to her critique of modernity also present a new angle on her political writings that remains somewhat under-represented in Dana Villa’s Cambridge Companion to Hannah Arendt (2000). The book also contests a widely accepted view of Arendt as an “anti-modernist”, as advocated, for example, by Maurizio D’Entrèves in *Modernity and the Human Condition: Hannah Arendt’s Conception of Modernity* (1991). Indeed, I argue that Arendt’s bringing together of critique and theology cannot be easily assigned to any one-sided classification. Unlike Peter Gordon’s *The Concept of the Apolitical: German Jewish Thought and Weimar Political Theology* (2007) and in dialogue with Samuel Moyn’s *Hannah Arendt on the Secular* (2008) my book shows the manner in which the “political theological predicament” was also relevant to Arendt. The book is also distinctive in suggesting that a reading of Arendt as a “post-Christian” thinker (in line with Julia Kristeva, *Female Genius: Life, Madness, Words – Hannah Arendt, Melanie Klein, Gabrielle Colette; A Trilogy,* 2001) should be regarded as an indication of Arendt’s return to the Roman sources of Christianity. In addition, the book complements Rebecca Dew’s *Hannah Arendt: Between Ideologies* (2020). Dew’s work mainly examines Arendt’s relations with her mentors Heidegger and Jaspers. Somewhat differently, my book suggests her debt to a “Roman” Augustine that reflects back on her intellectual links with these two sources of thought.

**6. Author Profile**

Yotam Hotam is currently a fellow of the Bucerius Institute for Contemporary German History and Society, and the Haifa Center for German and European Studies, and he is a senior lecturer (associate professor) at the Faculty of Education at the University of Haifa. He was a Horace W. Goldsmith Visiting Professor in Judaic Studies at Yale (2015), an honorary fellow of the Center for the Humanities at Wesleyan University (2016), and a visiting Mosse Professor at the UW-Madison and a Fulbright scholarship holder (2005-2006). He is a member of the academic committee of the Israeli Resling Press, as well as a number of Israeli academic journals. Between 2008-2012 he served as the editor of the Hebrew peer-reviewed Journal "Tabur: A Yearbook for European History, Culture, Society and Thought", published by the R. Koebner Center for German History at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. He was also a fellow of the Rosenzweig Minerva Research Center for German-Jewish Literature and Cultural History (2006-2008). He served as a research fellow in the special research group "Erinnerungskulturn" (2000-2005), based at the university of Giessen, as well as in the research group "Sport, Body, Subject" (2009-2011) of the "German Research Society" (DFG).