

About The Jewish Theological Seminary and The Finkelstein Institute

The Jewish Theological Seminary was founded in 1886 through the efforts of two distinguished rabbis, Dr. Sabato Morais and Dr. H. Pereira Mendes, along with a group of prominent lay leaders from Philadelphia and New York. Its mission was to preserve the knowledge and practice of historical Judaism. In 1887, the first class of ten students was held in the vestry of the Spanish-Portuguese Synagogue, New York City's oldest congregation. Since then, JTS has greatly expanded its mission, created a beautiful Manhattan campus, and evolved into the prestigious center of Jewish learning it is today. A Jewish university with a world-class faculty and diverse student body, JTS grants undergraduate, graduate, and professional degrees through its five schools and offers enriching programs for the Jewish community in the United States, Israel, and around the world.

The Jewish Theological Seminary's schools and facilities include The Graduate School; The Rabbinical School; H.L. Miller Cantorial School and College of Jewish Music; William Davidson Graduate School of Jewish Education; Albert A. List College of Jewish Studies; the Rebecca and Israel Ivry Prozdor, a model supplementary high school; a summer school; five research institutes, including the Melton Research Center for Jewish Education; lay leadership and professional institutes; community education programs; student residence halls; and the incomparable collections of The Library. The acclaimed Jewish Museum, established by JTS in 1904 and now an independent affiliated institution, is the foremost conservator of Jewish culture in North America. Consortia with renowned academic neighbors, including Union Theological Seminary and Columbia University, further support and enhance the scholarly ambiance of the learning community.

Since 1938, The Jewish Theological Seminary's Louis Finkelstein Institute for Religious and Social Studies has maintained an innovative interfaith and intergroup relations program emphasizing conversation between communities about matters of public significance. Its ability to join voices from different academic, social, and religious communities has resulted in unique conferences and interfaith cooperation. It has brought the relevance of Judaism and other religions to prominence in scholarly and practical fellowship on theological, ethical, and scientific issues.

Today, The Finkelstein Institute maintains this objective with a renewed focus on the problems of religion and the public sphere. The proper public role of religion in a liberal democracy, both in the United States and abroad, is a persistent and controversial problem. The Institute sponsors conferences on the theoretical, political, and theological dimensions of this problem, looking at such enduring issues as the role of virtue in liberal societies or the place of religion in national self-definition. In addition to its theoretical interest, the Institute sponsors conferences on current topical issues, such as the current state of the law of church and state, or bioethical problems, such as stem cell research and cloning.

Then as now, the Finkelstein Institute strives to be a venue for advancing the democratic conversation at the intersection of religion and public affairs.



Secular Europe, Religious America: Religion, Politics, and the Transatlantic Divide Laying the Ground for an Intercultural Dialogue

October 30-31, 2005
The Jewish Theological Seminary
New York City

A conference cosponsored by

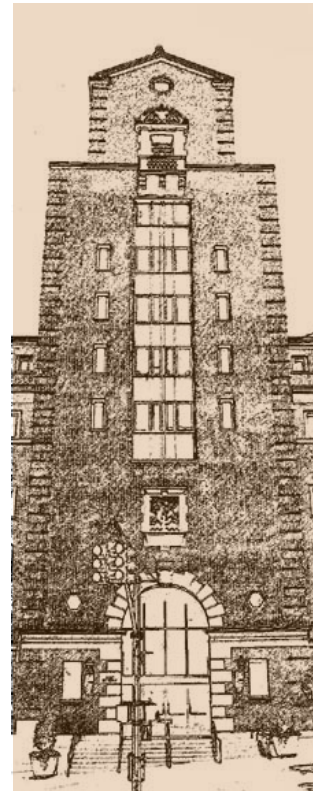
The Louis Finkelstein Institute for
Religious and Social Studies
and

The Konrad Adenauer Stiftung

with the participation of

The Foreign Policy Research Institute
and

The Council on Public Policy



This conference is devoted to understanding how the religiosity of American society vis-à-vis Western European societies exacerbates the tension between the United States and Europe. It also aims to find common ground through shared reflection on the historic, religious roots of Europe and America and, by doing so, reawaken a sense of the distinctiveness of the West in the encounter with other cultures.

Conference Program

All sessions, unless otherwise noted, will be held in the Mendelson Convocation Center.

Sunday, October 30, 2005

7:30-9:30 p.m. Session One

Welcome

Dr. Ismar Schorsch, *Chancellor, JTS*

Dr. Alan Mittleman, *Director, The Finkelstein Institute, JTS*

Dr. Norbert Wagner, *Konrad Adenauer Stiftung*

Historical Trajectories of Politics and Religion in the United States and Europe

Chair Dr. Norbert Wagner, *Konrad Adenauer Stiftung*

United States Hon. Mickey Edwards, *Princeton University; the Aspen Institute*

Europe Ministerpräsident a.D. Erwin Teufel, *Member of the State Parliament of Baden-Württemberg*

United States Prof. Wilfred McClay, *University of Tennessee*

Europe Prof. Michael Zöller, *University of Bayreuth*

Monday, October 31, 2005

9:00-10:30 a.m. Session Two

Political Sociology of Religion in the United States and Europe

Chair Prof. Amy Uelmen, *Director, Institute on Religion, Law and Lawyer's Work; Fordham University School of Law*

Europe Prof. Barry Kosmin, *Jewish Policy Research Institute; Trinity College*

United States Prof. John Green, *University of Akron; the Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life*

10:30-11:00 a.m. Coffee Break

11:00 a.m.-12:30 p.m. Session Three

Attitudes toward the Authority of Science in the United States and Europe

Chair Prof. Jonathan Imber, *Wellesley College*

Europe Prof. Dr. Manfred Marquardt, *Theologisches Seminar, Reutlingen*

United States Prof. Robert Pollack, *Columbia University*

Prof. Kent Greenawalt, *Columbia University Law School*

12:30-2:00 p.m. Buffet Luncheon (for all participants) Private Dining Room

2:00-3:30 p.m. Session Four

Religion and Foreign Policy

Chair Dr. Hillel Fradkin, *Hudson Institute*

Europe Prof. Otto Kallscheuer, *Political Scientist; Philosopher*

United States Dr. Harvey Sicherman, *Foreign Policy Research Institute*

Dr. Luis Lugo, *Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life*

3:30-4:30 p.m. Concluding Roundtable

Religion, National Identity, and Intercultural Dialogue

Chair Dr. Alan Mittleman, *Director, The Finkelstein Institute, JTS*

United States Prof. James Kurth, *Swarthmore College*

Dr. Peter Steinfels, *Fordham University*

Europe Msgr. J. Anthony McDaid, *Rome*