MODERNITY REQUIRES AID FROM TRADITION TO BETTER RESPOND TO CHALLENGES

Tradition

Good Question
An Exploration in Ethics Series

If you are interested in becoming involved with the Institute, please contact us at (919) 660-3033.

dukeethics.org

Director: Suzanne Shanahan
Communications Manager: Bryan Roth
Photography: Betsy Ferney/LittleElephantPhoto.com
Design: David Pickel/Addison-Design.com

Box 90432 Durham, NC 27708
(919) 660-3033
dukeethics.org
Malachi Hacohen has made his mark by looking at the past as a way to think about our present. Hacohen, a Senior Fellow at the Kenan Institute for Ethics, specializes in European intellectual history and Jewish history. History, religion and cultural tradition, he believes, are all crucial to understanding changes in public discourse. 

Throughout his academic career, Malachi Hacohen has studied the ways in which religious and cultural narratives were thought beyond the boundary of the century” said Hacohen. “Previously, religious narratives were thought to lie outside of public discourse. As Program Director for the Institute’s Religions and Public Life Initiative, Hacohen explores religions in their historical and cultural contexts, examining how they influence lives, interact along time and geography, and shape discourse. 

“One of the key questions for the Institute’s Religions and Public Life Initiative, he believes, is how can religion be engaged in public discourse.”

Hacohen, who serves as Bass Fellow and Associate Professor of History, has appointments in German Studies, Jewish Studies, Political Science, Religion, and Slavic, East European and Eurasian Studies. He was Director of the Council for European Studies for six years. Over his academic career, he has written on Jewish, European, and Islamic history, social theory, political thought, and the philosophy of science, engaging diverse topics, from liberalism, and cosmopolitanism, to the European Jewish intelligentsia, Austraian social history, and cosmopolitanism.

In his forthcoming book ‘Jacob & Esau: Jewish European History Between Nation and Empire, he offers a unique Jewish European history that represents a convergence of European intellectual history and rabbinic studies. The book explores how Jewish-Christian relations and pluralism and integration in nation-states and empires.

“Religious and Public Life Initiative, Hacohen has engaged, scholars at Duke, and beyond to, explore historical and contemporary configurations of religion and public life. The Institute’s commitment to modern diasporas, and administered two regional seminars, the North Carolina Jewish Studies Seminar and the Tri-Institute’s Christian, Jewish, and Muslim in the Post-Secular Age at the Kenan Institute for Ethics. The collaboration has grown into an International Network for Interreligious Research and Education, with ongoing projects among faculty from the Europe, and Israel.

“The polarization of secular and religious worldviews is dangerous,” said Hacohen. “Closing off communities to each other diminishes their self-reflection and ability to respond to today's challenges. Scholarship engaged in dialogue across borders will be Religions and Public Life Initiative’s priority.”