

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-87393-2 - The Politics of Jewish Commerce: Economic Thought and Emancipation in Europe, 1638-1848

Jonathan Karp

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

THE POLITICS OF JEWISH COMMERCE

This study demonstrates the centrality of economic rationales to debates on Jews' status in Italy, Britain, France, and Germany during the course of two centuries. It delineates the common motifs that informed these discussions: the ideal republic and the ancient constitution, the conflict between virtue and commerce, and the notion of useful and productive labor. It thus provides the first overview of the political-economic dimensions of the Jewish emancipation literature of this period, viewed against the backdrop of broader controversies within European society over the effects of commerce on inherited political values and institutions.

By focusing on economic attitudes toward Jews, this book illuminates European intellectual approaches toward economic modernity, measured against traditional political and constitutional ideals. By elucidating these general debates, it renders contemporary Jewish economic self-conceptions, and the enormous impetus that Jewish reformist movements placed on the Jews' economic and occupational transformation, fully explicable for the first time.

Jonathan Karp is Associate Professor in the Judaic Studies and History Departments at Binghamton University, SUNY. He is coeditor of *The Art of Being Jewish in Modern Times* (with Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, 2007). His current book projects are *The Rise and Demise of the Black-Jewish Alliance: A Class-Cultural Analysis* and *Philosemitism in History* (with Adam Sutcliffe; Cambridge University Press, 2009).

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-87393-2 - The Politics of Jewish Commerce: Economic Thought and
Emancipation in Europe, 1638-1848

Jonathan Karp

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

The Politics of Jewish Commerce

Economic Thought and Emancipation in Europe,
1638–1848

JONATHAN KARP

Binghamton University, SUNY



CAMBRIDGE
UNIVERSITY PRESS

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-87393-2 - The Politics of Jewish Commerce: Economic Thought and
Emancipation in Europe, 1638-1848

Jonathan Karp

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS

Cambridge, New York, Melbourne, Madrid, Cape Town, Singapore, São Paulo, Delhi

Cambridge University Press

32 Avenue of the Americas, New York, NY 10013-2473, USA

www.cambridge.org

Information on this title: www.cambridge.org/9780521873932

© Jonathan Karp 2008

This publication is in copyright. Subject to statutory exception
and to the provisions of relevant collective licensing agreements,
no reproduction of any part may take place without
the written permission of Cambridge University Press.

First published 2008

Printed in the United States of America

A catalog record for this publication is available from the British Library.

Library of Congress Cataloging in Publication Data

Karp, Jonathan, 1960–

The politics of Jewish commerce : economic thought and emancipation in Europe, 1638–1848 /
Jonathan Karp.

p. cm.

Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN 978-0-521-87393-2 (hardcover)

1. Europe – Commerce – History. 2. Jews – Commerce. 3. Jews – Europe – Economic
conditions. 4. Jews – Economic conditions. 5. Europe – Economic conditions. I. Title

HF3495.K37 2008

381.089'92404–dc22 2007045443

ISBN 978-0-521-87393-2 hardback

Cambridge University Press has no responsibility for
the persistence or accuracy of URLs for external or
third-party Internet Web sites referred to in this publication
and does not guarantee that any content on such
Web sites is, or will remain, accurate or appropriate.

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-87393-2 - The Politics of Jewish Commerce: Economic Thought and
Emancipation in Europe, 1638-1848

Jonathan Karp

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

*To my mother and father, Naomi and Martin Karp, with love,
gratitude, and admiration.*



Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-87393-2 - The Politics of Jewish Commerce: Economic Thought and
Emancipation in Europe, 1638-1848

Jonathan Karp

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

Contents

<i>Acknowledgments</i>	<i>page ix</i>
Introduction	1
1 This Newfangled Age	12
2 From Ancient Constitution to Mosaic Republic	43
3 A New System of Civil and Commercial Government	67
4 The Natural Relation of Things	94
5 A State within a State	135
6 The Israelites and the Aristocracy	170
7 Jews, Commerce, and History	201
8 Capitalism and the Jews	235
Afterword: Industrialization and Beyond	264
<i>Notes</i>	271
<i>Bibliography</i>	337
<i>Index</i>	363

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-87393-2 - The Politics of Jewish Commerce: Economic Thought and
Emancipation in Europe, 1638-1848

Jonathan Karp

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

Acknowledgments

This book has been many years in the making, during which time I have accumulated numerous debts of gratitude. The first is to my teachers at Columbia University. Professor Yosef Hayim Yerushalmi first pointed out to me the curious contrast between seventeenth- and eighteenth-century attitudes toward Jewish commerce. In approving my pursuit of this topic he provided abundant support of every kind – moral, material, and intellectual. Professor Michael Stanislawski, the finest teacher I have known, suggested the book’s main title and helped me understand how pervasive the theme of Jewish occupational “productivization” has been in modern Jewish history.

My fellow Columbia graduate student and great comrade, Arthur Kiron, helped me at crucial junctures to think through some of the book’s main arguments. My lifelong friend, Maurice Glasman, inspired me through his own work on related topics and raised my spirits over the course of many lengthy conversations. Charles Dellheim, Derek Penslar, David Ruderman, and Adam Sutcliffe read the entire manuscript and offered valuable criticisms. I would also like to thank Annette Aronowicz, Nicolas Berg, Lisa Makman, Ben McRee, Ezra Mendelsohn, Maria Mitchell, Jean Quataert, Gideon Reuveni, Abby Schrader, and Yumna Siddiqi for their many kindnesses. Andy Beck, my editor at Cambridge University Press, shepherded the book’s progress with the right balance of patience and concern. Allan Arkush, the chair of Judaic Studies at Binghamton University, has been a friend and guide who gently prodded me toward completion of the manuscript. My History Department chairs, Don Quataert, Brendan McConville, Bonnie Effros, and Howard Brown, have supported my work in every possible way.

My parents, Naomi and Martin Karp, exhibited unconditional love throughout the incomprehensible processes of Ph.D. dissertating and manuscript preparation. As a token of my love and gratitude, I dedicate this book to them. My *machatonim*, Rivie Glasman and the late Collie Glasman, afforded

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-87393-2 - The Politics of Jewish Commerce: Economic Thought and
Emancipation in Europe, 1638-1848

Jonathan Karp

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

x

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

me true spiritual sustenance. My children, Jacqueline and Isaac, kept me from despair and filled me with gladness. Finally, my wife, Gina Glasman, heard more, read more, and endured more of this book than any other person. For her countless suggestions and corrections, labor, humor in hard times and love always, I thank her with all my heart.