The Role of Scholarship in Shaping Jewish Identity—On Sunday, March 1, 2015, a panel of distinguished scholars and leaders involved in contemporary Jewish culture discuss how the Wissenschaft des Judentums movement impacted the manifold practice and understanding of Judaism today. p. 14.
Leo Baeck Institute’s 60TH Anniversary

William H. Weitzer, Executive Director

In 1955, a group of émigré intellectuals gathered to found an institute to preserve their shared German-Jewish history. Notable scholars including Ernst Simon, Robert Weltsch, Martin Buber, and Gershom Scholem met in Jerusalem and appointed Rabbi Leo Baeck the Institute’s first president and established independent centers in New York, London, and Jerusalem.

Sixty years later, the Leo Baeck Institute continues to carry out the founders’ mission to preserve and promote the history and culture of German-speaking Jewry. LBI New York realizes this mission through expansive holdings: our unparalleled archive that has been gathered, catalogued, and digitized over the years; our world-class library that covers every imaginable topic in German-Jewish history from rare books to current scholarship; and an art collection that includes etchings, paintings, and three-dimensional artifacts that add yet another perspective on this history that must not be forgotten.

The LBI story is also about the community of scholars who use our holdings as the basis for their research and about public audiences in the US, Germany, and around the globe who have an interest in German-Jewish history. Our public events draw both traditional and new audiences and supporters. You will recall our coverage in a previous issue of LBI News of our groundbreaking dinner in Berlin where Joachim Gauck, Federal President of Germany, was presented with the Leo Baeck Medal. As you will read in this issue, we ended 2014 with exciting programs like the visit of the German Justice Minister Heiko Maas and the Leo Baeck Memorial Lecture by Josef Joffe, who also received the Leo Baeck Medal.

We have many events planned for 2015, beginning with a symposium on Wissenschaft des Judentums on March 1, when we will also honor Professor Ismar Schorsch, President Emeritus of LBI New York, and open an exhibition titled Wissenschaft des Judentums: Jewish Studies and the Shaping of Jewish Identity. Our schedule continues with films, lectures, book events, concerts, and much more.

Welcome

“My wish for 2015, LBI’s 60TH anniversary, is for each of you to celebrate with us—come to the Leo Baeck Institute for an event, continue to give us your support, and spread the word about LBI to others who might be interested in our important work.”
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Cover Image:
Portrait of Moritz Steinschneider, Moritz Steinschneider Collection, AR 1696.

Moritz Steinschneider (1816 – 1907) made a major contribution to Jewish studies through his bibliographies of the Hebrew manuscript collections in major European libraries and his research on the role of Jewish translators in the transmission of classical knowledge to Western European culture. See p. 12.
Germany’s Top Justice Official Tackles His Ministry’s Past at LBI

On November 19, 2014, in conjunction with AJC, LBI had the honor to host a program presenting a project of the German Justice Ministry: “The Rosenberg Files: The German Federal Ministry of Justice and its Nazi Past.” This ongoing study by the Ministry’s Independent Academic Commission for the Critical Study of the National Socialist Past (ICC) looks at the Nazi influence on post-war German reconstruction and the how the Federal Ministry grappled with its own National-Socialist history.

In the Center for Jewish History’s packed Forchheimer Auditorium, German Federal Justice Minister Heiko Maas addressed the crowd and spoke about the high numbers of Nazi Party members and sympathizers that were employed in the post-1949 Ministry of Justice in Germany, which was tasked with interpreting and enforcing the law. On stage, Rebecca Wittmann (Professor of History at the University of Toronto) joined the ICC co-chairs, Christoph Safferling (Professor of Criminal Law, University of Marburg) and Manfred Görtemaker (Professor of Contemporary History, University of Potsdam) for a panel discussion following the Justice Minister’s address. David Marwell (Director of the Museum of Jewish Heritage, New York) moderated the discussion.

The ICC’s research was made possible by unfettered access to the files housed in the basement of the Ministry of Justice. Researchers examined over 250 cases of individuals with connections to the Nazi Party, ranging from former party functionaries to sympathizers who offered tacit approval of Nazi policies. According to the panelists, the legal profession in post-war Germany took steps that “normalized Nazi crimes” and shielded its members from culpability for their previous actions.

Safferling, Görtemaker and Wittmann tried to unpack the tangled history of the Ministry, by “unsram[bl]ing the shades of grey,” says Safferling.

In addition to the public address, Maas met with local Jewish leaders and lawyers to discuss the study and answer their questions. Later, he presented LBI International President Michael Brenner (University of Munich and American University) with the Order of Merit of the Federal Republic of Germany for his work as a preeminent historian of German-Jewish life. The entire program was a great success, shedding light on an oft-overlooked issue in post-war Germany and strengthening the international ties between the Jewish community and Germany.

In Chicago, Generations Gather for Intimate Look at Family Histories Preserved in LBI Archives

On Sunday, October 26, 2014, LBI invited genealogists, friends, and family of Chicago-area residents Walter Nathan and Marianne Dreyfus for an intimate discussion of the two long-time LBI supporters’ family histories. The event was a pilot for a new format of LBI programming called “Family Matters,” which will connect individual and family narratives to the historical context of Jewish life in Germany before 1933, during the Holocaust, and after World War II.

In downtown Chicago, Director of Research Frank Mecklenburg interviewed Marianne Dreyfus, who is the granddaughter of Leo Baec. Dreyfus spoke about her youth in Berlin, where her parents tried to shield her from the worsening situation. She recalled that her expulsion from school due to her religion was
the moment she realized that the situation in Germany was no longer safe. In January of 1939, her parents sent her on a Kindertransport to England, where they joined her in 1939. Dreyfus also spoke passionately about her paternal grandfather, Leo Berlak, who was sent from Berlin to Theresienstadt in 1941. In 1943, her other grandfather, Leo Baeck, joined Leo Berlak in Theresienstadt. One of Dreyfus’s most treasured possessions is a letter from her paternal grandfather, Leo Berlak, written one month before his death in April of 1943. The letter was addressed to Dreyfus and focused on the Berlak family lineage and history in an effort to ensure that the family history would not be forgotten. Today, a large portion of the Berlak Family papers are preserved in the Leo Baeck Collection, donated by Dreyfus to the Archive of Leo Baeck Institute.

Following in the same vein, genealogist Karen Franklin interviewed Walter Nathan, proud Chicagoman since 1938. Originally from Frankfurt am Main, Nathan discussed his childhood in Germany and his father and uncle’s innovative shoe business “Ada Ada.” He explained how even as a child, he experienced Germany becoming a progressively difficult environment for Jews: “Every month the screws were tightened a little more, made it more difficult to make a living for Jews.” He explains that in 1935, his parents sent him away to school in Belgium, with a one-way White Star line boat ticket to New York that was to be used when the situation in Europe became unbearable for Jews. Nathan says that day came in March 1938, when he received a telegram from his mother telling him to quit school and leave Belgium immediately.

Dreyfus and Nathan provided a glimpse into personal stories of Jewish life in pre-War Germany, and the steps that their families took to ensure their safety and prosperity. Histories such as Marianne Dreyfus’s and Walter Nathan’s speak to the larger story of the German-Jewish experience that countless individuals experienced. Their lives in Germany still resonate with them and have helped to create the families and lives they enjoy today in America. The Leo Baeck Institute is a haven for the materials that document the narrative of their lives, enabling their stories to be told for many future generations to come.

New Gift to Support Pilot Projects in Transcription and Photograph Digitization

Thanks to a gift from a private family foundation, LBI will launch pilot projects aimed at improving access to and discovery of two classes of materials in LBI archives that are rich in information but too often hidden from researchers: handwritten manuscripts and photographs.

A significant portion of LBI’s 10,000 archival collections contain handwritten materials, from 18th-century family recipe books written in Judeo-German with Hebrew characters to diaries of soldiers in WWI to the correspondence of families separated by persecution and war in the Nazi era. While standard archival descriptions provide basic clues about the content of these collections, handwritten materials are unlikely to surface in keyword searches that go beyond the name of the correspondents. Researchers who do manage to unearth promising documents often face the arduous task of deciphering scripts that run the gamut from elegant but archaic to thoroughly modern chicken-scratch.

Similarly, LBI has digitized over 25,000 photographs, but many of them lack the descriptive metadata about provenance, persons depicted, date, and geography that would make them useful to researchers. Other collections of artistic and historical significance, such as the photographic estate of John Schiff, who documented the artistic scenes in pre-war Germany and post-war New York, are well described but have not been digitized at the resolution necessary for their use by scholars, publishers, and curators.

With the seed funding provided by the gift, LBI will identify collections that contain important handwritten and photographic materials, establish standards for processing them, and transcribe and digitize them respectively. Photographs digitized in this pilot project will be integrated into the same technical infrastructure being built for the Edythe Griffinger Art Catalog, which is currently under construction.
Leo Baeck Medal for Josef Joffe

Eva Schweitzer

“Germans and Jews can enrich one another. They can unite their best qualities,” said LBI President Dr. Ronald Sobel at the Annual Award Dinner of the Leo Baeck Institute on Wednesday, December 3, 2014 at the Center for Jewish History in New York. He was there to present Dr. Josef Joffe, the publisher of the German Weekly newspaper Die Zeit, with the Leo Baeck Medal. Dr. Joffe, who had traveled to New York to accept the honor, thanked Dr. Sobel and the LBI with emotion in his voice.

Former Secretary of State Dr. Henry Kissinger gave a stirring laudatio for Joffe before the award presentation. The statesman pointed out the many parallels between his own life story and Dr. Joffe’s; like Kissinger, Joffe was educated in Germany as well as the United States, and both men have made a career in the realm of international politics—Kissinger as an American diplomat and Joffe as a German journalist.

However, Dr. Kissinger did point out one remarkable way in which Dr. Joffe’s life was different from his own: “My birth was less complicated.” Joffe was born in a bunker in Lodz after his family escaped the Vilna ghetto. When a midwife was sought in a neighboring bunker to attend to Joffe’s mother, the bunker’s residents were found unconscious due to a medication they had taken and they were rescued. “On his first day in this world, he saved a lot of lives,” quipped Kissinger.

After Kissinger’s introduction, Dr. Joffe gave the 57TH Annual Leo Baeck Memorial Lecture, entitled The Golden Age of German-Jewish History, 1871 – 1933: Remake or Mission Impossible? He spoke of a golden age for German Jews that began with the unification of Germany under Bismarck and was brutally ended by the rise of the Nazis just six decades later. Joffe posed the question whether this success story could be repeated today in a Germany which is home to the greatest number Jews in Europe after France and the United Kingdom.

Thanks to immigration from the former Soviet Union and Israel, Jews in Germany number 100,000 officially, and many more Jews go uncounted because they are not affiliated with a Jewish community. The prospects for another golden age, however, are dampened somewhat by the advanced age of the new immigrants, according to Joffe. Young Jews are seeking opportunities elsewhere: London, New York, or Silicon Valley. Drawing on Yuri Slezkine’s description of Jews as the quintessential “Mercurian” community—“urban, mobile, literate, articulate, and occupationally flexible”—Joffe posited that those young Jews best poised to launch another golden age may also be the most likely to leave Germany.

Jews have always had to understand the cultures in which they live better than their hosts in order to overcome hostilities, said Joffe. His own parents had hired a tutor for him when he was four years old, which allowed him to look and speak like a native Berliner. Nevertheless, Joffe said he lived with “one foot planted in the old world and one in the new.” He recalled how a teacher rebuked him with a slap for refusing to join in morning prayers at school. “You can pray too, you know; it’s the same God,” the teacher said.

In 1961, Joffe went to school in the United States and later attended university there. He drew parallels between the United States in the 20TH century and Germany during the decades between Bismarck and the Nazis: “In a nation on the rise, the future beats the past, while talent and ambition dwarf faith and ancestry.” Joffe said that the separation of church and state in the United States was more conducive to Jewish success and argued that the “values of Puritanism—hard work, deferred gratification, earthly success, Jerusalem on earth and not in heaven—dovetailed nicely with the Jewish spirit.” He also cited the “expanding European welfare state” as a brake on initiative. “Mercurians,” said Joffe, “have flourished best in a setting where they were both in and out, unwelcome for who they were, but wanted for what they had.”

Kissinger echoed Joffe’s praise of the United States. During the turmoil of the 1960s, Kissinger said, he and his fellow refugees took a different view from many of their American colleagues. “We did not question that some things were not done in the ideal way, but we knew what America meant to the world throughout our lives.”

Kissinger continued, “And so Joe in his life, and in his essays and in his articles, has never lost sight of the fact of who the essential guarantor of freedom in the world has been.”
Understanding through Cooperation: Germany Honors Carol Kahn Strauss

On January 20, 2015, LBI International Director Carol Kahn Strauss was presented the Commander’s Cross of the Order of Merit of the Federal Republic of Germany by Consul General Brita Wagener. The decoration was awarded in appreciation of her outstanding accomplishments and commitment to German-American-Jewish relations for more than two decades. It also represents a significant upgrade to the honor Strauss had already received in June, 2005, when then foreign minister Joschka Fischer presented her with the Cross of Merit, First Class in Berlin.

Carol Kahn Strauss was born in New York to a highly respected Jewish family who had come to the United States after fleeing Nazi-Germany. Her father had been the president of the district court in Dortmund when the Nazis expelled him from his post in 1934. After the November pogroms of 1938, he and his family finally left Germany.

In the presence of more than fifty guests, Consul General Brita Wagener said that it would have been understandable if Strauss had turned her back on Germany for the evils that her family had endured. Instead, Wagener said, she decided to make the fostering of the German-Jewish relationship and continuous cooperation with Germany the leitmotiv of her life. During more than 20 years as Executive Director and as International Director of LBI, New York Strauss established an exceptional and unique network in Germany. In these years she nurtured countless contacts with German partners for whom she became the symbol of trustful cooperation in the German-American-Jewish dialogue.

(continued on page 8)
Consul General Wagener also said that thanks to Strauss’s dedication and perseverance, a branch office of the LBI opened its doors in Berlin in July 2013 to maintain and deepen relations with scholars, Jewish communities, government and corporate sponsors, and the wider public in Germany. Wagener said that Strauss had opened a new dimension of cooperation with Germany toward a more prominent role for the LBI, by making Germans more aware of the long and illustrious German-Jewish heritage shared until 1933.

In her acceptance speech Strauss reflected upon the words of Federal President Joachim Gauck on the occasion of a dinner to mark the opening of an LBI, New York office in Berlin in May 2014. She agreed with him that the Holocaust is an inherent and indispensable part of our common memory, but that it is also critical to anchor the many other facets of German-Jewish history in the collective memory of the nation again.

Strauss also reflected on her own personal connection to German-Jewish history: “This gift of heritage has been given to me, I believe, for a reason, and that is to help preserve it, in America and in Germany. There can be no better validation of my small mission and of the work of LBI than this special recognition.”

Michael Brenner Recognized as “Guardian of Jewish History”

On November 19, 2015 at the Center for Jewish History, German Justice Minister Heiko Maas presented LBI International President Michael Brenner with the Federal Order of Merit, (Verdienstkreuz am Bande) praising the historian as a guardian of Jewish history and an important supporter of Jewish life in Germany and worldwide.

Brenner, born 1964 in Weiden, Bavaria, has occupied the Chair for Jewish History at the Ludwig-Maximilians-University of Munich (LMU) since 1997. In the past decade-and-a-half, he has established the LMU as a major European center for the study of Jewish history and culture with an excellent international reputation. Brenner is currently serving as the Seymour and Lillian Abensohn Chair in Israel Studies at American University (AU) in Washington, DC and directs AU’s Center for Israel Studies.

Maas said that, for Brenner, scholarship was not an end in itself, but a means for engaging with important social issues. The Justice Minister called Brenner a bridge-builder between Germany and Jews, between Europe and the US, and between Judaism and Islam.

In 2013, Brenner was appointed International President of the Leo Baeck Institute, in which capacity he coordinates work among the three independent LBI centers in London, Jerusalem, and New York. From 1998 until 2009, he was the Chairman of the Academic Working Group of the Leo Baeck Institute, and he co-edited the LBI’s four-volume work on the history of Jews in Germany, German-Jewish History in Modern Times, among dozens of other scholarly publications.

Gerald Westheimer: A Vision for Scholarship on German-Jewish History

Gerald Westheimer, born 1924 in Berlin, established the Gerald Westheimer Career Development Fellowship in 2008 to support scholarship on the history and culture of German-speaking Jews by offering financial support to recent PhDs early in their faculty careers. Based on the success of the program, Dr. Westheimer has provided a new, generous gift to continue supporting German-Jewish scholarship well into the future. We asked Westheimer about his childhood in Berlin, his career as one of the world’s top researchers on the subject of human vision, and his commitment to preserving German-Jewish history.

You are Professor of Neurobiology and Clinical Professor of Optometry at UC Berkeley. How would you describe your field and your accomplishments in layman’s terms?
I’m a vision scientist. That wasn’t really a career path when I started optometry school 70 years ago, but now there is a widely recognized field that studies human vision from all points of view. I’m most identified with my research into hyperacuity, which is a term I coined for a phenomenon related to how we perceive details. It turns out that we can see details that are even finer than the optics of the eye allow because the brain employs clever cognitive tricks to disambiguate the signal.

When did you develop your interest in science and vision in particular?

I was nine years old when Hitler came to power, and my parents soon transferred me to the Jewish Mittelschule on Große Hamburger Straße due to the anti-Semitism that pervaded the public Gymnasium. I was fascinated by optics and telescopes, and when I was 12 or 13 and had to write a school essay about a famous person, I chose Helmholtz, having checked out his popular scientific lectures from the school’s library.

My family’s experience in Germany, where all Jewish academics and civil servants were removed virtually without dissent from the legal, academic, and professional establishment, led to the firm conviction that I should pursue a career in which one could succeed outside the confines of government and institutions. Optometry seemed to fit the bill, and after we emigrated to Australia in 1938 I enrolled in the optometry diploma course at the Sydney Technical College.

What role did Judaism play in your upbringing?

My family was religiously observant, but there are degrees of observance. We kept kosher, but didn’t necessarily have two sets of dishes. What is interesting to me is that we were very consciously Jewish in a way that many Jews in Germany weren’t. In My German Question, the historian Peter Gay, who was actually in my school class in Berlin for about six months, writes that he was utterly unaware of Judaism until 1933. By contrast, my father’s family, even though it had probably been in Germany for 2,000 years, had stubbornly clung to Judaism. My parents identified as Germans, but they also knew that as Jews they did not have an equal status in Germany. This was very openly discussed in our home, and I was fully aware of the precarious status of Jews in Germany from my earliest consciousness.

You have lived in the United States for decades, but you’ve maintained your Australian citizenship. Why?

I have very positive feelings about Australia. When we left Germany, it was too late to get the affidavit required to go to the United States. Australia gave us a chance. My brother and I, at 14 and 16, were suddenly in the position of making all the decisions about our future and mediating the culture for our parents, but we did very well there.

Did that role reversal—being responsible for your family and your own future as a teenager—feel like a hardship?

When you’re young, you don’t realize you are being disadvantaged. The reason why such things are manageable when you are young is that there is always the future to look forward to.

Your career was in the natural sciences, but you have made a major commitment to support scholarship in the humanities on German-Jewish history. Why?

A German-Jewish home and upbringing at the beginning of the 20th century are my roots and heritage; they informed and guided my attitudes, behavior and accomplishments. As much as I identify with the scientific discipline in which I made my career, with Australia as the country that shielded us from the Holocaust, and with life in the United States for providing undreamt of opportunities to develop and deploy my talents, it is this heritage that I take pride in and want to ensure that a record of its history and collective achievements be preserved.

How does a patriotic German Jew feel about Germany today?

Some years ago, I accepted an honorary degree from the University of Tübingen, and that caused a lot of thinking on my part. It was not an automatic decision. I’m one of those people who still won’t buy a German car, and I would never seek to reestablish my German citizenship.

The historian Atina Grossmann wrote a wonderful article about people like me. She describes people who create their own intellectual horizon that they carry with them, which is made up of elements they select from their various environments. If you look at the books in my library, it’s a good reflection of that. It’s full of German literature, among many other things.
What was the *Wissenschaft des Judentums*?

**David Sorkin**

The Academic Study of Judaism (*Wissenschaft des Judentums*) was the key invention of the nineteenth century that transformed Judaism. What was the Academic Study of Judaism? It consisted of the application of the new methods of textual study, especially philology and history, to the study of Jewish texts and the history of Judaism. Scholars (the Humanists) had first developed those methods for the study of classical texts (Greek, Latin) and the history of the ancient world. Other scholars had then applied them to the study of Christianity, stirring major controversies by treating sacred texts historically—as human creations. Beginning around 1819 at the University of Berlin, a group of young Jewish scholars began to appropriate those methods for the study of Jews and Judaism. They wanted to lend the dignity and prestige of the new disciplines to their faith. Those scholars, including Leopold Zunz, Eduard Gans, and Heinrich Heine, understood their enterprise to be imperative for the acquisition of equal rights: Judaism had to be emancipated in order for the Jews to be emancipated.

The Academic Study of Judaism stood in tension with the pious study of Jewish texts. The new scholars wanted to study the origins of a text, its author, its meaning and transmission. They wanted to know how Judaism had changed and developed over the millennia. Their questions were historical and scientific. Such questions could be used to dissolve the sacred and timeless nature of the text. Scholars could employ *Wissenschaft* to corrode timeless revelation and tradition. Yet scholars could also employ *Wissenschaft* to support revelation and tradition. *Wissenschaft* was a malleable tool in the hands of its practitioners.

The Academic Study of Judaism therefore became the shared yet also contested tool of the proponents of all the new versions of Judaism that emerged in the nineteenth century. The advocates of Reform, Conservative, Neo-Orthodoxy and Orthodoxy all developed their own versions of *Wissenschaft* to create, articulate and legitimate their particular version of Judaism. Indeed, each of the various movements or denominations institutionalized that process by founding scholarly journals and, ultimately, seminaries that taught their particular version of Judaism based on their understanding of *Wissenschaft*. Similarly, scholars in Central and Eastern Europe developed a Hebrew language variant of *Wissenschaft* known as *Hokhmat Yisrael* (“the wisdom of Israel”).

“Science” of Judaism?

Although David Sorkin, along with many other scholars today, describes the *Wissenschaft* as the “academic” study of Judaism, it has also been called the “Science of Judaism” in publications including the landmark *Jewish Encyclopedia* of 1906. This translation, which sounds curious to some Anglophone ears, stems from the German usage of the word *Wissenschaft* (“science”) to describe not only the natural sciences, but all academic disciplines, including even the “softest” of humanities. Both translations, however, accurately convey an approach to the study of Judaism that is empirical, critical, and historical, rooted in the traditions of the Enlightenment and the University rather than the Synagogue or Yeshiva.

Pioneers of Jewish Studies

The definitive collection of *Wissenschaft* scholarship was created by curator Aron Freimann at the Frankfurt City Library between 1898 and 1932. Large portions of the collection were lost in WWII, but today LBI is working with the Frankfurt University Library to recreate Freimann’s collection online. The following profiles of key *Wissenschaft* scholars and some of their most important works illustrate the intellectual breadth of the *Wissenschaft* movement, its diversity of religious and political perspectives, and its impact on Jewish practice and identity today. The texts below were largely adapted from the 1906 *Jewish Encyclopedia*, an important compendium of Jewish knowledge which was written in the spirit of the *Wissenschaft* and recently entered the public domain.

**Leopold Zunz (1794 – 1886)**

In December 1817, Leopold Zunz, an instructor at a Jewish school in Wolfenbüttel, wrote an essay entitled *Etwas über die Rabinische Litteratur* (“On Rabbinical Literature”). This little book marks an epoch in the history of modern Jewish scholarship. It is a plea for the recognition of Judaism and its literature in university research and teaching. It exposed the ignorance which marked the books written by non-Jewish scholars on Judaism and the Jews, showing at the same time that Judaism had made valuable contributions to many sciences and therefore had a place in their history. This booklet may be said to have been the first to trace the outlines of Jewish science.
Zacharias Frankel (1801 – 1875)

Zacharias Frankel was one of the leading advocates for Conservative Judaism in Germany. Born and trained in Prague, he was the first rabbi in Central Europe with a university degree and the first to deliver his sermons in German. In 1854, he was appointed director of the newly founded Jewish Theological Seminary in Breslau, where he remained until his death.

As the exponent of “positive historical Judaism” he held that Reform Judaism ignored the national component of Judaism and focused mainly on its intellectual aspects. He agreed that religious reforms were necessary and advocated the right of researching Judaism as a scholarly discipline. However, he insisted on retaining customs that were deeply ingrained in Judaism, such as the prayer for returning to Zion. His middle position was sharply attacked by representatives of Orthodox as well as Reform Judaism.

Der gerichtliche Beweis nach mosaisch-talmudischem Rechte

Berlin, 1846 LBI call number BM 520 F73

This study of legal evidence in Talmudic law was the companion to an earlier work on the concept of oath-taking in Jewish tradition. Frankel had an explicit political motive for both; Prussian law discriminated against the Jews in so far as the testimony of a Jew against a Christian was valid only in civil cases, and in these only when they involved a sum less than fifty talers. Frankel demonstrated that the assumption on which this policy was based—that the sworn testimony of a Jew was less trustworthy than that of a Christian—had no basis in Jewish law or tradition. Frankel’s work was cited as an authority in the Prussian Diet when it abolished this form of discrimination in 1847.

Esriel Hildesheimer (1820 – 1899)

Around 1870, the Orthodox minority in Berlin, distressed at the turn toward liberalization represented by changes such as the installation of an organ in the Synagogue on Oranienburger Straße and the appointment of the Reform leader Abraham Geiger, sought another rabbi to lead the newly founded secession community, Addas Yisroel. Their choice fell upon the Halberstadt-born Rabbi Esriel Hildesheimer. A vocal opponent of the Reform movement, Hildesheimer believed strongly in the principle of Torah im derekh erez (Torah and worldly (continued on page 12)
knowledge): that halakhic observance was not only compatible with the study of science and other secular subjects, but that both were necessary to recognize and become close to God.

Statut für das Rabbiner-Seminar und den Seminar-Verein zu Berlin
Berlin, c. 1874. LBI call number r 692
[inscribed by the author on p. 10]
In 1873, Israel Hildesheimer founded the Orthodox Rabbinical Seminary of Berlin, which trained Modern Orthodox Rabbis in Germany until it was closed by the Nazis in 1938. Along with the Frankfurt Rabbi Samson Raphael Hirsch, Hildesheimer was among the most prominent leaders of the Orthodox movement in Germany, although his openness toward secular learning and cooperation with liberal Jews for the sake of the entire Jewish community often brought him into conflict with the more tradition-minded Hirsch.

Moritz Steinschneider (1816 – 1907)
In 1848, a Moravia-born Talmudist named Moritz Steinschneider was charged with the preparation of the catalogue of the Hebrew books in the Bodleian Library at Oxford, a work which was to occupy him for thirteen years. Steinschneider's Bodleian catalog, along with his catalogs of the Hebrew manuscripts of five large European libraries (Bodleian of Oxford, Leyden, Berlin, Minsk, and Hamburg) opened new horizons for Jewish studies, as he unearthed numerous treasures of Jewish literature and culture which had previously been hidden. From 1860 to 1869 he served as a representative of the Jewish Community in the Berlin courts, where he administered the Jewish Oath more judaico. Steinschneider missed no opportunity to protest against this remnant of medieval prejudice. In 1872 and 1876, he refused calls to both the Berlin Hochschule für die Wissenschaft des Judentums and the Rabbinical Seminary in Budapest, holding that the proper institutions for the cultivation of Jewish science were not the Jewish theological seminaries, but the universities.

Die hebraeischen ubersetzung des mittelalters und die Juden als dolmetscher
Berlin, 1893. LBI call number Z 7070 S83 H4
Steinschneider's magnum opus about Jewish translations of the Middle Ages shows how Arabic and Hebrew writers were instrumental in the transfer of classical Greek knowledge to Europe and Western culture. A far-ranging study of writings on subjects that went beyond purely Jewish interests, this work demonstrated the decisive contribution of both Jewish and Muslim writers to Western Civilization.
Wissenschaft des Judentums

SYMPOSIUM
SUNDAY, MARCH 1, 2015: 1:30 – 5:00 PM
The Role of Scholarship in Shaping Jewish Identity

EXHIBITION
MARCH 1 – AUGUST 1, 2015
Wissenschaft des Judentums: Jewish Studies and the Shaping of Jewish Identity

Launched by Jewish scholars in 19th-century Germany, the Wissenschaft des Judentums was a “scientific” approach to Judaism that not only formed the basis of modern academic Jewish studies, but also shaped the manifold understanding and practice of Judaism as it exists today. Join us on March 1, 2015 when distinguished panelists from across the spectrum of academia and contemporary Jewish cultural institutions will discuss the legacies of the Wissenschaft. On this occasion, LBI will also honor a distinguished scholar of the Wissenschaft, Professor Ismar Schorsch, with the Leo Baeck Medal and open an exhibition on the Wissenschaft.

Symposium co-sponsored by The Herbert D. Katz Center for Advanced Judaic Studies at the University of Pennsylvania. Exhibition supported by the David Berg Foundation

Details and advance registration at lbi.org/wissenschaft

12:00 PM
Exhibition open for viewing

1:30 PM
Presentation of the Leo Baeck Medal by Dr. Ronald B. Sobel and Mr. Robert Rifkind to Prof. Ismar Schorsch

1:40 PM
Remarks on Wissenschaft by Prof. Ismar Schorsch

1:50 PM
PANEL I
Wissenschaft des Judentums and Contemporary Jewish Identity

Chairperson—Andreas Brämer (Institute for the History of German Jews, Hamburg)
Christian Wiese (Goethe University, Frankfurt/Main)
Mirjam Thulin (Institute of European History, Mainz)
Yitzhak Conforti (Bar–Ilan University)

3:15 PM
PANEL II
Wissenschaft des Judentums and Contemporary Jewish Culture

Chairperson—David Sorkin (Yale University)
Annie Polland (Lower East Side Tenement Museum)
Jonathan Rosen (Nextbook Press)
Gavriel Rosenfeld (The Jewish Daily Forward)

4:15 PM
Reception

Above: Students on the steps of the Lehranstalt fuer die Wissenschaft des Judentums (Jewish teachers' seminary); Berlin, 1935.
Ten volumes of the German-language Encyclopaedia Judaica, from “Aach” to “Lyra”, appeared before the project was halted due to Nazi persecution.
LECTURE AND SCREENING  
TUESDAY, MARCH 3, 2015  
SCREENING AT 4:00 PM, LECTURE AT 6:30 PM  
Arnold Schoenberg’s Moses and Aron  
Center for Jewish History  
Andrew Marc Caplan, (2014–15 Cahnman Senior Scholar at the Center for Jewish History), will present his groundbreaking research on Jewish modernity in Austria-Hungary in conjunction with a screening of Arnold Schoenberg’s *Moses and Aron*. Dr. Caplan’s research in the collections at the Center informs his reinterpretation of Schoenberg’s famous opera that was written as a response to growing anti-Semitism in Austria-Hungary and Germany in the 1920s.  
*Co-sponsored by the Center for Jewish History*

CONFERENCE AND DRAMATIC READING  
MARCH 8 – 9, 2015  
Exile in the Spotlight: Kurt Hirschfeld and German-language Theater at the Schauspielhaus Zürich  
Schauspielhaus Zürich  
LBI New York and LBI London present an international conference to shine a spotlight on the life and legacy of Kurt Hirschfeld, the dramaturg and director most closely associated with the emergence of the Schauspielhaus Zürich as the home of German theater in exile during WWII. The conference will bring together scholars and representatives of the contemporary theater world and will also feature a dramatic reading of letters selected from Hirschfeld’s archival collection, which is preserved at LBI.  
*Full program at hirschfeld-zuerich-2015.org*

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Ismar Elbogen (head of table) with students Lehranstalt fuer die Wissenschaft des Judentums. Berlin, 1938  
A movement for the establishment in Germany of a seminary for Jewish studies was begun as early as 1835 by Abraham Geiger, who never ceased advocating the plan until the establishment of the “Hochschule für die Wissenschaft des Judentums” in 1872. Although the Hochschule, later renamed a “Lehranstalt”, was not associated with a particular denomination and focused instead on academic study of Judaism, it functioned chiefly to train Rabbis until it was closed by the Nazis in 1942.
LECTURE
WEDNESDAY, APRIL 1, 6:30 PM
Synagogues of New York: History, Architecture, and Community
Forchheimer Auditorium, Center for Jewish History
In recognition of the 50TH anniversary of the establishment of New York City's Landmarks Law and the Landmarks Preservation Board, architectural historian and preservationist Samuel D. Gruber will trace the rich and varied architectural history of New York synagogues emphasizing remarkable buildings that have been lost, those that have been lovingly restored, and a significant number of noteworthy buildings that could and should be preserved.
Co-sponsored by the American Jewish Historical Society, American Sephardi Federation, Yeshiva University Museum, and the Center for Jewish History

BOOK PRESENTATION
WEDNESDAY, APRIL 15, 2015, 6:30 PM
Loyal Sons: Jewish Soldiers in the German Army in the First World War
Kovno Room, Center for Jewish History
Peter Appelbaum will speak about his new book, which describes the experiences of Jews in the German army during the First World War. During the Great War, approximately 100,000 Jews served in the German army, of whom around 80,000 fought on the Front and 12,500 were killed, died, or went missing. About 35,000 were decorated, 23,000 promoted, and more than 2,000 became officers.

BOOK PRESENTATION
WEDNESDAY, APRIL 29, 2015, 6:30 PM
The Frankfurt School on Israel
Kovno Room, Center for Jewish History
In the decades following Israel's establishment, subtle variations appeared in the attitudes of key Jewish members of the Frankfurt School—including Max Horkheimer, Leo Lowenthal, Erich Fromm, and Herbert Marcuse—towards the Jewish state. In his new book, The Frankfurt School, Jewish Lives and Antisemitism (Cambridge University Press), author Jack Jacobs (John Jay College; Graduate Center, City University of New York) presents original research about this group, including previously unknown material from YIVO's collections, and argues that there was an inverse relationship between the group’s knowledge of Judaism and their criticism of the State: the deeper their knowledge, the stronger their critique of Israel.
Co-sponsored by YIVO Institute for Jewish Research

PERFORMANCE AND DISCUSSION
TUESDAY, MAY 19, 2015, 6:30 PM
Sara Levy's World: Music, Gender and Judaism in Enlightenment Berlin
Forchheimer Auditorium, Center for Jewish History
Sara Levy (1761 – 1854), a Jewish salonnière, patron, and performing musician who shaped the cultural ideals of her time, overcame obstacles of religion and gender to transform Berlin’s artistic landscape, acting as a catalyst for the “Bach revival” of the 19TH century. This performance will feature music owned and played by Sara Levy, including works by J.S. Bach, C.P.E. Bach, W.F. Bach, J.N. Forkel, Frederick the Great, and their contemporaries, with entertaining and informative commentary by Christoph Wolff (Harvard University).
Co-sponsored by the School of Arts and Sciences and the Mason Gross School of the Arts at Rutgers University.
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