

HENRY C. SOUSSAN

*The Gesellschaft zur  
Förderung der Wissenschaft  
des Judentums*  
in Its Historical Context

*Schriftenreihe  
wissenschaftlicher Abhandlungen  
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*Dedicated to Rabbiner Dr. Leopold Lucas*

*18 September 1872 (Marburg) –  
13 September 1943 (Theresienstadt)*



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January 2013

Henry C. Soussan

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## Abbreviations

AVJGL	Akademischer Verein für Jüdische Geschichte und Literatur
AWJ-KB	Korrespondenzblatt des Vereins zur Gründung und Erhaltung einer Akademie für die Wissenschaft des Judentums
AZJ	Allgemeine Zeitung des Judentums
CAHJP	Central Archives for the History of the Jewish People
CJ	Centrum Judaicum, Berlin
CV	Central-Verein deutscher Staatsbürger jüdischen Glaubens
CW	Die Christliche Welt
DIGB	Deutsch-Israelitischer Gemeindebund
DLZ	Deutsche Literaturzeitung
GFWJ	Gesellschaft zur Förderung der Wissenschaft des Judentums
HJB	Historisches Jahrbuch
HVJS	Historische Vierteljahresschrift
HZ	Historische Zeitschrift
IDR	Im Deutschen Reich
IF	Israelitisches Familienblatt
JC	Jewish Chronicle
JJGL	Jahrbuch für Jüdische Geschichte und Literatur
JJLG	Jahrbuch der Jüdisch-Literarischen Gesellschaft
JL	Jüdisches Lexikon
JNUL	Jewish National and University Library
JP	Die Jüdische Presse
JR	Jüdische Rundschau
LBIB	Bulletin des Leo Baeck Instituts
LBIYB	Year Book of the Leo Baeck Institute
LZ	Literarisches Zentralblatt für Deutschland
LZB	Literarisches Zentralblatt
MGWJ	Monatsschrift für Geschichte und Wissenschaft des Judentums
RÉJ	Révue des Études Juives
TG	Theologie und Glaube
ThLB	Theologisches Literaturblatt
ThLZ	Theologische Literaturzeitung
ThR	Theologische Revue



## Introduction

Any research on the history of European Jewry is written in the shadow of the Holocaust. The researcher is aware of this fact and must try at all times to maintain an emotional distance from the events that led to the destruction of most of European Jewry. Such objectivity becomes especially necessary when the subject at hand is German Jewry and what is arguably its most important contribution to Jewish history, *Wissenschaft des Judentums*, the movement to understand Jewish religion and culture from a rigorously scholarly perspective. Consistently stamped by controversy, this movement was essential in the adaptation of Judaism as a religion to a modern, post-emancipatory environment; a development that has itself been both praised and vilified from different viewpoints along the religious Jewish spectrum. At this book's centre are the activities of the foremost German-Jewish organization to advance and further this movement, the *Gesellschaft zur Förderung der Wissenschaft des Judentums*, which existed between 1902 and its forced dissolution in 1938. Any study of *Wissenschaft des Judentums* is incomplete without an analysis of the *Gesellschaft*, yet surprisingly little scholarly information is to be found about this organization. In order to place the organization in a historical and ideological context, an overview of the most important developments within *Wissenschaft des Judentums* is necessary, with particular emphasis on the ideological-religious ties between outstanding personalities and institutions tied to *Wissenschaft des Judentums* in the period preceding the organization's foundation. This discussion will thus focus in part on the situation of Jewish *Wissenschaft* starting at the turn of the twentieth century, when internal and external influences prompted a break with traditional approaches to Jewish studies; a development paving the way for the emergence of a new scholarly methodology within the discipline.

*Wissenschaft des Judentums* offered each of the religious factions of German Jewry – Liberal, Conservative, and neo-Orthodox – a “scientific” justification for its view of Judaism; it helped shape a new identity for followers of one or the other denomination.<sup>1</sup> Crucially, the movement was always the subject of controversy, particularly within the religious Jewish community, where there

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<sup>1</sup> See M. A. Meyer, ‘Jüdische Wissenschaft und Jüdische Identität’, in J. Carlebach (ed.), *Wissenschaft des Judentums: Anfänge der Judaistik in Europa*, pp. 3–20.

existed a strong feeling that it was too far removed from traditional Jewish learning. It was commonly held that in their eagerness to imitate non-Jewish academic developments, the proponents of *Wissenschaft* were diluting the identity of the Jewish people.

By far the most substantial criticism came from an outstanding scholar himself raised in the *Wissenschaft* tradition. Gershom Scholem first formulated his severe critique of the movement in 1944.<sup>2</sup> Several years later, he reiterated his original position, albeit in a somewhat milder tone.<sup>3</sup> The gist of the critique, however, remained the same: the movement was, he felt, “created and became effective under the influence of antiquated, idealistic and romantic ideas.”<sup>4</sup> Scholem portrayed the state of Jewish *Wissenschaft* in terms of a sorry juxtaposition. On the one side was the living organism of the Jewish people, on the other its scholarly rationalization; a rationalization often leading to a “censorship of the Jewish past”<sup>5</sup> arising from fear of discussing that “which happened in the cellar.”<sup>6</sup> The movement both embodied and was overshadowed by a “tendency to liquidate Judaism as a living organism.”<sup>7</sup> Life and death imagery pervades Scholem’s essay; his basic argument culminates in a putative citation of the eminent German-Jewish scholar Moritz Steinschneider (1816–1907): “The only task left is to give the remains of Judaism a dignified funeral.”<sup>8</sup> For Scholem, the reason those engaged in *Wissenschaft des Judentums* had mainly focused on apologetics was “that no purely academic institution existed addressing scholarly problems outside of any religious forum ... resulting in an inability to undertake meaningful projects.”<sup>9</sup> In Scholem’s view, the turning point in this situation occurred with the emergence of Zionism, which once again approached Judaism as a living organism.<sup>10</sup>

In retrospect, the attitude towards *Wissenschaft des Judentums* revealed by such statements would appear at best to lack balance, at worst to be egre-

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<sup>2</sup> G. Scholem, ‘Mitoch Hirhurim al Chokmat Jisrael’, in *Luach Haaretz* 4 (1944–1945), p. 94.

<sup>3</sup> *ibid.*, ‘*Wissenschaft des Judentums* einst und jetzt’, in *Judaica* 1, p. 147.

<sup>4</sup> *ibid.*, ‘*Wissenschaft des Judentums* einst und jetzt’, p. 148. In his last published essay on the topic, Scholem reverted to his original severe stance. *ibid.*, ‘Die Wissenschaft vom Judentum’, *Judaica* 6, pp. 9–52.

<sup>5</sup> *ibid.*, p. 149.

<sup>6</sup> *ibid.*, p. 157.

<sup>7</sup> *ibid.*, p. 152.

<sup>8</sup> Although this quotation’s authenticity is dubious in that it seems to be found nowhere but in Scholem’s text, it has become firmly ensconced in the scholarly literature.

<sup>9</sup> *ibid.*, p. 151.

<sup>10</sup> *ibid.*, pp. 157–158. The interrelationship of European scholars and their influence on the Jewish national movement has recently been examined by D. N. Myers in *Re-Inventing the Jewish Past. European Jewish Intellectuals and the Zionist Return to History*.

giously unfair.<sup>11</sup> Nevertheless, as a result of Scholem's stature his attitude has often been reflected in various works discussing the movement over past decades.<sup>12</sup>

One question in particular must be addressed for initial assessment: how did the movement's protagonists view their own position with regard to both the German-Jewish community and the wider non-Jewish community? In this respect, it is important to note that the *Gesellschaft zur Förderung der Wissenschaft des Judentums*, whose membership consisted of the vast majority of the leading German-Jewish scholars of Judaism, came into being precisely as a result of an intensifying crisis of learning – a widening gulf between scholarship and life that threatened to alienate the general population from the scholarly elite. Consideration of the activities of the *Gesellschaft* will allow us to verify the claim made in 1903 by the historian Simon Bernfeld (1860–1940) that this organization was an essential agent in the emergence of the so-called Jewish renaissance at the turn of the century, itself involving a conscious overcoming of this gulf.<sup>13</sup>

In a detailed discussion of the *Gesellschaft*, attention needs to be given to preceding organizations that shared its goal of disseminating knowledge to the public. Efforts in that direction are evident from the start, especially in the work of the *Verein für Cultur und Wissenschaft der Juden* (henceforth *Culturverein*), the *Institut zur Förderung der Israelitischen Kultur*, and the *Vereine für jüdische Geschichte und Literatur*. The *Culturverein* in fact represented the first organized body devoted to synthesizing the tenets of Judaism with the findings of modern research while actively influencing prevailing social opinion. While sharing this ethos, the *Gesellschaft* was more consciously concerned with both integrating Jewish scholars representing a wide range of religious perspectives – Liberal and Orthodox – and positioning itself vis-à-vis the Jewish national movement, which viewed it with suspicion. At the same time, the organization was a pioneer of Jewish modernism in its assertion of a break in the hitherto presupposed union between faith and scholarship. Within such a framework, one of the main goals of the *Gesellschaft* was to convince Christian theologians of the cultural significance of Judaism, in the hope of paving the path

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<sup>11</sup> See M. Brocke, 'Gershom Scholem: Wissenschaft des Judentums zwischen Berlin und Jerusalem', in *Freiburger Rundbrief* 3 (1998), pp. 178–186.

<sup>12</sup> G. Scholem, 'Überlegungen zur Wissenschaft des Judentums. Vorwort zu einer Rede, die nicht gehalten wurde', (1944), in G. Scholem, *Judaica* 6, pp. 7–52; P. Schäfer, *Gershom Scholem und die 'Wissenschaft des Judentums'*, in P. Schäfer/G. Smith (eds.), *Gershom Scholem – Zwischen den Disziplinen*, pp. 122–156; D. Weidener, *Gershom Scholem, Die Wissenschaft des Judentums und der 'Ort' des Historikers*, in H. Horch, R. Jütte, M.J. Wenninger, (eds.), *Aschkenas. Zeitschrift für die Geschichte und Kultur der Juden*, 11J./ H.2, pp. 435–465, here p. 444.

<sup>13</sup> S. Bernfeld, 'Geistige Strömungen im Judentum', in *Ost und West* 3 (1903), pp. 29–40.



to full social and academic acceptance of the Jews. In this respect, it is crucial to keep in mind that in early twentieth century Germany, no department of Jewish history or theology existed at any university.

The ethos of the *Gesellschaft* was defined through the combined efforts of its members, their programs, and their publications. For this reason, it is essential to closely consider the organization's publications within their scholarly context. Like any organization, the *Gesellschaft* attempted to fill a need and influence its environment. We thus also need to analyze the response to the organization by its Jewish and Christian target audiences – something to be accomplished through an examination of book reviews and other written testimonies such as the organization's correspondence. The structure and makeup of its membership as well as its financial situation will further clarify the position held by the organization within both German-Jewish and general German society.

At the start of the twentieth century, overcoming the apparent contradiction between a living religion and its scholarly rationalization had become a central challenge for *Wissenschaft des Judentums*. The first independent Jewish research institute in modern Europe, the *Akademie für die Wissenschaft des Judentums*, founded in 1919, reflected this challenge as a direct continuation of the *Gesellschaft*; like its predecessor, it was an effort – as conceived by Franz Rosenzweig (1887–1929) – to reconnect Jewish *Wissenschaft* to a Jewish community increasingly estranged from its religious and cultural roots. The question of the extent to which the *Akademie* drew on the experience of the *Gesellschaft* will also be addressed in this book.

## Literature and Source Material

Although the sources available for research on *Wissenschaft des Judentums* are diverse and abundant, those for the *Gesellschaft* are surprisingly sparse. Dieter Adelman has offered a first synopsis of its main publications,<sup>14</sup> and Jacques Ehrenfreund has included a brief overview of its activities in his book on Jewish memory and German nationality.<sup>15</sup> Some of the main sources analyzing these activities consist of both minutes of board meetings and annual reports, regularly included in the *Monatsschrift für Geschichte und Wissenschaft des Judentums*; furthermore, the annual reports sent out to members sometimes differ from the annual reports found in the *Monatsschrift* in that they include

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<sup>14</sup> D. Adelman, 'Die Religion der Vernunft im Grundriss der Gesamtwissenschaft des Judentums', in H. Holzhey, G. Motzkin and H. Wiedebach (eds), *Religion of Reason out of the sources of Judaism: Tradition and the Concept of Origin in Hermann Cohen's later work*, pp. 3–35.

<sup>15</sup> J. Ehrenfreund, *Mémoire juive et nationalité allemande*, pp. 145–148.

crucial additional information such as detailed financial statements and membership lists. Many of these reports have been preserved in the archives of the *Centrum Judaicum* in Berlin and were made available to me.

The collection of private and official correspondence at the *Centrum Judaicum* stems from the *Gesamtarchiv der deutschen Juden* – the archives where the *Gesellschaft* sent its documentation for storage. The files include records up to 1925; a smaller collection can be found at the National Archives for the History of the Jewish People in Jerusalem.

Publications of the *Gesellschaft* constitute additional sources used in the framework of this book. Analysis of these works forms a basis for understanding the organization's role in the general development of *Wissenschaft des Judentums*. Locating a variety of contemporary book reviews made it possible to assess the scholarly and general public reception of these works. In order to depict the non-Jewish as well as Jewish reception, the most widely circulated newspapers and journals were considered. The Jewish journals include the *Monatsschrift*, the *Allgemeine Zeitung des Judentums*, *Die Jüdische Presse*, *Der Israelit*, *Das Hamburger Familienblatt*, and *Ost und West*. Non-Jewish scholarly journals include the *Theologische Literaturzeitung*, the *Theologisches Literaturblatt*, the *Deutsche Literaturzeitung*, the *Zeitschrift für altorientalische Wissenschaften*, and the *Historische Jahresschrift*. Newspaper articles printed for special occasions such as jubilees and historical volumes formed an additional basis for assessing the organization's influence.

A great number of outstanding scholars were involved in the organization's activities. A group of the most important figures will be considered: Martin Philippson (1846–1916), Ismar Elbogen (1874–1943), Gustav Karpeles (1848–1909), and Samuel Krauss (1866–1948). The personal correspondence they left behind includes further valuable source material. Archival sources of this type will maintain their value for this and future studies in *Wissenschaft des Judentums*.

Because of the sheer volume of such material, its use has been limited to the most pertinent articles.

# I. The Movement of *Wissenschaft des Judentums*: A Historical Overview

## The Early Phase of *Wissenschaft des Judentums*

“The entry of the Jews into the totality of modern culture finds its conscious expression in the concept of a *Wissenschaft des Judentums*.”<sup>16</sup>

Although the literature devoted to *Wissenschaft des Judentums* is by now enormous,<sup>17</sup> much of it has centred on the movement’s foundations and its significance for the intellectual history of the Jews. In this respect, the work of Siegfried Ucko and Ismar Schorsch – the latter focusing on the intellectual-ideological premises of the movement’s founding generation – is especially noteworthy.<sup>18</sup>

While scholars tend to agree about the centrality of *Wissenschaft des Judentums* for the development of modern Judaism, less agreement is apparent concerning the movement’s definition.<sup>19</sup> Despite outlining an entire program for the movement, Abraham Geiger denied the need for any such definition whatsoever. For his part, although writing within the framework of his own profound scepticism, Gershom Scholem stated, broadly and positively, in 1963 that “*Wissenschaft vom Judentum* [sic.] means for us a cognizance of our own nature and history.”<sup>20</sup> More recently, Shulamit Volkov has defined the movement as the source of the single most important contribution to the “project of modernity”. Volkov argues that *Wissenschaft des Judentums* is German Jewry’s

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<sup>16</sup> S. Ucko, ‘Geistesgeschichtliche Grundlagen der Wissenschaft des Judentums. Motive des Kulturvereins vom Jahre 1819’, in *Zeitschrift für Geschichte der Juden in Deutschland* 5 (1934), p. 1.

<sup>17</sup> A selected bibliography can be found in J. Carlebach (ed.), *Wissenschaft des Judentums*, pp. 221–230.

<sup>18</sup> S. Ucko, ‘Geistesgeschichtliche Grundlagen’, pp. 1–35. A number of Ismar Schorsch’s most influential essays have been assembled in *From Text to Context: The Turn to History in Modern Judaism*.

<sup>19</sup> See A. Geiger, ‘Allgemeine Einleitung in die Wissenschaft des Judentums’, in *Nachgelassene Schriften* 2, ed. by L. Geiger, pp. 33–242.

<sup>20</sup> G. Scholem, ‘Wissenschaft vom Judentum einst und jetzt’, p. 148.

unique contribution, which she terms the “invention of tradition”.<sup>21</sup> An effort to clarify the parameters and contents of the movement is manifest from the start in an essay by Immanuel Wolf. Wolf (born Wohlwill, 1799–1847), was co-founder of the *Culturverein*, the first of many German-Jewish organizations responding to a combination of antisemitism and inter-communal tension. As a society devoted to promoting Jewish culture and knowledge, the *Culturverein* was established by some of the early champions of *Wissenschaft des Judentums*: Eduard Gans (1798–1839), Leopold Zunz (1794–1886), Moses Moser (1796–1838), and Wolf. In both its objectives and ultimate failure, the *Culturverein* offers a key to understanding the emergence of subsequent organizations.

Following Napoleon’s efforts to introduce Jewish civil equality, the inclination of Germany’s Jews to embrace the ideals of emancipation was further strengthened by the Prussian edict of 1812, which granted native-born status and citizenship to all legally resident Jews.<sup>22</sup> Only three years later, emancipatory hopes ran up against the contradictory regulations adopted by the different states at the Congress of Vienna. In August 1819, the *Hep-Hep* riots broke out in Würzburg. They quickly spread to neighbouring communities – a development which confronted Germany’s Jewish population with an expression of anti-Judaism reminiscent of medieval pogroms. Although the *Culturverein* is generally believed to have been brought into existence as a direct result of the riots, a recently published letter by Zunz – commonly considered the ultimate founder of Jewish *Wissenschaft* – emphasizes the inter-communal and educational significance of this pioneering project.<sup>23</sup> Its underlying goal was to study Judaism using the philological methods that had been pioneered in German universities; but this goal had a political dimension: confirmation of Judaism’s universal values, hence refutation of the pejorative image it had taken on for many non-Jews in Germany, and a significant number of Jews as well. In this way, a “rehabilitation” of German Jewry would be a natural consequence of the organization’s activities.

Along with establishing a research institute, the *Culturverein* published the first periodical devoted to that research, the *Zeitschrift für die Wissenschaft des Judentums*, edited by Zunz.<sup>24</sup> The *Culturverein* also instituted a practice of holding lectures for later publication in the *Zeitschrift*. Through the lecture medium, Zunz thus strove for inner emancipation – a re-education of the

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<sup>21</sup> See S. Volkov, *Germans, Jews, and Antisemites: Trials in Emancipation*, p. 106.

<sup>22</sup> S. M. Dubnov, *Die neueste Geschichte des jüdischen Volkes (1789–1914)*, *Das Zeitalter der ersten Emanzipation*, p. 209.

<sup>23</sup> See E. Lutz, *Der Verein für Cultur und Wissenschaft des Judentums und sein Mitglied H. Heine*, p. 102.

<sup>24</sup> L. Zunz (ed.), *Zeitschrift für die Wissenschaft des Judentums*, 1823. Suspended after three issues.

German-Jewish masses in the spirit of their gentile counterparts. Within the context of modern Jewish scholarship, such activities were essentially unprecedented; the journal's appearance also marked the first time the term *Wissenschaft des Judentums* was used in an official capacity.

It would soon become apparent, that the hopes tied to the *Culturverein's* journal could not be realized; the elitest scholarship it embodied was not, in the end, a suitable means of reaching a non-specialist public. Hence even Heinrich Heine, who had joined the *Culturverein* in August 1822, complained about the journal's incomprehensible language, declaring, in relation to the journal's third volume, that if he did not happen to know what the authors were trying to say, he would not understand a word.<sup>25</sup> Only three editions of the publication were printed (in March 1822, the second half of 1822, and June 1823). As a result, the *Culturverein* failed to gain recognition among Jews and non-Jews alike. Its membership never exceeded a hundred persons, and it was officially dissolved in May 1824. Later historians would point to an inability to communicate the goals of the new Jewish scholarship, together with its highly specialized language, as reasons for the organization's failure.<sup>26</sup> In subsequent years, every founding member with the exception of Zunz converted to Christianity; but the ethos of critically investigating Jewish history and culture initiated by the *Culturverein* would persist. The premises of the organization's founders became the *Leitmotiv* for the broader movement of *Wissenschaft des Judentums*.

Let us now more closely consider the contents of the *Zeitschrift*. In its opening article, Immanuel Wolf develops his programme for the scholarly investigation of Judaism. The strong influence of contemporary German philosophy, and in particular of Hegel's conceptualization of a *Volksgeist* manifesting itself through a people's various forms of intellectual and artistic expression is unmistakable.<sup>27</sup> This sweeping Hegelian perspective saturates Wolf's introductory remarks:

If we are to talk of a *Wissenschaft des Judentums*, then it is self-evident that the word "Judaism" is being taken here in its comprehensive sense – as the essence of all the circumstances, characteristics, and achievements of the Jews in relation to religion, philosophy, history, law, literature in general, civil life and all the affairs of man – and not in that more limited sense in which it only means the religion of the Jews. In any event,

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<sup>25</sup> *ibid.*, p. 172.

<sup>26</sup> See M. Philippson, *Neueste Geschichte des jüdischen Volkes* 1, p. 168.

<sup>27</sup> On the influence of Kant, Fichte, and Hegel on *Wissenschaft des Judentums*, see R. Schaeffler, 'Die Wissenschaft des Judentums in ihrer Beziehung zur Allgemeinen Geistesgeschichte im Deutschland des 19. Jahrhunderts', in J. Carlebach (ed.), *Wissenschaft des Judentums*, pp. 113–131.

it is the religious idea which conditions all the ramifications of Judaism and the one on which they are based.<sup>28</sup>

For Wolf, then, Judaism was the sum total of the Jewish cultural experience, from its ancient emergence through its development over the millennia. Such an approach represented a clear departure from traditional Jewish scholarly methodology, with its high-exclusive focus on biblical and Talmudic exegesis. In fact, in relation to that methodology the basic premise of Wolf's approach was a truly radical one: the need to critically scrutinize the most basic tenets of Jewish faith and practice, in particular Mosaic revelation and the authority of the Talmud.

This break with tradition was understood as facilitating German Jewry's acculturation into broader German society. Such an emancipative intention is evident throughout Zunz's writing, together with a hope for religious reform and – it would seem above all – academic recognition.<sup>29</sup> Despite his wish to maintain a substratum of religion-based values, Zunz was very clear in his insistence on an approach to Judaism grounded in the tenets of scientific scholarship – of *Wissenschaft*. An individual or group bound by superstition, he argued, could not free itself from a bias that was the enemy of such scholarship. The stance was revolutionary in that, for the first time in Jewish history, it was legitimate to consider a Judaism without religion – hence for modern Jewry to develop a new self-definition. The emergence of *Wissenschaft des Judentums* has thus often been defined as a central development in modern Jewish life and thinking. Looking backward, a paradigmatic representative of the movement, Ismar Elbogen, would state categorically that: “The borderline cannot be drawn sharply enough, it cannot be emphasized strongly enough, that *Wissenschaft des Judentums* was a novel creation, that it represents a break with the old knowledge and that it demands a fundamental difference in methodological approach.”<sup>30</sup>

Nevertheless, it is important to keep in mind that despite this emphasis on historical rupture and a move past religion, the movement's proponents also shared a fervent desire to rejuvenate Judaism and reconcile it with modern German thought and culture – not to see it vanish. In Wolf's words, Judaism was “not only of historical interest, not a principle that belongs to a lived past now merely preserved in the pages of history. It lives on, acknowledged by

<sup>28</sup> I. Wolf, ‘On the Concepts of a Science of Judaism’ in *LBI Year Book 2* (1957), p. 202.

<sup>29</sup> See M.A. Meyer, ‘Jewish Religious Reform and *Wissenschaft des Judentums*: The Positions of Zunz, Geiger and Frankel’, in *LBI Year Book 16* (1971), pp. 22–26.

<sup>30</sup> I. Elbogen, *Ein Jahrhundert Wissenschaft des Judentums*, p. 6; see also M. Wiener, ‘The Ideology of the Founders of Jewish scientific research’, in *Yivo Annual of Jewish Social Science 5* (1950), p. 184, referring to a “break in Jewish life ... a new stage in historical development”; see also I. Schorsch, ‘The Ethos of Modern Jewish Scholarship’, in *From Text to Context*, p. 158: “*Wissenschaft des Judentums* heralded a revolution in self-understanding”.

a not inconsiderable portion of humanity, even of European humanity, on a numerical basis alone.”<sup>31</sup> This preservative factor is precisely what Scholem believed was neglected by subsequent generations of German-Jewish scholars. Still, as early as Wolf there is manifest tension between such emphasis on Judaism as a living cultural system and principles of what can, from our post-Weberian perspective, be termed a high ideal of value-free scholarship. Jewish *Wissenschaft*, Wolf maintained, “begins without any preconceived opinion and is not concerned with the final result. Its aim is neither to put its object in a favourable, nor in an unfavourable light, in relation to prevailing views, but to show it as it is. *Wissenschaft* is self-sufficient, is in itself an essential need of the human spirit. It therefore needs to serve no other purpose than its own.” This stance was singularly unapologetic. Wolf went so far as to insist that Jewish *Wissenschaft* “treats the object of study in and for itself, for its own sake, and not for any special purpose or definite intention;” and he did not fail to draw conclusions taking into account prevalent concepts regarding Judaism:

No universally valid principle has yet been found to account for the circumstances of the Jews; and if there is ever to be a just decision on this issue, then this can clearly only be done through science [*Wissenschaft*]. Scientific knowledge of Judaism must decide on the merits or demerits of the Jews, their fitness or unfitness to be given the same status and respect as other citizens. This alone will define the inner character of Judaism and separate the essential from the accidental, the original from later addition.<sup>32</sup>

From its outset, *Wissenschaft des Judentums* vacillated between its internal educational and external political objectives, the latter being no less than an emancipation of German Jewry. This gaining of “status and respect” was to be brought about by convincing the non-Jewish public, most importantly the German academic establishment, of, precisely this possibility: to conceptualize Judaism in a scientifically valid framework – hence, proving its cultural and historical significance. For Zunz, then, the equality of the Jews could *only* emerge after official recognition of the new discipline.<sup>33</sup> By contrast, the objective of internal Jewish emancipation was to separate the “essential from the accidental”, to re-educate German Jewry through a re-formed Judaism, in order to enable assimilated German Jews to appreciate their cultural heritage.

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<sup>31</sup> I. Wolf, ‘On the Concepts’, p. 203.

<sup>32</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>33</sup> L. Zunz, *Zur Geschichte und Literatur*, p. 58.

## Early Conflicts regarding *Wissenschaft des Judentums*

One of the earliest Jewish criticisms levelled at a scientific investigation of Judaism came from orthodox scholars alarmed at the potential break between the Jews and their culture; for these scholars, the end result of such an approach was feared to be the religion's eradication. With historical perspective, we can understand that this concern was fueled by the novel idea of Judaism as a *developing* cultural system rather than a static monument of faith: a concept incompatible with basic sentiments shared by a great portion of the orthodox Jewish community. Ultimately, this shift – at least according to the perception of the more traditional communities – challenged rabbinic authority; and indeed, following Enlightenment and emancipation, such authority had factually been undermined. In such a context, *Wissenschaft des Judentums* inevitably emerged for some of its proponents and opponents as a tool for revolutionary change in religious practice and understanding. This tendency is evident, for instance, in writings of the Jewish reformist Abraham Geiger, whose self-proclaimed purpose was to unearth the “core” of Judaism by removing all the layers added during the course of the Diaspora experience.<sup>34</sup>

In light of the orthodox sense that science undermined all the certainties of faith, it is important to keep in mind that scientific activity, understood both in its naturalistic Aristotelian sense and as a rigorous comparison of conflicting source material, was nothing new to medieval Jewish scholars. With scribes having often altered or omitted Talmudic passages, the need to compare and analyze different versions was recognized – although this critical approach had its limitations.<sup>35</sup> Many centuries later, the great Talmudist Yomtov Lippman Heller (1579–1654) maintained a halachic framework in his own correction of Mishnaic inaccuracies and, at times, direct contradictions: his main tools were logical explanation and commonsense rationalization. Hence for Heller the Kabbalah had no place in interpretive decisions regarding the Mishnah; he refused to concern himself with esoteric matters. This commonsense approach epitomized objective Talmudic scholarship in seventeenth century Poland – it was a model for maintaining respect for tradition while at the same time seeking truth.

While thinkers of the Jewish Enlightenment increasingly highlighted the individual moral will at the expense of religious practice, the traditional model still powerfully informed the life and work of that movement's founder, Mo-

<sup>34</sup> See L. Geiger, *Abraham Geiger. Leben und Lebenswerk*, p. 295. “Es ist soweit gekommen, daß man der Schale mehr Verehrung zollt, als dem ewigen Kern. Selbst fortgeschrittene Rabbiner sind diesem Kleben am Äußeren, diesem Heidentum stumm und machtlos.”

<sup>35</sup> See H. Soussan, ‘Der Prophet Elijah in Liturgie, Halacha, und Kunst’, MA thesis, Hochschule für Jüdische Studien, p. 64.



ses Mendelssohn (1729–1786), who famously remained a practising Jew. The approach taken towards rabbinic Judaism by Mendelssohn's spiritual heirs, the *maskilim*, was less clear cut. Initially, they maintained strict deference to the rabbis and Talmudic literature, considered a source of wisdom, a stance certainly interacting in a complex way with their distaste for Yiddish and their desire to resuscitate Hebrew.<sup>36</sup>

In the prospectus of the main maskilic publication, the Hebrew-language *Ha-Me'assef*, the editors emphasized that they had “spent their lives in diligent study of the Torah”, and that their editorial authorities “include masters of the Talmud who know how to discuss the profundities of Halacha”. Editorship of the publication was entrusted to a newly founded Society of the Friends of Hebrew; readers were informed that two of the society's four chairmen had been assigned the “sacred duty ... of examining the articles to be printed and removing any impurity or blasphemy, which may not be admitted to the house of God.”<sup>37</sup> This self-imposed censorship indicates that at the very least, the editors sensed that their public would not sympathize with anti-traditional sentiments.

The anti-rabbinic views that became prevalent in maskilic circles over time in part reflected a general feeling among secularizing Jewish intellectuals that their traditional religion stood in the way of acceptance within wider German society.<sup>38</sup> These views had their most radical expression in an article in *Ha-Me'assef* portraying a fictitious conversation between Maimonides, Mendelssohn, and a representative of the contemporary rabbinic establishment.<sup>39</sup> The Jewish community's hostile response to the article underscored the unpopular nature of the views it represented; finding itself without a public, the journal closed down in 1797. That the high public esteem for rabbinic authority was maintained over the next few decades is evident in the way in which the Hamburg *Tempelverein* introduced its first Reform service in 1817. The synagogue commissioned Elieser Liebermann, a Talmud scholar, to prepare a halachic defence of the pertinent reforms; appearing in two publications – *Nogah ha-Zedek* (1818) and *Or-Nogah* (1818) – the defence amounted to a detailed apologia for the Reformers clothed in the traditional language of a rabbinic responsum and based solely on rabbinic sources.

Liebermann's publications provoked an angry response by the rabbinic court entitled *Ele divrej ha-Brit*. His efforts illustrate the need perceived by the age's Jewish reformers to persuade their still-traditional public using traditional means. Over the next few decades, conditions would change to the

<sup>36</sup> M. Meyer (ed.) *Deutsch-Jüdische Geschichte in der Neuzeit*, 2, p. 98.

<sup>37</sup> *Nahal Besor* [prospectus of *Ha-Me'assef*, April 13, 1783], *Ha-Me'assef* 1 (1784), 1–4, pp. 11–14.

<sup>38</sup> Cf. M. Meyer, *The Origins of the Modern Jew*, p. 115.

<sup>39</sup> *Ha-Me'assef* 7, (1797), pp. 54–67, 120–55, 203–28, 279–98.

extent that by 1844 during a conference of Reform rabbis in Brunswick, Samuel Holdheim (1806–1860), a champion of radical reform, could evoke the authority of *Wissenschaft des Judentums* to legitimize his radical program. “All the talk about the Talmud is an illusion”, Holdheim declared, “Science has decided that the Talmud has no authority, dogmatically or practically.”<sup>40</sup> Correspondingly, the “philosopher of Judaism” Julius Guttman (1880–1950)<sup>41</sup> argued that the new discipline should lead to an easing of the pressures exerted by “rabbinism”, in other words to a relativizing of the authority of religious sources and institutions. Guttman did, however, insist on the centrality of preserving a positive relationship to the Jewish past, with the goal of a Jewish renaissance grounded in Judaism’s own historical resources.<sup>42</sup> But despite this deep concern with tradition, it is not surprising that the established German-Jewish Orthodoxy viewed early *Wissenschaft des Judentums* as its most dangerous foe.

### *Wissenschaft des Judentums 1820–1854*

While, the high hopes of the *Culturverein*’s founding members had not been fulfilled, the *Wissenschaft* movement would continue to broaden its influence over the first half of the nineteenth century, eventually affecting every aspect of German-Jewish life, including the educational system and the liturgical arrangement of the synagogue service.

Although in this period the movement persistently lacked an organized working forum, it would nonetheless be the setting for much outstanding scholarship. Zunz’s first work, *Etwas über die rabbinische Literatur*, was published in 1818; another of his groundbreaking works, *Salomon ben Isaak, genannt Raschi* – the first effort at a critical biography of a Jewish medieval scholar – appeared in the first volume of the *Zeitschrift* (1822–1823). Zunz’s great work on Jewish liturgy, *Die gottesdienstlichen Vorträge der Juden historisch entwickelt*,<sup>43</sup> which presented for the first time rabbinic sources according to their historical evolution, was published in 1832; his famous essay on the social and literary history of the Jews, *Zur Geschichte und Literatur*,<sup>44</sup> appeared in 1845. In Eastern Europe, Nachman Krochmal (1785–1840), eventually dubbed the “Mendels-

<sup>40</sup> *Protokolle der ersten Rabbinerversammlung abgehalten in Braunschweig*, p. 55.

<sup>41</sup> F. Bamberger, ‘Julius Guttman: Philosopher of Judaism’, in *LBI Year Book* 5 (1960), pp. 3–34.

<sup>42</sup> J. Guttman, ‘Das geistige Erbe des deutschen Judentums’, *ibid.*, 58 (1981), p. 7.

<sup>43</sup> L. Zunz, *Die gottesdienstlichen Vorträge der Juden historisch entwickelt. Ein Beitrag zur Altertumskunde und biblischen Kritik. Zur Literatur- und Religionsgeschichte von Dr. Zunz.*

<sup>44</sup> *Etwas über die rabbinische Literatur: Nebst Nachrichten über ein altes bis jetzt ungedrucktes hebräisches Werk.*

sohn of Galicia”, was the individual responsible for introducing the new scholarly methods, mainly through his magnum opus *More Nevuchim Ha-Seman* (*Guide for the Perplexed of Our Time*). The most important author-scholar influenced by Krochmal’s work was the Galician born Solomon Rappoport (1790–1867), who wrote a series of bibliographical studies of tenth and eleventh century rabbinic leaders. Other figures meriting mention in this context are David Kaufmann (1852–1899), a professor for Jewish theology and history at the *Landesrabbinerschule* in Budapest, and Samuel David Luzzatto (1800–1865), a professor at the Rabbinical College of Padua.

Within the field of Jewish historiography, Isaak Markus Jost (1793–1860) served as a methodological pioneer through a series of sweeping surveys: the *Geschichte der Israeliten seit der Zeit der Maccabaeer bis auf unsere Tage* (1820–1847); *Neuere Geschichte der Israeliten* (1846–1847); *Allgemeine Geschichte des Israelitischen Volkes* (1832); and *Geschichte des Judentums und seiner Sekten* (1857–1859). Jost was a strong supporter of the German-Jewish Reform movement, consigning contemporary spiritual leaders to the historical past as a reflection of his own antipathy regarding religious observance. The title of his last work, *Geschichte des Judentums und seiner Sekten*, is in itself indicative of an extreme ambivalence regarding rabbinic Judaism. In the echoing of a standard anti-Jewish theme of the time – simultaneously part of an Enlightenment attack on what was viewed as the hypocrisy of religious authority – Jost went so far as to trace the lowly status of modern-day Jewry back to what in his eyes was the Pharisees’ responsibility for Jesus’s crucifixion. On the basis of such views and a general denigration of Judaism in favour of Christianity, Zunz condemned Jost’s *Geschichte*. But the great historian of Judaism Heinrich Graetz (1817–1891), despite his orthodoxy and outspoken anti-Christian sentiments, would acclaim the monumental work a groundbreaking effort.<sup>45</sup> It is apparent that Jost’s approach reflected the intent of non-Jewish historians to isolate Pharisaism from modern Christian culture.

This period was also marked by a new interest in medieval Jewry in the framework of Jewish *Wissenschaft*. Devoting himself to the Hebrew and Arabic literature of the Spanish Golden Age, Salomon Munk (1803–1867) single-handedly laid the foundation for a modern understanding of medieval Jewish philosophy. His younger colleague Moritz Steinschneider expounded on the enormous contribution of medieval Jewry to mathematics, natural history, philology, philosophy, and medieval culture in general. At the same time, he contributed to Jewish historiography in an eminently practical way through the painstaking preparation of numerous subject catalogues.<sup>46</sup> In the face of such unmistakable scholarly achievement, there was considerable criticism di-

<sup>45</sup> H. Graetz, *Volkstümliche Geschichte der Juden* 6, p. 280.

<sup>46</sup> ‘Moritz Steinschneider’, in *JL* 4/2, p. 714.

rected at Jewish *Wissenschaft* within the German-Jewish scholarly community. In 1860, Samuel David Luzzatto (1800–1865) insisted that:

... The wisdom of Israel as it is studied in Germany ... cannot continue to exist. It is not studied for its own sake; in the last analysis these scholars respect Goethe and Schiller more than all the prophets and the *Tannaim* and *Amoraim*. They study ancient Israel the way other scholars study ancient Egypt, Assyria, Babylon and Persia – that is, for the love of science or the love of fame. And they intend, in addition, to increase the honour of Israel in the eyes of the Gentiles; they exalt the role of some of our ancient sages in order to hasten the first step toward salvation, which is, in their eyes, emancipation.<sup>47</sup>

Despite the accusation of assimilationism clearly at work here, one central goal of those scholars tied to *Wissenschaft des Judentums* was to gain recognition and acceptance within the German university system. It was widely assumed that this achievement alone would signify true emancipation. The first to evoke such a goal was Abraham Geiger (1810–1874), who in 1836 published an article in his *Wissenschaftliche Zeitschrift für jüdische Theologie* entitled ‘The Establishment of a Faculty of Jewish Theology, an Urgent Need in Our Time’. Geiger argued that:

from the moment Jewish theology enters the community of the sciences, it enters into a compact with its sister disciplines, a pact that is indissoluble and inseparable. They will go together hand in hand, constituting their own circle, assisting each other in a friendly manner and asserting just claims to pursue mutual friendship.<sup>48</sup>

Soon afterwards, the editor and publisher of the *Allgemeine Zeitung des Judentums* and Rabbi of Magdeburg, Ludwig Philippson (1811–1889), published an appeal to “all Israelites in Germany” to raise money for establishing a Jewish faculty and seminary.<sup>49</sup> In Philippson’s view, German Jewry stood at a crossroads, with its adherents in the middle of an educational and political crisis: In the process of civil emancipation, German Jews were running the danger of losing their connection to their heritage. In a tone marked with considerable pathos, Philippson lamented the fragmented state of *Wissenschaft des Judentums*, which at this time was furthered mainly by the efforts of individual scholars. The most serious problem, as he saw things, was a lack of modern educators and theologians. Philippson made very clear what he expected of a Jewish faculty; To “develop and defend” the Jewish religion, to “protect it against ridicule”, and to save the Jewish people from “degeneration

<sup>47</sup> See M. Myers, *Reinventing the Jewish Past*, p. 27.

<sup>48</sup> A. Geiger, ‘Die Gründung einer jüdisch-theologischen Fakultät, ein dringendes Bedürfnis unserer Zeit’, in *Wissenschaftliche Zeitschrift für jüdische Theologie* 1, p. 6.

<sup>49</sup> L. Philippson, ‘Aufforderung an alle Israeliten Deutschlands zu Subscriptionen, um eine jüdische Facultät und ein jüdisches Seminar für Deutschland zu begründen’, in *AZJ* 1 (1837), pp. 349–351; see also I. Elbogen in *29. Bericht der Lehranstalt für die Wissenschaft des Judentums*, p. 62.

and inner strife". For Philippson, then, *Wissenschaft des Judentums* amounted to anything but value-free scholarly investigation; it was rather a tool in the struggle against the modern German Jew's complete assimilation.

Both Geiger and Philippson felt that the establishment of a chair in Jewish *Wissenschaft* at a German university was crucial to the discipline's validation in that it would guarantee complete research and intellectual independence to the scholars involved – a seminary for rabbinic education according to models offered in other European countries could only satisfy the needs of the hour.<sup>50</sup> In any case, while calls for such a chair would be frequently made over the following decades, none of the various German governments were to respond positively. It would also be many years before the German-Jewish community could inaugurate such a seminary, viewed by many as a temporary substitute for the withheld university chair.

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<sup>50</sup> See, to this effect, L. Geiger (ed.), *Abraham Geiger: Leben und Lebenswerk*, p. 422.

## II. The Institutionalization of *Wissenschaft des Judentums*

Zacharias Frankel, the Jewish Theological Seminary in Breslau and the *Monatsschrift für Geschichte und Wissenschaft des Judentums*

Zacharias Frankel (1801–1865) was the first rabbi from Bohemia with a secular academic education, and he initially sympathized with the Reform movement centered around Abraham Geiger. But he broke completely with the movement in 1845, when, against his protest, the majority of the participants of the second rabbinic conference at Frankfurt am Main moved to abolish Hebrew as the standard language of prayer in favour of the German vernacular.

When the first German rabbinical seminary was founded in Breslau on 10 August 1854, Frankel was appointed director. The approach taken by the seminary to questions of interpretation and religious tradition closely reflected his own beliefs.<sup>51</sup> Ideologically he sought to take a middle position between the radical Reform movement and traditional Orthodoxy, founding the so-called positive-historical school that later came to be known as Conservative Judaism.<sup>52</sup> “Positive” in this context denoted a general acceptance of all historical developments within the Jewish religious and cultural experience; reforms were only acceptable if they were in harmony with the spirit of this historical Judaism. Frankel thus vehemently rejected reform for its own sake – all the more so when it contradicted the desires of the community. His positive-historical ideology was aimed at defending belief in the Mosaic revelation, a belief that, he insisted, remained valid within *Wissenschaft des Judentums*:

Any positive religion can know progress only up to a certain limit; the term itself already states that it possesses a steady, indissoluble quality that needs to be upheld; it is revelation and not *Wissenschaft*, and Judaism may still, with righteous joy, make the additional claim that its basis is, at the same time, the highest point of *Wissenschaft*.<sup>53</sup>

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<sup>51</sup> For the history of the Seminary see G. Kisch (ed.), *Das Breslauer Seminar Jüdisch-Theologisches Seminar (Fraenckel'scher Stiftung) in Breslau 1854–1938*.

<sup>52</sup> A. Brämer, *Rabbiner Zacharias Frankel: Wissenschaft des Judentums und konservative Reform im 19. Jahrhundert*.

<sup>53</sup> See Meyer, ‘Jewish Religious Reform’, p. 34.

In defending the legitimacy of *Wissenschaft* within Judaism and the legitimacy of historical Judaism within general culture,<sup>54</sup> Frankel guaranteed freedom of research within the seminary, with students as well as teachers nonetheless being obliged to live strictly according to Jewish religious law. But despite the latter stipulation, the Orthodox reaction to Frankel's concept of a gradually evolving rabbinic law was sharply critical. For, maintaining the traditional Jewish assumption of a distinction between the "written" Torah and the "oral" legal tradition laid forth in the Talmud, Frankel, while placing the "written" Torah outside the realm of critical evaluation, did not regard the "oral" Talmud with the same reverence. Although the Talmud was to be accorded the same regard as the Torah, it was, in contrast to the Torah, a human compilation, hence open to such evaluation. Frankel thus developed his most original and creative scholarship in the Talmudic sphere. In *Darkhe ha-Mishnah*, published in 1859, he traced the historical development of the Mishnah. Edited and finalized around 200 A.D., that compilation of Jewish legal tradition came to form the core of the Talmud, even superseding the Torah in its practical significance. With Orthodox German Jewry maintaining its belief in the divine character of the oral law, *Darkhe ha-Mishnah* became the object of harsh critique from within its ranks – by, among others, the distinguished rabbi Esriel Hildesheimer (1820–1899) and Samson Raphael Hirsch (1808–1888).<sup>55</sup>

Frankel also initiated publication of the prestigious *Monatsschrift für Geschichte und Wissenschaft des Judentums*, editing the journal from its first edition in 1851 until his death in 1868.<sup>56</sup> The journal was taken over by the *Gesellschaft* in 1902, but ran until 1939. It was preceded by the *Zeitschrift für die religiösen Interessen des Judentums*, published by Frankel between 1844 and 1846. In describing his motivations for founding the *Monatsschrift*, Frankel revealed a belief that *Wissenschaft des Judentums* was the most important means of rejuvenating German Jewry's interest in religion:

Each periodical must find its justification in itself, and must be based on the requirements of the time in which it is created. In the realm of Judaism, journalism had to pursue a twofold direction, the religious and the political; and as in its final state the specific political position assigned the Jew was based on the religious, both directions overlapped to a great extent, and both the religious and the political had to be discussed

<sup>54</sup> I. Heinemann, 'Die Idee des Jüdisch-Theologischen Seminars', in Kisch, *Das Breslauer Seminar*, p. 87.

<sup>55</sup> M. Breuer, *Jüdische Orthodoxie im deutschen Reich 1871–1918, Sozialgeschichte einer religiösen Minderheit*, p. 124.

<sup>56</sup> For an evaluation of the *Monatsschrift* see K. Wilhelm, 'Die Monatsschrift für Geschichte und Wissenschaft des Judentums. Ein geistesgeschichtlicher Versuch', in Kisch, *Das Breslauer Seminar*, pp. 327–349. See also M. Brann, 'Zur Geschichte der Monatsschrift', in *MGWJ* 51 (1907), pp. 1–16 and I. Elbogen, 'Ein hundertjähriger Gedenktag unserer Wissenschaft', *ibid.* 66 (1922), pp. 89–97.

and represented. ... But the end of the religious struggle has brought little satisfaction. No victory cry, but quiet silence accompanies it: The religious struggle has not been continued because participation on the religious side has generally waned. The aim of a journal dedicated to the interests of Judaism must thus be directed towards making readers receptive to the great and relevant content of Judaism. ... although education is its final goal, it can only achieve it by combining the pleasant with the useful. ... *Wissenschaft des Judentums* is its mightiest lever; without it there is no Judaism.<sup>57</sup>

### The Hungarian *Landesrabbinerschule* and Austrian *Lehranstalt*

Significantly, in the ensuing years two rabbinical seminaries were founded in Austria and Hungary respectively; these closely followed the approach taken by their German predecessor. Founded in 1877, The *Landesrabbinerschule* in Budapest was a state-supported institution with government-appointed staff and administration.<sup>58</sup> The indemnity collected by the Hungarian officials as a result of Jewish participation in the 1848–1849 revolution, although technically labeled a fine, had been allotted to Jewish education by the Hungarian government. The pathway to a seminary had already been paved in 1837 by the Hungarian parliament's passage of a law requiring rabbis to undergo higher education and register births, marriages, and deaths. Parliamentary permission for a rabbinical seminary had also been approved in 1844, but bitter strife between Orthodoxy and the Reform movement went on for almost twenty years before the allotted funds could be used for that purpose. At the General Jewish Congress convened by the Hungarian government in the winter of 1868–1869, a decision was reached to open a seminary along the same lines as the Breslau model. During the second half of the ten-year course of study, students were to be required to enrol at the university and earn a university degree.

The partially state-funded Austrian rabbinical seminary, the *Israelitisch-Theologische Lehranstalt*, was founded in 1893 and soon emerged as the European centre of research on Jewish literature and history. By 1880, the Viennese Jewish community numbered 120,000, making it one of the largest Jewish communities in Europe at the forefront of modernized, acculturated European Jewish society. The *Lehranstalt* came into being as a response to a public

<sup>57</sup> *MGWJ* 1 (1851), p. 2.

<sup>58</sup> The following were directors of the seminary: M. Bloch (1877–1907), W. Bacher (1907–1913), L. Blau (1914–1932), M. Guttmann (1933–1942). Other well-known scholars who taught there were D. Kaufmann, I. Goldziher, and D. Friedmann. On the *Landesrabbinerschule* see M. Carmilly-Weinberger (ed.), *The Rabbinical Seminary of Budapest 1877–1977*; see also J. Schweizer, 'Das Budapester Rabbinerseminar. Der Platz des Rabbinerseminars in der jüdischen Wissenschaft', in Carlebach, *Wissenschaft des Judentums*, pp. 74–85.



argument between August Rohling, an antisemitic professor in Prague, and Joseph Samuel Bloch, a rabbi and champion of Jewish rights. This conflict underscored the need for a public cultural forum for Austrian Jewry; the *Lehranstalt* was then launched with the assistance of Jewish financiers, various Jewish communities, and a small government subsidy. The institution could pride itself on attracting prominent scholars to its faculty, some of the most famous being Victor Aptowitzer (1871–1942), Adolf Büchler (1867–1939), Hirsch P. Chajes (1876–1927),<sup>59</sup> Moritz Güdemann (1835–1918), Adolf Jellinek (1820–1893), Samuel Krauss, David Müller (1846–1912) and Adolf Schwarz (1846–1931). The *Lehranstalt* would be active until 1938, when the *Anschluss* led to the destruction of all Jewish cultural institutions.

### The *Hochschule für die Wissenschaft des Judentums*

In 1873 Berlin's *Hochschule für die Wissenschaft des Judentums* was officially opened. This independent Jewish-theological institution corresponded to what liberal rabbis Abraham Geiger and Ludwig Philippson had called for in 1836 and 1837 respectively; the central concepts of their plan had evolved from contemporary needs:

The foundation of a Jewish theological faculty, to which a general spiritual elevation of Judaism and its followers is related, will, more than anything else, be able to save the honour of the Israelites and refute many of the accusations repeatedly made against them, and is the best means of guiding public attention away from confusion.<sup>60</sup>

The institution endorsed a strong apologetic tendency, combined with a pragmatic sense of the value of *Wissenschaft des Judentums* for German Jewry. At the same time, Geiger was open in his conviction that only a theological faculty and not a simple rabbinical seminary could function in a German university structure, thus helping to incorporate Jewish *Wissenschaft* into the world of general scholarship. The statutes of the *Hochschule* stipulated that lecturers had to have earned an academic degree allowing them to teach at a German university; additionally only students who qualified for university enrolment were to be accepted.<sup>61</sup> The institution's founders intended to attract students from a range of academic disciplines and religious backgrounds, thus both enriching *Wissenschaft des Judentums* as well as increasing the wider aca-

<sup>59</sup> Following the First World War, the *Lehranstalt* faced a financial crisis. Hirsch Peres Chajes, then the Chief Rabbi of Vienna, was instrumental in keeping the institution open through his solicitation of financial help from American Jews, in particular the Cultural commission for Germany of the American Joint Distribution committee, see *Bericht der Lehranstalt für die Wissenschaft des Judentums*, (1924), p. 3.

<sup>60</sup> Geiger, 'Die Gründung', p. 2.

<sup>61</sup> *Satzung der Hochschule für die Wissenschaft des Judentums*, § 15, p. 26.

demic community's understanding of and tolerance for the Mosaic faith. The *Hochschule* in actuality emerged as the foremost liberal rabbinical seminary in Germany, although it produced few rabbis when compared to its institutional counterparts in Breslau and Berlin (see below) – a reflection of the strong ethos of *Wissenschaft* underpinning its program.<sup>62</sup>

The ideal of free research and scholarship would be realized at the *Hochschule* more than at its neo-Orthodox and Conservative counterparts; both the institution's teachers and students thus represented a range of orientations within Judaism, and there was a general insistence on strict neutrality in religious and political matters. The opening paragraph of the *Hochschule's* constitution hence stipulated "independence from government, community and synagogue". The board not only refused to involve itself in inner-Jewish religious questions, but even declined to cooperate with important Jewish organizations such as the *Deutsch-Israelitischer Gemeindebund* in the struggle against antisemitism. Acting rabbis were likewise excluded from the institution's administration.<sup>63</sup> The *Hochschule's* intense concern with maintaining its independent status was manifest in its rejection in 1892 of an offer from the Berlin Jewish community to take over its administration in order to save it from financial ruin.<sup>64</sup>

The institution's non-involvement with general political developments did not save it from unfavourable treatment by German officials. In 1883, on the insistence of the ministry of education, the *Hochschule's* name was changed to the *Lehranstalt für die Wissenschaft des Judentums* – an indication of lesser academic status.<sup>65</sup> While the institution had to struggle with such external issues, one of its persistent problems was its financial situation, which worsened considerably towards the end of the nineteenth century. All the historical accounts lament a lack of support not only from the official, governmental side but from the Jewish community as well.<sup>66</sup> In its first years, the *Hochschule* received modest annual fees from its approximately 120 mem-

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<sup>62</sup> H. Völker, 'Die Gründung und Entwicklung der Hochschule für die Wissenschaft des Judentums', in *Trumah* 2 (1990), p. 45, has put the number of students taking up a rabbinical position after studying at the *Hochschule* until the end of the nineteenth century at 30.9%, compared to 40% at the *Jüdisch-Theologisches Seminar* and 61.4% at the *Orthodox Rabbinerseminar*.

<sup>63</sup> See *Satzungen der Hochschule für die Wissenschaft des Judentums*, § 13.

<sup>64</sup> See I. Elbogen in I. Elbogen and I. Höniger, *Festschrift zur Einweihung des eigenen Heims* (Berlin 1907), p. 71. Another telling episode was the refusal of the *Hochschule's* staff to provide an expert opinion concerning the obligation of a Jewish community to build a ritual bath. See H. Steinthal, 'Festrede zum 25jährigen Jubiläum der Lehranstalt für die Wissenschaft des Judentums', in G. Karpeles (ed.) *Über Juden und Judentum* (2nd edn., Berlin 1910), p. 247.

<sup>65</sup> See H. Völker, 'Die Gründung und Entwicklung der Hochschule', p. 36.

<sup>66</sup> See C. Wiese, *Wissenschaft des Judentums und protestantische Theologie im wilhelminischen Deutschland. Ein Schrei ins Leere?*, p. 72.

bers, but Berlin's Jewish community – the largest and wealthiest in Germany – did not contribute enough to offer a solid financial foundation. Elbogen thus observed that “all hopes were in vain, the appeals were ignored; larger donations were lacking entirely. ... As unbelievable as it seems, what occurred ... one can only call a disgrace.”<sup>67</sup> While German Jewry was readily willing to donate to philanthropic causes such as hospitals, orphanages and houses for the poor, large-scale support of scholarly organizations was apparently uncommon outside of the United States. The difficulty of raising capital for Jewish scholarship was a complaint which arose again and again during the nineteenth century.

The *Lehranstalt* was to suffer from inadequate funding for many years, a situation contrasting sharply with its lofty name and image. A visible sign of this situation was the undignified housing – for over three decades, no independent building could be financed. Towards the end of his life, the former *Lehranstalt* student Georg Herlitz (1885–1968) recalled his impressions when first enrolled in 1904:

The Institute was located ... in the front department of a building, which rear part was the Lindenstrasse Synagogue. ... It consisted – after 32 years of existence! – of a mere two rooms of the size of schoolrooms of an ordinary primary school. The same building was used as one of the Sunday-schools for the Berlin Jewish Community. In addition to those two rooms, a slightly larger room in the ground floor was used as the library, and if I am not mistaken was at the same time the living room of the librarian.<sup>68</sup>

The financial bind led in turn to an inability to employ lecturers. Ludwig Philippson had designated five full-time lecturers as the minimum staff needed to cover the main fields of *Wissenschaft des Judentums*; according to his view, these comprised Biblical studies, Talmudic studies, history of Judaism, history of Jewish literature, ethics, and Jewish homiletic literature.<sup>69</sup> In order to teach minor subjects, he suggested employing several part-time scholars. In reality, the available salaries restricted the institution to one full-time lecturer at a time. Other Berlin-based scholars agreed to teach part-time as a supplement to their main employment.

A central hope at work behind the *Hochschule's* establishment was bridging the gap between specialized Jewish scholarship and the general German-Jewish public.<sup>70</sup> In Germany, the ideal of popularizing knowledge was modelled on the liberal concept of *Volksbildung*, its aim being a reduction of the educational gap between the upper and lower classes. At the end of the nine-

<sup>67</sup> See I. Elbogen, *Festschrift zur Einweihung*, p. 19.

<sup>68</sup> G. Herlitz, ‘Die Lehranstalt (Hochschule) für die *Wissenschaft des Judentums* in Berlin’, *LBI Year Book* 35 (1966), p. 198.

<sup>69</sup> See I. Elbogen, *Festschrift zur Einweihung*, p. 22.

<sup>70</sup> ‘Die Lehranstalt für die *Wissenschaft des Judentums*’, in *Ost und West* 7 (1907), p. 678.

teenth century, the successful introduction of adult education was partially reflected in increasing numbers of courses popularizing scientific knowledge at German universities.<sup>71</sup> According to Elbogen the decision by the *Hochschule* board in 1879 to organize a cycle of public lectures – later widely known as the “Monday lectures” – was motivated by purely financial considerations: a desire to consolidate the stipend fund. The lecture series, the first of such series offered in Germany’s Jewish community, proved popular enough to become a permanent feature.<sup>72</sup>

Despite success in that forum, in 1902 the *Lehranstalt*’s precarious financial situation was underscored by the serious illness of its only full-time senior lecturer, Martin Schreiner (1863–1926).<sup>73</sup> By 1907, however, the economical state of affairs had begun to improve, the employment of Ismar Elbogen being accompanied by several large donations that allowed an acquisition of independent premises. Located in the centre of Berlin, the new building symbolized an increased acknowledgement of *Wissenschaft des Judentums* by German Jewry. One Jewish commentator described the trend succinctly: “It is only in recent times that a deeper understanding, a greater willingness for sacrifices for our spiritual life and for the investigation of our literature, has become apparent.”<sup>74</sup> Correspondingly, from the winter semester of 1908–1909 onwards, the *Lehranstalt* offered weekly evening lectures directed at a general audience. The expanded public interest in *Wissenschaft des Judentums* was reflected in the increased attendance and the rise in financial support by various Jewish communities and private donors, together with an increase in memberships (from 536 to 715).<sup>75</sup>

### The *Rabbinerseminar*

In the late nineteenth century, German Orthodoxy referred to the reconciliation of tradition with modernity as *Torah im derekh erez*, a Talmudic phrase meaning “Torah along the path of the world”; but sharp differences emerged regarding what this path involved. Among the three leaders of Orthodox German Jewry, Seligmann Baer Bamberger (1807–1878), Samson Raphael

<sup>71</sup> Th. Nipperdey, *Deutsche Geschichte* 1, p. 567.

<sup>72</sup> See I. Elbogen, *Festschrift zur Einweihung*, p. 59.

<sup>73</sup> M. Eschelbacher, ‘Ismar Elbogen’, in *Mitteilungsblatt des Vereins ehemaliger Hörer der Hochschule für die Wissenschaft des Judentums* 2 (1927), p. 3.

<sup>74</sup> ‘Die Lehranstalt für die *Wissenschaft des Judentums*’, in *AZJ* 71 (1907), p. 489.

<sup>75</sup> The annual report of the *Lehranstalt* for 1910 notes “an increased understanding of our goals within German Jewry”, pointing to a rise in financial support from the Berlin Jewish community (from 8,000 to 12,000 marks). See 28. *Bericht der Lehranstalt für die Wissenschaft des Judentums* (1910), p. 10.

Hirsch, and Esriel Hildesheimer, the first two both firmly rejected *Wissenschaft des Judentums*, in line with their particular understandings of “divine revelation”. Based on his belief that only traditional Torah study constituted a legitimate investigation of Judaism, Bamberger gave the movement little attention. For his part, Hirsch, the champion of neo-Orthodoxy, confronted the *Wissenschaft* movement directly, as something akin to pure heresy. Hirsch, in fact, denied that the movement could be regarded as a *Wissenschaft*, since it was unencumbered by the same “objective truth” that was the premise of its representative supporters. For the champions of Jewish *Wissenschaft*, the holy scriptures and Talmud were historically developed texts that could be rationalized through comparative study with holy texts from other cultures. This view was in direct conflict with Hirsch’s belief that the Torah was as much a divine creation as nature itself, and that the religious teachings of Judaism could only be studied with the help of their own internal tools, not through externally derived scientific methods.

Hirsch thus directly contested the legitimacy of *Wissenschaft des Judentums*, declaring it to be “unlawful” and “false” in that it lacked the impartiality so passionately demanded by its followers. His interpretation of *Torah im derekh eretz* involved a synthesis of the study of Torah and general tenets of German *Bildung* (the ideal of philosophical-humanistic self-formation), which, if properly understood, harmonized fully with traditional Judaism. Despite Hirsch’s traditionalism, this acceptance of *Bildung* marked a sharp departure from long-held traditional views. That so many ultra-Orthodox Eastern Europeans thought of Hirsch as the champion of orthodoxy in Germany appears to have reflected limited awareness of what his philosophy implied.<sup>76</sup>

Esriel Hildesheimer went a step further than Hirsch, trying to harmonize traditional Judaism with the principles of Jewish *Wissenschaft* itself. His approach was intellectually pragmatic; as he conceived it, *Torah im derekh eretz* involved no fusion of Torah with modern values but their co-existence in dialectic harmony.<sup>77</sup> This approach was reflected in his founding of the Orthodox *Rabbinerseminar* in Berlin in 1873. While Hildesheimer had planned this institution for some time, the opening of the *Hochschule* had now convinced him of the urgency of an Orthodox counterweight. The curriculum of the *Rabbinerseminar* focused on a critical study of the Bible and Talmud – but from an Orthodox viewpoint, meaning that at least directly, the divinity of the written Torah was not called into question. Nevertheless, in line with principles of Jewish *Wissenschaft*, modern research methods were applied to the

<sup>76</sup> M. B. Shapiro, *Between the Yeshiva world and Modern Orthodoxy: The Life and Works of Rabbi Jehiel Jacob Weinberg 1884–1966*, pp. 41–47.

<sup>77</sup> M. Eliav, ‘Das orthodoxe Rabbinerseminar in Berlin’, in Carlebach, *Wissenschaft des Judentums*, p. 62.

holy texts; from the common Orthodox standpoint this could only mean a movement from disrespect to open heresy, the source of a sharp conflict between Berlin and the Orthodox circles around Hirsch and Bamberger.

In the course of time, the modern Orthodoxy represented by Hildesheimer would become predominant within the German-Jewish Orthodox movement. The distinction between the Orthodox, Conservative, and Liberal movements, the three major factions within German Judaism, would become institutionalized through the establishment of separate seminaries. Although there was a certain amount of mobility between the three institutions, for the most part each educated spiritual leaders for their corresponding communities. In 1934, looking back at the consolidation of each of the three movements at a time when all of them were facing state sponsored discrimination, Siegfried Ucko made the following observation:

Almost all directions of the Jewish present revolve around *Wissenschaft des Judentums*. The foundation of a new Orthodoxy bases itself, if not upon all the values of science, then at least upon scientific terminology. Without the sifting and separating work of science, the liberal understanding of Judaism as a religious community is unthinkable; and a national Jewish renaissance is only conceptually possible as a national-humanistic synthesis, which in turn is only conceivable as the result of entrance into the wider culture.<sup>78</sup>

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<sup>78</sup> S. Ucko, *Geistesgeschichtliche Grundlagen*, p. 315.

### III. *Wissenschaft des Judentums* and the Revival of Hebrew

The founding of the World Zionist Organization in 1897 marked a watershed in the development of German Jewry. While most of the early Zionist leadership consisted of German-speaking Jews, the number of active supporters in Germany was at first rather small. Indeed the majority of German Jews regarded the Zionist movement as a threat because its ideology cast into doubt the central goal of the Jewish establishment: the completion of the emancipation process. A swift and fierce rallying of opposition within the otherwise split German-Jewish spiritual leadership was reflected in their collective protest against Theodor Herzl's plans to hold the first Zionist Congress in Munich, forcing him to change the location to Basel, Switzerland.

The relationship between Zionism and *Wissenschaft des Judentums*, an embodiment of German Jewry's emancipatory values, was closely linked to the generally hostile approach to Zionism taken within the rabbinic establishment, which comprised the overwhelming plurality of scholars of Judaism. While the orthodox rabbinate rejected Zionism because the messiah had not yet arrived, liberal rabbis emphasized the religious obligation Jews had towards Germany, their own *Vaterland*. The chairman of Germany's *Allgemeiner Rabbinerverband*, Sigmund Maybaum (1844–1919), forcefully rejected Zionism – as did the chief rabbis of England and France and the eminent scholar and chief rabbi of Vienna, Moritz Güdemann. In 1897 Güdemann, convinced like most of his co-religionists that antisemitism was a “curable disease”, went so far as to publish a vehemently anti-Zionist work, *Nationaljudentum*.<sup>79</sup> In 1907 he insisted that “in 10 or 20 years time, the Aryan peoples will be ashamed . . . of anti-Semitism”.<sup>80</sup> For their part, the Zionists considered antisemitism to be largely a constant in the European psyche, placing in doubt any efforts to reconcile Jewish and Christian European culture.

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<sup>79</sup> M. Güdemann, *Nationaljudentum*. See also F. Kind, ‘Zionismus als Utopie. Moritz Güdemanns Stellung zum “Nationaljudentum”’.

<sup>80</sup> Moritz Güdemann in a letter dated 19 December 1907. See J. Fraenkel, ‘Güdemann und Herzl’, *LBI Year Book* 11 (1966), p. 71.

Although from within community leadership, the protagonists of Zionism initially received little political support within Germany, the movement brought a renewed vitality to Jewish life in Western Europe, which would eventually be welcomed by many who otherwise opposed it. One such figure, Martin Philippon, thus conceded in 1910 that Zionism had “certainly strengthened Jewish self-confidence and self-respect”; his additional comment that “even when it will have vanished as a separate movement, its positive effects will continue to influence the Jewish community” encapsulates the viewpoint that many middle-class Jews came to hold in the pre-Great War period.<sup>81</sup> In 1901, Martin Buber introduced the term “Jewish renaissance” in a now-famous essay addressing what he viewed as a reawakened spirit of Jewish national feelings.<sup>82</sup> This was the backdrop for Buber’s call for a renewal of Jewish scholarship; with the question of the meaning of Jewish *Wissenschaft* for the Jewish national movement having been placed on the agenda of the Fifth Zionist Congress, Buber took the occasion to criticize the established approach of that movement, which he saw as tied to a widespread assimilationist ethos which he opposed. For Buber, *Wissenschaft des Judentums* had always remained “a subdivision of philology. The object of its research has been the old Jewish scriptures. . . . It does not merit the title *Wissenschaft des Judentums*”. As a replacement, he proposed a different, non-philologically oriented scholarship that focused on “the foundations of the Jewish people, its development and present situation . . . in order to recognize what one loves, and be able to determine what our people require and can expect, their needs and possibilities.”<sup>83</sup> In this manner, Buber implicitly challenged the sustained effort by those practicing Jewish *Wissenschaft* to demonstrate the compatibility of Judaism with modern European values; the movement was in his view only meaningful if put at the service of the Jewish *Volk*. For a start, through an introduction of the study of Jewish mysticism,<sup>84</sup> the *Kabbalah* is clearly perceived as an antidote to the enlightened rationalism *Wissenschaft* saw as the core of Jewish culture. Buber’s methodological critique of *Wissenschaft des Judentums* was even more fundamental, involving a call for a new scholarly project to replace scattered biographical, bibliographical and similar efforts with a collective, encyclopaedic project on the part of a range of distinguished Jewish scholars, each scholar working independently on a specific historical topic in dialogue with the others – for the sake, in the end, of presenting the entire extant corpus of Jewish *Wissenschaft*.

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<sup>81</sup> M. Philippon, *Neueste Geschichte des jüdischen Volkes* 2, p. 166.

<sup>82</sup> M. Buber, ‘Jüdische Renaissance’, in *Ost und West* 1 (1901), pp. 7–10.

<sup>83</sup> M. Buber, ‘Jüdische Wissenschaft’, in *Die Welt* 5 (1901), p. 1.

<sup>84</sup> M. Brenner, *The Renaissance of Jewish Culture in Weimar Germany*, p. 29.



In this respect, despite Buber's own Zionist convictions, his effort to shift the focus of modern Jewish scholarship, reveals more sympathy with the *Wissenschaft* movement than was commonly acknowledged by the German-Jewish Zionists. At the same time, one of the most remarkable achievements of Europe's Zionist movement was the transformation of Hebrew into a modern language. This development had unmistakable implications for those pursuing the methodologically modern Jewish scholarship, who now stood accused by the Zionist side of having replaced their "national language" with the language of their host country.

One of the most influential figures in the emergence of cultural Zionism was Ascher Ginsberg, better known by his *nom de plume* Achad Ha'am. In 1882, during a congress of Russian Zionists, Ginsberg compared the different paths the emancipation process had taken in Western and Eastern Europe: whereas Eastern European Jewish writers and scholars had always emphasized the continuity of the Hebrew language as a natural means of national expression, their Western European counterparts, in particular those who were German-Jewish, had opted for the path of adaptation to their host country's language. In this context, he singled out Abraham Geiger, the most well known representative of Reform Judaism, as having mentioned "somewhere that those who now write in Hebrew feel no inner connection to the written word, but automatically find themselves in a completely different realm of thought, the world of Talmud sages and rabbis into which they have been forced."<sup>85</sup> Ginsberg saw such a viewpoint as prevalent among Western European Jews, for whom a connection with the language of the Jewish people had ceased to exist. Nevertheless, he acknowledged the efforts of the German-Jewish reformers at religious modernization, which he understood as proof that their Jewish identity, although biased and shrunken, had not entirely vanished. All told, his assessment of the value of the contribution of Jewish *Wissenschaft* to Jewish culture was critical. He referred to these as "blind followers and slavish imitators" (*Nachbeter und Nachtreter*) of their non-Jewish colleagues; in his opinion, their main goal was "to loosen the national tie not only between past and future but also between the dispersed parts of the nation."<sup>86</sup> Achad Ha'am saw firm proof of the most extreme assimilationist tendencies in the scholarly usage of the German language, his convictions being encapsulated in the declaration that "the national literature of a people is only that which is written in its national language."<sup>87</sup> For Ginsberg, then, *Wissenschaft des Judentums* had become "a monument to our spiritual slavery".<sup>88</sup>

<sup>85</sup> Achad Ha'am, 'Nachahmung und Assimilation', in *Am Scheidewege* 1, p. 254.

<sup>86</sup> Achad Ha'am, 'Auferstehung des Geistes', in *Am Scheidewege* 2, pp. 211 ff.

<sup>87</sup> *ibid.*, p. 213.

<sup>88</sup> *ibid.*, p. 212.

In the discussion of the relation of *Wissenschaft des Judentums* to the “living” Jewish people, a conflict crystallized between Eastern and Western European Jewry; the conflict was framed by the language question, itself one of the main focal points for a critique of Jewish *Wissenschaft*. We should note that the strong Zionist reservations regarding the scholarly movement’s founding fathers, particularly against Leopold Zunz, can be traced back to Zunz’s first work, *Etwas über die rabbinische Literatur*, with its culturally and linguistically assimilationist arguments. In his literary debut, Zunz introduced a death-imagery regarding Hebrew culture that would be reiterated in various modes over the following six decades and more. “But just now in our time”, he observed,

“we the Jews – only so that we stand fast with what is German – reach with great earnestness towards the German language and German education, and therefore – perhaps often without wanting it or realizing it – see the new Hebrew literature carried to its grave – *Wissenschaft* standing forth and demanding an accounting from its ranks.”<sup>89</sup>

In actuality, it would be unfair to make Leopold Zunz responsible for the situation he was trying to evaluate: A worsening knowledge of Hebrew among Germany’s Jews. Taking into account the broader history influencing Zunz’s remarks, a critical fact remains; even before the term *Wissenschaft des Judentums* was used for the first time in 1822 (in the *Zeitschrift für die Wissenschaft des Judentums*), Jewish enthusiasts of the European Enlightenment began an initiative in Berlin to revive the Hebrew language they already perceived as dying. In 1783 Isaak Euchel and Mendel Bresslau presented a call to found an organization to be named *Hevrat Doreshet Leshon Ever*, devoted to adapting the Jewish holy tongue to modern needs, for the sake of replacing a Yiddish-German deemed to be culturally inferior. The call received a quick and broadly sympathetic response, receiving support by the most prominent of the Jewish Enlighteners, Moses Mendelssohn and Naphtali Herz Wessely. The most significant fruit of their efforts was the Hebrew newspaper *Ha-Me’assef*, which they founded the following year. With distinguished contributors such as Isaak Satanow and Judah Ben-Zew, the paper was published more or less regularly until 1790, and then intermittently until 1797.<sup>90</sup>

A final effort to revive *Ha-Me’assef* followed in 1809; publication ceased two years later. With the increasing acculturation of Germany’s Jews having led to a rapid decrease in familiarity with Hebrew, the next periodical to appear following *Ha-Me’assef*, *Shulamit*, was obliged to publish in German. This development was accompanied by the appearance of several important works focused on the Hebrew language, reflecting a strong, Haskalah-influenced in-

<sup>89</sup> L. Zunz, ‘Etwas über die rabbinische Literatur’, in *idem*, *Gesammelte Schriften* 1 (Berlin 1875), p. 4.

<sup>90</sup> M. Meyer (ed.), *Deutsch-Jüdische Geschichte der Neuzeit*, 1, p. 296.

terest in its resuscitation and modernization.<sup>91</sup> This furnished a basis for the research of Hebrew undertaken by the next generation of scholars and the founders of *Wissenschaft des Judentums*, for whom it became a primary objective of their scholarly activity. Abraham Geiger characterised it succinctly: “Until genuine [Hebrew] linguistic studies are at home amongst us . . . we cannot yet speak of a *Wissenschaft des Judentums*.”<sup>92</sup>

The reason for this position is clear. The bulk of traditional Jewish literature is in Hebrew (as well as in Aramaic), ranging from the Bible to the Talmud and beyond to a corpus of medieval Jewish texts. In this respect, it is important to note that despite Geiger’s division of *Wissenschaft des Judentums* into philosophical, historical, and linguistic domains, the interest in Hebrew of the early followers of *Wissenschaft* was wholly philological – unlike their predecessors, they neither intended nor promoted a revival of the “holy tongue”. In the face of diminishing familiarity with Hebrew in the West, in Eastern Europe, *Ha-Me’assef* was followed by a large number of scholarly Hebrew publications.<sup>93</sup> The scholar and founder of Jewish *Wissenschaft* in the east, Solomon Rappoport, published all of his works in Hebrew and also edited the influential Hebrew-language journal *Keren Chemed*. The main work of Nachman Krochmal, the philosophical treatise *More Nevukhim Ha-Seman*, was likewise written in Hebrew. In their use of Hebrew, both these scholars exerted a strong influence on the following generation of Eastern European Jewish scholarship.

Assimilation was not the only reason for the sharply contrasting situation in the west. It is the case that many Eastern European Jews had easier access to Hebrew literature because of their traditional yeshiva education, but beyond this fact, the priorities of the early proponents of *Wissenschaft* in Germany were entirely different. Whereas the effort of the Eastern European scholars was directed primarily at an inner-Jewish sphere which they hoped to reform and educate, the target group in the west was always twofold. On the one hand, as in the east they hoped to convince the nation’s Jews of the global historical significance of both their religion and Jewish cultural achievements; on the other hand a primary goal was to establish enduring ties with the non-Jewish German academic and reading public, in order to counter anti-Jewish prejudice and further legal emancipation.

<sup>91</sup> Two parts of *Lebanon*, the most important work by N. Wessely on Hebrew grammar and philology, appeared under the title *Gan Na’ul* in 1765 in Berlin (the other parts were never published). Judah ben Zew then published a work on the modern use of Hebrew, *Talmud Leschon Ibri* (Breslau 1796) as well as the German-Hebrew dictionary *Otzar ha-Schoraschim* (Vienna 1807–1808). Both publications were long considered standard reference works in the field.

<sup>92</sup> A. Geiger, *Nachgelassene Schriften* 2, p. 60.

<sup>93</sup> These included *Bikkure ha-Ittim*, (Vienna 1820–1831), *Keren Chemed*, (Tarnopol 1833–1842), *Otzar Nechmad*, (Vienna–Pressburg, 1856–1863), and *He-Chalutz*, (Lemberg–Breslau–Prague, 1852–1889).

In 1845, Leopold Zunz would refer to this “educational function” in the introduction to his famous *Zur Geschichte und Literatur*. Already in *Die gottesdienstlichen Vorträge der Juden historisch entwickelt* (1832) he mustered historical evidence, addressed to both German Jewry and Prussian officials, in favour of introducing a German sermon into the synagogue service. Similarly, his treatise *Die Namen der Juden* (1837), although commissioned by Berlin’s Jewish community, served the apologetic purpose of persuading the Prussian government that Jews had always adopted the proper names of their host populations, hence should not be prevented from taking Christian names in Prussia. In this vein, to help end legal discrimination against Germany’s Jews, Zacharias Frankel applied the methodology of Jewish *Wissenschaft* in two main works, *Die Eidesleistung der Juden in theologischer und historischer Beziehung* (1840) and *Der gerichtliche Beweis nach mosaisch-talmudischem Recht* (1846). To such general ends, it was important to show that in Western Europe and Germany in particular, Jews did not live, in David Kaufmann’s words, “at all times from old trousers and usury.”<sup>94</sup> It was clear enough to all parties, however, that it would not have been particularly diplomatic to present such an argument to Prussian officialdom in Hebrew rather than German.

In this respect, it is important to acknowledge the intellectual self-perception of Jewish *Wissenschaft*’s founding generation. For the scholars involved in this movement, a central imperative was to attend to the recognition of the scholarly study of Jewish literature, history, and culture as an integral element of European cultural-historical studies. With German having become a lingua franca of modern scholarship, its emergence as the central medium for these Jewish scholars was inevitable. As late as 1898, Martin Schreiner, a lecturer at the *Lehranstalt*, could thus maintain that “one who has read the Jewish works which were published in the German language can almost claim that he knows the entire literature of *Wissenschaft des Judentums*.”<sup>95</sup> Nevertheless, one does find numerous Hebrew language contributions, Zunz himself having written many articles for *Keren Chemed* and publishing his own Hebrew introduction to *More Nevukhim Ha-Seman*. In 1834, Abraham Geiger could thus confront Zunz with the astonished questions: “What led you to translate your book entirely into Hebrew? Are you trying to appeal to the Poles?” Geiger continued as follows:

“I do think that first the shell, which has laid itself around the heart and spirit of these people [in the east], must be removed through the foundation of elementary education. They also must first go through the Enlightenment before they ripen towards true

<sup>94</sup> D. Kaufmann, ‘Die *Wissenschaft des Judentums*’, in *Gesammelte Schriften von David Kaufmann* 1, pp. 1–13, here p. 3.

<sup>95</sup> M. Schreiner, ‘Was ist uns die *Wissenschaft des Judentums*?’, *AZJ* 62 (1898), p. 177.

scholarship, and whoever does not take this standpoint will not be able to understand your book and will not appreciate it.”<sup>96</sup>

It is clear that the attitudes revealed in these remarks would have deepened the mistrust of *Wissenschaft des Judentums* felt by many Eastern Jewish scholars. Already in 1845, Geiger had called for a replacement of the Hebrew synagogue liturgy by the vernacular on account of popular ignorance of the holy tongue. At the same time, he voiced reservations regarding the plans of his colleague Solomon Judah Rappoport to edit *Keren Chemed*: “Why in Hebrew, where only such a limited public can be informed of the discourse?”<sup>97</sup> Nevertheless, it would be wrong to interpret these remarks as comprising a battle cry against Hebrew as large Hebrew-reading public in fact no longer existed in Western Europe. A closer look at Geiger’s vast bibliography reveals that he did not in principle oppose the language’s modern usage, contributing extensively himself to *Keren Chemed*, *Ozar Nechmad*, and *Hechalutz*, and authoring influential Biblical studies in his exegetical Hebrew work *Parschandata* (1855).<sup>98</sup>

The same can be said for Zacharias Frankel, whose *Darkhe ha-Mishna* and groundbreaking work on the Jerusalem Talmud, *Mevo Yerushalmi* (1870) were both written in Hebrew. For his part, the great historian of the Jews Heinrich Graetz published, among other works, an anthology of modern Hebrew poetry entitled *Leket Shoshanim* (1862). Zunz’s successor in Prague, Michael Sachs, although earning his scholarly reputation through translations of medieval Judeo-Spanish literature into German, also published consistently in various Hebrew scholarly journals. Sachs’ *Beiträge zur Sprach- und Altertumsforschung aus jüdischen Quellen*, published between 1852 und 1854, was intended as preparatory work for a history of Hebrew grammar.<sup>99</sup> With the founding in 1862 of *Mekitze Nirdamim* (*Awakener of the Slumbering*), an international society devoted to the publication of medieval Hebrew manuscripts in critical editions, Sachs became its German representative. Finally, we can note the publication of *Ozar Tov*, a Hebrew supplement to the *Magazin für die Wissenschaft des Judentums*, published between 1876 and 1893 by Abraham Berliner (1833–1915) and David Hoffmann (1843–1921), a pair of Orthodox scholars at the rabbinical seminary in Berlin.

<sup>96</sup> A. Geiger, *Nachgelassene Schriften* 5, p. 83.

<sup>97</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>98</sup> A collection of Geiger’s Hebrew contributions was published by R. Kirchheim, ‘Abhandlungen in hebräischer Sprache’, in Geiger, *Nachgelassene Schriften* 5. See also S. A. Poznanski (ed.), *Abraham Geigers gesammelte Abhandlungen in hebräischer Sprache*.

<sup>99</sup> F. D. Lucas, and M. Heitmann, *Stadt des Glaubens: Geschichte und Kultur der Juden in Glogau*, pp. 469 f.

Although incomplete, this survey does indicate that in this phase of Jewish *Wissenschaft* Hebrew was never completely replaced by German and there was no general rejection of its use. The rise of Zionism, and in particular the cultural revival that followed, brought with it an increased interest in Hebrew that could not be ignored by participants in the *Wissenschaft* movement. When in 1902 the founding members of the *Gesellschaft zur Förderung der Wissenschaft des Judentums* met to inaugurate their new organization, they addressed this development. While discussing the new society's journal, Samuel Poznanski (1864–1921) suggested it should focus especially on modern Hebrew literature and possibly be published in Hebrew as well – this for the sake of re-Hebraizing Jewish *Wissenschaft* in general.<sup>100</sup> The meeting's result was reflected in a plan to publish “thirty-six monographs covering every aspect of Jewish studies”.<sup>101</sup> This outline of *Wissenschaft* was to be divided into four categories, one of which would be linguistics, covering not only biblical Hebrew, but remarkably modern Hebrew as well.<sup>102</sup> All the more surprising was the assent of most scholars present to this plan, despite the widely-held anti-Zionism; a sign, despite the frequent assertions to the contrary that the *Wissenschaft* movement was indeed engaged with contemporary Jewish realities and emphatically not steered above all by apologeticist and assimilationist goals.

At the same time, it is clear that a central motivation for founding the *Gesellschaft* involved defence against theological antisemitism. Establishment of the organization was a widely publicized event, extensively covered by both the German and foreign press. Achad Ha'am's comment was as follows:

Now the papers have published the news that in Germany the idea has surfaced to found a great *Gesellschaft zur Förderung der Wissenschaft des Judentums*; during the founding meeting ... Ludwig Geiger ... emphasized the necessity of not only concentrating our efforts on the Hebrew literature of the past (as has been the case in Jewish scholarship until now), but in directing them towards the present! We can easily imagine how such an organization will look if men like Geiger are amongst the founders.<sup>103</sup>

Directed at the outspokenly anti-Zionist son of Abraham Geiger, Achad Ha'am's closing comment reflects his deep scepticism regarding the ability of German-Jewish scholars to serve a living Judaism. However, not all of the Eastern European responses were this critical. The influential monthly journal for Zionism and Hebrew literature *Haschiloach* (edited by Achad Ha'am from 1896 to 1903) published an extensive account of the goals of the *Gesellschaft*, reporting on the detailed discussions leading up to its founding and

<sup>100</sup> *Der Israelit* 88 (1902), 1841.

<sup>101</sup> ‘1. Jahresbericht der GFWJ’, in *MGWJ* 48 (1904), p. 60.

<sup>102</sup> The categories are: A. *Sprachwissenschaft*, B. *Geschichtliche und literargeschichtliche Fächer*, C. *Systematische Fächer*, D. *Praktische Fächer*.

<sup>103</sup> Achad Ha'am, ‘Auferstehung des Geistes’, p. 230.

giving special emphasis to their ambitious publication plans, which were reprinted in full. Commenting on the plans, the author praised the inclusion of modern Hebrew.

At that time, no scholar had yet been assigned by the *Gesellschaft* to work in the domain of Hebrew in the context of its ambitious *Grundriss* project (which contents are described at length below); the chairman of the *Gesellschaft*, Martin Philippon, thus assured David Neumark (1866–1924) that the search for a suitable candidate would continue.<sup>104</sup> In truth, concrete plans did not crystallize in the thirty-six years of the *Gesellschaft*'s existence. The reasons for this were mainly practical; only nine of the planned thirty-six volumes of the *Grundriss* were ever completed, and the fact that modern Hebrew was not among them reflected a dearth of competent scholars. Even when, in 1912, a revision of the original outline for the project had become necessary, some potential authors having died and others having lost interest in contributing, this vacuum could not be filled. Nevertheless, the history of poetry and modern Hebrew literature was added to the planned sub-categories – it was meant to be directed by Heinrich Brody of Prague, and constituted an acknowledgment of the significant modern Hebrew literature that was being published at the time.

A central purpose of the *Gesellschaft* was to support research and publications. One of its undertakings was an extensive dictionary of ancient and modern Hebrew compiled by the linguist and lexicographer Eliezer Ben-Jehuda – an ardent Zionist who became known as the “father of modern Hebrew” – with a consistent focus on continuities between the biblical Hebrew language and its contemporary variant; the work's first volume appeared in 1910. When Ben-Jehuda asked the *Gesellschaft* to underwrite his research, the organization immediately agreed,<sup>105</sup> and in 1907 a society was founded to help the project's financing. It consisted of representatives from several large Jewish organizations, Martin Philippon serving as *Gesellschaft*'s representative.<sup>106</sup>

In the same manner, the *Gesellschaft* supported both *Ha-Goren*, a scholarly yearbook published in Berditshev and Berlin by Samuel Abba Horodetzky,<sup>107</sup> and the *Zeitschrift für hebräische Bibliographie*, together with – on a continuous, generous basis – the above-mentioned organization *Mekitze Nirdamim* in publication of medieval Hebrew manuscripts. Furthermore, the society contributed to Isaak Goldhor's Hebrew-language study of the geography of Pa-

<sup>104</sup> D. Neumark, ‘The Meeting of the Society for the furthering of Jewish studies’ (Heb.), in *Hashiloach*, 13 (1904), pp. 354–367.

<sup>105</sup> ‘3. Jahresbericht der GFWJ’, in *MGWJ* 50 (1906), p. 128; ‘4. Jahresbericht der GFWJ’, *ibid.* 51 (1907), p. 120.

<sup>106</sup> ‘5. Jahresbericht der GFWJ’, in *MGWJ* 52 (1908), p. 125.

<sup>107</sup> *ibid.*

lestine.<sup>108</sup> Lastly, many of its publications were themselves translated into modern Hebrew – among them Martin Philippon's *Neueste Geschichte des Jüdischen Volkes*.<sup>109</sup>

These efforts notwithstanding, the tensions between east and west concerning the linguistic question remained in play. When in 1909, in a book on the revival of modern Hebrew literature published by the Eastern European Zionist Nahum Slouschz,<sup>110</sup> the author failed to make mention of the German-Jewish contribution to Jewish scholarship. The issue was taken up in a three-part article in the *Allgemeine Zeitung des Judentums*, the negligence being severely criticized and a sustained effort made to restore the honour of the scholars in question.<sup>111</sup>

Despite an increasing acceptance in Western Europe of a Jewish scholarship that used modern methods and was not religiously grounded, until the outbreak of World War I, the choice of German as the language of publication was defended with arguments displaying an apologetic tenor. Hence we find Ignaz Ziegler (1861–1950) succinctly defining use of German as “one of our best weapons in the struggle for justice and freedom”. “Furthering of the scholarly literature in the language of the land,” he maintained, “is directly and indirectly a pillar of our emancipation.”<sup>112</sup> Both during and after the war, the massive immigration of Eastern European Jews to Germany intensified; this naturally had a strong impact on Germany's Jewish communities.<sup>113</sup> Among the emigrants were a large number of Hebrew-writing authors, transforming several cities – between 1920 and 1924, above all Berlin<sup>114</sup> – into veritable centres of modern Hebrew culture. The impact of this development on Ismar Elbogen is apparent in his short history of *Wissenschaft des Judentums*, published in 1922: “Recently the dissemination of Hebrew has made such progress”, he indicated, “that it can be viewed once more as the common language of the Jews”. Hebrew took on a new status among the members of *Wissenschaft*, if Jewish scholarship could be disseminated in that language. For Elbogen, the question of the use of Hebrew had thus emerged as the “vital question for *Wissenschaft des Judentums* ... if it is to retain the connection with a living Judaism”. Elbogen did not call for Jewish scholarship to no longer appear in the

<sup>108</sup> ‘3. Jahresbericht der GFWJ’, in *MGWJ* 50 (1906), p. 125.

<sup>109</sup> See ‘Ausschußsitzung der Gesellschaft zur Förderung der Wissenschaft des Judentums, 20.05.1909’, in *MGWJ* 53 (1909), p. 385.

<sup>110</sup> N. Slouschz, *The Renaissance of Hebrew Literature 1743–1885*.

<sup>111</sup> S. Ochser, ‘Das Wiedererwachen der hebräischen Literatur im 19. Jahrhundert’, in *AZJ* 76 (1912), pp. 366–368, 377–379.

<sup>112</sup> I. Ziegler, ‘Gutta cavat lapidem’, in *AZJ* 77 (1913), p. 361: “Förderung der in der Landessprache geschriebenen Wissenschaft ist direkt und indirekt ein Pfeiler unser Gleichberechtigung. ... eine unserer besten Waffen im Kampfe um Recht und Freiheit.”

<sup>113</sup> See T. Maurer, *Ostjuden in Deutschland 1918–1933*.

<sup>114</sup> Brenner, *Renaissance*, p. 185.



European languages, which would have represented a severing of ties with the general scholarly community; what he wished for instead was a bilingual approach.<sup>115</sup> Similar considerations were raised during the founding meeting of the *Akademie für die Wissenschaft des Judentums*, resulting in an initial motion to publish all works in both German and Hebrew.<sup>116</sup>

In 1921 the Hebrew-language poet Chaim Nachman Bialik (1873–1934) moved from Odessa to Berlin, where he became acquainted with some of *Wissenschaft*'s proponents and duly urged them to support the ongoing Hebrew revival. One of his suggestions in this regard was the publication of a scholarly journal. Accordingly, in 1924 Ismar Elbogen and two of his colleagues at the *Hochschule*, Jacob Nachum Epstein (1878–1952) and Naphtali Herz Tur-Sinai (born Torczyner, 1886–1973) announced the establishment of such a journal, which was entitled *D'vir*. Both in its embrace of the Hebrew medium for the first time since the early nineteenth century and its scholarly synthesis between Eastern and Western European Jewry, the publication of *D'vir* was a landmark of German-Jewish scholarship. An emotional letter to the editors by Bialik, beginning with the traditional Jewish blessing of praise, *Shehechianu*, was reprinted in its first issue – for Bialik the journal was a sign

... that a new spirit has entered the circles of Western European scholars ... like the beginning of a spiritual revolution, a passionate call to return from the great unbearable sin which the Western European Jewry and its leaders have been committing for almost three generations against one of the most precious possessions of the Jewish people; the Hebrew language.<sup>117</sup>

With striking vehemence, Bialik went on to condemn the “apostles of the process of overcoming the Hebrew spirit, Zunz, Geiger and their companions”, who, in their “addiction to miserable equality”, had created ‘the disgusting deformity, this mixed creation ... which is called “Jewish scholarship in a foreign language” – a scholarship that, according to Bialik, had accelerated the dissolution of the Jewish people. His judgement of Western Jewry’s spiritual state was equally negative: “after 150 years of peace and freedom” he commented on that Jewry, “[it] lies as dead before us”. Like his spiritual mentor Achad Ha’am, Bialik offered the Eastern European Jews as the positive antithesis to their Western brethren; in their insistence on maintaining the Hebrew language, they lay the groundwork for the spiritual resurrection of the Jewish people.<sup>118</sup>

<sup>115</sup> I. Elbogen, *Ein Jahrhundert Wissenschaft des Judentums*, p. 7.

<sup>116</sup> See J. Guttmann, ‘Jüdische Wissenschaft. Die Akademie für die Wissenschaft des Judentums’, in *Der Jude* 7 (1923), p. 493.

<sup>117</sup> C. N. Bialik, ‘Jüdische Wissenschaft in fremder Sprache’, in *Der Jude* 8 (1924), pp. 566 f.

<sup>118</sup> *ibid.*

Bialik's use of death imagery points forward to Gershom Scholem's similar depiction in describing the *Wissenschaft* movement – Scholem had made Bialik's personal acquaintance in Berlin. For the poet, that movement was, in fact, a "faithful companion" of German Jewry "in the valley of death". Separated from its original language, the movement had "desiccated"; lost its relationship to living Judaism. The scholars of *Wissenschaft* stood "on the grave of an empty and dead past" – a past that was "buried", and German Jewry found itself "in its death struggle."<sup>119</sup> Bialik, a conceptualizing of Judaism in modern terms, understood by Leopold Zunz and his colleagues as the only means to prevent an assimilating modern Jewry from moving into oblivion, had become the path to the very destruction it hoped to prevent.

It is clear that Bialik's polemic is of more interest for the conflict it reveals than for any objective assessment of *Wissenschaft's* shortcomings. It is self-evident that the movement was not responsible for the rapidly diminishing knowledge of Hebrew among German Jews, nor for the ongoing desire they felt for complete political and social emancipation – two realities to which the movement was responding. Furthermore, few would now be willing to condemn, from a parochial nationalist perspective, the desire of *Wissenschaft's* proponents to integrate Jewish scholarship into the broader scholarly world of Germany and Europe, and to avoid relegation to a linguistic ghetto. At the same time, a strong sympathy manifested towards the "holy tongue", and continued to exist within the movement; this sympathy was expressed in part through an intensive scholarly investigation of the Hebrew language and Hebrew linguistics – activities that were a *sine qua non* for the emergence of Hebrew as a dynamic modern language. The "Hebrew dimension" of *Wissenschaft des Judentums* had thus become one of the movement's central precepts – even if this was neither intended nor expected by most of its affiliated scholars.

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<sup>119</sup> *ibid.*

## IV. Societies Linked to the Wissenschaft Movement

### The *Institut zur Förderung der Israelitischen Literatur* (1855–1874)

Until the 1848 revolution, Germany's Jews were generally excluded from civil committees and clubs. *Salonkultur* and the circle around Moses Mendelssohn were an exception.<sup>120</sup> The *de facto* exclusion of Jews from many *Vereine* in the years extending from the 1820s to the post-1848 period prompted the emergence of a network of Jewish parallel organizations,<sup>121</sup> forming the basis for a German-Jewish subculture. It appears that 62 Jewish organizations were founded in the first half of the nineteenth century, 91 between 1850 and 1875, and 143 in the last quarter of the century.<sup>122</sup> The emergence of various groups tied to *Wissenschaft des Judentums* reflected this broader development.

During these years, the *Institut zur Förderung der Israelitischen Literatur* in Leipzig was the first and most successful Jewish *Buchgemeinschaft*, or publication society, set up to promulgate Jewish learning. Its idea originated with Ludwig Philippson, who had suggested the founding of an *Israelitischer Literaturverein* as early as 1846.<sup>123</sup> Although the three Jewish institutions of higher learning all provided for the instruction of rabbis, education of the general population was not addressed. In an effort to partly remedy this situation, between 1839 and

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<sup>120</sup> Concerning the problems German Jews faced when attempting to join the Freemasons, see J. Katz, *Jews and Freemasons in Europe, 1723–1939*. Katz here refutes the theory that sporadic admission of Jews into Freemasonry signifies a breakthrough into social acceptance. See also *idem*, *Aus dem Ghetto in die bürgerliche Gesellschaft: Jüdische Emanzipation 1770–1870*, pp. 56 f.

<sup>121</sup> S. Volkov, *Die Juden in Deutschland*, pp. 92 f.

<sup>122</sup> K. Tenfelde, 'Entfaltung des Vereinswesens (1850–1873)', in O. Dann (ed.), *HZ, Beiheft 9: Vereinswesen und bürgerliche Gesellschaft in Deutschland*, p. 62.

<sup>123</sup> See M. Kayserling, *Ludwig Philippson: Eine Biographie*, pp. 252–258; I. Elbogen, *Ludwig Philippson. 28. Dezember 1811 – 28. Dezember 1911*; J. Philippson, 'The Philippsons. A German-Jewish family', in *LBI Year Book 7* (1962), pp. 95–118.

1853 Philippson published a complete translation of the Hebrew Bible, with a commentary written in non-specialist prose; this succeeded, in Shalom Ben-Chorin's words, in "bringing the Jewish Bible into the Jewish home ... and indeed avoided the heaviness of the Zunz publication."<sup>124</sup> The Philippson translation owed at least part of its appeal to the presence of over 500 illustrations on topography and archaeology of the ancient Near East.

Philippson had expressed his intention of creating a literary-educational forum at the founding meeting of the *Allgemeine Zeitung des Judentums* in 1837, but the project would only be realized in 1855, after his emotional appeal appeared in that same paper. In the appeal, which was reprinted in 10,000 pamphlets, he insisted that "when worship services are only seldom attended, when the effects of school are soon wiped away by life ... literature speaks ... constantly and ever again to the people, speaks to them in an attractive and comfortable manner, so that its effect is undeniably the most meaningful method for the religious life in the present."<sup>125</sup> His strategy for creating a reading public was to require only a very humble annual subscription of two talers,<sup>126</sup> with distribution of Institute publications to members at no extra cost. Authors were guaranteed both remuneration for and publication of their work. A committee consisting of Philippson and two other scholars – in the first committee these were Midrash und Kabbala-scholar Adolf Jellinek and historian I. M. Jost – would decide on the suitability of the various manuscripts. In addition, many local agents, predominantly rabbis and teachers,<sup>127</sup> were appointed to distribute publications and attract new members. Although Philippson often complained about a lack of support from large Jewish communities like those in Berlin, Königsberg, Hamburg and Frankfurt, as well as of general disinterest by leading Jewish public figures,<sup>128</sup> in the thirteen years of its existence the Institute was actually a pronounced success. In the first three years, the number of subscribers rose from 2,500 to over 3,600; at the end of the third year, more than 90,000 books had been sold.<sup>129</sup> In the tenth year of its existence – there were 3,400 subscribers, the figure dropping to 3,300 in 1865–1866, 2,800 in 1866–1867, and 1,400 in the last two years (the

<sup>124</sup> S. Ben-Chorin, 'Jüdische Bibelübersetzungen ins Deutsche', *LBI Year Book* 4 (1959), p. 317.

<sup>125</sup> *AZJ* 19 (1855), p. 87.

<sup>126</sup> On the popularity of literary subscriptions in this period see R. Wittmann, *Buchmarkt und Lektüre im 18. und 19. Jahrhundert*, pp. 48 ff. See also O. Dann (ed.), *Lesegesellschaften und bürgerliche Emanzipation*.

<sup>127</sup> H. Horch, *Auf der Suche nach der jüdischen Erzählliteratur. Die Literaturkritik der "Allgemeinen Zeitung des Judentums" (1837–1922)*, p. 158.

<sup>128</sup> Abraham Geiger, for example, disapproved of the *Institut's* unscholarly nature and initially refused to join. See letter to S.D. Luzzatto, 11.06.1856, in Geiger, *Nachgelassene Schriften* 5, pp. 217 f.

<sup>129</sup> See *AZJ* 21 (1857), pp. 624 f.

war that broke out in 1869 apparently contributing to the sharp reduction). The first annual report recording over 2,000 members, Philippson decided to exclude dogmatic, homiletic and neo-Hebrew publications and instead support works of more popular interest. Specialized scholarly publications were to be supported by stipends.<sup>130</sup>

Philippson described his own goal as the publication of “entertaining literature, novels and other ‘light’ reading” in order to counter “materialism and indifference.”<sup>131</sup> Institute members were thus guaranteed that the books on offer would neither be of a highbrow nor of a political-polemical nature; intended, like the public newspapers, to “catch the interest of the greater multitude ... in an entertaining and educational manner.”<sup>132</sup> The approximately 80 published works by 50 authors were mainly historical and (to a somewhat lesser extent) belletristic publications. The former category included a number of noteworthy works in serial form: the *Bibliothek der griechischen und römischen Schriftsteller über Judentum und Juden*; the *Jahrbuch für Geschichte des Judentums und der Juden*; the *Geschichte des Judenthums und seiner Sekten* by I.M. Jost; and the seven-volume *Geschichte der Juden* by Heinrich Graetz. Although a great part of the writings of both Ludwig Philippson and his older brother Phöbus were on offer, there were relatively few books treating exclusively religious themes.<sup>133</sup> The reasons given by Philippson for the Institute’s eventual disbanding were increased running costs and the decline in membership, which he saw as stemming from an increased indifference to modern Jewish literature by the Jewish reading public. Another of his misgivings was a lack of productivity by Jewish authors. He was particularly annoyed by a hostility to the Institute’s goals and ideals by the rabbinic establishment; nevertheless, the strictly Orthodox and a few narrow-minded scholars excepted, he had enjoyed the cooperation of most of the factions within German Jewry.<sup>134</sup> This led to the relatively large proportion of members from the teaching professions, the Institute’s subsequent success in small communities, and its relative failure in larger communities, where strictly Orthodox factions were more likely to wield greater influence.

Philippson believed that the belletristic publications put out by the Institute were its greatest success – the best means of achieving “enthusiasm and love for the fatherly religion and participation in it, an identity with activity on behalf of the fatherly religion, for merging the destiny and conditions of the Jewish people in the past and the present; at the same time the best an-

<sup>130</sup> *AZJ* 20 (1856), p. 111.

<sup>131</sup> *AZJ* 19 (1855), p. 277; *AZJ* 21 (1857), p. 624.

<sup>132</sup> *AZJ* 19 (1855), p. 238.

<sup>133</sup> H. O. Horch, *Auf der Suche*, p. 156.

<sup>134</sup> M. A. Meyer (ed.), *Deutsch-Jüdische Geschichte in der Neuzeit* 2, p. 343.

tidote against the too-common mockery and disfigurement of Jews in other belletristic writings.”<sup>135</sup> In other words, Philippson saw a great danger posed to Jewish self-esteem by the anti-Jewish images generated in many German novels, and sought to counter this situation through the creation of a Jewish literary genre. But his intense concern with and pride for German-Jewish education would be overshadowed by the rise of political antisemitism in Germany in the 1870s, a development calling for a reconsideration of the work and objectives of an organization like the Institute. It thus shut its doors in 1875, although it remained a model for a number of other Jewish literary organizations.

### *Mekitze Nirdamim and the Zunz-Stiftung*

One of the organizations referred to directly by Philippson was *Mekitze Nirdamim*, founded in 1864 mainly for the sake of reproducing medieval Hebrew manuscripts, thus preserving them from loss.<sup>136</sup> An examination of the organization’s list of activities clearly reveals its difficulties in finding a supportive public for this endeavour; nevertheless, through the publication of valuable editions of precious manuscripts such as Yehuda Halevi’s *Diwan*, *Mekitze Nirdamim* managed to attract 1,200 members. The organization did stop operating in the mid 1870s for around a decade; it remained highly specialized in nature, publishing only Hebrew texts and thus remaining generally unnoticed by the larger public.

The *Zunz-Stiftung* was established in 1864 on the occasion of Leopold Zunz’s seventieth birthday; it was intended as a “sign and testimony of veneration and gratitude, in light of the great sacrifices which Dr. Zunz has endured during his entire life of work for *Wissenschaft*, and his tireless productivity even in advancing age.”<sup>137</sup> The foundation’s limited funds were used for literary contests, with Zunz receiving the interest for the remainder of his life. After his death, the money was used to support scholarly works.

<sup>135</sup> *AZJ* 38 (1874), pp. 467–471.

<sup>136</sup> M. Philippson, *Neueste Geschichte des jüdischen Volkes*, Band I. (Leipzig, 1907), p. 344.

<sup>137</sup> See *JL* 4/2, p. 1646.

## The Post-1870 German-Jewish Political-Organizational Situation, the Treitschke Affair, and Jewish *Wissenschaft*

By the mid-nineteenth century, there was a widespread recognition within German Jewry of the need to create one central organization to politically represent all of Germany's Jews. In 1848 Ludwig Philippson thus suggested the formation of a synod with the goal of unifying German Jewry; and in 1850 the Berlin Jewish community proposed (albeit unsuccessfully) a central authority for Prussian Jewry similar to the French *Consistoire*. It is notable that these efforts were opposed by Zunz, who feared that the concentration of authority could lead to "quasi-papal" misuse, and by Abraham Geiger, who feared for the autonomy of Germany's diverse Jewish communities.<sup>138</sup>

Despite this awareness, even the *Deutsch-Israelitischer Gemeindebund*, founded on 29 June 1869, was never able to fully unite all of the German-Jewish communities. At the height of its success, it served 1,200 of them (more than a third of the total), operating solely on volunteer staff and without official recognition. The *Gemeindebund*'s main objective was to represent the communities in all social-welfare and administrative matters; this offered great benefits to smaller communities. Another area of activity was to set up a commission on the history of German Jewry and a related general archive; political and religious activities were explicitly excluded from the organization's agenda.<sup>139</sup> The absence of a central organization was keenly felt in the 1870s when political antisemitism rose dramatically, sparking the painful question of how to respond to the development. The main opposition to an immediate response came from Liberal Jewish circles, who believed the state would protect Jewish legal rights and that any declaration of the establishment of a specifically Jewish organization would serve only to strengthen antisemitism. The initial attitude of the German-Jewish communities was thus to downplay the development – a passivity eventually shifting to the activism of a younger generation.

The formation of the *Centralverein* on 26 March 1893 – according to Marjorie Lamberti, the "most important event in the history of German Jewry" in the time between the emancipation and the Holocaust<sup>140</sup> – signaled the onset of this activism. Nevertheless, it was an event anticipated by certain developments within *Wissenschaft des Judentums* period. Whereas in the past, that movement had served to either reform the Jewish masses or to combat Christian prejudice, with the rise of political antisemitism in Germany its protagonists

<sup>138</sup> See K. Wilhelm, 'The Jewish Community in the Post-Emancipation Period', *LBI Year Book 2* (1957), p. 60.

<sup>139</sup> M. Meyer, *Deutsch-Jüdische Geschichte in der Neuzeit 3*, p. 136.

<sup>140</sup> M. Lamberti, *Jewish Activism*, p. 176.

faced sometimes intense hostility within the academic sphere. A defensive-apologetic current had run through the movement since the early writings of the circle around Zunz, a tendency that reflected a general reluctance among German Jews to confront the growing antisemitic threat, thus acknowledging a potential contradiction between Germanism and Judaism.<sup>141</sup> Previously this had been steadily tied to faith in both the eventual acceptance of Jewish scholarship into the German university system and, more broadly, the acceptance of German Jewry as part of the body politic meriting full civic rights. Now, the grounds for this optimism had been badly shaken.

The famous so-called Treitschke affair unfolded in this context. In two articles published in the *Preussische Jahrbücher* at the end of 1879, the Prussian historian Heinrich von Treitschke (1834–1896) had accused the German Jews of breaking the *quid pro quo* emancipatory pact by failing to rid themselves of their “un-German” traits – the beginning of an antisemitic political campaign on his part. The main thrust of his criticism was directed against Heinrich Graetz, whose *Geschichte der Juden* indeed advocated a separate Jewish national loyalty, and who had offended German national heroes by measuring their deeds primarily against their (frequently negative) conduct vis-à-vis the Jews. Treitschke’s attack on the Jews condensed into a defence and justification of German antisemitism, culminating in the notorious declaration “the Jews are our misfortune.”<sup>142</sup> This position was not a new one; many German antisemitic writers and agitators had done their share to propel the “Jewish question” into public awareness before Treitschke. The attack he levelled against Graetz, however, marked the first time the work of a prominent representative of *Wissenschaft des Judentums* came under such fire from a leading German intellectual and public figure – the source of the incident’s especially broad impact.

German-Jewish reactions to the Treitschke/Graetz controversy and Treitschke’s campaign were stamped by ambivalence. The fact that Graetz’s historiography seemed to imply that Jews formed a national entity worried many Jews concerned with demonstrating and confirming undiluted loyalty to the German nation. Among these were prominent figures such as the philosopher Hermann Cohen (1842–1918), who in 1880 wrote of the “misfortune that a Jewish historian . . . could bring about such a terrible perversity of emotive judgments,”<sup>143</sup> the historian Harry Bresslau (1848–1926), and the banker and politician Ludwig Bamberger (1823–1899). On the other hand, the Conservative movement was quick to back Graetz, with the *Jüdisch-Theologisches Seminar* offering almost unanimous support – perhaps not surprising consid-

<sup>141</sup> I. Elbogen, and E. Sterling, *Die Geschichte der Juden in Deutschland*, p. 271.

<sup>142</sup> See W. Boelich (ed.), *Der Berliner Antisemitismusstreit*, p. 17.

<sup>143</sup> H. Cohen ‘Ein Bekenntnis zur Judenfrage’, in *Hermann Cohens Jüdische Schriften 2*, p. 86.



ering he was the institution's director.<sup>144</sup> In any event the damage caused by Treitschke was enduring. In the year following the controversy's outbreak, Theodor Mommsen, that historian's most outspoken and distinguished non-Jewish public opponent, observed that as Treitschke was a respected academic figure, "what he said had now become acceptable;"<sup>145</sup> the old prejudices now sanctioned, they could circulate broadly in bourgeois circles both inside and outside the universities.

On 1 December 1880, a group of twenty-eight Jewish notables led by Moritz Lazarus (1824–1903) established what was to be known as *Das jüdische Comité*.<sup>146</sup> Along with his brother-in-law Heymann Steinthal, Lazarus was a Liberal Jew famous as the founder of the discipline of *Völkerpsychologie*. Lazarus had for some time been extremely active in Jewish affairs, presiding over the Liberal congregations in Leipzig and Augsburg. He was also one of the main initiators of the *Hochschule für die Wissenschaft des Judentums*, and actively participated in the *Deutsch-Israelitischer Gemeindebund* – activities placing him at the forefront of the Jewish response to Treitschke. He had in fact already published his own response in December 1879, in an article entitled "Was ist National?" arguing forcefully that Germany's Jews were indeed striving wholeheartedly to become Germans. While the *Jüdische Comité* underscored that its purpose was Jewish self-defence, it also insisted that it was defending German rather than Jewish interests, as antisemitism was a disgrace to the German nation. It should be noted that the *Comité* failed to gain any significant Jewish support within German Jewry.

One project of the *Deutsch-Israelitischer Gemeindebund*, especially relevant in this context was the establishment of a historical commission – three Jewish members sitting on its board with three Christian medieval historians – in October 1885, with the goal of publishing a history of the Jews in Germany as part of a general German history. Nothing came of this plan, but seventeen years later, two of the organization's Jewish members, Ludwig Geiger (1848–1919) and Hermann Bärwald (1828–1907), signed an appeal leading to the founding of the *Gesellschaft zur Förderung der Wissenschaft des Judentums*, under which auspices the plan could be realized in the form of the *Germania Judaica*.

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<sup>144</sup> See M. A. Mayer, 'Great Debate on Antisemitism', in *LBI Year Book* 11 (1966), pp. 157 f.

<sup>145</sup> T. Mommsen, *Auch ein Wort über unser Judentum* (Berlin 1880). See also W. Boehlich (ed.), *Antisemitismusstreit*, p. 221.

<sup>146</sup> Other famous members of the committee included Berthold Auerbach, Professor Jakob Barth, Harry Bresslau, Julius Hirschberg, Heymann Steinthal, Ludwig Loewe, Wolf Strassman and Samuel Kristeller. See I. Schorsch, *Jewish Reactions to German Antisemitism 1870–1914*, p. 61.

The *Akademischer Verein für Jüdische Geschichte  
und Literatur*

With his prominent position at the University of Berlin, Treitschke's highly publicized arguments underscored the leading role German universities had long played in Germany's antisemitic movement. The antisemitic petition of 1880, which called for limitations and even partial rescinding of Jewish emancipation, was signed by 265,000 persons, including 4,000 students. Whereas the absolute number accounts for 0.6 per cent of the total German population, the percentage of student signatories within the total academic population (students and faculty) was ten times higher – roughly 19 per cent.<sup>147</sup> At the University of Berlin the numbers were even more dramatic. Out of a total student population of 4,107, around 1,700 signed the petition, accounting for 41 per cent of all enrolled students.

The most far-reaching consequence of this sociopolitical reality was the emergence of militantly antisemitic regional *Vereine Deutscher Studenten* (Associations of German Students, henceforth VDSt). In effect these were fraternities, the first of which was founded in Berlin in December 1880, with others following in Halle-Wittenberg, Leipzig and Breslau (February 1881), Göttingen (March 1881), the *Technische Hochschule* in Berlin-Charlottenburg (May 1881), Kiel, and Greifswald (June 1881).<sup>148</sup> Their declared, central objective was to exclude Jewish students from any form of organized student life; in 1902, the VDSt could declare “with joyous satisfaction that the idea represented by the organization's founders has prevailed straight through the student body. The social isolation of the Jewish students has essentially been achieved.”<sup>149</sup>

At a time when German Jewry was still debating how to respond to worsening antisemitism, a passive attitude was not an option for the German-Jewish students, confronted daily with the hostility of their peers. Instead it resulted in the emergence of their own social organizations. The most widely documented of these is the Jewish fencing corporation *Viadrina*, founded in 1886 in Breslau.<sup>150</sup> The organization laid much emphasis on both physical fitness and an awareness of Jewish history; through its sustained initiation of

<sup>147</sup> N. Kampe, *Studenten und Judenfrage im Deutschen Kaiserreich*, p. 31.

<sup>148</sup> *ibid.*, p. 33.

<sup>149</sup> *ibid.*, p. 140.

<sup>150</sup> See A. Asch and J. Philippson, ‘Self-Defence at the Turn of the Century: the Emergence of the K.C’, *LBI Year Book* 3 (1958) pp. 122–139; A. Asch, *Geschichte des K.C.*; Schorsch, in *Reactions*, p. 72, mentions *Viadrina* alone, as does Meyer in *Deutsch-Jüdische Geschichte* 3, pp. 144 ff.; while Lamberti, in *Jewish Activism*, focuses on the reaction of the official Jewish communities starting in the 1890s and thus does not discuss activism by preceding Jewish student organizations.

self-defence measures, it represented a key moment in the emergence of positive German-Jewish self-assertion. Significantly, the members of *Viadrina* were virtually exclusively medical students, and a systematic imitation of the German fraternities was apparent, with the use of colours, uniforms and black-red-golden flags. No clear Jewish symbol played a part in their official costume.

With the focus on *Viadrina*, most scholars have overlooked another organization founded four years earlier, in the winter semester of 1882–83, less than two years after the foundation of the VDSSt. The *Akademischer Verein für jüdische Geschichte und Literatur* (AVJGL) first appeared at the University of Berlin, and was the first German-Jewish student organization to promote Jewish scholarship.<sup>151</sup> It was not a fencing fraternity – one reason that unlike *Viadrina* and other more militant unions it has not received much attention. Nevertheless, all the rituals typical for a German fraternity were rigorously observed: there were drinking parties, with festive uniforms and colours (green, white red, symbolizing hope, joy and science) worn on formal occasions, honorary officers, and toasts to the Kaiser accompanying every formal celebration.<sup>152</sup> The organization's underlying aim was to demonstrate the relevance of Judaism to world history and ensure a place for *Wissenschaft des Judentums* within the framework of the general sciences. The fulfillment of this aim was believed best attained through a sustained study of Jewish literature and history.<sup>153</sup> New members were obliged to give at least two lectures and were asked to donate a book to the AVJGL library.<sup>154</sup> Focusing on one or another topic of Jewish interest, the lectures were often delivered by famous Jewish scholars and former students now active as senior members. In the first twenty-five years of the organization's existence, 435 lectures on different aspects of Jewish history and culture were delivered. Roughly ten percent of the lectures were concerned with contemporary issues, such as the economic situation in Palestine, the 'Jewish renaissance', 'Jewish settlements in oriental countries', and the nationality question. Topics not yet part of mainstream *Wissenschaft des Judentums* were also addressed including: Jewish music, art, and mysticism. From 1903 onward, classes in Jewish history were obligatory.

Similarly to *Viadrina*, the main stimulus for the founding of the AVJGL was the increasing antisemitism in German universities; a prominent impetus for

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<sup>151</sup> J. Reinharz, *Fatherland or Promised Land. The Dilemma of the German Jew 1893–1914*, p. 30, suggests that the organization was founded as a response to the antisemitic corporations but overlooks its novelty.

<sup>152</sup> See 'Gemeindebote', in *AZJ* 67 (1903), p. 2.

<sup>153</sup> J. Cohen (ed.), *Geschichte des Akademischen Vereins für jüdische Geschichte und Literatur* (Berlin 1908), p. 3.

<sup>154</sup> M. Graetz, 'The A.J.G.V.', in *LBI Year Book* 8 (1963), p. 268.

the organization's turn to Jewish *Wissenschaft* was the hope of increasing Jewish self-esteem. The proximity of the *Lehranstalt* facilitated an unofficial bond between the two institutions,<sup>155</sup> with the extraordinarily distinguished list of honorary members confirming the high esteem held by the organization for those pursuing *Wissenschaft*.<sup>156</sup> Among the members were David Baumgardt, Leo Baeck, David Cassel, Ernst Cassirer, Hermann Cohen, Simon Dubnow, Ismar Elbogen, Heinrich Graetz, Julius Guttmann, Gustav Karpeles, Moritz Lazarus, Eugen Mittwoch, Joel Müller, Martin Philippon, Immanuel Ritter, Martin Schreiner, and Max Wiener. The great number of student members from disciplines other than theology is striking. In 1908, the senior membership consisted of thirty-three medical doctors, twenty teachers, sixteen rabbis, nine lawyers, and eight other professionals. The interest in Jewish culture had notably extended beyond a narrow circle of rabbinic students.

The insertion of the word "Jewish" into the organization's title is noteworthy, reflecting a growing self-confidence amongst its supporters. It seems that this show of Jewish pride made a significant number of Jews uncomfortable – they preferred the less confrontational terms "Mosaic" or "Israelite".<sup>157</sup> At the same time, the AVJGL's open Jewishness provoked non-Jewish students to the point where some of its first notifications on the University of Berlin premises were defaced or torn down.<sup>158</sup>

Although the organization was open to students of all faiths, the number of non-Jewish members was negligible.<sup>159</sup> In Jewish denominational matters, it maintained a neutral position, but this appears to have failed to attract Orthodox scholars to the organization. Despite its own broad intentions,<sup>160</sup> the AVJGL's boundaries were in fact essentially defined by the university. Nevertheless its work helped form the basis for the emergence of two other organizations, the *Vereine für jüdische Geschichte und Literatur* and the *Gesellschaft zur Förderung der Wissenschaft des Judentums*, which would shape the intellectual life of German Jewry in a broader manner over the coming decades. In this respect, it is important to note the active presence in the organization of a number of individuals who would continue to play a prominent role within German-Jewish scholarship and culture. Three future founders of the *Gesellschaft zur Förderung der Wissenschaft des Judentums* merit particular mention: the literary critic Gustav Karpeles and the historians Martin Philippon and Leopold Lucas

<sup>155</sup> See I. Elbogen, *A Century of Jewish life* (Philadelphia 1944), p. 712, n. 65.

<sup>156</sup> See M. Graetz, 'The A. J. G. V.', pp. 267–268.

<sup>157</sup> See letter by Julius Cohen, 'Der akademische Verein für jüdische Geschichte', in *AZJ* 72 (1908), p. 88.

<sup>158</sup> M. Graetz, 'The A.J.G.V.', p. 267.

<sup>159</sup> See J. Reinharz, *Fatherland*, p. 30.

<sup>160</sup> J. Cohen, *Geschichte des Akademischen Vereins*, p. 3.

(1872–1943). It is safe to assume that these men developed their sense of the goals and parameters of Jewish *Wissenschaft* within the AVJGL's venue.

The breadth and number of lectures Lucas offered between the winter semester of 1882–1883 and the winter semester of 1907–1908 attests well to his early role in disseminating *Wissenschaft*: 'Glaube und Aberglaube bei den Juden' (WS 1892–1893); 'Spinozas theologisch-religiöser Traktat' (WS 1893–1894); 'Pontius Pilatus' (WS 1893–1894); 'Die historische Entwicklung der nationalen Idee im Judentum' (SS 1894); 'Urkundliches Material für die Geschichte der Juden zur Zeit der Kreuzzüge' (WS 1894–1895); 'Das Leben der Juden im XIV. Jahrhundert' (WS 1894–1895); 'Die Reformation und die Juden' (SS 1895); 'Judenverfolgungen zur Zeit des schwarzen Todes' (SS 1896); 'Kritik der jüdischen Geschichtsschreibung' (SS 1897); 'Sefer Chassidim' (WS 1897–1898); 'Uebersicht über die Entwicklung der Juden im 12. Jahrhundert' (SS 1898); and 'Die Epochen der biblisch-mittelalterlichen Kritik bei Christen und Juden' (WS 1898–1899).<sup>161</sup> In 'Kritik der jüdischen Geschichtsschreibung', Lucas directly called for the creation of a new organization advancing the goals of the *Wissenschaft* movement through increased scholarly cooperation and more widespread publishing opportunities. The idea remained unheeded, and in 1899 he left Berlin to become Rabbi of Glogau. But he remained in close contact with those he had befriended during his Berlin years. His activities for the AVJGL provided a basis for the emergence of a network of similar, if more popularly oriented, organizations throughout Germany and, three years after his departure, that of the *Gesellschaft* itself.<sup>162</sup>

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<sup>161</sup> Karpeles' lectures were as follows: 'Die jüdisch-deutsche Literatur' (WS 1885/6); 'Heinrich Heine und die Juden' (WS 1901–1902); 'Saul Wahl, ein Judenkönig von Polen' (WS 1904–1905); 'Das Theater bei den Juden' (SS 1907). Philippon's lectures: 'Papst Martin V. und die Juden' (WS 1892–1893); 'Ein jüdischer Leibarzt der Königin Elisabeth und Shakespeares 'Kaufmann von Venedig'' (WS 1894–1895); 'Der große Kurfürst und die Juden' (WS 1896–1897); 'Kaiserliche Räuber und jüdische Räuber' (SS 1899); 'Der Großinquisitor Peter Arbues, ein Heiliger der katholischen Kirche' (WS 1901–1902); 'Die Juden im mittelalterlichen England' (WS 1902–1903); 'Sizilien und die Juden' (WS 1904–1905); 'Die Juden im Orient – Selbstgeschautes' (WS 1905–1906); 'Die Bibel und der alte Orient' (SS 1907). The 1899 lecture on Jewish banditry apparently took some courage: in 'Wissenschaft vom Judentums einst und jetzt', p. 156 f., Scholem complains that the history of the Jewish underworld and Jewish criminals had not been addressed for fear of an antisemitic reaction.

<sup>162</sup> See *AZJ* 72 (1908) p. 88.

### The *Vereine für jüdische Geschichte und Literatur*

The mid-nineteenth century “organizational renaissance” of German Jewry<sup>163</sup> has been examined most extensively in relation to the *Centralverein*. Nevertheless, other organizations played an influential role in furthering a growing interest in Judaism and Jewish self awareness within German Jewry. This interest was reflected in, among other things, the establishment of a nationwide network of associations for Jewish literature and history. Before its forced dissolution by the Nazis in 1938, this network, inspired by the AVJGL’s ideals would both change the intellectual landscape of German Jewry and offer a model that would be successfully exported to many other countries around the world.

The founder of and driving force behind the popular-scientific *Literaturvereine* movement was Gustav Karpeles. Born in 1848 in Eivanovitz (Moravia), and raised with strong religious guidance from his father, Orthodox Rabbi Elia Karpeles, he studied at Breslau’s *Jüdisch-Theologisches Seminar*. In 1870, at the age of twenty-two, he co-founded *Die Jüdische Presse*, an Orthodox newspaper, later edited by Hirsch Hildesheimer, which would achieve wide circulation. At this time, as an outcome of the increasing cultural assimilation of German Jewry into the surrounding society and culture, the Reform movement was gaining wide popularity; in 1869 Reform rabbis convened in Leipzig for the first time in almost thirty years, and two years later they met again in Augsburg to decide on more decisive steps towards liberal Jewish liturgy and practice. Given these developments the establishment of an Orthodox periodical was a very clear expression of a conservative standpoint. Despite this public stance, during his time in Berlin Karpeles did move closer to Jewish liberalism; from 1890 onward he would serve as editor of the quasi-official organ of Liberal Judaism in Germany, the *Allgemeine Zeitung des Judentums*. During his lifetime he would also be editor of both the *Breslauer Nachrichten* and *Westermanns Monatshefte*. In itself, editing the *Allgemeine Zeitung* would not have been remarkable. What made it so was that, in a reflection of his personal upbringing, he would maintain good relations with Orthodox Jewry even after he no longer adhered to its precepts – he even favourably viewed the founding of *Adass Isroel*, the separatist Orthodox movement in Berlin. At their inception the local German *Vereine für jüdische Geschichte und Literatur* set up on Karpeles’ model operated mostly independently from each another, lectures being arranged according to the opportunities offered by the locale. Karpeles envisioned a unified national organization, which he in fact managed to establish in Hanover in 1893 with the participation of representative personalities

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<sup>163</sup> P. Pulzer, *Jews and the German State: The political History of a Minority 1848–1933*, p. 13.

comprising the whole spectrum of German-Jewish religious and political life. To make this possible, Karpeles categorically excluded all questions related to religious practice from the province of the *Vereine*, instead advocating “complete religious and political neutrality in all communal matters”.<sup>164</sup> Hence for the first time since organized German Jewry had become fractured into various more and less liberal parties, all of its factions, including the strictly Orthodox, had come together to endorse a simple principle – maintaining broad familiarity with the results of modern Jewish scholarship. This approach allowed, for instance, the Orthodox Hirsch Hildesheimer (1855–1910) to work together with the Liberal Martin Philippson to help found the organization and serve on its board. Other Orthodox public figures to participate were Willy Bambus (1862–1904) and Pinchas Kohn (1867–1941), the latter initiating a *Verein* in Ansbach in 1895. Even the Orthodox separatist newspaper *Der Israelit* regularly informed its readers of both the Frankfurt *Verein*’s activities and nationwide *Verbandstage*, while duly affirming that “the *Verein* stands on the grounds of traditional Judaism.”<sup>165</sup> In 1902 members of the separatist Orthodox Frankfurt community even established their own *Verein*.<sup>166</sup> It should be stressed that such activity was unfolding at a time of considerable religious tension within the German-Jewish community; throughout the *Vereine*, certain subjects (such as the red flag, Bible criticism) had to be avoided in order to preserve the cohesion of this ideologically heterogeneous organization.

Within the *Vereine*, the influence of a time-honoured Jewish institution, the *bet ha-midrash*, was apparent. With roots in the second-temple period, this institution, existing independently of the synagogue, focused on study of the Talmud and discussion of questions related to Jewish life and customs. Frequented by both ordinary men and scholars, it encouraged the spread of a certain level of cultural literacy within traditional (pre-*Haskalah*) Jewish society. In the divided German-Jewish religious forum, the institution’s quasi-revival provided a necessary niche, and did so with extraordinary success. Since their purpose was not religious practice, the *Vereine* could attract Jews of all social strata and degrees of religious conviction without any danger of compromising their basic sense of religious identity and affiliation. Naturally there were differences with the traditional institution reflecting the nature of modern German Judaism. The *Vereine*, unlike the *Bet ha-Midrash*, were open to both men and women and emphasis was placed on the importance of generally comprehensible, widely encompassing lectures that did not require the traditional intense group participation. Nevertheless, there were a variety of par-

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<sup>164</sup> See ‘Bericht über Tätigkeiten der Vereine’, in *Jahrbuch der Jüdisch-Literarischen Gesellschaft* 2 (1899), p. 269.

<sup>165</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>166</sup> M. Breuer, *Jüdische Orthodoxie*, p. 199.

icipating forums, which along with the libraries and reading rooms became an important gravitational centre for German Jews interested in Judaism.

In a short time, the *Vereine* attracted a remarkably large membership; by 1900, the total membership was 12,149, spread out over 131 local societies.<sup>167</sup> On the eve of World War I, there were over 200 such societies, comprising over 15,000 members, and similar societies had emerged in a number of other European countries based on the German model. A letter from Karpeles written in 1902 to Israel Abrahams – who had turned to Karpeles for advice in establishing a Union of Literary Societies in England – summarizes the success of the *Vereine*:

The result of the work of these Societies ... is very satisfactory. Until about twelve years ago, the greater number of Jews in Germany had but a vague idea of their history and knew still less of their literature. That today a rudimentary knowledge of these subjects has become general, that a certain reverence for our history and literature has taken possession of our people, that our members purchase or read Jewish books is entirely due to the literary Societies. They have helped to strengthen the spirit of religion, and they have done much in overcoming indifference. ... I might with truth assert that the literary Society is the only link which connects many Jews who had ceased to participate in the synagogue service to Judaism and further that the Society has not infrequently become the bridge to the synagogue. In ... some ... provinces the entire resurrection of religious life which has sunk to the lowest ebb is entirely due to the literary Societies ... and it has happened that people ... who had serious thoughts of conversion both for themselves and their children, have been won back to Judaism by means of our Societies.<sup>168</sup>

But for all his eloquence, Karpeles neglected mention of the specific cultural-political backdrop of the flourishing of the *Vereine*, which was the persistence and vehemence of antisemitic prejudice in Wilhelminian German society, the tendency within an assimilating German Jewry to internalize such prejudice, and the role of the Enlightenment in restoring pride in Jewish culture. Max Eschelbacher, one of Berlin's leading Conservative rabbis in the early twentieth century, directly addressed this context in his own description of the *Vereine's* work:

The *Vereine für jüdische Geschichte und Literatur* are one of the youngest creations of German Jewry; they have developed in a manner rich with blessing. They were founded upon the realization that our great history is too little-known, that the Jew of the present hears many aspersions against his faith and his ethnic background, and that he is subordinate to these influences, because he does not know upon what twisting and turning the aspersions rest, how one-sided and hateful they are, and how little they do

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<sup>167</sup> J. Borut, 'Vereine für jüdische Geschichte und Literatur at the End of the Nineteenth Century', *LBI Year Book* 41 (1996), pp. 89–114.

<sup>168</sup> Gustav Karpeles to Israel Abrahams, in *Jewish Chronicle* 1 (4 July 1902), p. 735.



justice to the far-reaching places and times influenced by the phenomenon of Judaism. These deficiencies in knowledge and understanding are being met by your *Vereine*.<sup>169</sup>

The publication medium of the *Vereine* was their yearbook, the *Jahrbuch für Jüdische Geschichte und Literatur*, edited by Karpeles. First published in 1898, it addressed topics of broad interest concerning Jewish culture, and included an extra pamphlet listing all the lectures delivered over the past year in the various local branches. In this manner, year after year readers were informed of literary developments, research, and publications by this impressive group of Jewish scholars. The *Vereine* actively promoted an atmosphere of sharing the developments within Jewish *Wissenschaft* with their non-specialist audience. Two regular forums in the yearbook should be noted; the introductory review of the past year by Martin Philippson and the literary review by Gustav Karpeles. Philippson used his forum to share his impressions of recent developments for German Jewry's political situation. Karpeles, in commenting on German-Jewish literary activity, was evaluating the impact of general social-intellectual developments on the Jewish population. Considering the friction existing between the different religious 'camps', and keeping in mind the fact that the *Vereine* comprised the single organization most generally accepted by all streams of German Judaism, the yearbook's influence was considerable – as was that of the assessments offered by its two leading commentators.

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<sup>169</sup> J. Eschelbacher, 'Bericht über die Tätigkeit der Vereine', *JJGL* 7 (1904), p. 2.

## V. The crisis of learning in Wilhelminian Germany and its Impact on Jewish *Wissenschaft*

In Germany around the turn of the twentieth century, the scholarly study of Judaism was not an accepted university discipline. Nevertheless, in both the rabbinical seminaries and the *Lehranstalt*, students were required to pursue an academic degree from a German university.<sup>170</sup> Those scholars pursuing Jewish *Wissenschaft* thus broadly had close contact with intellectual developments within the German universities, and the situation of Jewish *Wissenschaft* in this period can only be fully understood in light of this broader academic and sociological context.

In the closing years of the nineteenth century, German scholarship had plunged into a crisis, rooted in developments that had set in several decades earlier, which Fritz Ringer has referred to in his famous *Decline of the German Mandarins* as involving a “growing revulsion against ‘positivism’ and ‘psychologism’ in higher education”. German academics, Ringer observes, had begun “to express misgivings about the current condition of German learning and of German cultural life more generally. They spoke of a decline in the vitality of their intellectual traditions, a loss of meaning and relevance.”<sup>171</sup> On a methodological level, the malaise was ascribed to a lack of a discernible systematic approach with research and scholarship being divided into an ever-growing number of specialized sub-disciplines. What was needed, the general feeling had it, was a new process of epistemological and conceptual synthesis.<sup>172</sup> As manifest in Ludwig Feuerbach’s critique of religion and the atheistic, anti-Christian philosophies of Arthur Schopenhauer and Karl Marx, David Friedrich Strauß’s theological questioning of Christianity’s relevance, and Ernst Haeckel’s neo-Darwinian/natural-scientific (and militantly atheist) explana-

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<sup>170</sup> C. Wiese, *Wissenschaft des Judentums*, pp. 70 f.

<sup>171</sup> F. K. Ringer, *The Decline of the German Mandarins: The German Academic Community 1890–1933*, pp. 253 f.

<sup>172</sup> For expressions of the longing for such a synthesis, see E. Marcks, *Die Universität Heidelberg im 19. Jahrhundert: Festrede zur Hundertjahrfeier am 7. August 1903*, p. 43; F. Paulsen, *Die deutschen Universitäten und das Universitätsstudium*, p. 109.

tion of human existence, a radical and sustained questioning of traditional religious beliefs and institutions served as a counterpart to this new cultural criticism. The sociological corollary to such intellectual activity was a process encapsulated in two interconnected terms, *Entkirchlichung* and *Entchristianisierung*.<sup>173</sup>

Those pursuing Jewish *Wissenschaft* were acutely aware of these developments and manifestly shared in the mood of the time. Karpeles, for example, frequently used his editorship of both the *Allgemeine Zeitung des Judentums* and the *Jahrbuch für Jüdische Geschichte und Literatur* to emphasize the necessity of restoring the ties between teaching and life, as in the following remarks:

In this century *Wissenschaft des Judentums* has experienced a remarkable renaissance ... The academic study of Judaism has taken on a position of respect; it has achieved much more than its enemies will ever admit. But one facet ... remains neglected within this great work: the education of the people ... Particularly in the last decades, scholarship has secluded itself from any contact with the people more than ever before.<sup>174</sup>

Similarly to their non-Jewish colleagues, the German-Jewish scholars had become sceptical of a positivism leading to ever-increasing specialization into various subcategories of Jewish studies, with a subsequent loss of overview of the discipline to which they were devoted. In fact this development may have caused a comparatively greater crisis among Jewish scholars, since it was a relatively new phenomenon in the Jewish world. Roughly until the Mendelssohnean era, Jewish scholarship had gone hand in hand with religious practice. After the Jewish Enlightenment and within the space of a few generations, familiarity with the Jewish religion and its practice had broadly shifted to a *clerical establishment* and an Orthodox minority. For this reason, an obligation to enlighten a Jewry seen as estranged from its own culture was an onus embraced by many leading scholars – a perception corresponding to Karl Jaspers' observation that many German scholars felt “a sense of guilt, because they had failed as bearers of tradition.”<sup>175</sup>

Karpeles, as indicated, was not alone in his sense of unease at the state of Jewish scholarship. Elbogen offered the following methodological critique:

Scholarly research on Judaism is a child of the nineteenth century ... it had its moment of greatness, but did not remain at the pinnacle ... Covering new territory, buoyed by the pleasure of the explorer, the scholars laid discovery upon discovery without processing the results. Building blocks were heaped on each other, but there was never a building, seldom a harmoniously toned mosaic. One detail after another, but seldom

<sup>173</sup> See Th. Nipperdey, *Deutsche Geschichte* 1, pp. 507 ff.

<sup>174</sup> G. Karpeles, ‘Literarische Jahresrevue’, in *JJGL* 2 (1899), pp. 23 f.

<sup>175</sup> See F. Ringer, *Decline*, p. 257.

a summary. Specialization gained the upper hand, research was lost in minutiae ... The educated, even the theologians, barely took notice of this work.<sup>176</sup>

As was the case with their non-Jewish counterparts, for Elbogen, Karpeles, and others the answer to the emergence of “an endless sea of *Wissenschaften*”<sup>177</sup> with a corresponding fear that *Wissenschaft des Judentums* would lose all popular appeal, was a new “fundamental, systematic, and comprehensive” scholarship. “There has been enough drudgery,” Karpeles declared. “Now the individual pieces must be put together, and in the diverse fields of our *Wissenschaft* the fundamental works must be created.”<sup>178</sup>

Somewhat unjustly, this response to what was now defined as positivist fragmentation was also a reaction against a great deal of highly distinguished scholarship, including, perhaps most dramatically, the scholarship of Moritz Steinschneider. In the course of his lifetime, in over 1,500 individual essays covering the various domains of Jewish *Wissenschaft* and in numerous catalogues of Hebrew manuscripts located in various European libraries, Steinschneider had laboured to trace the paths of convergence between Judaism, Islam, and Christianity comprising, together with the pagan heritage, the foundations of Western culture. This was in itself a grandiose enterprise, and an affirmation of Steinschneider’s uncompromising elitism. He rigorously rejected any simplification of *Wissenschaft* for the sake of Jewish *Bildungsbürgertum*, which he feared would lead to isolation from non-Jewish scholarship. Steinschneider warned of the creation of a “literary ghetto”<sup>179</sup>, a fate to be avoided at all costs. His work was seen as exemplifying an ongoing crisis of learning; its excessively complicated and detailed methodology was antiquated and confusing. In Karpeles’ words:

We could far sooner make the complaint that we have too many preparatory works and too much material, and that the path which continuously collects ever more building blocks does not pave the way for anyone ... This archaeological current has already reigned for more than half a century of Jewish literature. Almost all scientific achievements have an antiquarian character and a philological nature, as though *Wissenschaft des Judentums* belonged solely to antiquity.<sup>180</sup>

In any case, against the backdrop of the magisterial scholarly tradition pioneered by Leopold Zunz and continued by Steinschneider, there was a growing sense within the *Wissenschaft* movement that whatever the crisis at work within

<sup>176</sup> I. Elbogen, ‘Zum Jubiläum der Gesellschaft zur Förderung der Wissenschaft des Judentums’, in *MGWJ* 72 (1928), p. 3.

<sup>177</sup> Th. Nipperdey, *Deutsche Geschichte* 1, p. 677.

<sup>178</sup> G. Karpeles, ‘Literarische Jahresrevue’, in *JJGL* 2 (1899), pp. 24 f.

<sup>179</sup> See for example L. Geiger, ‘Moritz Steinschneider, Ein Gedenkblatt’, in *Berliner Tageblatt* 160, (1916).

<sup>180</sup> G. Karpeles, ‘Literarische Jahresrevue’, in *JJGL* 4 (1901), p. 19.

general German scholarship itself, its Jewish counterpart was not keeping abreast of the methods and insights developed by that scholarship. In this respect, some Jewish scholars were arguing that the source of this qualitative gap lay in the exclusion of Jewish studies from the German universities. For Elbogen,

*Wissenschaft des Judentums* must be promoted, through extending and deepening its complexities and through improvement of its methods, that it may take its rightful place among the sciences, that it may dwell among them as an equal sister ... The future problem is not whether our *Wissenschaft* will be accepted in the universities but whether it will be capable of being accepted – if it is on the same level as the national universities.<sup>181</sup>

It is apparent that the exclusion of Jewish *Wissenschaft* from the universities perpetuated a problem Karpeles succinctly summarized as “a lack of critique and strict training.”<sup>182</sup> Likewise, Samuel Krauss (1866–1948) blamed the general absence of “any genuine interest” in Jewish scholarship on “the presentations of Jewish scholars” being “rather deficient in both philological and methodological structure.”<sup>183</sup> Among German-Jewish scholars it was Hermann Cohen who engaged in the most far-reaching effort to confront this crisis of Jewish scholarship. Cohen viewed rational ethics and religion as mutually complementary. The God of Judaism, as mediated by the Hebrew prophets, was identical to a God of ethics. Correspondingly, he viewed Kant’s philosophy as largely articulating the same ethical monotheism that was at the core of Judaism. Cohen thus passionately believed in an intrinsic similarity between German and Jewish beliefs and values; just as Judaism had enriched Western culture, it was open to enrichment by German humanism, a key to a refined understanding of the messianic idea and a general revival of the Jewish spirit. This is the basis of one of Cohen’s foremost “religious postulates” – the German-Jewish duty to “love our fatherland; and to strive for a homeland of general spiritual culture.”<sup>184</sup> Cohen looked forward to a point in history marked by a true blending of German and Jewish culture; until then he saw his duty as Jew and German as entrenched in a defence of the notion of ethical monotheism. At the same time, Cohen was realistic in his evaluation of anti-Jewish feeling in the general population, and in academic circles in particular. He became increasingly active in Jewish affairs – a development he referred to as a “return” in an essay of 1880 entitled ‘*Ein Bekenntnis zur Judenfrage*’ (‘An Avowal concern-

<sup>181</sup> I. Elbogen, *Festschrift zur Einweihung*, p. 98.

<sup>182</sup> G. Karpeles, ‘Literarische Jahresrevue’, in *JJGL* 10 (1908), p. 26.

<sup>183</sup> S. Krauss, *Monumenta Talmudica* 5 (Berlin–Vienna 1914), p. 5 f.

<sup>184</sup> H. Cohen, ‘Religiöse Postulate’ in *Hermann Cohens Jüdische Schriften* 1, p. 9.

ing the Jewish Question'), in which he attempted to counter Treitschke's attack on Germany's Jews that had appeared the previous year.<sup>185</sup>

Cohen considered the objective and spiritual situation of Judaism at the start of the twentieth century to be highly perilous. In 1907 he observed that the novelty of the German-Jewish predicament was that "as unbelievable as it seems, our enemies indeed count on the effecting of our destruction in the foreseeable future". He was here referring cryptically not only to outspoken anti-Semites but also to the "broadest circles of the liberal German population, including many whom we consider our personal friends". Cohen was convinced that many of those hoping for the dissolution of Judaism did so for "humanitarian" reasons, which is to say to end the misfortune of "our poor Jews". "It is with this point of view in mind," he insisted, "that we must direct all of our facilities in the defence against the fundamental war of destruction (*Vernichtungskrieg*) which is being directed against us".<sup>186</sup> For Cohen, the only possible resistance against the threat of such "spiritual elimination" was religious and ethical in nature, involving a reinforcement of Jewish religious awareness and knowledge. Hence in contrast to Zunz and Rappoport, he viewed Judaism not from the perspective of antiquarian scholarship but as a living religion;<sup>187</sup> in this framework he took a pragmatic position vis-à-vis *Wissenschaft des Judentums*, calling for its support as a form of "religion, politics and *Wissenschaft*" at once.<sup>188</sup> Like Zunz, he felt that only the acceptance of Jewish *Wissenschaft* could lead to full Jewish emancipation. Consequently everything had to be done to establish the discipline officially at the universities, a demand being issued more frequently than ever by various German-Jewish figures at the beginning of the twentieth century.<sup>189</sup> Cohen added, realistically, that the German state would never accept such a plan as only Jews would be able to occupy the relevant chairs.

What distinguished Cohen's outlook from that of his predecessors was his insistence that, as he put it in a speech delivered in 1904, "the continued existence of Judaism is dependent on its philosophical justification" – on a rigorous scholarly foundation not opposed to popularizing expositions as long as it was not replaced by them.<sup>190</sup> The poor state of Jewish religious

<sup>185</sup> F. Rosenweig in *ibid.*, p. XXVI.

<sup>186</sup> H. Cohen, 'Zwei Vorschläge zur Sicherung unsres Fortbestandes', in *Jüdische Schriften* 2, p. 134.

<sup>187</sup> See 'Die Errichtung von Lehrstühlen Ethik und Religionsphilosophie an den jüdisch-theologischen Lehranstalten', *Jüdische Schriften* 2, p. 108: "*Wissenschaft des Judentums* was initially founded by Zunz and Rappoport as antiquarian scholarship."

<sup>188</sup> H. Cohen, 'Religöse Postulate', p. 13.

<sup>189</sup> Cf. I. Ziegler, 'Eine Jüdische Universität', in *AZJ* 65 (1901), p. 415 f.; *idem*, 'Neue Bahnen für die jüdische Wissenschaft', *AZJ* 67 (1903), p. 237.

<sup>190</sup> H. Cohen, 'Die Errichtung von Lehrstühlen', p. 116.

life, he felt, lay in a deficient education of the rabbis: since their philosophical training originated at the universities, their own view of Judaism became distorted by polemics. Cohen's self-avowed far reaching appeal for the official academic recognition in Germany of Jewish *Wissenschaft* was focused specifically on this situation. In the same speech he made clear that the acknowledgement was to take the form of university chairs in Jewish ethics and philosophy – disciplines he wished to see blended with historiography in a methodologically novel way. With its traditional emphasis on history, he observed, classical *Wissenschaft des Judentums* had neglected a systematic philosophical confrontation with Judaism as a religion.<sup>191</sup> In this manner, Cohen was single-handedly responsible for introducing the element of philosophical reflection into the field of Jewish learning.<sup>192</sup> Cohen's critique of modern German-Jewish rabbinic scholarship was not only systemic in nature but also sociological. Having studied at the *Jüdisch-Theologisches Seminar* in Breslau, he was well aware that a main obstacle to a reviving of Jewish scholarship lay in an overburdening of community rabbis, who were forced to serve as both communal leaders and theological scholars.<sup>193</sup> At the same time, they suffered from ideological constriction, in part imposed by the communities they were serving. This naturally precluded any meaningful participation in the field of "higher criticism", in other words in scientifically exploring the composition and development of the Hebrew Bible, an activity thus left almost entirely to Christian theologians.<sup>194</sup>

Other German-Jewish thinkers voiced similar concerns, Max Wiener (1882–1950) suggested that an attitude of "piety towards the Scriptures" on the part of the classic figures involved in *Wissenschaft des Judentums* was responsible for their reluctance to participate in Biblical scholarship.<sup>195</sup> As circumstances failed to improve for the discipline's post-founder generation, the need to develop scholarly methods free of rabbinic restraint became obvious. Ismar Elbogen acknowledged as much in 1907:

It could be calamitous for our *Wissenschaft* if the concern for our heirs, as it presently stands, is left to chance ... Rather, an effort must be made to attract talented and capable people for our *Wissenschaft*. An academic career must be open to them in which they have a perspective of advancing and that they can view as full recompense for a state position or that of a rabbi.<sup>196</sup>

<sup>191</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>192</sup> H. Liebschütz, 'Jewish Thought and its German Background', *LBI Year Book* 1 (1956), pp. 222 ff.

<sup>193</sup> See also G. Karpeles, 'Ein Wort über die jüdische Wissenschaft', in *AZJ* 65 (1901), p. 589; A. Schwarz in *7. Jahresbericht der Israelitisch Theologischen Lehranstalt in Wien 1899/1900*.

<sup>194</sup> H. Cohen, 'Religöse Postulate', p. 12.

<sup>195</sup> M. Wiener, 'Ideology', p. 186.

<sup>196</sup> See I. Elbogen, *Festschrift zur Einweihung*, p. 95. Elbogen continued to view this as

This unsatisfactory situation can be underscored by the fact that from their founding until 1912, the three Jewish theological seminaries in Germany had appointed a mere forty scholars, a number including many part-time positions.<sup>197</sup> Such part-time work constituted the sole option for the great majority of Jewish scholars pursuing *Wissenschaft des Judentums* outside the rabbinate. Mainly responsible for Jewish scholarship, the German-Jewish rabbinate lacked the means to properly disseminate their findings – a situation made worse by a general lack of appreciation for their scholarly labours. Looking back at the previous decades, Gustav Karpeles thus observed that:

About 200 larger or smaller works have been published, but all these works reaching a very limited circle ... Unfortunately, this is true in particular of the Jewish writings ... The Christian theologians already have their public or community; the works of Jewish authors in this field have neither one nor the other. Today still, the majority of editors and authors are self-publishing ... today still, the situation of Jewish book-commerce is unsatisfactory. The university generally rejects our *Wissenschaft* ... In a word, today as before, Jewish literature lacks acknowledgment, lacks an institution.<sup>198</sup>

While German Jewry showed a great deal of support for Jewish social and philanthropical institutions and organizations, support of scholarship lagged markedly behind. “It is here,” Karpeles remarked, “that the proverbial sentiment of our co-religionists for charitable causes almost completely fails.”<sup>199</sup> The point is made more dramatic when considering the sum allotted by the *Deutsch-Israelitischer Gemeindebund* in 1902 for literary subventions, and financial support for printed works related in any way to Jewish scholarship. The sum amounted to 3,350 marks, while total expenses for the year amounted to over 36,000 marks. Compared with the number of works awaiting print, the amount was negligible. At the 1902 meeting of the *Gemeindebund*, one speaker warned that the few Jewish scholars of Jewish history and thought with repute were on the best way to be crushed under the weight of Protestant and Catholic theology.<sup>200</sup> This imbalance was due, in large measure, to neglect by the same co-religionists to whom the appeal for funding had to be directed. Hence towards the turn of the century, Martin Philippon would comment that: “Even in the capital our rich and wealthy have no care for the fostering of

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a central shortfall in the organization of *Wissenschaft des Judentums*. *ibid.*, *Ein Jahrhundert*, p. 39.

<sup>197</sup> *ibid.*, p. 65.

<sup>198</sup> See G. Karpeles, ‘Ein wunder Punkt’, in *AZJ* 64, (1900), p. 157. Concerning the lack of appreciation for Jewish scholars by their co-religionists see also L. Lucas in *Die Wissenschaft des Judentums und Wege ihrer Förderung*, p. 8.

<sup>199</sup> G. Karpeles, ‘Ein wunder Punkt’, p. 157.

<sup>200</sup> ‘Stenographisches Protokoll des IX. Deutsch-Israelitischen Gemeindebundes vom 23. Februar 1902’, p. 31.



our Jewish *Wissenschaft*. More idealism! That must be our byword for present and future.”<sup>201</sup>

For his part, Karpeles suggested an approach to remedying this state of affairs: popularization of Jewish *Wissenschaft*, “since there will be no books and no authors without a public, that is a fact.”<sup>202</sup> He went on:

The situation will neither change nor improve until we found an *Institut zur Förderung der Israelitischen Literatur*, similar to the one founded by the unforgettable Ludwig Philippson, even with slightly modified tendencies, in order to meet the present day’s requirements. ... I do not doubt that today in Germany such a success would be possible. ... Then a new era for Jewish literature will begin.<sup>203</sup>

At the end of 1901, Karpeles addressed German Jewry with an emotional plea to increase its support for a reformed *Wissenschaft des Judentums*. After criticizing the situation in the rabbinical seminaries and the failure of the scholars, he concluded on an apocalyptic note: “At present, our *Wissenschaft* is leading a miserable existence. In its atrophy, it has lost its connection with true scholarship and with the interest and duties of life, drawing a direly threatened Judaism, attacked by ingenious if hostile works, down ever deeper.”<sup>204</sup> In one letter of response to the editor, a reader addressed the core of the problem, naming lack of decent funding for the scholars and their work. If we view the preceding rhetoric from the present perspective, it is clear that it reflects Karpeles’ own suggested path towards the discipline’s rehabilitation. The foundation of scholarly societies for the promotion and publication of academic Jewish literature was not a novel idea, but it had now become a necessity for a community which considered itself to be under attack.<sup>205</sup>

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<sup>201</sup> M. Philippson, ‘Jahresrückblick’, *JJGL* 1 (1898), p. 6.

<sup>202</sup> G. Karpeles in ‘Literarische Jahresrevue’, *JJGL* 3 (1900), p. 23.

<sup>203</sup> *ibid.*, p. 25.

<sup>204</sup> G. Karpeles, ‘Ein Wort über die jüdische Wissenschaft’, p. 589.

<sup>205</sup> See *AZJ* 66 (1902), p. 12.

## VI. *Wissenschaft des Judentums* outside Germany

In the context of the crisis of learning described previously, the German academic establishment took a dim view of the future; it was widely feared that Germany was in the process of losing its international scholarly preeminence.<sup>206</sup> In the period leading up to the start of the twentieth century, the question of how accurate this assessment was is less relevant than the parallel it offers to the self-perception that had emerged within *Wissenschaft des Judentums*. In 1898 Martin Schreiner thus observed that:

A few decades ago, Germany was almost the only place for scholars dedicated to fostering Jewish history and literature. ... In our days, so it seems, Germany is ceasing to be considered the classical land of *Wissenschaft des Judentums* ... Two rivals have arisen, in two other countries [England and France], where, although the number of Jews is small ... the intensity of their work in our field is all the greater.<sup>207</sup>

He maintained that many mistakes had been made when it came to promoting German-Jewish *Wissenschaft*, most of them through lack of appropriate financial support. The situation was indeed quite different in a number of other countries, where Jewish scholarship had made considerable progress in organization and consolidation; in the last decades of the nineteenth century, national Jewish historical societies were formed in several countries, including France (1880), the USA (1892), England (1893) and Hungary (1894).

As early as 1829, a modern rabbinical school, the *École Centrale*, was founded in Metz,<sup>208</sup> with the school moving to Paris in 1859 as the *École Rabbinique*. This was the first European Jewish institution of higher learning to be state funded.

In nineteenth century France, Jewish scholarship was accepted into the realm of the state's universities – something not possible in Germany until the late 1920s. In 1864 Salomon Munk was appointed Professor of Hebrew and Syriac literature at the *College de France*: a remarkable appointment

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<sup>206</sup> Th. Nipperdey, *Deutsche Geschichte* 1, p. 589.

<sup>207</sup> M. Schreiner, 'Was ist uns die *Wissenschaft des Judentums*?', in *AZJ* 62 (1898), p. 177.

<sup>208</sup> See M. R. Hayoun, 'Die *Wissenschaft des Judentums* und ihre Vertreter in Frankreich: 1830–1970', in J. Carlebach, *Wissenschaft des Judentums*, pp. 199–211.

followed several decades later (1896) by the establishment of a chair for Talmud and Rabbinic Judaism at the *École Pratique des Hautes-Études*. The position was given to Israel Levi (1856–1939), who would later become Chief Rabbi of France. A few years earlier (1880), the *Société des Études Juives* was founded in Paris by Zadoc Kahn (1839–1905), the Chief Rabbi of France, Isidore Loeb (1839–1892) and Israel Levi – all three graduates of Metz’s *École Rabbinique* – with the support of Baron Eduard Rothschild. The society’s establishment marked, in M. Liber’s words, “the entry of France into *Wissenschaft des Judentums*.”<sup>209</sup>

The Société’s main purpose was to revive the interest in Jewish studies in France, with special emphasis on the history of French Jewry. As could be expected, its activities included sponsorship of scholarly works – these would include Isidore Loeb’s *Tables du Calendrier* (1886) and Heinrich Gross’ now classic *Gallia Judaica*, a geographic history of the life of French Jewry since the Middle Ages, including medieval rabbinic and archival sources (1897). In addition the Société offered public lectures, some delivered by non-Jews such as the French orientalist Ernest Renan, Henri Jean Baptiste, and Anatole Leroy-Beaulieu. The society’s triennial *Revue des études Juives* became a respectable rival to the *Monatsschrift für Geschichte und Wissenschaft des Judentums*. According to Ismar Schorsch, there was an element of political motivation in the journal’s founding to “challenge the German-Jewish hegemony” embodied in the *Monatsschrift* in the aftermath of the Franco-Prussian war.<sup>210</sup> In any event, the publication represented a remarkable success for the comparatively small but nonetheless active French Jewish community, which numbered just over 80,000 at the end of the nineteenth century.

At the time of its founding, the Société was without an equivalent in Germany, but was inspired by the earlier success of the *Institut zur Förderung der Israelitischen Literatur*. However, in this respect, it is important to note Maurice Hayoun’s argument that the Société could only have emerged in an area imbued with German culture. The first modern French rabbinical school in France, the *Seminaire Israelite de France*, had been founded in Metz, the capital of Lorraine. This disputed area was so heavily influenced by German culture that most people spoke German or a German dialect. In actuality, many of the French contributors to Jewish scholarship were German, with the Alsace-Lorraine region serving as an ideal location for emigration for many German scholars who were unable to find employment in their homeland.<sup>211</sup> Two such figures Hayoun mentions are the oriental studies scholar Salomon

<sup>209</sup> M. Liber, ‘Cinquante Ans d’Études Juives’, *RÉJ* 89 (1930), p. 3.

<sup>210</sup> I. Schorsch, ‘Jewish Studies from 1818 to 1919’, in *From Text to Context*, p. 354.

<sup>211</sup> M. R. Hayoun, ‘Die Wissenschaft des Judentums und deren Vertreter in Frankreich’, p. 200.

Munk (from Glogau), and Joseph Derenbourg (1811–1895, from Mainz). One could add the example of Hungarian-born Heinrich Gross, who himself received his rabbinic education at the Breslau *Jüdisch-Theologisches Seminar* and later served as rabbi in Augsburg, Bavaria. The *Gallia Judaica* was originally written in German, and shared aspects with a similar project envisaged over a decade earlier by the *Deutsch Israelitischer Gemeindebund* that had failed to materialize.

Hence by the end of the nineteenth century, Martin Philippon's statement that French Jewry knew no Jewish *Wissenschaft*<sup>212</sup> was no longer accurate – the discipline's acceptance and acknowledgement was actually far greater than on the other side of the Rhine. Developments in this respect were even more noteworthy in the United States, as a result of both the earlier immigration of German Jews and, albeit less directly, the ongoing wave of Jewish immigrants arriving from Russia and the Ukraine. In 1892, the Jewish Historical Society was founded in New York upon the initiative of Cyrus Adler. A few years earlier (1888), the Jewish Publication Society was founded in Philadelphia after two previous unsuccessful attempts. A membership organization requiring annual fees, after one year it enjoyed a membership of 1,600. The general purpose of the organization was similar to that of the *Vereine für jüdische Geschichte und Literatur*; to publish a wide variety of books on Jewish topics – works of biblical and Jewish religious scholarship, but also historical studies and biographies, and even novels, but always in English. In 1899 it began publication of the popular *American Jewish Yearbook*, still in print today.

The start of the twentieth century also saw the reorganization, under direction of the great scholar of Jewish manuscripts Solomon Schechter (1847–1915) of the Jewish Theological Seminary in New York, which had been founded in 1886 under Sabato Morais. After becoming president of the seminary in 1902, Morais recruited some of the world's best Judaic scholars for the faculty, including the Talmudist Louis Ginzberg (1873–1953), the historian of Judaism Alexander Marx (1878–1953), the semitic studies and biblical scholar Israel Friedländer (1877–1920), and the authority on medieval Hebrew literature Israel Davidson (1870–1939). A bibliographical counterpoint to this institutional development was offered by what was certainly the strongest scholarly achievement of American Jewry in that period: publication between 1901 and 1906 of the twelve-volume *Jewish Encyclopaedia*. This was, in Ismar Schorsch's words, "a collective venture of huge proportions and astonishingly high quality, a magnificent summation of nearly a century of Jewish scholarship, and, above all, the transplantation of *Wissenschaft des Judentums* to America".<sup>213</sup>

<sup>212</sup> M. Philippon, *Neueste Geschichte* 1, p. 218.

<sup>213</sup> I. Schorsch, 'Jewish Studies', p. 355.

The growing accomplishments of Jewish scholarship in America did not go unnoticed in Germany. The generous sponsorship of Jewish scholarly work by American philanthropists was considered especially impressive, financial failure being an ever-present menace for all but a very few German organizations. At the turn of the century, many appeals were thus addressed to German Jewry to follow the example of American co-religionists in support of Jewish *Wissenschaft*.<sup>214</sup> Widespread admiration was also focused on the literary achievements of American Jewish scholars. In the spring of 1902, *Die Jüdische Presse* published an editorial by Isidor Singer (1853–1939) the editor, along with Cyrus Adler, of the *Jewish Encyclopedia* and eventual founder of the American League for the Rights of Man. In this venue Singer spoke of a Jewish renaissance in America, referring directly to both the reorganized seminary and publication of the encyclopaedia, at a time, he observed, when "... the educated gentlemen over in Europe continued to catalogue, compile and edit old manuscripts, notes and reviews".<sup>215</sup> The encyclopaedia received significant attention throughout the German-Jewish press, where it was duly lauded but also interpreted as a sign that German-Jewish dominance of Jewish *Wissenschaft* was under serious challenge. For the Austrian rabbi and scholar Ignaz Ziegler, the Encyclopedia thus made clear that American Jewish scholars would soon surpass their European counterparts in terms of achievement.<sup>216</sup> Orientalist Wilhelm Bacher (1850–1913) was likewise impressed by the work; he did note, however, that plans for such an encyclopaedia had originated with Moritz Steinschneider and David Cassel (1818–1893) in Germany in 1844. Bacher's final assessment was guardedly generous: it was "not without regret" that "the Jews of Germany and other countries" would "remember that to America was granted the bringing forth of this work."<sup>217</sup>

In England as in the USA, German-Jewish influence appears to have been a determining factor in the development of Jewish scholarship. The most famous state-supported rabbinical seminaries as well as one of the earliest, London's Jews' College, was founded in 1855 at the initiative of Nathan Marcus Adler (1803–1890). Born in Hanover, then under British rule, Adler had been educated in Germany, becoming rabbi of Oldenburg in 1829, then of Hanover the following year – and Chief Rabbi of the United Hebrew Congregations of the British Empire in 1844. The first director of Jews' College, the oriental studies specialist Michael Friedländer (1833–1910) was born in Posen, teaching in the Jewish school in Berlin before his tenure at the London institution. Also foreign born, his successor, the historian and theologian Adolf

<sup>214</sup> See G. Karpeles, 'Ein wunder Punkt', pp. 157 f.

<sup>215</sup> I. Singer, 'Die jüdische Renaissance in Amerika', *JP* 33 (1902), p. 94.

<sup>216</sup> I. Ziegler 'Eine jüdische Universität', p. 414.

<sup>217</sup> W. Bacher, 'Die Jüdische Enzyklopädie', in *AZJ* 70 (1906), p. 116.

Büchler (1867–1939) came to London from the *Israelitisch-Theologische Lehranstalt* in Vienna, having studied both at the *Jüdisch-Theologisches Seminar* in Breslau and the *Landesrabbinerschule* in Budapest before receiving his doctorate at the University of Leipzig in 1890. Starting in 1883, it was generally expected that students at Jews' College would graduate from London University, of which the college remains an associate institute to this day – an integration of academic liberalism into Jewish orthodoxy that itself may well reflect the institution's German-Jewish roots. Similar ties are evident in the history of the Anglo-Jewish Historical Society of England, founded in 1893 at the incentive of Heinrich Graetz, who had visited the Anglo-Jewish Historical Exhibition of 1887 and called on his British co-religionists to found an institution to research the history of Britain's Jews. For its part the main journal of Jewish scholarship in Britain, the *Jewish Quarterly Review* (appearing between 1888 and 1908), while offering articles in biblical criticism and theology, chiefly served as the vehicle for research on the inestimably important documents from the Cairo Geniza. Solomon Schechter later arranged to have many of these documents transferred to Cambridge, where he held the chair for rabbinic literature between 1890 and 1901.

All told, it is apparent that by the turn of the nineteenth century Jewish *Wissenschaft* had freed itself from German hegemony to a striking extent. Germany remained the centre of Jewish scholarship in spite of the broad failure of German scholars to achieve their main objective – the transmission of Jewish cultural heritage to Germany's Jews. Their efforts in this regard, however, aroused significant interest on the part of non-Jewish scholars. This served to amplify the volume of anti-Jewish polemic by Christian theologians, a development to which we will now turn.

## VII. The Jewish-Protestant Conflict

### Protestant Theology and Jewish Scholarship

In 1921, George Foot Moore – a Presbyterian minister and holder of Harvard’s chair in the history of religion starting in 1904 – published an article in the *Harvard Theological Review* on the Christian theological perception of Judaism which described the situation that had developed in Germany over previous decades. In the article’s opening, Moore observed that “Christian interest in Jewish literature has always been apologetic or polemic rather than historical.”<sup>218</sup> In support of this argument, Moore presented a detailed review of pertinent Christian scholarship from antiquity to the present, with a focus on contemporary German theologians. In Moore’s view, these theologians based most of their knowledge of Judaism on medieval Christian sources, reflecting a disregard of rabbinic Judaism in favour of an historically invalid description, that served Christian-apologetic ends. The results of this type of scholarship, he indicated, were uniformly negative; where in the Middle Ages the Christian intention had been to prove that Christianity had become the legitimate successor of Judaism, inheriting its concept of the deity in its totality, contemporary Christian scholars in Germany were now trying to prove the opposite. The Jewish concept of God, they now purported, and with it the entire religious system, had always been primitive and archaic in nature when compared to its Christian successor. As Moore himself indicated, there were some exceptions to the bias he described. For example, in his *Das Jahrhundert des Heils* (2 vols. 1838), August Friedrich Gförer (1803–1861) emerged as the first Protestant theologian who tried to portray Judaism according to Jewish sources, without any polemic bias, and with the help of contemporary Jewish scholars.<sup>219</sup> Nevertheless, the pattern was broadly accurate with due account taken of differences in emphasis on the negative portrayal of early Judaism. Hence the New Testament scholar Emil Schürer (1844–1910), editor of the *Theologische Literaturzeitung*, became famous for his three-volume *Geschichte des jüdischen Volkes im Zeitalter Jesu Christi* (1898–1901). Although criticized by

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<sup>218</sup> G. F. Moore, ‘Christian Writers on Judaism’, in *Harvard Theological Review* 14 (1921), p. 197.

<sup>219</sup> *ibid.*, p. 223.

many Jewish scholars for his portrayal of the Pharisees,<sup>220</sup> Schürer's history was also lauded as "an outstanding work of critical scholarship and scientific presentation".<sup>221</sup> In actuality, Schürer's magnum opus reduced Judaism to a legalistic religion,<sup>222</sup> thus minimizing its ethical teachings and prophetic core.<sup>223</sup> In turn, in his work *Die Religion des Judentums im neutestamentlichen Zeitalter* (1903), Wilhelm Bousset (1865–1920) defined ancient Judaism – without any consultation of primary sources – as "a religion of contradictions", a "fermenting disunited chaos, self-contradictory, complicated, disharmonious".<sup>224</sup> Ironically, with the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls, it has become apparent that this description rather accurately describes the state of inter-testamental Judaism, with its numerous ideas and ideologies competing with a priestly caste. At the time of its publication, however, Jewish scholars rightly considered Bousset's work to be essentially polemic and anti-Jewish in spirit, aimed at distorting the perception of rabbinic Judaism in order to define it as antithetical to the Christian religion. Hence for Moore, "it was not Judaism, as a religion, but Judaism as the background, environment, source and foil of nascent Christianity" that Bousset had in mind.<sup>225</sup>

### Hermann L. Strack and the *Institutum Judaicum*

To understand the relationship between *Wissenschaft des Judentums* and the Protestant Christian theologians, the exceptional personality of Hermann Leberecht Strack (1848–1922), Protestant theologian and oriental studies scholar at the University of Berlin, must be considered. Strack was the founder and director of the *Institutum Judaicum*, a missionary institution established in 1883 in Berlin. Its name was typical for a university-connected institution aimed at promoting missionary activity among Jews. Similar institutions existed in Breslau, Oslo, Erlangen, Greifswald, Halle, and Leipzig. Counterparts in other areas of Europe existed as well, with the London-based *Society for the Advancement of Christianity among the Jews* being the oldest and largest.<sup>226</sup> Strack's connections with Judaism were multi faceted involving a

<sup>220</sup> G. Herlitz in *JL* 4/2, p. 290.

<sup>221</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>222</sup> See esp. chapter 28, 'Das Leben unter dem Gesetz'.

<sup>223</sup> See J. Eschelbacher, *Das Judentum im Urteile der modernen protestantischen Theologie*, p. 33 f.; G. F. Moore, 'Christian Writers', p. 239.

<sup>224</sup> See J. Eschelbacher, *Das Judentum*, p. 43 f.; See also F. Perles, *Boussets Religion des Judentums im neutestamentlichen Zeitalter, kritisch untersucht*.

<sup>225</sup> G. F. Moore, 'Christian Writers', p. 245.

<sup>226</sup> R. Golling and P. von der Osten-Sacken (eds.), *Hermann L. Strack und das Institutum Judaicum in Berlin*, p. 71.



continuous public struggle for a just portrayal of Judaism and against anti-semitic publications. He was following the ethos of his teacher Franz Delitzsch (1813–1890), who had earned the respect of Jewish scholars by exposing and refuting pseudo-scholarly antisemitic writing such as Professor August Rohling's *Der Talmudjude*, published in 1871.<sup>227</sup> In 1892, Strack brought a case against the author of a pamphlet in which Jews were accused of ritual murder. He followed this up in 1893 with *Die Juden, dürfen sie "Verbrecher von Religions wegen" genannt werden? Aktenstücke zugleich als ein Beitrag zur Kennzeichnung der Gerechtigkeitspflege in Preußen*. In many other publications, such as *Der Blutaberglaube in der Menschheit, Blutmorde und Blutritus* (1891) Strack used Jewish sources to prove that consumption of blood (including vampirism) was forbidden by Jewish religious law. His campaign against blood libel became even more pressing after the accusation of ritual murder levelled at the Jews of Xanten in 1891. Strack also continued to speak out against more general antisemitic prejudice in his books *Das Wesen des Judentums* (1906) and *Jüdische Geheimsetzte?* (1920).

In the introduction to the fourth edition (1908) of his *Einleitung in Talmud und Midrasch*, first published in 1887 and probably his most well-known book, Strack similarly spoke out against the myth of arcane rabbinic writings, referring to "ignorant agitators (most of whom are of evil intent)" who "still try to lie to the Christian German people in maintaining that Judaism 'fearfully uses all possible means to keep the Talmud a secret.'" <sup>228</sup> But his effort at enlightenment in this regard had a powerful practical component; his own invaluable contributions to many aspects of scholarship on Judaism. Strack's many writings on Hebrew and Aramaic etymology are still counted among the standard literature.<sup>229</sup> Additionally he was one of the first non-Jewish scholars to underscore the importance of Jewish sources for understanding the New Testament and Christian theology – a claim that his Jewish colleagues had been making for some time. In this manner Strack was one of the few theologians who did not attempt to construct an artificial separation between Jesus and his surrounding culture as a precondition for his scholarly investigations. He was aware of the sensitivity surrounding the topic, reassuring his readers that "we intended to portray objectively the belief and outlook of the Jews at the time of Jesus and the oldest Christendom."<sup>230</sup> The repeated support he expressed for the establishment of a university faculty for Jewish studies was in line with this general perspective.

<sup>227</sup> See F. Delitzsch, *Rohling's Talmudjude beleuchtet*.

<sup>228</sup> H. L. Strack, *Einleitung in Talmud und Midrasch* (1887), p. VII.

<sup>229</sup> See for example: *Grammatik des biblischen Aramäisch* (1911), *Hebräische Grammatik mit Übungsbuch* (1917) and *Jüdisches Wörterbuch*.

<sup>230</sup> R. Golling and P. von der Osten-Sacken, *Hermann L. Strack*, pp. 68 f.

In Strack's view, objectivity, the precondition for every science, could not be assumed on the part of Christian scholars when it came to rabbinic literature.<sup>231</sup> Similarly, he felt that Orthodox Jewish scholarship failed to maintain high standards of objectivity. Despite this position, he appears to have been highly esteemed within Germany's Orthodox scholarly community;<sup>232</sup> he was a guest of honour when the *Lehranstalt* inaugurated its new building in 1907.<sup>233</sup> By the same token, a number of notable Jewish scholars helped him prepare the *Einleitung*, and he acknowledged by name Eduard Baneth (1855–1930), Simon Eppenstein (1864–1920), Jakob Nahum Epstein (1878–1952), Julius Theodor, Ismar Elbogen, Saul Horovitz (1859–1921), Samuel Krauss, Alexander Marx, and Felix Perles (1874–1933),<sup>234</sup> all members of the *Gesellschaft zur Förderung der Wissenschaft des Judentums*. Strack himself was one of the few Christian members,<sup>235</sup> and the *Gesellschaft* supported Strack's project by purchasing large numbers of the *Einleitung* and selling the book at a discount to its members.<sup>236</sup> For his part, Strack supplied the *Gesellschaft* with a much-needed copy of a Talmud manuscript;<sup>237</sup> his role in one of the organization's major projects will be discussed below.

Strack's positive approach to Judaism notwithstanding, it remains the case that his scholarly activities were oriented toward the conversion of Jews,<sup>238</sup> his periodical *Nethanael* being aimed at teaching Christian spiritual leaders the art of missionizing.<sup>239</sup> To achieve this goal, Christians needed to lead a moral life and meet Jews with love. In a letter to the notorious antisemite Adolf Stoecker, Strack accordingly indicated that "to practice missionizing without love, and without being able to convince the object of missionizing of the love of the missionizer, is impossible. Therefore I must first show the Jews that I also stand up for them; they must know that they do not have an enemy in me. Only then will their ears become more receptive."<sup>240</sup> However paradoxical it sounds, the intention behind Strack's emphasis on objective research and struggle against antisemitism was thus to demonstrate the superiority of Christian faith over Judaism; in this respect he did not differ from other theologians of the time. Consequently, he spoke out against efforts by liberal Christian theologians like Adolf Harnack who sought to deny Jesus's

<sup>231</sup> See for example H. L. Strack, *Einleitung*, p. VI.

<sup>232</sup> See J. Wohlgemuth, 'Hermann L. Strack', in *Jeschurun* 9 (1922), p. 383.

<sup>233</sup> See 'Gemeindebote', in *AZJ* 71 (1907), p. 1.

<sup>234</sup> *ibid.*, VIII.

<sup>235</sup> See, for example, 7. Jahresbericht der GFWJ, where Strack is listed a member.

<sup>236</sup> See '6. Jahresbericht der GFWJ', in *MGWJ* 53 (1909), p. 125.

<sup>237</sup> 'Ausschußsitzung der GFWJ vom 03.01.1912', in *MGWJ* 55 (1911), p. 761.

<sup>238</sup> See R. Golling, 'Strack und die Judenmission', in *Judaica* 38 (1982), pp. 67–90.

<sup>239</sup> See for example the essay by H. L. Strack, 'Wie gewinnen wir unsere Geistlichen für die Arbeit an Israel?', in *Nathanael* 13 (1897), pp. 50–55.

<sup>240</sup> H. L. Strack, *Herr Adolf Stöckers, christliche Liebe und Wahrhaftigkeit*, p. 53.

resurrection, which seemed too close in his eyes to Jewish theology.<sup>241</sup> Because of such views, and despite Strack's insistent focus on scholarly neutrality, he never entirely succeeded in convincing his Jewish colleagues of his own objectivity. In a detailed book review of *Kommentar zum Neuen Testament aus Talmud und Midrasch* (1922), a work written with Paul Billerbeck (1853–1932) and published after his death, Johann Krenzel expressed doubts in this regard, observing that “the frequent goal of Protestant scholars to paint one side darker in order to make the other side appear ever more bright ... is also not infrequently apparent in the work of Strack and Billerbeck.”<sup>242</sup> This assessment reflects a mistrust among Jewish scholars for Christian approaches to the history of Christian foundations. At the same time, the limits inherent in Strack's perspective, defined to some extent by his missionary intent, do not seem to have diminished the admiration felt for him by his Jewish colleagues, for whom his honest efforts at understanding counted far more. These sentiments were encapsulated in the many elegies appearing for him in the Jewish press.

### Adolf Harnack's *Das Wesen des Christentums* and its Repercussions

While the work of Gförer, Schürer, Bousset, and Strack was mainly of interest to specialists, an increasing popularization of scholarly research intensified an antagonism between *Wissenschaft des Judentums* and Protestant theology. This undercurrent of animosity made itself felt in both German academic circles and those of the educated public. The most significant popularizing work that must be considered in this context is the wildly successful *Wesen des Christentums*, by the prominent theologian Adolf Harnack. One of Harnack's main motivations for writing this book was a desire to present non-theologian intellectuals with a cohesive picture of Protestant belief, based on theological scholarship; the book, which was couched in accessible popularist language, can thus be understood as a reaction to the ongoing fragmentation of scholarship into isolated disciplines. Based on a series of sixteen lectures Harnack had given at the University of Berlin in 1899 and 1900, *Das Wesen des Christentums* had sold 45,000 copies by 1903, necessitating a reprint that same year. The book created nothing short of a crisis situation for the Liberal Jewish minority in Germany.

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<sup>241</sup> H. L. Strack, ‘Das Wesen des Judentums’, in *Jahrbuch der evangelischen Judenmission* 1 (1906), p. 20.

<sup>242</sup> J. Krenzel, ‘Der Kommentar zum Neuen Testament aus Talmud und Midrasch von Hermann L. Strack und Paul Billerbeck’, in *MGWJ* 68 (1924), p. 68.

The reason for this crisis corresponded to a pattern proposed by Moore, and was quite straightforward. Put simply, Harnack's effort to portray Christianity as the fulfilment of Old Testament prophecy meant defining Judaism as an elementary stage on the path to Christianity; Christianity in his view had liberated Judaism from its ritualistic and nationalistic attributes. For Harnack, rabbinic Judaism was a backward step – it amounted, in his presentation, to a primitive and superstitious religious regression. For Harnack, Jesus was only loosely connected to his Jewish sociocultural and religious environment, and the conflict between Jesus and the Pharisees was essentially irreconcilable. The Pharisees, he indicated, functioned as a “ruling class” that had “little heart for the suffering of the poor,”<sup>243</sup> their interest in cultic justice overriding any compassion for the plight of the common man. Both “priests and Pharisees”, he declared, “held the people in bonds and murdered their souls.”<sup>244</sup> The Jewish nation “knew justice only through violence.”<sup>245</sup>

Harnack's own insistence that nothing was known about the first thirty years of Jesus's life notwithstanding, he also flatly insisted that “the demand of our time to understand Jesus as part of Jewish teaching ... is wrong.”<sup>246</sup> Against the broader backdrop of an Enlightenment tradition which stressed conciliatory relations between liberal Judaism and educated Protestantism, Harnack's stance embodied disregard, even contempt, of German Jewry's liberal Jewish intelligentsia. For committed liberal Jews, Harnack's attack on the Pharisees represented an unmistakable disparagement of basic Jewish values – but it could not be denied that his attitudes were nonetheless potentially seductive for an increasingly assimilated, non-practicing German-Jewish bourgeoisie. The anxiety and frustration this catalyzed were reflected in some of Germany's Jewish newspapers; Gustav Karpeles thus observing in the *JJGL*, “in the face of the ever-escalating events” caused by ... *Das Wesen des Christentums*, that:

It is very regrettable that no outstanding Jewish theologian could be immediately found to unravel the polemics and disprove the portrayal and judgment of Judaism in Harnack's work, thus exposing a range of grave errors by the famous Protestant theologian. Harnack's book is widely read particularly in Jewish circles, and most especially in those circles who prefer to call themselves refined. ... For many Jewish students, Harnack is the highest theological authority, and they continuously quote his conceptions of Judaism and Christianity. To those who stand at the crossroads, Harnack's ideas offer a welcome opportunity to gain the motivation for moving from the familiar ... inferiority of Judaism to the higher moral development of Christianity. Facing this problem, I have expressed the most fervent wish that a pertinent response,

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<sup>243</sup> A. Harnack, *Das Wesen des Christentums*, p. 58.

<sup>244</sup> *ibid.*, p. 66.

<sup>245</sup> *ibid.*, p. 69.

<sup>246</sup> *ibid.*, p. 10.

based on the sources, or even more strongly, a positive presentation of Judaism, will be written. ... Especially in our time, when the most vital religious questions are on the agenda – when Judaism is attacked, slandered, and degraded on a daily basis in newspapers and journals, even by men who claim to be knowledgeable and are accepted as such – it is precisely in this time that an educational description of Judaism has become a pressing necessity. Our educated waver back and forth between Haeckel and Harnack, between the all-negating natural sciences and a Judaism-debasing Protestant theology; between a world view that decomposes every religion and another that degrades Judaism to a national cult. Judaism is, however, a world-view which has nothing to fear from either the natural sciences or Protestant theology. The problem is to show what the essence of our religion is ... This problem must be solved in a book on the essence of Judaism.<sup>247</sup>

It is important to note that the academic assault on Judaism was not limited to departments of theology. In 1902, for instance, Friedrich Delitzsch, Professor of Assyriology at the University of Berlin, delivered his own understanding on what he termed *Bibel und Babel* – the title of the book based on the lectures published that same year. Delitzsch's reigning thesis was that Judaism, that ancient Israelite religion, represented absolutely nothing original, but was entirely copied from earlier Babylonian culture. Consequently, cultural achievements generally attributed to Judaism such as the Sabbath, the Decalogue and monotheism, as well as its legal structure, were themselves completely unoriginal. In light of what was emerging as an academic trend, Ismar Elbogen commented as follows:

We Jews have fared badly in the heated literary war which followed this lecture [by Delitzsch] ... made even more regrettable because simultaneously Adolf Harnack's lectures on "The essence of Christianity", which were distributed widely in a cheap popular edition, confused the senses. In particular, the expositions of the highly acknowledged theologian served as a welcome pretext to numerous Jewish academicians to baptize themselves, or at least their children.<sup>248</sup>

More generally, Leopold Lucas observed that:

We are attacked with entire systems, a fine-woven weave of observations and conclusions. Texts claiming scholarly status are what furnished our opponents with the necessary supply of public feelings against the Jews. Against such influence, there is very often a hovering between self-confidence and resignation among the Jews.<sup>249</sup>

And later, Lucas would look back on the period as follows:

It was a time of oppression ... The antagonists inflicted much damage on Judaism through scientific formulations of their suppositions and assertions. They advanced upon us with entire systems, with finely spun observations and conclusions. With ap-

<sup>247</sup> G. Karpeles, 'Literarische Jahresrevue', in *JJGL* 5 (1902), pp. 20–22.

<sup>248</sup> I. Elbogen, '25 Jahre Dozent: Erinnerungen von Professor Ismar Elbogen', in *CV-Zeitung* 50 (1927), p. 699.

<sup>249</sup> L. Lucas, *Die Wissenschaft des Judentums*, p. 7.

parent scientific works they influenced public opinion in a hitherto unprecedented manner.<sup>250</sup>

The linkage proposed between conversion to Christianity and an anti-Jewish academic *Zeitgeist* was not entirely unfounded. In absolute numbers, between 1870 and 1900 such conversions numbered approximately 11,000. This might seem a negligible percentage, considering a Jewish population of over 500,000, but conversions – two thirds of them being to Protestantism<sup>251</sup> – were actually on the rise as a result of general antisemitism, and university educated Jews accounted for 36 per cent of the total – more than one in three.

This development was concentrated in, although not confined to the university environment, and as such was particularly demoralizing to German-Jewish scholars. It sharpened a sense of urgency when it came to creating an effective organizational framework for gaining university recognition.<sup>252</sup> In general, the resurgence of antisemitism in the 1880s had forced the realization that the achievements of Jewish *Wissenschaft* had failed, by and large, to diminish the antisemitic treatment of Judaism in Protestant theological faculties. In this way, an Enlightenment-grounded faith in a gradual diminishing of antisemitism began to give way to a more realistic appraisal of the current sociopolitical atmosphere, accompanied by an awareness that a concerted effort was required to counteract it.

For nearly a century, scholars had tried to conceptualize Judaism in modern terms and integrate its study into the world of modern scholarship. This endeavour had largely failed. Still denied academic acceptance and with no central, mobilizing body at its disposal German Jews faced the apparently impossible task of effectively transmitting knowledge. The difficulty of their situation was compounded by the deepening antisemitism and cultural pessimism within different layers of German society and politics. *Wissenschaft des Judentums* stood little chance, of counteracting the attraction offered by both Christianity and Christian theology to the assimilated children of Germany's Jewish bourgeoisie. Existing organizations such as the *Vereine für jüdische Geschichte und Literatur* could hardly remedy this situation. While they were useful in spreading knowledge to the larger public, they were not in the position, to develop or support new research,<sup>253</sup> and could in no way compete with established university structures. While non-Jewish scholars were able to conduct state-supported research at academies and uni-

<sup>250</sup> L. Lucas, 'Zum 25jährigen Jubiläum der Gesellschaft zur Förderung der Wissenschaft des Judentums', in *MGWJ* 71 (1927), p. 329.

<sup>251</sup> See M. A. Meyer, *Deutsch-Jüdische Geschichte* 3, pp. 20 f.

<sup>252</sup> See A. Jospe, 'The Study of Judaism in German Universities before 1933', in *LBI Year Book* 27 (1982), pp. 295–319.

<sup>253</sup> M. Philippon, 'Jahresrückblick', in *JJGL* 7 (1904), p. 4.

versities, their Jewish counterparts, now as before, had to rely on the charitable support of their co-religionists. In this context, as suggested, *Wissenschaft des Judentums* faced a major new challenge: defending Judaism against attacks on the part of learned theologians, the movement's "internal" orientation thus now being overshadowed by the "external" pressures of German society.

The founding of the *Gesellschaft zur Förderung der Wissenschaft des Judentums* was a response to this general predicament, and to the cultural crisis in which much of German Jewry found itself. This alignment occurred in the context of broader societal and academic trends. At the end of 1901, Gustav Karpeles again called for a reform of Jewish *Wissenschaft* and its institutions, which, he observed, still seemed unable to come up with an adequate response to the challenges of Protestant theology.<sup>254</sup> The necessity for some positive action was widely recognized in Jewish scholarly circles, yet so far the appropriate way to implement it seemed uncertain.

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<sup>254</sup> See G. Karpeles, 'Ein Wort über die jüdische Wissenschaft', p. 589.

## VIII. The founding of the *Gesellschaft zur Förderung der Wissenschaft des Judentums*

### The Role of Leopold Lucas

Born in 1872 in Marburg, Leopold Lucas enjoyed deeply rooted connections with Jewish *Wissenschaft*. His great-uncle was the philosopher Salomon Ludwig Steinheim (1789–1866), and familial ties existed to Heinrich Heine. Lucas studied Oriental languages and philosophy at the University of Berlin and Tübingen, completing his doctoral thesis in 1895 under Professor Bernhard von Kugler in Tübingen. Entitled *Geschichte der Stadt Tyros zur Zeit der Kreuzzüge*, the thesis focused on the troubled Jewish-Christian relationship in crusader-age Tyros and its reflection on Jewish history, which would remain the main focus of Lucas' research.<sup>255</sup> Lucas had also studied at the *Lehranstalt* starting in 1892, where he received his rabbinic ordination in 1898. His decision to attend that institution was influenced by both his teacher Abraham Strauß and the Marburg rabbi Leo Munk. During this period of rabbinic studies, and accompanying his activities in the AVJGL, Lucas came into personal contact with some of the leading figures of German Jewry, among them Martin Philippon and Gustav Karpeles, together with other teachers – Sigmund Maybaum, Martin Schreiner, Eduard Baneth, and David Cassel. Lucas also had the opportunity to attend lectures by leading German scholars with decidedly unfavourable opinions regarding Judaism, notably Adolf von Harnack and Heinrich von Treitschke. We can assume that Lucas was strongly affected by the antisemitic atmosphere permeating the university and larger German society. In 1899 he left Berlin to become Rabbi of Glogau in Silesia, as the successor to Benjamin Rippner (1842–1898). At this time, Glogau's Jewish community numbered 863 people out of a population of 20,000. Eventually turning

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<sup>255</sup> Improving Jewish-Christian relations was very important to Leopold Lucas, who gave frequent public lectures to this end, usually at the *Glogauer Gewerbeverein (Die Gesellschaft zur Förderung geistigen und wirtschaftlichen Wissens für Glogau und Umgegend)* and the *Glogauer Volkshochschule*.



down an offer to serve as Rabbi of Magdeburg, he would remain the religious leader of Glogau's Jewry until its destruction by the Nazis.

Lucas articulated his religious views in his rabbinic inauguration sermon of 1899, where he portrayed the "essence" of Judaism as consisting of three basic elements: belief in God, ethical law, and historical development. In the latter respect he was echoing the view that had been formulated by Abraham Geiger of Judaism as a steadily evolving organism, with new adaptations required for every age. For the religion to function properly, the three components were meant to interact in equilibrium, with the conceptual core of a self-confident, non-apologetic theology making concessions neither to the natural sciences nor to philosophy.<sup>256</sup> For Lucas, these components in freeing themselves from religion, had turned against it, and had thus proven to be a "misfortune". At the same time, he saw modernism and the acculturation tied to it as having destroyed the unity of the Jewish people which he intended to restore. In 1899, Lucas saw to the publication of S.L. Steinheim's manuscript *Moses und Michelangelo; Die Wissenschaft des Judentums und die Wege zu ihrer Förderung* followed in 1906. In 1911, he became a member of the Athens-based Byzantine Society, and in the spring of 1914, he assumed the leadership of the Glogau chapter of the *Alliance Israelite Universelle*,<sup>257</sup> an organization mainly concerned with Jewish education and Jewish welfare. In this period he gave frequent public lectures, often directed towards an improvement in Jewish-Christian relations.

That Leopold Lucas was very much a German Jew of his time is underscored in the letter of approbation he received from the city of Glogau for his twenty-fifth anniversary as rabbi. Along with the usual praise for Lucas' educational and scientific achievements and interfaith activities,<sup>258</sup> the letter focused on his efforts to comfort fellow residents of Glogau during the Great War in preparation for even greater sacrifices on behalf of the *Vaterland*. (Sixteen soldiers from the town would die; on 18 November 1926, Lucas dedicated two wall plaques to these soldiers on the occasion of the Catholic Penance Day.) In fact, patriotism emerged as a recurrent theme in Lucas' sermons and lectures; he identified passionately with the *Vaterland* concept, organizing ceremonies in honour of the *Volkstrauertag*, the day of national mourning for fallen soldiers, and he believed – and preached – that the war itself had been unavoidable. But although the losses were painful, the life force, scientific grandeur, and cultural achievements of the German people had not been broken. In the not too far distant future, Lucas felt, Germany would be

<sup>256</sup> See 'Meine Augen erhebe ich zu den Bergen, von dannen mir Hilfe kommt', in E. Dettmering (ed.), *Rabbiner Dr. Leopold Lucas Marburg 1872–1943 Theresienstadt: Versuch einer Würdigung*, pp. 27–34.

<sup>257</sup> *Ost und West* 4 (1914), p. 314.

<sup>258</sup> For an example of the latter see *Niederschlesischer Anzeiger*, 5 October 1920.

vindicated.<sup>259</sup> His stance was strongly supported in Glogau by both city officials and the local press – all held Rabbi Lucas in the highest esteem, as they had his predecessor Benjamin Rippner.<sup>260</sup>

Lucas's nationalism was, of course, commonplace within German Jewry at the time. Kaiser Wilhelm's declaration that "I recognise no [ethnic] group; I know only Germans" was broadly understood as a promise of equality – as an offer to finally cement into social acceptance the legal emancipation achieved in 1871. Another critical source for support of the war effort was the fact that one of the enemies was Russia, the country inflicting the most abuse and oppression on its Jewish inhabitants. At the war's outbreak, such sentiments were shared by all factions of German Jewry, including the Orthodox and Zionist minorities.<sup>261</sup> Despite such committed identification with German culture, Lucas remained consistently aware of the possibility of a new rise in German antisemitism. As early as 1901, in an article entitled 'Das Recht', he addressed the reality of both official and unofficial antisemitism in German society, referring to the Jewish struggle for justice as a "fight for our future."<sup>262</sup> At the same time, he understood this struggle to include a spiritual element, articulated as an effort to deepen the foundations of Jewish *Wissenschaft*, which was, for Lucas, the sustaining force within German Judaism.<sup>263</sup> In 1910 he published a work that would receive wide acclaim, *Zur Geschichte der Juden im Vierten Jahrhundert*. As the title indicates, he focused on a period in which Christianity became the state religion of the Roman Empire and was redefining its position towards Judaism, a period forming a foundation for subsequent centuries of Christian anti-Judaism.<sup>264</sup> Some of his concluding words encapsulate his political-historical perspective. "The Jews", he argued,

sought to take the offensive. They did not shrink from open demonstrations; from all quarters they sought allies, whom they won over by an understanding of their viewpoints ... The Jews did not lack leading personalities who among other things, thwarted the baptism of their co-religionists in a skilful, unprecedented manner ... These studies are intended to show that the Jews' humiliation was the result of a mighty struggle with its own rationale.<sup>265</sup>

<sup>259</sup> *Niederschlesischer Anzeiger*, 6 March 1928.

<sup>260</sup> B. Rippner's *Vaterländische Reden* were published by the community of Glogau in 1872.

<sup>261</sup> See, M. Breuer, *Orthodoxie*, p. 385; *Jüdische Rundschau*, 19 June 1914, p. 273.

<sup>262</sup> L. Lucas, 'Das Recht', *AZJ* 65 (1901), p. 100.

<sup>263</sup> L. Lucas, *Die Wissenschaft des Judentums*, p. 3.

<sup>264</sup> See L. Lucas, *The conflict between Christianity and Judaism: A Contribution to the History of the Jews in the Fourth Century*, p. 94.

<sup>265</sup> *ibid.*, pp. 95 f.

At the end of 1901, Lucas intensified his organizational efforts to strengthen the position of German-Jewish *Wissenschaft*.<sup>266</sup> During his years in Glogau, he consistently focused on creating an organization to systematize and strengthen *Wissenschaft des Judentums*. He had remained in close contact with his former co-students from the AVJGL; his initial intention had been to publish a scholarly journal sponsored by the senior members of the student union or possibly serving as a supplement to the *Allgemeine Zeitung des Judentums*.<sup>267</sup> In the winter of 1900 in his role as head of the local chapter of the *Verein für jüdische Geschichte und Literatur*, he had Martin Philippon lecture in Glogau, and both Philippon and Gustav Karpeles gave talks there the following year.<sup>268</sup> Lucas had become acquainted with both men at the AVJGL and with both serving on the board of the *Verband der Vereine für jüdische Geschichte und Literatur*,<sup>269</sup> it is likely that he approached them with plans for a new organization.

After initial reservations, Philippon became enthusiastic about the idea and offered his support. In addition to being chairman of the largest German-Jewish organization of the time, the *Deutsch-Israelitischen Gemeindebund*, Philippon was a member of the board of trustees of the *Lehranstalt für die Wissenschaft des Judentums* in Berlin.<sup>270</sup> His endorsement was the turning point for public interest in Lucas' plans. Lucas then wrote and distributed an unpublished organizational appeal;<sup>271</sup> its precise nature is unclear as the document has never been located. It appears to have been met with interest, but also with considerable opposition from the Jewish scholarly establishment, and despite the fact that it attracted a significant number of signatures, it remained unpublished. In a letter to Moritz Lazarus, Lucas thus wrote that the appeal was written in "exact accord with Philippon and Karpeles";<sup>272</sup> but later, in the official minutes of the constitutional assembly of the *Gesellschaft*, Lucas indicated that reservations regarding the wording of this first appeal necessitated the writing of a second. As an article in *Der Israelit* points out, Lucas had criticized the state of *Wissenschaft des Judentums* in too outspoken a manner.<sup>273</sup> But his proposed plans had sparked enough interest for a new appeal to be drafted (see Appendix 1). Written by Lucas in collaboration with Her-

<sup>266</sup> See L. Lucas, 'Zum 25jährigen Jubiläum', p. 321.

<sup>267</sup> See H. Cohen, *Geschichte des Akademischen Vereins*, 14. See also Lucas, 'Zum 25jährigen Jubiläum', p. 321, n.1.

<sup>268</sup> See 'Bericht über die Tätigkeiten der Vereine', in *JJGL* 5 (1902), p. 25.

<sup>269</sup> Since 1898 Martin Philippon had contributed the 'Jahresrückblick' and Gustav Karpeles the 'Literarische Revue' in the *JJGL*.

<sup>270</sup> See M. Philippon, 'The Philippons', pp. 110f.

<sup>271</sup> See *AZJ* 66 (1902), p. 532.

<sup>272</sup> Leopold Lucas and Moritz Lazarus, 16.6.1902, Lazarus Archiv, JNUL, Arc. Ms.Var.298/97. Special thanks to Hartwig Wiedebach for the letter.

<sup>273</sup> *Der Israelit* 88 (1902), *Nachrichten und Korrespondenzen*, p. 1839.

mann Cohen<sup>274</sup> and calling for the founding of a new society, the *Gesellschaft zur Förderung der Wissenschaft des Judentums*, it was signed by many of the leading scholars of Jewish *Wissenschaft*. This second appeal was circulated among potential sympathizers, and published in the Jewish press.<sup>275</sup> It was met with a great deal of enthusiasm, and a constitutional assembly was convened on 2 November 1902.

### The Published Appeal

The initial words of this second appeal, “To our co-religionists”, left no doubt that support for the new organization was being sought among Jews alone. Even so, the authors also made clear that they were not engaged in an effort to encourage Jewish isolationism. Rather, as Martin Philippon explained retrospectively, new Jewish organizations constituted a reaction to the anti-Jewish and exclusionary policies, the voluntary separation through Jewish organizations thus being a means to reduce tension between Jews and non-Jews:

One should understand us correctly. Of course we do acknowledge with joy all that we owe to German culture. . . . But we nevertheless are conscious of our human dignity and pride, and each offence hurts us and arouses in us justified anger. We are absolutely convinced that the future reconciliation of the Christian majority to the Jews . . . will happen much more easily and sooner if the Jews keep to themselves for the time being, thereby eliminating any reason for social frictions and complaints of Jewish obtrusiveness.<sup>276</sup>

On a certain level, a similar reasoning may well have been at work in the appeal, which refers to the furthering of *Wissenschaft des Judentums* as a necessity for the self preservation of the Jewish people and as the “holiest duty to our religion” and a “duty to *Wissenschaft* and general culture”. For the appeal’s authors, the study of Jewish culture and religion was, in any event, in the interest of humanity in general as well as German society. At the same time, it is clear that they felt the time for interconfessional scholarly cooperation had yet to arrive. In this respect the appeal repeatedly evokes the defensive elements influencing the project of *Wissenschaft des Judentums*. Hermann Cohen refers to “the temptations of our enemies who desire to destroy us”, to a Protestant theology “that is inflicting great damage on us, especially in the Protestant judgment of our spiritual sensibility”, and describes Jewish *Wissenschaft* as a “spiritual bulwark.”<sup>277</sup>

<sup>274</sup> L. Lucas, ‘Zum 25jährigen Jubiläum’, p. 321.

<sup>275</sup> See for example AZJ 66 (1902), pp. 398 f.

<sup>276</sup> M. Philippon, ‘Rückblick auf das Jahr 5663’, in *JJGL* 7 (1904), pp. 2 f.

<sup>277</sup> H. Cohen, ‘Zur Begründung einer Akademie für die Wissenschaft des Judentums’, in *Jüdische Schriften* 2, pp. 210–217.

The dictum of Leopold Zunz that the Jewish social ghetto would only fall after the ghetto of *Wissenschaft des Judentums* has been dismantled was central to the founding ideology of the *Gesellschaft zur Förderung der Wissenschaft des Judentums*. However, the appeal's authors recognized that "these troubled times teach us that our emancipation still is far away". The appeal was thus marked by activist vocabulary, with terms such as "deflection", "defense" (*Abwehr*; *Verteidigung*) – reflecting a broader trend within German Jewry towards social and cultural activism.<sup>278</sup> The appeal's translation into Hebrew (along with several European languages) is remarkable, in that its signatories were ideologically either anti-Zionist or, at least, indifferent to the Zionist cause. On the one hand, the translation addressed the increased activity of Eastern European scholars within Jewish *Wissenschaft*; on the other hand, it reflected the general increase of interest in and respect for the *lingua sancta* by German-Jewish scholars at the turn of the century – as suggested, a development that accompanied the rise of Zionism.

More than sixty years had passed since the first public calls for state recognition of *Wissenschaft des Judentums*. One important element distinguishing the *Gesellschaft* from previous organizations was its emphasis on self-reliance; an emphasis underscoring, perhaps ironically, the marginalized situation of German Jewry. For in establishing their own academic framework, the promoters of Jewish *Wissenschaft* were in effect institutionalizing their segregated status. To be sure, this formal isolation was accompanied by an unprecedented promise of recognition for their scholarly achievements.

Jews were not the only minority in Germany to have promoted their own scholarly institutions in the interests of social and cultural self-help. In general, the emergence of interest groups was a nation-wide phenomenon with numerous causes espoused, such as supporting Polish immigrants, the workers and Catholics.<sup>279</sup> In addition, Christian denominations tended to strengthen their own positions through self-isolation. Likewise, the existence of German organizations and learned societies embracing followers of a particular faith or culture was widespread at the start of the twentieth century,<sup>280</sup> the country's disadvantaged Catholic minority played a central role. Already in 1876, Georg von Hertling founded the *Görres Gesellschaft zur Pflege der Wissenschaft im katholischen Deutschland*. In the face of Protestant hegemony over university positions and chairs, the society proposed the groundwork for a Catholic university through "a gathering of Catholic scholars", and more generally

<sup>278</sup> J. Borut, 'Der Central-Verein und seine Vorgeschichte', *Jüdischer Almanach 1996*, p. 99.

<sup>279</sup> M. Brenner, *Renaissance*, p. 20.

<sup>280</sup> For a survey of Germany's Jewish organizations, see P. Billerbeck, 'Vereinsorganisationen innerhalb der Judenheit Deutschlands', in *Nathanael 20* (1904), pp. 33–61, 65–92; *ibid.*, 21 (1905), pp. 1–31.

at “initiating scholarly activity in the Catholic spirit in all directions.”<sup>281</sup> The broader ideological goal of the *Görres Gesellschaft* was to defend “the Catholic truth”, and the way to reach the Catholic population and counteract the prevailing Protestant scholarship was thought to be through publication of popular-scientific works. In the framework of such intentions, the Catholic society may have set a precedent for the Jewish *Gesellschaft*.

Since a positive reception of the appeal by potential supporters was key to the success or failure of the entire project, the appeal’s signatories were carefully chosen for their charismatic effect on the entire spectrum of German Jewry.<sup>282</sup> The appeal can in fact be considered something of a public relations masterpiece, including the main scholarly-political representatives of Jewish *Wissenschaft* not only in Germany but in Austria, Hungary and the German periphery. Wilhelm Bacher and Moritz Kayserling (1829–1905) from Budapest, Adolf Schwarz and Moritz Güdemann from Vienna, and David Simonsen (1853–1932) from Denmark were among the signatories. It is also striking that only eight of the initiators were rabbis, while nine were professors or lecturers. Of the lecturers, four were from a theological seminary, two were teachers, and one was a politician. Gustav Karpeles, editor of the *Allgemeine Zeitung des Judentums* was also asked to sign. The influence of the rabbinical institutes, each represented by one of their lecturers, was evident; the *Jüdisch-Theologisches Seminar* was represented by Markus Brann (1849–1920), the Budapest *Landesrabbinerschule* by Wilhelm Bacher, and Vienna’s *Israelitisch-Theologische Lehranstalt* by its director Adolf Schwarz, all three of these institutions ideologically representing the positive-historical stream of Judaism. In total, eleven of the men who signed the appeal either studied at one of these Conservative schools or were currently teaching there,<sup>283</sup> underscoring the strong presence of Conservative Judaism in Jewish *Wissenschaft* at this time.<sup>284</sup> Conservative predominance is further emphasized by the fact that Leopold Lucas was the only acting rabbi ordained at the *Lehranstalt*. Further, only he

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<sup>281</sup> ‘*Görres Gesellschaft zur Pflege der Wissenschaft im katholischen Deutschland*’, *Vereinschrift für 1876*, p. VII.

<sup>282</sup> The signatories were as follows: Salo Adler, Wilhelm Bacher, Eduard Baneth, Hermann Bärwald, Markus Brann, Hermann Cohen, Ludwig Geiger, Moritz Güdemann, Jakob Guttmann, Gustav Karpeles, Moritz Kayserling, Theodor Kroner, Moritz Lazarus, Leopold Lucas, David Mayer, Martin Philippon, Adolf Schwarz, David Jakob Simonsen, Heinemann Vogelstein, Samson Weisse, and Cossmann Werner.

<sup>283</sup> Wilhelm Bacher, Markus Brann, Hermann Cohen, Moritz Güdemann, Jakob Guttmann, Gustav Karpeles, Theodor Kroner, Adolf Schwarz, David Jakob Simonsen, Heinemann Vogelstein and Cossmann Werner. Both Baerwald and Adler were graduates of the University of Breslau.

<sup>284</sup> When in 1904 Markus Brann referred to German-Jewish organizations where graduates from the *Jüdisch-Theologisches Seminar* were particularly active, he also mentioned the *Gesellschaft*. See M. Brann, *Geschichte des Jüdisch-Theologischen Seminars*, p. 139.

and Heinemann Vogelstein (1841–1911) were members of the *Vereinigung der liberalen Rabbiner Deutschlands*.

With the new organization naturally hoping to receive support from wealthy members, it was important that the signatories also include prominent German-Jewish political activists. Among these were Martin Philippon and David Hugo Mayer. Mayer (1854–1931), a politician, was the first Jew elected to the state government of Baden and was the long-time president of Baden's *Oberrat der Israeliten*, in which Jewish functionaries, together with Moritz Lazarus and Hermann Cohen, had been active in working politically on behalf of the Jewish community. At the same time, the presence among the signatories of Hermann Bärwald and Salo Adler (1857–1919) points to the general wish, on the part of the organizers, to raise the esteem in which Jewish studies were held. Bärwald was the former and Adler the current director of Frankfurt's Jewish Liberal secondary school, the *Philanthropin*;<sup>285</sup> the inclusion of these two men appears to have reflected a hope that school graduates could be influenced to enter the field of Jewish studies.

The average age of the signatories was slightly over fifty-one, making thirty year old Leopold Lucas by far the youngest participant. In light of his presence on the list, the apparently minimal level of support by the Liberal wing of German Jewry, in other words the *Lehranstalt*, is somewhat surprising. In fact, only three signatories (Eduard Baneth, Ludwig Geiger, Leopold Lucas) were either former students or teachers at that institution. Lucas' former teachers Sigmund Maybaum and Martin Schreiner were absent from the list, as was Salomon Neumann (1819–1908), chairman of the *Lehranstalt's* board, whose name had been suggested by Philippon. The *Lehranstalt* was thus represented only by its Orthodox lecturer, Eduard Baneth.

Maybaum's reason for refusing to support his former student's initiative was hinted at by Lucas himself, in the context of reference to a conflict of interest that had developed earlier that year.<sup>286</sup> The establishment of an organization along the lines of the *Gesellschaft* was discussed at a general meeting of the *Vereinigung der liberalen Rabbiner Deutschlands* in Frankfurt on 9 July 1902. At the meeting the decision was taken to initiate publication of a "systematic-scholarly portrayal of a theology of Jewish religion, precepts of belief, and ethics of Judaism", taking the form of "informal study booklets"; these were described as "a critical requirement of our time".<sup>287</sup> A planning committee was immediately appointed to set up an organization tasked with producing these texts.

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<sup>285</sup> About the *Philanthropin*, see A. Galliner, 'The Philanthropin in Frankfurt. Its educational and cultural significance for German Jewry', *LBI Year Book* 3 (1958), pp. 169–186.

<sup>286</sup> L. Lucas, 'Zum 25-jährigen Jubiläum', p. 323.

<sup>287</sup> *AZJ* 66 (1902), pp. 400 f.

This may have represented a conflict of interest for Lucas, who was already preparing the groundwork for the *Gesellschaft*. Despite his protests, a resolution was adopted that intended to render the organization a partisan enterprise, with the *Vereinigung der liberalen Rabbiner Deutschlands* at its epicentre. Lucas had insisted on the creation of a truly independent organization, one entirely neutral in religious matters and standing apart from religious factions and associated conflicts. Despite the controversy, Lucas proceeded with the constitutional meeting. In its aftermath, the plans of the Liberal rabbinic assembly were abandoned.

The incident, however, left a cloud over the *Gesellschaft*. Maybaum made no effort to hide his opposition to its founding, and his public refusal to support the new organization was voiced at the constitutional meeting. The formal reason he gave for his opposition was concern that any new organization would reduce already limited contributions to both the *Lehranstalt* and the *Zunz Stiftung*. On the other hand, the lack of support from the only full-time lecturer at the *Lehranstalt*, Martin Schreiner, may have reflected his wish not to offend his colleague Maybaum. The fact that earlier in 1902 he published a pamphlet, *Die jüngsten Urteile über das Judentum*, which defended Judaism against theological attacks suggests that his sympathy would have been with the *Gesellschaft*. However, the pamphlet had been reviewed critically by none other than Leopold Lucas, his former student, and his refusal to get involved with the organization's founding night also reflect a sense of pique in that respect. Among other things, Lucas suggested that Schreiner was guilty of laxity in his research.<sup>288</sup>

## The Constitutional Meeting

On 2 November 1902, the *Gesellschaft's* constitutional meeting took place in Berlin. The date coincided with the beginning of the winter semester at the University of Berlin, an intentional "coincidence" making excuses more difficult for scholarly notables who failed to appear.<sup>289</sup> Several former members

<sup>288</sup> L. Lucas, 'Die jüngsten Urtheile über das Judentum', *AZJ* 66 (1902), p. 153.

<sup>289</sup> The following men (as listed in the protocol) responded to the invitation; their titles are in themselves telling: Professor Dr. Adler, Emil Apolant, Dr. Eduard Baneth, B. Barol, Dr. Simon Bernfeld, Professor Blaschke, Rabbiner Bloch, Geheimer Sanitätsrat [Ferdinand] Blumenthal, Rabbiner Dr. Blumenthal, Dr. Brann, Siegfried Brünn, Rabbiner Dr. [Moritz] David, Rabbiner Dr. Joseph Eschelbacher, Rabbiner Dr. Ephraim Finkel, Prediger Dr. Fischer, Emer. Kantor Fränkel, Dozent Friedländer, Prediger Galliner, Prof. Ludwig Geiger, Rektor Dr. Gutmann, Direktor Dr. [Michael] Holzman, Prediger Dr. [Israel] Jelski, Prof. Dr. Salomon Kalischer, Professor Dr. Alexander Kisch, Dr. Benzion Kellermann, Redakteur Max Albert Klausner, Kirchenrat Dr. Theodor Kroner, Max Lessmann, Prediger Dr. Levin, Rechtsanwalt Leo Lilienthal, Zahnarzt Lipschitz, Dr. med. B. Lipschütz, Rabbiner Dr. Leopold Lucas, Rechtsanwalt Felix Makower, Rab-



of the AVJGL were present at the meeting; but only seven of forty-three invited members of the *Vereinigung der liberalen Rabbiner Deutschlands* attended – something that perhaps is not surprising considering that their effort to create a similar organization had been effectively preempted by the *Gesellschaft*. In any event, as had been the case with the initial appeal, rabbis and scholars who had studied at the Conservative *Jüdisch-Theologisches Seminar* far outnumbered those from the *Lehranstalt*,<sup>290</sup> the apparent under-representation of Liberal rabbis quite possibly reflecting the conflict between Lucas and the *Vereinigung* mentioned previously.

The meeting opened with a talk by Lucas on ‘The Necessity of Establishing a *Gesellschaft zur Förderung der Wissenschaft des Judentums*’. Lucas began the talk by criticizing the often “deplorable backwardness” of Jewish scholarship in respect to goals and methods; he also restated the argument already made by many other scholars that recent research in Jewish *Wissenschaft* had been far too detailed, thus losing both a Jewish readership and its connection to real-life Judaism. Although Lucas did not directly mention the biased theological scholarship at the German universities, he called attention to the numerical under-representation of Jewish scholars, and to the fact that Jewish publications “disappear into an ever-larger abyss, which is deepening all the time.” A few months earlier, he had observed that “we experience an unhappy revival of scholarly polemics ... which would have been confronted a long time ago by an energetic defensive activity, if we had been endowed with a fitting *Wissenschaft des Judentums*”<sup>291</sup> – an untenable situation he proposed remedying through centralized research in the field of *Wissenschaft des Judentums*.

In this vein, he understood a central purpose of the *Gesellschaft* as strictly supervising the academic excellence of supported publications. At the same time, he focused on the desperate financial state facing many scholars pursuing Jewish *Wissenschaft*. Completing a manuscript was itself fraught with difficulty; funds were usually not available to support authors involved in writing, and afterwards it was extremely difficult to find a publisher. In most cases, authors could not expect any remuneration for their work. One goal of the *Ge-*

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biner Dr. Sigmund Maybaum, Rabbiner Dr. Eugen Meyer, Syndikus Dr. Minden, Redakteur Dr. Julius Moses, Prof. Gustav Oppert, Prof. Dr. Philippson, Rabbiner Dr. Adolf Pos[z]nanski, Rabbiner Dr. Samuel Poznanski, Rabbiner Dr. Rosenthal, Rabbiner Dr. Samuel, Oberlehrer Dr. Schaefer, Professor Dr. David Simonsen, Sanitätsrat Dr. E. Stern, Rabbiner Dr. Josef Stier, Rabbiner Dr. Yehuda Noah Theodor, Justizrat Dr. Timendorfer, Rabbiner Dr. Heinemann Vogelstein, Max Weiss, Rabbiner Dr. Jacob Winter, Rabbiner Dr. Weisse.

<sup>290</sup> Eight had studied at the *Lehranstalt*, seventeen in Breslau.

<sup>291</sup> L. Lucas, ‘Die jüngsten Urtheile’, p. 153. “Dafür erleben wir ein unglückseliges Aufleben einer wissenschaftlichen Polemik ... Wenn wir eine jüdische Wissenschaft hätten, wie sie sein sollte, so müßte schon längst eine energische Abwehrtätigkeit sich entwickelt haben.“

*sellschaft*, then, would be supporting such scholars financially. It was imperative, Lucas concluded, to both create a cadre of young scholars and unite the diffuse forces within Jewish scholarship. Eduard Baneth now took the floor, announcing the *Gesellschaft's* pursuit of four major tasks: distribution of grants to young scholars, help in and direct publication of important scholarly works, financing of chairs in Jewish studies, and the convening of general conferences on various questions of Jewish scholarship. Baneth also voiced regret at the abandonment of Judaism by many intellectuals and deplored the ongoing pseudo-scientific attacks in Germany on the Jewish religion. A scholarly organization such as the *Gesellschaft*, he indicated, could only validate Judaism's status as a worthy and honourable faith. We thus see that in the constitutional meeting *Wissenschaft des Judentums* was connected to very specific goals, not least of which was gaining respect within German academia.

At this point, Sigmund Maybaum took the floor, questioning the need to found yet another Jewish educational institution – better to support those already in existence, such as the *Zunz Stiftung*, whose four board members were conspicuously absent from the assembly. Earlier Philippson had suggested that Salomon Neumann, chairman and founder of the *Stiftung*, as well as chairman of the managing board of the *Lehranstalt*, should sign the appeal, but this expectation was not realized.<sup>292</sup> The *Stiftung*, Maybaum pointed out, was itself in dire need of more support. Furthermore, academic standards in Jewish scholarship were substandard; it was necessary to correct existing problems before incurring new ones. Since Maybaum had actively supported the *Vereinigung's* initiative towards founding a new organization, his protests were manifestly disingenuous, Lucas' arguments for establishing a truly independent scholarly forum with a broad range of contributors from across the German-speaking Jewish world retaining overwhelming support. In the end, only two persons voted against establishing the *Gesellschaft*, Maybaum and the orthodox rabbi Moritz.<sup>293</sup>

The appeal's twenty-one original signatories were now elected to an executive committee,<sup>294</sup> the first board of the *Gesellschaft* consisted of chairman Martin Philippson, vice-chairman Jakob Guttmann (1845–1919), secretary general Leopold Lucas, and vice-secretary Samuel Poznanski. Following the

<sup>292</sup> On Neumann's contribution to *Wissenschaft des Judentums*, see H. Cohen, 'Salomon Neumann', in *Jüdische Schriften* 2, pp. 425–438.

<sup>293</sup> This is indicated in a letter from Lucas to his former teacher Lazarus. See Leopold Lucas and Moritz Lazarus, 16.6.1902, Lazarus Archiv, JNUL, Arc.Ms.Var.298/97; no mention is made of dissenting voters in the minutes of the constitutional meeting; in Maybaum's case, possibly because after the vote he agreed to join on the executive committee.

<sup>294</sup> The committee would be expanded to include Rabbis Sigmund Maybaum, Samuel Abraham Posnanski, Philipp Bloch, Moritz Steckelmacher, and Pincus Bernhard Ziemlich as well as Immanuel Landsberger, a Glogau banker, who was elected treasurer.

vote, the assembly agreed to a constitution defining the new society's central goals – the same as those outlined by Baneth, although with no mention of conference sponsorship.<sup>295</sup>

In light of Martin Philippson's role in various other influential German-Jewish organizations at the time, it is understandable that Leopold Lucas desired his intimate and active participation in the *Gesellschaft's* founding. Philippson's assumption of the chairmanship was a validation of the new organization.<sup>296</sup> It may be the case that the ties between the *Institut zur Förderung der Israelitischen Literatur*, led as it was by Philippson's famous father, Ludwig, played more than a minor role in Philippson's decision to accept the chairmanship, particularly since some members viewed the *Gesellschaft* as "reincarnation" of the older organization.<sup>297</sup> These ties naturally strengthened a sense of continuity within *Wissenschaft des Judentums*. Martin Philippson himself, while acknowledging the close connection between his own and his father's organization, emphasized that he viewed both the *Literaturvereine* and the *Gesellschaft* as offshoots of the *Institut*, which he considered as essentially scholarly organizations.<sup>298</sup>

### Reactions to the founding of the *Gesellschaft*

Later, looking back at initial responses to the *Gesellschaft's* founding, Leopold Lucas would indicate that there was

malicious joy in the camp of the enemy, and pessimism in our own ranks. Then, suddenly, there was a proud jury of scholars of Judaism at our disposal, who systematically began comprehensive critical work. [With the founding of the *Gesellschaft*,] a change of mood was immediately noticeable.<sup>299</sup>

A good example of such a "change of mood" is offered by Gustav Karpeles, long-time critic of the state of Jewish *Wissenschaft*, who in the *Literarische Jahresrevue* of 1902 wrote:

What, then, has happened in the past year in this direction? It would be unfair to deny that we are on the way to recovery. Without doubt, a deep current drawing us towards knowledge and instruction is flowing through modern Judaism; a heightened spiritual

<sup>295</sup> See Satzungen des Vereins 'Gesellschaft zur Förderung der Wissenschaft des Judentums', *MGWJ* 48 (1904), pp. 125–128.

<sup>296</sup> See L. Lucas, 'Zum 25jährigen Jubiläum', p. 321.

<sup>297</sup> See 'Ausschußsitzung der GFWJ vom 3.1.1912', in *MGWJ* 55 (1911), p. 758.

<sup>298</sup> M. Philippson, 'Ludwig Philippson', in *JJGL* 14 (1911), p. 101.

<sup>299</sup> L. Lucas, 'Zum 25jährigen Jubiläum', pp. 329 f. "Es war Schadenfreude im Lager der Gegner und Pessimismus in unseren Reihen. Da stellte sich plötzlich ein so stolzer Areopag von Gelehrten dem Judentum zur Verfügung und begann systematisch die notwendige umfassende Arbeit ...".

movement is noticeable in all areas, within the population and scholarly circles ... We are no longer willing to abandon a significant part of *Wissenschaft des Judentums* ... to one-sidedness, hatred and prejudice, but rather insist on our good right and know how to support it scientifically. This is great progress, and it is necessary that we recognize it as such in order to remain courageous in light of the many confusing events of our time ... As one of the most gratifying events in this area, we welcome the *Gesellschaft zur Förderung der Wissenschaft des Judentums* ... and if it is possible to raise the means necessary for the fruitful development of such a society, then we can place our best expectations in this new founding.<sup>300</sup>

In 1904 Karpeles likewise observed that a decisive turn for the better had occurred for German-Jewish *Wissenschaft*. After acclaiming the popularizing work of the various *Vereine für jüdische Geschichte und Literatur*, he turned to the *Gesellschaft*:

Only the one who deliberately closes eye and ear to present events can deny that a great change has entered our spiritual life. The terms *Wissenschaft des Judentums* and “Jewish literature”, which in many circles were rather unknown, have now become almost popular. Credit for this change can be claimed solely by the *Vereine für jüdische Geschichte und Literatur*. But *Wissenschaft* has not been spared the reactionary effects. The fear, voiced time and again by many learned men, that half-knowledge might gain the upper hand and that reciprocal action between the recognition of our *Wissenschaft* and its furthering will not occur, has turned out groundless. The most visible proof to the contrary is the sympathetic interest the *Gesellschaft zur Förderung der Wissenschaft des Judentums* has found almost everywhere in both Germany and Austria. With the society’s founding, a new dawn has broken for *Wissenschaft des Judentums*. All the misgivings that have so far hindered a promotion of the work of this *Wissenschaft* can be remedied through the organization. Our scholars will no longer need to worry about how they publish their books. They will no longer be obliged to work for nothing, and even possibly pay for their own printing costs, in order to peddle the fruit of years of laborious work; in a word, *Schnorrerliteratur* will be at an end. ... Precisely the scholarly developments of the last years should have taught the great in Israel how foolish it is to coolly and casually gloss over *Wissenschaft des Judentums*; how much higher the regard for Jews will rise in the cultural world once substantial means are put at the movement’s disposal, in order to effectively refute all attacks on Judaism ...<sup>301</sup>

<sup>300</sup> Karpeles, ‘Literarische Jahresrevue’, in *JJGL* 6 (1903), pp. 18 f.

<sup>301</sup> Karpeles, in ‘Literarische Jahresrevue’, in *JJGL* 7 (1904), pp. 17 f. “Nur wer Aug’ und Ohr absichtlich den Erscheinungen der Gegenwart verschließt, kann es in Abrede stellen, daß ein großer Umschwung in unserm geistigen Leben eingetreten ist. Der Begriff einer Wissenschaft des Judentums und einer jüdischen Literatur, der weiten Kreisen bis dahin so ziemlich fremd war, ist jetzt geradezu populär geworden. Das Verdienst, diesen Umschwung hervorgerufen zu haben, dürfen die Vereine für jüdische Geschichte und Literatur für sich allein in Anspruch nehmen. Aber auch die Rückwirkung auf die Wissenschaft selbst ist nicht ausgeblieben. Die Befürchtung, die gelehrte Männer wiederholt ausgesprochen haben, daß die Halbwisserei überhand nehmen würde und daß eine Wechselwirkung zwischen unserer Wissenschaft und der Förderung derselben nicht stattfinden werde, ist grundlos geblieben. Denn der sicherste Gegenbeweis ist die freudige Teilnahme, die die “Gesellschaft zur Förderung der Wissenschaft des Judentums” fast überall in Deut-

In an essay on contemporary Jewish culture and community, the scholar Simon Bernfeld compared the passivity and quietism of the Jewish community in Germany starting in the mid-nineteenth century with more recent developments: “There has been, for some time now, a spiritual movement, a lively drive, a will to live ... we sense that we are experiencing the birth of a new spiritual epoch.”<sup>302</sup> According to Bernfeld, the strongest sign of such a rejuvenated Judaism was Zionism. He also noted positive signs among the non-Zionist majority, in particular a moment “to spread the knowledge and love of Judaism amongst our brothers”. After acknowledging the achievements of the *Vereine*, he referred to the founding of the *Gesellschaft* as reflecting the “desire of German Jewry to preserve Judaism not only as a religion, but as a cultural phenomenon”. It was this intention of reconnecting Jewish culture with the living community – neither an archaic culture nor an exhausted ideology – that distinguished the *Gesellschaft* from other scholarly associations. He observed that:

“It is certainly not pure scientific interest alone [which] brings together men of different social standing and from different religious convictions in order to further the people in knowledge of Judaism. Also the wish has been loudly expressed that the organization should expand its activities for *Wissenschaft* and life.”<sup>303</sup>

Comments such as the above were typical of the highly enthused reception – and great expectations – with which the *Gesellschaft* was greeted; its founders nevertheless were aware of the pressing need to demonstrate its value. Lucas contended that in light of the many letters written to the *Gesellschaft* from many different sources, it was necessary to clarify its position and restate its original goals. There seems to have been some confusion regarding its purpose – a confusion perhaps grounded in its stated intention of producing scholarly yet popular works. A related discussion took place at a board meeting of the

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schland sowohl als in Österreich gefunden hat. Mit der Begründung dieser Gesellschaft beginnt ein neuer Morgen für die Wissenschaft des Judentums. Alle Übelstände die bisher der Arbeit an dieser Wissenschaft, der Förderung und ihrer Verbreitung derselben hinderlich entgegentraten, können durch diese Gesellschaft gehoben [sic] werden. Unser [sic] Gelehrten werden nicht mehr in Sorge sein, wie sie ihre Bücher in die Öffentlichkeit bringen können. Sie werden es nicht mehr nötig haben, umsonst zu arbeiten und womöglich noch die Druckkosten zu bezahlen, um dann später mit ihren Werken, der Frucht jahrelanger mühevoller Arbeit, hausieren zu gehen; mit einem Wort, die Schnorrerliteratur wird aufhören. ... Gerade die wissenschaftlichen Ereignisse der letzten Jahre sollte die Großen in Israel darüber belehren, wie thöricht es sei, kühl und achtlos an der Wissenschaft des Judentums vorüber zu gehen, um wie viel höher aber das Ansehen der Juden in der Kulturwelt steigen möchte, wenn der Wissenschaft des Judentums große materielle Mittel zur Verfügung gestellt würden, um alle Angriffe auf das Judentum wirksam zu widerlegen ...”.

<sup>302</sup> S. Bernfeld, ‘Geistige Strömungen’, p. 29.

<sup>303</sup> *ibid.*, p. 31.

*Verband der Vereine für jüdische Geschichte und Literatur* in May 1903. While some were under the impression that the new society was directed towards scholars only, others understood its aim as a further popularizing of Jewish *Wissenschaft*.<sup>304</sup> In a lecture delivered on 27 December 1905, Lucas restated the society's main objectives, now adopted by the assembly. He added that the novelty of the society's plans lay in its intention of putting *Wissenschaft des Judentums* at the service of the Jewish society's educational needs.<sup>305</sup>

The ebullient reactions to this unparalleled effort reflect the unshakable belief in the power of rational arguments and objective scholarship. Not only would the Jewish community benefit immensely from the new enterprise; the protagonists were particularly hopeful that the work of the *Gesellschaft* would be noticed by educated Christians. Then it would only be a question of time and diligent scholarly work, so it was hoped, until the non-Jewish academic world would recognize the value of Jewish culture and appreciate the contributions of its people.

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<sup>304</sup> 'Bericht über die Tätigkeit der Vereine', in *JJGL* 7 (1904), pp. 17–19.

<sup>305</sup> L. Lucas, *Die Wissenschaft des Judentums*, p. 13.

## IX. The Liberal-Orthodox Conflict

By its very nature, the founding of the *Gesellschaft zur Förderung der Wissenschaft des Judentums* raised the issue of the relationship between Liberal and Orthodox Jewish scholars within the field of *Wissenschaft des Judentums*. Given the significant position that the *Wissenschaft* movement had occupied in German-Jewish controversies since the nineteenth century, the questions at work here were potentially divisive ones.

As suggested, from its beginnings *Wissenschaft des Judentums* included an effort to limit religious authority through *Wissenschaft*; arguably, the movement was inherently anti-rabbinic. The *Culturverein* had attempted to subordinate rabbinic authority to scholarship, Max Wiener thus stating that “all theoreticians of the *Culturverein* are agreed on the rejection of rabbinism.”<sup>306</sup> Accordingly, Leopold Zunz maintained that in order to achieve cultural progress, “the rule of the Talmud must be broken.”<sup>307</sup> Such opinions naturally did not further confidence in the new discipline on the Orthodox side, and it is not surprising that the first opponents of Jewish *Wissenschaft des Judentums* were Orthodox.

To what extent did *Wissenschaft des Judentums* offer shared intellectual ground for dialogue and debate among German-Jewish scholars with differing religious leanings – or were the differences simply too fundamental for any such common engagement? As discussed, the ideas of Samson Raphael Hirsch regarding the *Wissenschaft* movement were ahistorical – a crucial deviation from the prevailing view of the movement as a form of scholarship focused on the historical development of Jewish religion and culture. At the centre of Hirsch’s approach lay a belief that as long as the Torah’s divine authorship was denied, a prejudice-free form of *Wissenschaft* would be impossible. For his part, Hirsch Hildesheimer, who was an uncompromising supporter of the *Wissenschaft* movement, took great pride in the academic standards of the *Rabbinerseminar* being equal to those at the *Jüdisch-Theologisches Seminar* and *Hochschule*. He readily acknowledged the importance of modern philological and historical research, if only to argue against particular findings, and in general

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<sup>306</sup> M. Wiener, *Jüdische Religion im Zeitalter der Emanzipation*, p. 186.

<sup>307</sup> N. N. Glatzer (ed.), *Leopold and Adelheid Zunz: An account in letters. 1815–1885*, p. 13.

to defend his conviction that an educated modern Orthodoxy was fully compatible with *Wissenschaft des Judentums*.

From the time Orthodoxy began to develop its own approach to modern scholarship, a rivalry between the progressive and Orthodox streams of German Judaism seemed inevitable. With scholars affiliated with progressive Judaism being predominant in academic spheres, Orthodox Jews often found themselves on the defensive. The modernizing process they faced was perhaps epitomized in the publication of the first modern German translation of the Babylonian Talmud by Lazarus Goldschmidt (1871–1950) between 1897 and 1909. In the mid-1850s, Ludwig Philippson founded his *Bibelanstalt* in an attempt to counter the work of Christian missionaries; his celebrated annotated German translation of the Bible, published in 1853, was based on principles of modern scholarship, prompting an attack by the Orthodox rabbi Seligmann Bamberger, who then founded his own *Orthodox-Israelitische Bibelanstalt*, publishing a traditional translation of the Holy Scriptures in 1873.<sup>308</sup>

Such conflict, while essentially remaining on a popular level, was openly nurtured by all sides, discouraging those affiliated with one camp from working with the other. Nevertheless, not all German-Jewish organizations suffered from factionalism; in the nineteenth century, there was a remarkable degree of cooperation between Orthodox and Liberal scholars within *Wissenschaft des Judentums* itself – for instance among those working under the auspices of *Mekitze Nirdamim*. These individuals included the founder of modern Hebrew journalism Eliezer Lipman Silberman (1819–1882), who combined a conservative religious outlook with modernizing tendencies; Chief Rabbi Nathan Adler (1803–1890), Moses Montefiore (1784–1885), Joseph Zedner (1804–1871), who unified the Hebrew books at the British library, Michael Sachs (1808–1864), a Berlin rabbi who towed a conservative, middle path between the religious parties, and the Italian scholar Samuel David Luzzatto. Their cooperation was no doubt facilitated by the fact that problems related to the translating and editing of medieval manuscripts were not nearly as volatile as those related to biblical criticism or the question of the divine origin of the oral law. Moreover, the drive to save religious documents from oblivion itself rendered this organization into a collective enterprise – “a rendezvous of Jewish scholars of all religious trends.”<sup>309</sup> After a decade-long cessation of activity, *Mekitze Nirdamim* would be revived in 1885 through the efforts of Abraham Berliner, lecturer at the Berlin *Rabbinerseminar* and staunch supporter of the secessionist *Adass Isroel* congregation, which he chaired for many years.<sup>310</sup> In 1909 the organization would be again revived for a third

<sup>308</sup> Orthodox-Israelitische Bibelanstalt (ed.), *Übersetzung der fünf Bücher Mose*.

<sup>309</sup> *JP* 34 (1903), p. 501.

<sup>310</sup> Members now included M. Ehrenreich; Josef Derenbourg (1811–1895), an orien-



time, now by Samuel Poznanski, Aaron Freimann (1871–1948), and David Simonsen, all three active in the *Gesellschaft*, which offered much support to *Mekitze Nirdamim*.<sup>311</sup>

The inter-communal dynamic manifest in *Mekitze Nirdamim* points to a changed role of *Wissenschaft des Judentums* from a separating to a unifying force within German Jewry. It should also be noted that Orthodox scholars were initially among the members of the historical committee of the *Deutsch-Israelitischer Gemeinbund*, which published the *Zeitschrift für Geschichte der Juden in Deutschland*. In any event, the strongest example of Liberal-Orthodox cooperation was offered by the *Vereine für jüdische Geschichte und Literatur*, an organization defining popular venues for *Wissenschaft des Judentums*, where the personal persuasions of individual members seemed to be of no importance whatsoever. This certainly reflected the initiative of the institutional founder of the *Vereine*, Gustav Karpeles, who at one point directly stated that “religious and political guidelines” were “completely foreign to the various *Literaturvereine*, all of them pursuing the selfsame purpose of spreading knowledge of Jewish history and literature in all circles.”<sup>312</sup> Some representatives of German Orthodoxy became board members of the *Vereine*; many local branches were actually founded by Orthodox rabbis, the *Israelit* reporting not only on the activities of the Frankfurt branch but also on those of the national assemblies of the *Verband*.<sup>313</sup>

Nevertheless, the unifying example set by the *Literaturvereine* should not be mistaken as an indication that deep ideological differences had ceased to exist. Generally speaking it is both difficult and unfair to assign individuals to ideological categories. This is certainly the case regarding nineteenth and twentieth century German-Jewish theologians: a so-called “Liberal rabbi” may have been just as halacha-observant as his Orthodox or Conservative colleagues, and all would have in fact benefited from the same secular educa-

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talist and close friend of Abraham Geiger; the Russian orientalist David Günzburg (1857–1910); Salman Halberstamm (1832–1900); and the Russian scholar Albert Harkavy (1835–1919), who was then the head of the department of Jewish literature and oriental manuscripts at the Imperial Library in St. Petersburg and a leading figure in the progressive *Mefizej Haskala be-Jisrael*.

<sup>311</sup> In this third phase, Berliner continued to work for the organization on a voluntary level. Notably, in 1970 the still active society *Mekitze Nirdamim*, now based in Israel, was chaired by Gershom Scholem.

<sup>312</sup> ‘Mitteilungen aus dem Verband für jüdische Geschichte und Literatur’, in *JJGL* 2 (1899), p. 269.

<sup>313</sup> On the other hand, M. Breuer, *Orthodoxie*, p. 176, mentions that when two lecturers at the *Rabbinerseminar*, Barth and Hoffmann, became members of a Jewish literary society, the Frankfurt-based Orthodox journal *Jeshurun* expressed its disapproval. It is not entirely clear what society Breuer is referring to here. Possibly, he means the Berlin-founded *Akademischer Verein für jüdische Geschichte und Literatur*, but neither Barth nor Hoffmann appear in the membership lists.

tion.<sup>314</sup> Additional factors thus need to be considered when attempting to determine the affiliation of a rabbi or scholar, the most important of these certainly remaining, in the case of rabbis, the school of ordination. While rabbis at the *Hochschule* and the *Jüdisch-Theologisches Seminar* were free to practice in any community they wished, those ordained at the *Rabbinerseminar* were threatened with revocation of ordination if they practiced in a Liberal synagogue; a prohibition on serving in a community where, for example, organ music was performed was often included in this restriction. In turn, Orthodox rabbis were themselves divided between those who remained part of the established community (the *Gemeindeorthodoxie*) and those favouring separation from the Liberal majority through establishment of separate communities (*Separatorthodoxie* or *Austrittsorthodoxie*). Another indication of ideological sympathies was membership in one of the many rabbinical organizations. In 1885 the *Freie Vereinigung für die Interessen des Orthodoxen Judentums*, founded under Hirsch's auspices, viewed its main duty as the struggle against the Reform movement and advocated a separation from the main Jewish community. On the other hand, the *Allgemeiner Rabbinerverband*, founded in 1896, included non-separatist rabbis of both Liberal and Orthodox persuasion. In 1897, the non-separatist Orthodox *Verband traditionell-gesetzestreuer Rabbiner* was founded, followed in 1898 by the *Vereinigung der liberalen Rabbiner Deutschlands* and in 1906 by the *Verband orthodoxer Rabbiner*, a separatist organization that excluded anyone who was a member of the *Allgemeiner Rabbinerverband*.<sup>315</sup>

At the start of the twentieth century, one particular controversy underscored the potential conflict between an Orthodox and Liberal understanding of *Wissenschaft des Judentums*. The Polish scholar and historian Isaak Halevy (1847–1914) had become famous for his six-volume history of Judaism, *Dorot Ha-Rishonim*, which focused on the period dating from the writing of the Mishnah until the end of the Gaonic period.<sup>316</sup> In this work, Halevy displayed an immense knowledge of rabbinic literature whilst maintaining the highest scholarly standards; according to Mordechai Breuer, both his historical erudition and analytical skills surpassed those of any other scholar working in this field, including Zunz and Graetz.<sup>317</sup> One of Halevy's main goals was to disprove the main historicizing thrust of scholars such as Krochmal, Frankel and Graetz, and thus to defend through high scholarship – as paradoxical as it may seem – the pre-Haskalah tenet that the Talmud did not develop organically and adapt itself to social change, but rather had been revealed, pre-

<sup>314</sup> See M. Gruenewald, 'The Modern Rabbi', *LBI Year Book* 2 (1957), pp. 85–97.

<sup>315</sup> M. Meyer, *Deutsch-Jüdische Geschichte* 3, p. 114.

<sup>316</sup> I. Havely, *Dorot ha-rishonim: sefer divre ha-yomim livene Yisrael*.

<sup>317</sup> M. Breuer, *Orthodoxie*, p. 179.

sumably like the written Torah, to Moses on Sinai. For Halevy, traditional *Wissenschaft des Judentums* viewed Jewish history through alien lenses; he referred disparagingly to the eagerness shown by many scholars pursuing *Wissenschaft* to reject the authority of rabbinic Judaism for the sake of rationalizing the Jewish religion.<sup>318</sup>

German Orthodoxy enthusiastically welcomed Halevy's work. In particular, in various articles the *Israelit* celebrated the assertion that "*Wissenschaft* has returned to Orthodoxy" through the discrediting of all earlier, non-traditional scholars.<sup>319</sup> With the status and basic understanding of scholarly research at stake, heated arguments were now inevitable, and ideological differences resurfaced. Where champions of Liberalism complained that Jewish scholarship was ignored by Christian scholars, thus neglecting the relevance of Jewish cultural values, the supporters of Orthodoxy accused the Liberal faction of presenting a distorted picture of Judaism. Typical in this respect is the defence of Halevy's stance offered by the Orthodox rabbi of Bad Homburg, Heymann Kottek (1860–1912). He referred to a self-abasement manifest in the work on rabbinic history by many Jewish scholars – a lack of respect for their own past which he juxtaposed with Halevy's pride in his.<sup>320</sup>

In turn, despite Halevy's undisputed erudition, his work incurred the deep disfavour of the Liberal wing of *Wissenschaft des Judentums*, in particular as represented by the Breslau school, whose founders he had personally attacked.<sup>321</sup> This was the context for Ismar Elbogen's sharp rejection of the scholarly methods displayed by a self-proclaimed Orthodox *Wissenschaft des Judentums*, which he defined, following an examination of several points in Halevy's work, as a simple contradiction in terms. "It is ... a great error to assume that historical research can promote the Orthodox view", he insisted. "The peculiar [Orthodox] system of rigidity created in Germany can only be upheld through self-deception."<sup>322</sup> The dissemination of Elbogen's essay as a separate pamphlet, as well as the intense coverage the controversy attracted in the Liberal Jewish press, reflect the irritation of many representatives of Jewish *Wissenschaft*, who feared a distraction from the struggle for state recognition.

<sup>318</sup> A. Reichel, *Isaak Haley-Letters* (Heb.), pp. 112 f.

<sup>319</sup> *Der Israelit* 39 (1898), p. 467 f.; 42 (1901), pp. 331 f.

<sup>320</sup> *JP* 33 (1902), p. 13 f.

<sup>321</sup> A complete list of critics of *Dorot-Harishonim* can be found in A. Reichel, *Isaac Haley*, pp. 164 ff.

<sup>322</sup> I. Elbogen, 'Die neueste Konstruktion der jüdischen Geschichte', in *MGWJ* 46 (1902), pp. 1–48. Elbogen would maintain the position that "Orthodoxy and *Wissenschaft* are mutually exclusive" in 1922, while acknowledging individual Orthodox scholarly contributions. See I. Elbogen, *Ein Jahrhundert*, p. 7.

In any case the publication of Halevy's work encouraged Orthodox efforts to further an Orthodox *Wissenschaft*, although Halevy's arguments were received far more positively in Frankfurt than in Berlin. The difference between the neo-Orthodox communities in these two cities involved the more flexible approach taken by the Berlin circle, in part regarding innovations originating in non-Orthodox Jewish organizations. This leniency was often criticized in Frankfurt; in that city, the effort to establish a parallel Orthodox *Wissenschaft des Judentums* culminated with the founding of a new scholarly society at the beginning of 1902, the *Jüdisch-Literarische Gesellschaft*, largely on Halevy's initiative. This development initially met with scepticism within Liberal German Jewry,<sup>323</sup> although over time the society's activities were acknowledged and the scholarly value of its publications praised.<sup>324</sup> These activities contributed to an increased interest in Jewish *Wissenschaft* within Orthodox circles – by 1907 the society had over 550 members. The studies it sponsored were limited however, to historical analysis, carefully avoiding any hint of biblical criticism – a form of religiously-grounded self-censorship manifestly conflicting with the methodological claims staked by objective empirical research.

The introductory passage of the yearbook established by the *Jüdisch-Literarische Gesellschaft* in 1903 referred to an intent “to further *Wissenschaft des Judentums*” by engaging only in “serious research that holds our interest and not that which is based on unproven hypotheses and arbitrary conclusions.”<sup>325</sup> To be sure, the “unproven hypotheses” were a euphemism for any scholarship critical of traditional beliefs.

Despite the apparent conflict between the tenets of objective scholarship and those of faith, German Jewish Orthodoxy had developed enough self-confidence to demonstrate the legitimacy of its own *Weltanschauung* through *Wissenschaft*. While the sponsorship of scholarly competition in the form of cashprizes had been undertaken by other societies, the decision of the *Jüdisch-Literarische Gesellschaft* to support scholars during the course of their studies was something new. In addition, the society would support the publication of a limited number of books, including several installments of Halevy's *Dorot Harishonim*, Heymann Kotték's *Geschichte der Juden*, and Isaak Goldhor's *Die Geographie Palästinas (Admat Kodesch)*. The society's yearbook became a forum for smaller essays focussing on seventeenth and eighteenth century Jewish history, with book reviews written from an Orthodox perspective. Twenty-two volumes of the yearbook would be published between 1903 and 1932, all receiving significant coverage both from the Jewish press

<sup>323</sup> See for example *AZJ* 66 (1902), pp. 110 f.

<sup>324</sup> See for example *AZJ* 73 (1909), pp. 297 f.

<sup>325</sup> *JJLG* 1 (1903/5664), p. III. “... dass es nur die ernste Forschung sein darf, die sich nicht auf unbewiesene Hypothesen stützt und nicht mit willkürlichen Conjekturen arbeitet ...”.

and Christian scholarly journals such as the *Theologische Literaturzeitung*.<sup>326</sup> With the society having made clear that it did not intend to create a systematic picture of Jewish history, the *Jahrbuch* maintained its own focus on popularly-oriented (if still scholarly) essays with a traditional outlook. Many of these would be published in Hebrew.<sup>327</sup>

The dissonance between Berlin's and Frankfurt's Orthodoxy persisted, with Halevy making a point of defending the Hirschian doctrine of a monolithic approach to Jewish law and religion. His frequently disparaging remarks on what he considered an inferior level of Talmudic knowledge among students at the *Rabbinerseminar* further disturbed the already precarious relationship between the two groups.<sup>328</sup> In fact the only lecturer at the *Rabbinerseminar* who was also a member of the *Jüdisch-Literarische Gesellschaft* during the first years was Jakob Barth (1851–1914). While Abraham Berliner and Joseph Wohlgemuth (1867–1942) joined at a later stage, neither Hirsch Hildesheimer nor David Hoffmann ever did so. Against such a backdrop, the founding, likewise in 1902, of the *Gesellschaft zur Förderung der Wissenschaft des Judentums* in Berlin appears to suggest a more or less direct response to the emergence of the Orthodox *Gesellschaft*. As detailed above, of the twenty-one signatories of the appeal, none was a representative of any of the Orthodox camps. In his opening statement at the former society's constitutional assembly, Leopold Lucas did mention an effort on his part to approach (otherwise unidentified) Orthodox personalities; but he also acknowledged his failure to overcome the feeling shared by Orthodox scholars that “common ground for cooperation was absent.”<sup>329</sup> Similarly, the participants at the constitutional meeting had been exclusively former students and teachers at one of the non-Orthodox institutions or at least sympathizers with affiliated movements. (The one exception was David Moritz, who we will recall voted against founding the *Gesellschaft*.) Although most participants belonged to the Conservative movement, the meeting did include strong supporters of the extreme Liberal wing such as Heinemann Vogelstein and Ludwig Geiger. After the society's founding, the *Israelit* duly published a report whose disparaging tone was captured in its closing remark:

Since we have learned that in Berlin there are still some co-religionists who are neither society chairmen, nor committee members, nor editors of Jewish gazettes, we are justified in having high hopes that soon even more Jewish societies and gazettes will be founded in the capital of the Reich.<sup>330</sup>

<sup>326</sup> See for example *ThLZ* 18 (1910), pp. 554 f.

<sup>327</sup> *JJLG* 1 (1903/5664), pp. III–V.

<sup>328</sup> For the various points of friction within Orthodox circles, see D. Ellenson and R. Jacobs, ‘Scholarship and Faith: David Hoffman [sic] and his relationship to *Wissenschaft des Judentums*’, in *Modern Judaism* 8 (1988), pp. 27–40.

<sup>329</sup> *JP* 33 (1902), p. 438.

<sup>330</sup> *Der Israelit* 43 (1902), p. 1841.

This was followed two weeks later by a scornful editorial,<sup>331</sup> the basic thrust of which was reminiscent of Hirsch's categorical rejection of modern Jewish studies, encapsulated in a series of rather crudely articulated questions: "But what, for heaven's sake, in fact is *Wissenschaft des Judentums*, what is it concerned with and from what sources is it to be drawn, where can it be learned, what are its aids, its goals and purposes, its roots, its blossoms, in short: what is this thing called *Wissenschaft des Judentums*?" Such comments contrasted sharply with the positive reception offered the new society throughout the rest of the Jewish press.<sup>332</sup>

In fact, many of the issues concerning the *Gesellschaft* were considered to be of lesser concern for the Orthodox – particularly the discussion about the essence of Judaism, which was described as "something uncanny, diseased, smacking of the *fin de siècle*."<sup>333</sup> Another author stated that the "feverish search for the essence of Judaism" was "a sign of sickness, an unmistakable symptom of decay and decadence".<sup>334</sup> In general, both the problem of Christian anti-Jewish theology and the debate over the essence of religions were concerns within the realm of Liberal Judaism. The systematization at work in *Wissenschaft des Judentums* was in line with scholarly principles developed by the German Protestant academic world an approach that Orthodoxy did not believe should be emulated. In this manner, the founders of the *Gesellschaft* were confronted with the question of the legitimacy of modern Jewish studies.

Nevertheless, Leopold Lucas hoped that the *Gesellschaft* would emerge as a forum uniting Liberal and traditional scholars. His cautious optimism was closely connected to the society's ambitious plans to publish a systematic series of scholarly works encompassing the entire field of Jewish *Wissenschaft*. The idea for this *Grundriss der Gesamtwissenschaft des Judentums* had originated with Gustav Karpeles, who saw it as a belated response to Germany's Christian anti-Judaism; a corresponding committee (consisting of Karpeles, Bacher, Cohen, Güdemann, Bloch, Kroner, Lucas and Philippson) decided to limit the *Grundriss* to 36 full-length studies, with the option to expand if necessary.<sup>335</sup> In fact, only nine of these 36 volumes were completed. As the *Grundriss* project was founded upon the premise of complete academic freedom, cooperation was enlisted between scholars of different ideological backgrounds. The *Gesellschaft* would go to great lengths to avoid Liberal-Orthodox conflict – something already manifest in the decision not to identify the two votes which contested its founding at the constitutional meeting.

<sup>331</sup> *Der Israelit* 43 (1902), p. 1953.

<sup>332</sup> Cf. *AZJ* 66 (1902), p. 532; *IF* 45 (1902), p. 4; *JP* 33 (1902), pp. 438 f.

<sup>333</sup> *ibid.*, p. 1954.

<sup>334</sup> M. Breuer, *Orthodoxie*, p. 194.

<sup>335</sup> C. Wiese, *Wissenschaft des Judentums und protestantische Theologie im wilhemischen Deutschland*, p. 80.

Correspondingly, there was an active Orthodox role within the *Gesellschaft*, the Berlin *Rabbinerseminar* acquiring corporate membership, and many Orthodox scholars either joined the society, for instance, Josef Carlebach (1883–1942) and Louis Lewin (1868–1941) or successfully turned to it for subsidies.

Some Orthodox members of the *Gesellschaft* also contributed to the Orthodox *Jahrbuch* in Frankfurt. One particularly striking example is Eduard Baneth. Hailing from a highly traditional Jewish background and educated at the yeshiva of Pressburg, Baneth became one of Esriel Hildesheimer's favourite disciples while simultaneously studying at the University of Berlin. When his community in Krotoszyn decided to introduce organ-playing into the religious service, he left his rabbinic position in protest; although he subsequently became a lecturer at the *Lehranstalt*, he continued to be active in causes tied to Orthodox Judaism, the *Jüdische Presse* observing that this involvement had earned him "respect and appreciation in all religious camps". On his sixtieth birthday, both the lecturers at the *Rabbinerseminar* and his colleague Ismar Elbogen, together with former fellow students, publicly congratulated him for his scholarly achievements.<sup>336</sup> Having been, as indicated, one of the main speakers arguing for the society's establishment at its constitutional meeting, he contributed an *Einleitung in den Talmud* to the *Grundriss*. Later, the *Gesellschaft* would publish his *Maimonides als Chronologe und Astronom*.

Another major Orthodox contributor to the *Gesellschaft* was Simon Eppenstein his own *Grundriss* contribution was a *Geschichte der bibelexegetischen Literatur*. Eppenstein was born in Poland, and served as rabbi of Briesen, West Prussia, from 1889 to 1911. He was among the first members of the society to benefit from its financial support, for his preparation of Abraham Maimunis's Arabic commentary to the Pentateuch with a German translation.<sup>337</sup> Following his appointment as lecturer in Jewish history and biblical exegesis at the *Rabbinerseminar* in 1912, he continued to publish under the society's auspices, while at the same time writing many articles for the Orthodox *Jahrbuch*.

Similarly the Orthodox rabbi Samuel Klein (1886–1940) was responsible for the volume on the *Historische Geographie Palästinas*, having received a grant from the society in 1908 that allowed him to travel to the Middle East in order to research this topic first hand. Klein had studied at the *Rabbinerseminar*, where Hirsch Hildesheimer had sparked his interest in the geography of the land of Israel; between 1909 and 1913 he would serve as a rabbi in Bosnia. Another Orthodox rabbi, Kempen-based Louis Lewin, received support for printing and publishing his *Geschichte der Juden in Lissa*. Active in both the *Jüdisch-Literarische Gesellschaft* and the *Gesellschaft zur Förderung der Wissen-*

<sup>336</sup> *JP* 33 (1915), p. 384.

<sup>337</sup> See '1. Jahresbericht (1903) der GFWJ', in *MGWJ* 48 (1904), p. 59.

*schaft des Judentums* and among the first graduates of the *Rabbinerseminar*, Lewin also published regularly in the *Jahrbuch*, mainly on the history of Jews in Poland. The society went on to publish his study of *Die Landessynode der großpolnischen Judenschaft* in 1926. Additionally, when a revision of the original plan for the *Grundriss* became necessary in 1912, the new plan included the volume *Neuhebräische Poesie* by Heinrich Brody, Prague's Orthodox chief rabbi (and a *MGWJ* contributor).<sup>338</sup> Alexander Marx, himself a former student at the *Rabbinerseminar*, agreed to contribute *Nachbiblische jüdische Literatur bis zum Erlöschen des Gaonats*,<sup>339</sup> although neither of these volumes were ever published.

An additional project marked by Liberal-Orthodox collaboration was the *Germania Judaica*, an ambitious alphabetical collection of historical articles on Germany's Jewish communities. The project's Orthodox co-editor, Aaron Freimann, complemented his work on the *Germania Judaica* with articles on the codifier Asher ben Yehiel (1259–1328) and his followers, published in the *Jahrbuch*.<sup>340</sup> One member of *Germania Judaica*'s editorial board, Leopold Löwenstein (1843–1924), was the Orthodox rabbi of Mosbach, who simultaneously edited the monthly *Blätter für jüdische Geschichte und Literatur* for *Der Israelit*. Löwenstein likewise published many articles in the *Jahrbuch*,<sup>341</sup> while maintaining an active membership on the board of the *Gesellschaft* and contributing several articles to the *Monatsschrift*, mainly on modern German-Jewish history.<sup>342</sup> Another major project of the *Gesellschaft*, the publication of a comprehensive work on Maimonides, was a further example of successful Orthodox-Liberal cooperation, with four of the first volume's twelve articles written by Orthodox scholars.

Orthodox scholars were also represented within the *Gesellschaft* on a senior administrative level, with the Frankfurt rabbi Nehemiah Nobel (1871–1922)

<sup>338</sup> Brody also wrote a Hebrew article on the *Sefer ha-Tarshish* in *JJLG* 18, pp. 1 ff.

<sup>339</sup> '10. Jahresbericht der GFWJ', in *MGWJ* 57 (1913), p. 121.

<sup>340</sup> 'Ascher ben Jehiel. Sein Leben und Wirken', in *JJLG* 12, pp. 237 ff.; "Die Ascheriden (1267/1391)" in *JJLG* 13, pp. 142 ff.

<sup>341</sup> 'Zur Geschichte der Rabbiner in Mainz (1615–1848)', in *JJGL* 3, pp. 220 ff.; 'Zur Geschichte der Juden in Fürth', *JJLG* 6, pp. 153 ff.; VIII: pp. 65 ff.; X: pp. 49 ff.; X: pp. 396 ff.; 'Das Rabbinat in Hanau nebst Beiträgen zur Geschichte der dortigen Juden', *JJLG* 14, pp. 1 ff.; XIV: pp. 252 ff.

<sup>342</sup> 'Jüdische und jüdische-deutsche Lieder', *MGWJ* 38 (1894), pp. 78–89; 'Bemerkungen zum Stammbaum der Zunzschen Familie', *MGWJ* 38 (1894), pp. 571 ff.; 'Das Wiener Memorbuch in der Klaussynagoge zu Fürth', *MGWJ* 42 (1898), pp. 272–278; 'Notitz über die Nachkommen der Jair Chajjim Bacharach', *MGWJ* 43 (1899), pp. 432; 'Die Familie Aboab', *MGWJ* 48 (1904), pp. 661–701; 50 (1906), pp. 374 f.; 'Sterbetage', *MGWJ* 50 (1906), pp. 604–608; 'Stammbaum der Familie Gelderen', *MGWJ* 51 (1907), pp. 205–213; 'Die Familie Teomim', *MGWJ* 57 (1913), pp. 341–362; 'R. Juda Mehler II', *MGWJ* 61 (1917), pp. 285–291.



being elected to the executive board in 1913<sup>343</sup> and becoming vice-secretary general in 1920.<sup>344</sup> After his premature death, he was replaced by another Orthodox rabbi, Jacob Horovitz (1873–1939), also of Frankfurt.<sup>345</sup> And finally, the orientalist Eugen Mittwoch (1876–1948), a former student at the *Rabbinerseminar* and a prominent member of *Agudas Isroel*, became the *Gesellschaft's* last chairman in 1934. Mittwoch had previously received an annual subsidy for his work on a *Wörterbuch der Mischnassprache*; he had been assigned to write on epigraphics for the *Grundriss* and had been active on several of the society's committees. In 1930, he had represented the society at a rally of the *Shomre Shabbes* organization, whose goal was nothing less than combating “calendar reform” and encouraging Sabbath observance among ordinary people, particularly those engaged in trade.<sup>346</sup>

Despite the clear Orthodox presence and interdenominational cooperation within the *Gesellschaft*, its basic leanings remained predominantly Liberal, with many of its reference works becoming classics within the Liberal framework. These works included Leo Baeck's *Das Wesen des Judentums*, Kaufmann Kohler's *Systematische Theologie*, Hermann Cohen's *Religion der Vernunft aus den Quellen des Judentums*, and Martin Philippon's *Neueste Geschichte des Jüdischen Volkes*. This last publication would be subject to severe Orthodox criticism for having almost entirely neglected the productive role of neo-Orthodoxy in Germany. As Mordechai Breuer observed, hardly any Orthodox scholars contributed to the *Monatsschrift*<sup>347</sup> – a situation Breuer attributed to deep antipathy between Esriel Hildesheimer and the journal's founder Zacharias Frankel.<sup>348</sup> It would seem that participation in the *Grundriss* would have posed problems for at least some Orthodox scholars, as the project was meant to encompass the “whole range of Jewish scholarship”, including controversial fields such as higher biblical criticism and religious philosophy. From this point of view, the considerable Orthodox contribution to the society points to a remarkably open and pluralistic understanding of Judaism. In other words a German-Jewish scholarly elite had emerged that was increasingly interested in working beyond denominational lines for the greater communal good. The common language was *Wissenschaft des Judentums*, which, to some extent had evolved from a dividing into a unifying force. One under-

<sup>343</sup> See ‘Ausschußsitzung vom 31. Dezember 1913’, in *MGWJ* 58 (1914), p.128.

<sup>344</sup> See ‘Ausschußsitzung vom 13. Juni 1920’, in *MGWJ* 64 (1920), p. 159.

<sup>345</sup> See ‘17. Jahresbericht der GFWJ’, in *MGWJ* 64 (1920), p. 238. At the time, it was even possible that a *Dayan* of the *Beth Din* of London's United Synagogue, Rabbi Asher Feldman, could become the *Gesellschaft's* contact man, encouraging many new members. Feldman had received his education from Jews' College and the University College of London.

<sup>346</sup> ‘Vorstandssitzung vom 08.12.1930 der GFWJ’, in *MGWJ* 74 (1930), p. 479.

<sup>347</sup> M. Breuer, *Orthodoxie*, p. 176.

<sup>348</sup> See E. Hildesheimer, *Briefe*, pp. 25 ff.

lying factor at play was certainly the sense that strengthening broader Jewish identity and self-assurance was more important than fundamental denominational differences. Another, central explanation involves a shared German *Bildungsideal*. While nearly all scholars supporting the *Gesellschaft* had graduated from a modern theological seminary, each such institution, whether Liberal, Conservative, or Orthodox, required their students to earn doctorates from German universities. Their work within *Wissenschaft des Judentums* involved the practical application of academic methods taught at these universities. Increasingly the identification with shared scholarly values was proving stronger than issues of religious dissent. German higher education had become an improbable common denominator for Jewish scholars of otherwise opposing philosophical and theological worldviews.

## X. The activities of the *Gesellschaft zur Förderung der Wissenschaft des Judentums*

### The Organization of the *Gesellschaft*

The *Gesellschaft zur Förderung der Wissenschaft des Judentums* was organized along democratic principles in that each member had one vote, regardless of the amount of money he or she had contributed. Member organizations – so-called *Körperschaften* – were entitled to one vote for every 300 marks contributed. Twenty-five board members and two financial examiners were elected during the annual general public meeting, and the board of directors could co-elect up to thirty-six additional members. The board was the society's governing body and elected the chairman, the secretary general, and the treasurer, as well as their replacements. The chairman and the secretary general structured the board and represented the organization externally.<sup>349</sup>

The most important roles of the board were to coordinate the society's different projects and put forth suggestions regarding the payment of annual grants, subsidies, and book publications to the different expert sub-committees – *Fachkommissionen* – that had been established to counter the complaints about low standards within Jewish *Wissenschaft* and to promote higher ones. Several significant decisions were reached at the board's second committee meeting, held on 21 and 22 April 1903. One of these was entry into a collaborative arrangement with the *Zunz Stiftung* – a clear effort to counter any friction created by the society's founding. Henceforth the *Stiftung* would send one of its representatives to the society's board meetings, and this member would have a vote. Another such decision was to take over the financially troubled, and yet pre-eminent, *Monatsschrift für die Geschichte und Wissenschaft des Judentums* after the society was approached regarding this matter by its editor Markus Brann. Founded by Frankel, the *Monatsschrift* had been edited by Graetz from

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<sup>349</sup> The membership of the board of the *Gesellschaft* was as follows: Chairman 1902–1916: Martin Philippon; 1917–1919: Jakob Guttmann; 1919–1932: Moritz Sobernheim; 1933–1938: Eugen Mittwoch. Vice Chairman 1902–1916: Jakob Guttmann; 1917–1923: Phillip Bloch; 1923–1938: Leo Baeck. Secretary General 1902–1906: Leopold Lucas; 1907–1909: Gustav Karpeles; 1910–1916: Phillip Bloch; 1917–1938: Ismar Elbogen.

1869 to 1887 and was then revived by Brann and David Kaufmann in 1892; Brann continued to publish the journal after Kaufmann died in 1899. Had the society not taken over the journal, its continued publication would have been doubtful.<sup>350</sup> Society members were now to receive the journal free of charge, with other publications sold at a discount of 30 per cent.

### The Popularization and Professionalization of *Wissenschaft des Judentums*

Against the particular socio-historical backdrop outlined above, the society was determined to make *Wissenschaft des Judentums* more accessible to interested lay people.<sup>351</sup> The desire to bridge the gap between life and vocation, evident throughout its own publications and literature, became the overriding ethos of the *Gesellschaft*. Despite the high level of scholarship projected for the *Grundriss*, those involved in the project intended to make even its publications “accessible to the educated non-expert public in particular.”<sup>352</sup> Likewise, the *Gesellschaft* planned to rid the *Monatsschrift* “of its dry tone and reconnect it with the living forces of Judaism”<sup>353</sup> – this entailing the introduction of less specialized articles,<sup>354</sup> together with a regular inclusion of book critiques and annual bibliographical reviews.<sup>355</sup>

Importantly, this movement towards the popularization of Jewish *Wissenschaft* was accompanied by a simultaneous movement towards its professionalization. As we have seen, objective circumstances made it nearly impossible for most Jewish scholars to render the academic study of Judaism into a career. For the most part, these scholars had to finance their own projects, often depending on sponsorship from within the Jewish community or even paying their own publication fees. This shortcoming was not only related to the anti-Jewish attitude of the universities’ theological faculties, rather, it originated in

<sup>350</sup> I. Elbogen, ‘Ein hundertjähriger Gedenktag’, p. 97.

<sup>351</sup> See ‘Satzungen des Vereins *Gesellschaft zur Förderung der Wissenschaft des Judentums*’, § 9: “Die vom Verein herauszugebenden Schriften müssen streng wissenschaftlichen Charakter tragen.”

<sup>352</sup> See *MGWJ* 47 (1903), p. 572.

<sup>353</sup> Elbogen, ‘Zum Jubiläum’, p. 4.

<sup>354</sup> See ‘7. Jahresbericht der GFWJ’, in *MGWJ* 54 (1910), p. 125. The editors maintained that among the received articles there were almost as many popular-scientific articles as there were strictly scholarly ones. See ‘8. Jahresbericht der GFWJ’, in *MGWJ* 55 (1911), p. 121.

<sup>355</sup> Another of the society’s moves towards popularization was a decision that each member would receive a copy of the *Jahrbuch für jüdische Geschichte und Literatur*. In general the new approach was extremely well received. See ‘9. Jahresbericht der GFWJ’, in *MGWJ* 55 (1911), p. 755.

part with the seminaries, which saw rabbinic education as their main responsibility. In response, as articulated in its founding appeal, the *Gesellschaft* was determined to:

primarily support talented young people who have completed their education at both a university and one of the theological seminaries and whose inclination and vocation moves them towards scholarly work. They will be endowed with sufficient stipends, assuring us of an adequate base of teaching support, which we desperately need in order to educate our theologians and present our scholarship with dignity.<sup>356</sup>

At the same time, the *Gesellschaft* committed itself to a process of remuneration for contributions to *Wissenschaft des Judentums*. This took the form of payments for articles in the *Monatsschrift* and at last the disbursement of a salary to its editor Markus Brann. In line with the intentions articulated in the appeal, it also allowed for systematic support of research projects – evaluated by the *Fachkommissionen* – and the printing and publishing of books. In order to qualify for support, the research had to be in one of the following fields: systematic theology (ethics and religious philosophy), Hebrew language study and biblical exegesis, Talmud and codices, history (political, legal, economical, cultural), literary and religious history, practical theology, or apologetics. The eleven *Fachkommissionen* covered the following subjects: systematic theology, ethics and religious philosophy, Hebrew linguistics, biblical exegesis, Talmud and codices, history up to the destruction of the Second Temple, history from the destruction of the Second Temple to the end of the Gaonate, history from the end of the Gaonate to the age of Mendelssohn, history from the age of Mendelssohn to the present, literary and religious history, practical theology (pedagogics), and apologetics.<sup>357</sup> As in the universities, scholars could also receive annual subsidies and funding for research trips, access to necessary manuscripts and secondary sources, as well as for travel expenses to and from meetings of the *Gesellschaft*. Following the example of academic institutions, assistant researchers were employed for larger scale scholarly works such as the *Corpus Tannaiticum*. Likewise strict guidelines were set for research proposals; works had to “present the results” or “contain essential new results” of current research. A significant number of applicants were in fact turned down by the *Fachkommissionen*. Finally, in keeping with the practice of other German academic organizations, a scholarly lecture became a fixed feature of the annual meetings, which were meant to serve as a forum for the coordination of relevant research.<sup>358</sup>

<sup>356</sup> *AZJ* 66 (1902), p. 398.

<sup>357</sup> See ‘1. Jahresbericht der GFWJ’, in *MGWJ* 48 (1904), pp. 57 f.

<sup>358</sup> See Appendix 3. On the need to promote Jewish *Wissenschaft* through such measures, see ‘Satzungen des Vereins *Gesellschaft zur Förderung der Wissenschaft des Judentums*’, § 11. See also ‘Ausschußsitzung der GFWJ vom 24.06.1912’, in *MGWJ* 56 (1912), pp. 511 f.

## Membership and Finances of the *Gesellschaft*

The *Gesellschaft's* statutes offered three membership options: sponsors (*Stifter*) who had donated at least a one-time amount of 1000 marks, permanent members who had donated a one-time amount of at least 300 marks, and members who paid an annual membership fee of eight marks.<sup>359</sup> Both individual and group memberships were possible, the latter being the most common. Membership included a free subscription to the *Monatsschrift* and the *Jahrbuch* of the *Verband der Vereine für jüdische Geschichte und Literatur*; all other *Gesellschaft* publications could be purchased at a seventy per cent discount. Sponsors and members who paid at least one hundred marks annually received a free copy of any book published by the *Gesellschaft*;<sup>360</sup> it was further agreed to acquire books in bulk in order to distribute as much literature as possible and offer members a reduced price.

While the founding appeal had been a success, by 1904 Leopold Lucas could point to “the great difficulty in interesting wider circles in our work and stimulating them to more generous financial participation.”<sup>361</sup> Repeated calls for more support reflected the challenge of maintaining the interest of a lay public. The *Gesellschaft* thus took public relations very seriously and steady efforts towards outreach were manifest in the years leading up to World War I. For the first several years, the society hired Hamburg Rabbi Nathan Max Nathan to conduct extensive nationwide lecture tours focusing on local B'nai Brith lodges hoping to recruit additional members. To this end trips were initiated to Worms, Frankfurt and Breslau in order to meet with political representatives of city councils. Another successful strategy included newspaper advertising, announcing annual committee meetings and new publications throughout the Jewish press. Attracting new members was in any event mainly achieved through personal contact, with existing members recruiting new ones. The *Gesellschaft's* board did its best to maintain ties with members, initiating a range of strategies to this effect, annual assemblies – themselves announced in the Jewish press – for both elections and raising a wide range of issues,<sup>362</sup> supporting frequent public lectures by prominent members, mainly in the framework of the *Literaturvereine*, and lastly, engaging contact persons in various cities and countries to propagate the *Gesellschaft's* activities and collect membership fees.

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– The *Gesellschaft* also decided to hire one professional administrator, Dr. Nathan M. Nathan, who served as vice general secretary; later, an additional full-time secretary was hired.

<sup>359</sup> ‘Satzungen des Vereins’, § 3.

<sup>360</sup> *ibid.*, § 10.

<sup>361</sup> ‘3. Jahresbericht der GFWJ’, in *MGWJ* 50 (1906), p. 125.

<sup>362</sup> See letter of Nathan to Philippson, 13.02.1908, CJ GE 2097, Nr. 0483.

## Membership of the Gesellschaft:

1903: 305	1926: 1531
1904: 584	1927: 1598
1905: 715	1928: 1600
1906: 837	1929: 1633
1907: 958	1930: 1649
1908: 1105	1931: 1458
1909: 1209	1932: 1375
1910: 1278	1933: 1325
1911: 1360	1934: 1337
1912: 1495	1935: 1454
1913: 1554	1936: 1403
1914: 1650	1937: 1279
1915–1924 (no information available)	1938: 1248
1925: 1561	

In considering the fluctuation of membership over time, it should be noted that the above list does not reflect public awareness of the *Gesellschaft* in absolute numbers. As many Jewish communities and organizations (themselves with large memberships) joined the society collectively, the distribution of its publications and the *Monatsschrift* was considerably larger than the numbers given here. Nevertheless, they do indicate certain developmental trends in the different stages of the society's history. For example, up until World War I, a steady, almost linear increase in membership can be observed, reflecting the increased general interest in *Wissenschaft des Judentums*. Membership declined for the first time in 1915. This was due to three factors: the economic hardship of members as a consequence of the war, the fact that former members were now living in "enemy countries" (and could no longer be counted as members) and often could not even be reached, and the service and deaths of many members on the battlefields.<sup>363</sup> Perhaps less significantly, publicity aimed at gaining new members ceased during the war years.

The numbers between 1916 and 1921 can only be estimated and are based on various comments by the board, since no precise information was available for those years. The indication is that the membership did not diminish during this period. A factor explaining the apparent rise in 1918 is the inclusion of former "enemy countries" in the membership lists for that year. In the postwar years, membership stabilized at around 1,600, numbers dropping sharply in 1931 and 1932 but catching up again by 1935. This appears to re-

<sup>363</sup> '13. Jahresbericht der GFWJ', in *MGWJ* 59 (1915), p. 311.

flect legal exclusion of German Jewry from non-Jewish social and cultural organizations as a result of the Nuremberg laws. Membership fluctuation was particularly high in the 1930s, perhaps due to emigration. In light of the economic depression in that decade's first years, the board tried to stabilize membership by taking financial hardship into consideration, exempting members from payments or reducing fees.

In his jubilee speech of 1927, Leopold Lucas had already confirmed that it had become more difficult to recruit new members. The energy Lucas invested in the *Gesellschaft* is evident in the figures from the *Gesellschaft's* inception; in the first annual report of 1903, his home town, Glogau, had sixty-one members distributed over five society branches – a reflection of the importance of individual contacts; in contrast, Berlin had forty-nine members and five such branches (two years later the figure for the capital was 118 members and nine branches).

Since detailed membership lists were usually published with the annual reports, we can ascertain that while no woman was ever made a member of any of the society's committees, female membership did increase over the years. In 1904, almost two per cent of members in Berlin were women. By 1918, this number had more than doubled, which might be considered unusual for the time, although it should be noted that the Berlin Jewish community was possibly the most progressive in Germany.

In a strictly business sense, the *Gesellschaft* was only a moderate success, depending mainly on the financial support of the Jewish communities and the B'nai Brith lodges. In the first quarter of 1903, the communities of Breslau, Frankfurt am Main, and Berlin each contributed 1,000 marks to help launch the organization. The first annual report counted forty-three communities that had joined collectively, as did the *Deutsch-Israelitischer Gemeindebund* and many of the local *Vereine für jüdische Geschichte und Literatur*. Altogether the organization received around 8,500 marks in donations by the end of the first year.<sup>364</sup> An additional 10,000 marks was contributed by wealthy members, with Martin Philippon's brother, the general council Franz Philippon, making the most generous donation of 5,000 marks (these funds were placed in an interest-bearing account).

The society's annual reports reveal both the contributions of members and income from sales of the *Monatsschrift* and other publications. The financial development of the society until World War I was relatively stable, with an average annual income of just above 30,000 marks. A significantly higher income in 1910 was due to additional donations by Edmund de Rothschild, Franz Philippon, and Marie Errera amounting to 14,000 marks, after special efforts were made to secure additional funds for the *Corpus Tannaiticum*. Still, only

<sup>364</sup> '1. Jahresbericht der GFWJ', *MGWJ* 48 (1904), p. 61.



five years after its founding, the society was so short of funds it was unable to pay any subsidies for that year.<sup>365</sup> The annual reports repeatedly state that many worthy projects had to be suspended, and that the need for such support was much higher than the available funding.

Until the outbreak of World War I, the general view of the development of the *Gesellschaft* was extremely positive and the board members observed that “interest is growing and the high goals of our *Gesellschaft* are being conveyed into ever wider circles.”<sup>366</sup> At the end of 1909 the annual report stated that:

Not only is there a stronger participation among our co-religionists in *Wissenschaft des Judentums*, but we also see that our publications are well-received by the scholarly world, and that – as is the case with all true *Wissenschaft* – they serve to enlighten and to destroy prejudice, a fact which, with time, will not fail to influence the destiny of Judaism. It is thus the duty of each of us to assist the *Gesellschaft* through recruitment of new members to broaden its effectiveness.<sup>367</sup>

## Publications of the *Gesellschaft* 1902–1916

### The *Grundriss der Gesamtwissenschaft des Judentums*

#### 1. The Project’s Goals and General Organization; Contributors’ Backgrounds

The *raison d’être* and goals of the *Grundriss* – investigation of key areas of Jewish scholarship on the highest level, combined with accessibility of this material to an educated general public – have been outlined above. The draft of the *Grundriss* covered all fields of the *Wissenschaft des Judentums*; in the project’s execution, there was steady emphasis on authors’ responsibility for their own works, with a note added to each published text indicating that the contents in no way reflected the *Gesellschaft*’s views. This stance can be understood as a reflection of the society’s interest in maintaining non-partisanship in questions of potential inner-Jewish conflict. This concern emerged as paramount, in view of the fact that as the most ambitious project within German-Jewish *Wissenschaft* at the start of the twentieth century, the *Grundriss* would dominate, the *Gesellschaft*’s activities over the thirty-six years of its existence.<sup>368</sup>

Following their presentation in 1903, the plans for this ambitious scholarly project were generally welcomed by the Jewish academic world. Rather ef-

<sup>365</sup> See ‘Ausschußsitzung der GFWJ vom 23.12.1907’, *MGWJ* 52 (1908), p. 127.

<sup>366</sup> See ‘6. Jahresbericht der GFWJ’, *MGWJ* 53 (1909), p. 125.

<sup>367</sup> See ‘7. Jahresbericht der GFWJ’, *MGWJ* 54 (1910), p. 125.

<sup>368</sup> For a complete table of the contents of the *Grundriss*, see Appendix 2.

fusively, its chairman Martin Philippon referred to “the greatest literary undertaking our religious community has known in centuries”, laying out the project’s purpose as follows:

The *Grundriss der Gesamtwissenschaft des Judentums* is intended to give a large circle of readers a strictly scholarly yet at the same time comprehensive idea of the actual standing of all those scholarly disciplines concerned with the religion, history, literature, holy tongue, philosophy, and cult of the Israelite tribe and its beliefs. In this way the educated world will be presented with an accurate picture of Judaism in past and present in its essence and goals as well as in its position within general human culture and spiritual development. The most important Jewish scholars educated within the German system have agreed to collaborate.<sup>369</sup>

Following our earlier look at Orthodox participation in the organization, an overview of the general educational and religious backgrounds of the forty-five men who agreed to contribute, supplies a necessary perspective. At the time that the plans for the *Grundriss* were drafted, a little less than fifty per cent of these men – twenty-one in total – were active rabbis, perhaps suggesting a tendency towards professional, non-cleric scholarship. Eleven of the laymen were, however, employed at one of the following theological seminaries: the *Jüdisch-Theologisches Seminar* in Breslau (Brann), the *Lehranstalt* in Berlin (Baneth, Elbogen), the *Israelitisch-Theologische Lehranstalt* in Vienna (Schwarz, Büchler), the *Landesrabbinerschule* in Budapest (Bacher, Blau, and Goldziher), the Jewish Theological Seminary in New York (Ginzberg), the Hebrew Union College in Cincinnati (Kohler), and the *Collegio Rabbinico* in Florence (Chajes). At the time Kellermann, Krauss, and Stern were instructors in various Jewish institutions, and Caro, Cohn, Geiger, Landauer, and Harkavy were university lecturers or had related academic positions; Cohen was Professor at the University of Magdeburg. Buber, Epstein, and Philippon were private scholars, and Karpeles was otherwise employed. As with participants in the *Gesellschaft’s* opening appeal, the religious and educational background of these men was overwhelmingly Conservative, the movement associated with positive-historical Judaism. Twenty-seven of them had either received their education at a seminary identifying with Conservative Judaism or later taught there.

Let us now consider the material meant to be covered in the *Grundriss*. As can be seen in Appendix II, the project was divided into four sections: linguistics, historical and literary topics, systematic topics, and practical topics. Of these, the linguistics section is perhaps most striking on account of its acknowledgment of modern Hebrew as a distinct domain of study. The largest section by far, with a rich range of sub-sections, was allotted to historical topics, with a relatively small role played by critical biblical studies, a field

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<sup>369</sup> See ‘Grundriss der Gesamtwissenschaft des Judentums’, appendix to S. Krauss, *Talmudische Archäologie* 1 (Leipzig 1910).

traditionally neglected in Jewish scholarly circles. The history section of the *Grundriss* did include two then novel subsections, economic history and mystical literature. Hence the importance of the Kabbalah within Jewish popular-esoteric traditions seems to have been acknowledged some time before Gershom Scholem himself turned to this topic. Notably, the second lecture sponsored by the *Gesellschaft*, given by Philipp Bloch (1841–1923), was entitled *Die Kabbala auf dem Höhepunkte ihrer Entwicklung und ihre Meister*.

A number of the auxiliary historical sections, chronology, study of sources, epigraphics, palaeography, and numismatics underscore the expanded perspective *Wissenschaft des Judentums* had gained over recent decades – certainly the result of growing influence by German Protestant scholarship and the rise of secular scientific history as a discipline. The same expansion seems at work in the incorporation of comparative topics into the systematic topics section, which was intended to develop a sweepingly systematic description of Judaism, thus responding to the fragmentation of research and scholarship within Jewish *Wissenschaft*. In this respect, it should be noted that German theological faculties were still far from including comparative studies in their curriculum. Finally, the section on practical topics was meant as a regenerative tool; a statement that the *Gesellschaft* intended to put itself at the service of the Jewish community, both pedagogically and in terms of concrete organizational and administrative problems. This rather odd insertion under the rubric of practical theology pointed perhaps to a sense that in one way or another, there was an onus to include practical topics in its basic mission statement.

Curiously, the society expected the entire *Grundriss* to be completed within five years. When it became clear that such hopes had been excessively ebullient, optimism was retained, with a new completion date set for the end of 1915. Although, as indicated, only nine out of the thirty-six planned volumes of the *Grundriss* would ever be published, many of these became standard works within Jewish scholarship. Just as importantly from a historical perspective, even unfinished the *Grundriss* attests to a sustained effort by its initiators, in the general framework of a crisis of learning, to confront and resist the difficulties placed in the way of Jewish scholarship by German Protestant academic culture. At the same time the *Grundriss* was an impressive attempt to reach the educated public by synthesizing the fragmented pieces of scholarly research.

2. Published Volumes of the *Grundriss*

Moritz Güdemann: *Jüdische Apologetik* (1906)

As a reflection of the strongly defensive character of the *Gesellschaft*, the fact that one of the first books planned for publication as part of its most ambitious enterprise was Moritz Güdemann's *Jüdische Apologetik* is certainly no coincidence. The book represents one of the earliest sustained efforts in modern Jewish scholarship to defend Judaism against Christian theological attacks. Although scheduled to be published in 1904 by Veit & Co., the book actually first appeared in 1906, published – perhaps at Leopold Lucas' initiative – by the Carl Flemming Verlag in Glogau,<sup>370</sup> after the *Gesellschaft* board unsuccessfully threatened Veit & Co with legal action for not bringing the book to press, a sign of both the delicate nature of the subject matter and the urgency with which publication was viewed by the *Gesellschaft*.<sup>371</sup> The delay meant that another similarly-themed publication that the *Gesellschaft* sponsored, Josef Eschelbacher's *Das Judentum und das Wesen des Christentums*, would be published before Güdemann's book.<sup>372</sup> In any event the publication delay did not diminish its reception or impact.

*Jüdische Apologetik* is divided into seven chapters, the first two considering the written law and oral tradition, the two elements traditionally seen as the foundation of Judaism. Arguing that Jewish law was based on both prophetic and popular Jewish traditions, Güdemann maintained that the Pharisaic legal system was a continuation of the prophetic commandments. In a third chapter, he explored the central question of whether Judaism was a national or universalistic religion. This was an explosive question, as Jewish particularistic claims could be and were often used to deny a Jewish capacity for assimilation into “foreign” cultures and thus, potentially, the emancipatory pact in toto. Güdemann made it clear on numerous occasions that he regarded himself as German, and could not understand why a Jew having grown up in Germany should regard himself as part of a Jewish nation.<sup>373</sup> A subsequent chap-

<sup>370</sup> Güdemann thus expresses his gratitude to Lucas for the efforts he took in seeing to the book's corrections and printing. See M. Güdemann, *Jüdische Apologetik* (Glogau 1906), p. XX.

<sup>371</sup> 'Ausschußsitzung der GFWJ vom 10.07.1905', in *MGWJ* 49 (1905), p. 507. In fact, this work was ready to be printed in May 1905; see '3. Jahresbericht der GFWJ', in *MGWJ* 50 (1906), p. 125.

<sup>372</sup> J. Eschelbacher, *Das Judentum und das Wesen des Christentums* (Berlin 1905). See also idem, *Das Judentum im Urteil der modernen protestantischen Theologie* (Berlin 1907). Michael Friedländer's *Geschichte der jüdischen Apologetik als Vorgeschichte des Christentums: Eine historisch-kritische Darstellung der Propaganda und Apologie im Alten Testament und in der hellenistischen Diaspora* had been published in 1903.

<sup>373</sup> See J. Fraenkel, 'Güdemann und Herzl', p. 80.

ter turns to the relationship between God and man, and to a rebuttal of the common Christian view of Judaism as centred around the notion of a vengeful God. The book's last sections discuss both Jewish law as an educational and pedagogic institution and the Jewish religion in relation to its ethical expression. The work concludes with an analysis of the Jewish understanding of the world in the framework of messianism and the future of humankind.

Güdemann's book was not the only *Gesellschaft*-sponsored response to the biases of Christian theology. In fact, the society's first publication, Leo Baeck's *Das Wesen des Judentums* of 1905, would remain the most prominent Jewish reply to Harnack's *Das Wesen des Christentums*. Dieter Adelman has suggested that the exclusion of Baeck's work from the *Grundriss* may have reflected its focus on strict scholarship, in this case constituting itself an investigation of apologetics and not an apologetic oeuvre as such.<sup>374</sup> It should be kept in mind, however, that with its various subdivisions the *Grundriss* was a meticulously planned enterprise, with Güdemann having been assigned to write about Jewish apologetics from the outset, whereas Baeck had agreed to write a history of the Jewish religion. In light of the intention to cover the entire domain of *Wissenschaft des Judentums* in its studies, publication of two books on the same topic may have been frowned upon.

In this period, apologetics had long since become a solidly established subdivision of both Protestant and Catholic theology. Within Jewish scholarship, apologetics was also treated with respect, as Judaism's intellectual defence, traceable to the second century CE,<sup>375</sup> against anti-Jewish ideas and polemics. As late as 1927, the *Jüdisches Lexikon* defended its necessity, while also indicating that recently its value "has been questioned, as it has been claimed that permanent defence deprives the religion of its originality and continuity ... therefore the exaggeration and untruthfulness which is sometimes visible has justly been criticized". For this reason, the *Jüdisches Lexikon* observed, "[T]he goal of any productive apologetics must be to overcome the polemical, and the objective appreciation of opponents and their own convictions must be laid forth in an impeccable and clear fashion. This defines the positive duty of apologetics."<sup>376</sup>

It is the case that the first publications of the *Gesellschaft* had legitimate and understandable apologetic tendencies; these contributed significantly to the impetus of the revival of Jewish *Wissenschaft* that was underway.<sup>377</sup> But contrary to what Ismar Schorsch has argued, following Gershom Scholem, it is not the case that such tendencies would define the society's program as a

<sup>374</sup> See D. Adelman, 'Die Religion der Vernunft', p. 26.

<sup>375</sup> For a history of Jewish apologetics see *JL* 1, pp. 391–396.

<sup>376</sup> *ibid.*, p. 397.

<sup>377</sup> See C. Wiese, *Wissenschaft des Judentums*, pp. 80 ff.

whole.<sup>378</sup> However, in speaking of a “preoccupation” by the leaders of the *Gesellschaft* “with the character of Protestant scholarship on Judaism”,<sup>379</sup> Schorsch is basically on target. This preoccupation was manifest in the above-cited works, one of their foremost concerns being an articulation of a Jewish response to Harnack’s *Wesen des Christentums*.

Moritz Güdemann, responsible for the *Apologetik* section of the *Grundriss*, was at that time the Chief Rabbi of Vienna. Born in 1835 in Hildesheim, Prussia, he was among the first students to study in the newly-opened *Jüdisch-Theologisches Seminar*, under Heinrich Graetz, Zacharias Frankel, and Jacob Bernays (1824–1881), together with the mathematician Benedikt Zuckermann (1818–1891). Güdemann received his rabbinic ordination in 1862, his rabbinic studies being complemented by attending lectures at the University of Breslau in Arabic, Syrian, and Persian literature. After succeeding Ludwig Philippson as rabbi of Magdeburg for a four-year period, he moved to Vienna where he was appointed rabbi in 1868. A year later, he became a member of Vienna’s rabbinical court, sharing the post of Chief Rabbi with Adolf Jellinek starting in 1891. After Jellinek’s death three years later, Güdemann held the post alone until his own death in 1918. Güdemann’s general religious stance was marked by strong adherence to the Conservatism into which he had been ordained. He strongly opposed both the introduction of organ music into prayer services in Germany and, despite his own staunch anti-Zionism, the omission of prayers referring to Zion, as well as to the temple sacrifices. This conservative attitude towards religious questions earned him respect in the Orthodox camp.<sup>380</sup>

Güdemann’s writings can be divided into historical and apologetic works. His major contribution was a three-volume study of medieval Jewry, *Die Geschichte des Erziehungswesens und der Cultur der abendländischen Juden* – a pioneering work in its focus on the interaction between Jewish cultural life and surrounding Christian society, using a comparative methodology, that had been largely lacking in Graetz’s monumental *Geschichte*.<sup>381</sup> The work was published between 1880 and 1888 and was translated into Hebrew and Yiddish; it would alter the course of Jewish historiography. Other historical works by Güdemann included *Geschichte der Juden in Magdeburg* (1866), *Das jüdische Un-*

<sup>378</sup> See G. Scholem, *Wissenschaft des Judentums einst und jetzt*, p. 154; Schorsch, *Jewish Reactions*, p. 174.

<sup>379</sup> *ibid.*, p. 173.

<sup>380</sup> An eulogy in an orthodox newspaper, entitled ‘Zwei Leuchten in Israel’, likened Güdemann’s eminence in Western Europe with that of Rabbi Chaim Soloveitchik, one of the predominant figures in Eastern European orthodox Jewry in his time. See *JP* 33 (1918), p. 314.

<sup>381</sup> See I. Schorsch, ‘Moritz Güdemann: Rabbi, Historian and Apologist’, *LBI Year Book* 11 (1966), pp. 42–66.

*terrichtswesen während der spanisch-jüdischen Periode* (1873), *Religionsgeschichtliche Studien* (1876), and *Quellenschriften zur Geschichte des Unterrichts und der Erziehung bei den deutschen Juden* (1892). These volumes were complemented by studies in comparative history, many articles in the *MGWJ*, the *JQR*, and the *JJGL*, and contributions to *Festschriften* for Zunz, Graetz, and Steinschneider. Nevertheless, in the face of this prolific scholarly production, Güdemann's dominant interest throughout his career remained the problematic relationship between scholars of Christian theology and scholars engaged in *Wissenschaft des Judentums*. In this respect, *Jüdische Apologetik* can be considered the culmination of Güdemann's central concerns. He had established his erudition in New Testament scholarship with *Religionsgeschichtliche Studien*, a work that explained many developments in early Christianity through the use of Jewish sources. One of his main goals was to demonstrate the influence of Jewish thought and culture on the Christian Bible by comparing it with rabbinic explanations of Talmudic traditions. Other works written in this framework were *Jüdisches im Christentum des Reformationszeitalters* (1870), *Nächstenliebe* (1890), *Die Stellung der jüdischen Literatur in der christlich-theologischen Wissenschaft während und am Ende des 19. Jahrhunderts* (from a commemorative volume dedicated to David Kaufmann, 1900), and *Das vorchristliche Judentum in christlicher Darstellung* (1903).<sup>382</sup>

Güdemann's study of Jewish apologetics represented the first systematic description of the topic. He was well aware of the difficulties involved in gaining an objective perspective regarding one's own religion, his intent was to let the "sources speak" for themselves as much as possible. The alternative was a non-historicity he viewed as exemplified in theological writings that limited critical-historical methodology to the Hebrew Bible while approaching the Christian Bible with religious piety. This institutionalized academic double standard he viewed as epitomized by Harnack's *Das Wesen des Christentums*, whose own stance was conveyed in the declaration that concerning the father-son relationship between Jesus and God, "all scholarship must remain silent".<sup>383</sup> Güdemann likewise criticized Wellhausen for avoiding the question of Jesus's historicity. For Güdemann, any discussion of the essence of religions was, correspondingly, to be rejected. In his words: "With *Wesen* [essence], much mischief [*Unwesen*] is created." His intention was to limit his own work to a description of ongoing responses to theological attacks against Judaism – the response to material-legalistic attacks being consigned to that

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<sup>382</sup> Essays focused on the same theme include 'Neutestamentliche Studien', *MGWJ* 37 (1893) and 'Eine spaßhafte Prozeßgeschichte mit ernstem Hintergrunde', *MGWJ* 59 (1915).

<sup>383</sup> See M. Güdemann, *Apologetik*, pp. XII f.

part of the *Grundriss* concerned with the philosophy of religion. It was, he felt, “the scientific Christian theology of our day that popularizes a view of Judaism demanding our defence.”<sup>384</sup>

At the time, the Liberal rabbi of Carlsbad, Ignaz Ziegler, was in the process of preparing an apologetic work entitled *Der Kampf zwischen Judentum und Christentum in den ersten drei christlichen Jahrhunderten*. In an article in the *AZJ*, Ziegler offered a summary of four theses manifest in Christian theology that were focused on in Jewish apologetics; the summary is useful in understanding the nature of Güdemann’s concerns:<sup>385</sup>

First, by having taken the great prophets of Israel as his prototype, Jesus is above them and is their fulfilment; in contrast the scribes of his time dismissed the religious-cultural lessons of the prophets and pronounced the law to be the essence of Judaism. Second, while the Jews worshipped only their national God, Jesus taught the God of humankind, separate from any nationalism. Third, Jesus’s God is the all-merciful God of love and grace, whereas the Jewish God is one of revenge, wrath, and punishment. Fourth, in that he asked only for inner faith, Jesus paved the way for liberation from the law, whereas Judaism sharpened and rendered the law more difficult, thereby setting up dead words and the worship of letters as a religion.<sup>386</sup>

This line of theological argumentation was identified by Güdemann as having led to a predominant tendency of Christian theologians to distinguish between Israelite and Jewish religion, leading to a particularly anti-Jewish bias:

From the standpoint of Christian belief, Judaism is but a wilted twig of Old Testament religion, the lifeblood and vitality of which, through a new revelation, crossed over into Christianity. This standpoint is at the core of the new scientific theology, and it has undertaken to substantiate it academically.<sup>387</sup>

According to this skewed christian approach, Güdemann suggested, Judaism’s very *raison d’être* came to an end with Christianity’s adoption of the “Old Testament” legacy, which now applied to all humankind. Such an anti-Jewish narrative of the replacement of the “old covenant” between God and the Jews by a “new covenant” between God and the Christians was of course not new; the novelty lay in the quasi-scientific argumentation of Christian theologians and their claims of scholarly objectivity. This was where the Güdemann placed as the main focus of contemporary Jewish apologetics.

The extreme praise Güdemann’s work received in the Jewish press reflected a sense of urgency in and relief by the reviewers. An extensive three-part book

<sup>384</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>385</sup> I. Ziegler, copies of which he later donated for distribution amongst members of the *Gesellschaft*. See ‘5. Jahresbericht der GFWJ’, in *MGWJ* 52 (1908), p. 123.

<sup>386</sup> I. Ziegler in *AZJ* 70 (1906), p. 562.

<sup>387</sup> M. Güdemann, *Apologetik*, p. XI.



review in *Die Jüdische Presse*, for instance, directly raised the issue of Jewish self-defense, referring to it as an age-old Jewish necessity and observing that “we must constantly step in for the truth and hope for its victory, because it is the truth for which we fight. Our fighting methods must be according to the manner of the fighters, and because of the importance of the issue, must seek to anticipate all objections and threats.”<sup>388</sup> Although the anonymous reviewer criticized Güdemann for having neglected to argue against a prevailing *Quellenscheidung* that divided the Hebrew Bible into different time periods and authorships, he also confirmed “that the cause of Judaism could not have been presented in a more impressive and multi-faceted manner.”<sup>389</sup>

In another review of Güdemann’s book, Ignaz Ziegler used even more enthusiastically militant language in commenting on what he termed Güdemann’s “call to arms”:

This work is a first-class combative, partisan book ... It is high time that we came to our own senses and took up the battle against the old inherited prejudices ... Today, the most distinguished task of Jewish savants must be to cleanse the coat of arms of Judaism from its besmirching by Christian theology, primarily Protestant theology ... We have been silent long enough.<sup>390</sup>

In contrast, as had been anticipated by several Jewish commentators,<sup>391</sup> Christian reactions to the book were consistently negative across denominational lines. One review by a Catholic theologian raised objections to each of Güdemann’s arguments,<sup>392</sup> but despite the sometimes hostile tone of such reviews, they did reveal that the work was being noticed, and thus that one objective of the *Gesellschaft* was being fulfilled. Undoubtedly, the work’s effectiveness was due in part to its open acknowledgment of a Jewish-Christian conflict. Güdemann’s refusal to ask for tolerance of Judaism as a “living” and “vital” religion<sup>393</sup> and his insistence that equality with Christianity represented a “precondition” for dialogue,<sup>394</sup> allowed the *Gesellschaft* to establish a new tone for *Wissenschaft des Judentums* with its first publication in the *Grundriss*.

<sup>388</sup> See *Beilage zur Jüdischen Presse*, 37 (1906), p. 597.

<sup>389</sup> *ibid.*, 38 (1907), p. 1.

<sup>390</sup> I. Ziegler in *AZJ*, 70 (1906), p. 561.

<sup>391</sup> See S. Krauss in *LZ* 2 (1907), p. 51 f.; I. Ziegler in *AZJ* 70 (1906), p. 574.

<sup>392</sup> *Studien und Mitteilungen aus dem Benediktiner und dem Cistercienser Orden* 28 (1907), p. 685 f.

<sup>393</sup> M. Güdemann, *Apologetik*, p. XIV.

<sup>394</sup> *ibid.*, p. XII.

Martin Philippson: *Die Neueste Geschichte des jüdischen Volkes* (1789–1914)  
(1907/1910/1911)

Alongside the filial loyalty we have pointed to previously, one of the central motivations of Martin Philippson in helping to found the *Gesellschaft* had involved a concern for the increase in theological antisemitism. He was also acutely aware of that phenomenon's socio-political counterpart, as made clear in his observation in the introduction to the second volume of the *Neueste Geschichte des jüdischen Volkes* that it had “produced counter-effects of enduring significance” within the Jewish community. “Those attacked,” he commented, “drew even more closely together, founding defence organizations and ... ever more strongly emphasizing their affiliation with Judaism.” In part, he continued, they expressed such a sense of affiliation “with Jewish-nationalistic feeling” of their own.<sup>395</sup> He concluded as follows: “In short, the rebirth and re-ascension of Judaism in the last decades has been, if not caused by antisemitism, then at least induced by it.”<sup>396</sup> At later points in the volume, Philippson similarly argued that “antisemitism is ... an element of the revival, unification, and inner strengthening of German Jewry,” and – in a passage that retrospectively takes on considerable sad irony – that “antisemitism, which has striven for the extermination [*Vernichtung*] of Judaism, has to the contrary had a fructifying and sustaining effect within this strong and life-loving community.”<sup>397</sup>

Consequently Philippson assigned antisemitism a central role in Jewish history since 1875. He viewed the reaction of German Jewry to this phenomenon,<sup>398</sup> and, more narrowly, the founding of the *Gesellschaft* as one particular defensive measure. In this regard, he lamented the incapacity that Jews had previously shown to effectively counter the “intensive attacks by Protestant theology” – attacks that had regrettably influenced not only Christians but also Jews, the reason being the miniscule number of Jewish theologians and the full time employment of many of them as communal rabbis.<sup>399</sup>

Martin Philippson was born in 1846 in Magdeburg; he became a teacher in Berlin's *Jüdisches Lehrerseminar* at the age of twenty-four. In 1870, he volunteered for the Prussian army and participated in the siege of Paris. The following year, he took up a professorship in modern history at Bonn. After being invited to the University of Brussels in 1875, he became a member of the Belgian Academy of Sciences; in 1890, he was elected director of that university

<sup>395</sup> See M. Philippson, *Neueste Geschichte* 2, p. 1.

<sup>396</sup> *ibid.*, p. 2.

<sup>397</sup> *ibid.*, pp. 51, 149.

<sup>398</sup> *ibid.*, pp. 50 f.

<sup>399</sup> *ibid.*, p. 146.

but was forced to resign soon after because of anti-German feeling; after his return to Germany, his academic career in Berlin ran into difficulties because of his Jewish origins.

Over time, Philippson emerged as a prominent German-Jewish activist, involved in many projects related to *Wissenschaft des Judentums*. One focal point of his efforts – in 1900 – was the creation of a central body to represent German Jewry to the German authorities; these efforts led to the formation of the *Verband der deutschen Juden* in 1904. Under his chairmanship, and with the support of both B'nai Brith and the Jewish community of Berlin, the *Deutsch-Israelitischer Gemeindebund* initiated a central archive for German Jewry in 1905: an idea that had first been suggested by historian Ezechiel Zivier in an article in the *Monatsschrift*.<sup>400</sup> When Philippson agreed to work for the *Grundriss* on a general history of the Jews from Moses Mendelssohn to the present, the two previous synthetic histories of that genre had become largely outdated. The first of these, Isaak Markus Jost's *Geschichte der Israeliten*, ended at 1815. The second, Heinrich Graetz's *Geschichte der Juden*, ended with the revolution of 1848. Other than these two works, only local histories had been published. According to Martin Philippson himself, most Jewish authors of historical works suffered from having been educated as theologians. Philippson, however, was an historian by training – while his doctoral thesis had been on Richard the Lionheart,<sup>401</sup> modern Prussian history was the main focus of his mature scholarship.<sup>402</sup> However he had never published a major work related to a Jewish

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<sup>400</sup> E. Zivier, 'Eine archivalische Informationsreise', in *MGWJ* 49 (1905), pp. 209–254. The *Gesamtarchiv* compiled and catalogued documents stemming from hundreds of German-Jewish communities, sometimes going as far back as the Middle Ages, the results of the related research being published in the *Mitteilungen des Gesamtarchives der deutschen Juden*. The concept of the *Gesamtarchiv*, another reflection of the movement towards a systematic Jewish *Wissenschaft*, would be adopted in many Jewish communities throughout the world. When the concept became public knowledge, a short debate unfolded over whether the *Gesellschaft* should sponsor this archival enterprise. See 'Ausschußsitzung der GFWJ vom 10.7.1905', in *MGWJ* 49 (1905), p. 508. Although the idea was shelved, the close connection between the archives and the society was obvious, with both Philippson and Elbogen serving on the archive's first board. See 'Gemeindeblatt', in *AZJ* 69 (1905), p. 1. The society also supported the archives financially and encouraged Jewish organizations and individuals to donate to the project. In return the society benefited from use of the archive's large collection: something particularly useful for the *Germania Judaica* project, to be discussed below. The archive's journal was offered to members of the society free of charge.

<sup>401</sup> M. Philippson, 'De primordiis Henrici Leonis, ducis Saxoniae et Bavariae. Dissertatio inauguralis historica', (Bonn 1876).

<sup>402</sup> Philippson's historical writing included the following works: *Max von Forckenbeck: Ein Lebensbild* (1898), *Friedrich III. als Kronprinz und Kaiser* (1893), *Der Grosse Kurfürst Friedrich Willhelm v. Brandenburg*, 3 vols. (1897, 1902, 1903), *Geschichte Heinrichs des Löwen, Herzogs von Bayern und Sachsen und der welfischen und staufischen Politik seiner Zeit*, 2 vols. (1867, 1868), *Geschichte des preußischen Staatswesens vom Tode Friedrichs des Großen bis zu den*

topic. The first volume of the *Neueste Geschichte des jüdischen Volkes* appeared in 1907; it encompassed the history of the Jews of Central and Western Europe until the start of 1875. A second volume covering Central and Western European Jewry between 1875 and 1908 and Near Eastern Jewry between 1830 and 1908 appeared in 1910. The third volume, which related the history of the Jews in Poland and Russia from 1830 to 1910 and based on sources that Philippson had to have translated, appeared in 1911. The second edition of Philippson's entire work was published in 1922, revised and edited by Paul Rieger.

In retrospect, we can understand the *Neueste Geschichte* as representing the first effort at a popularly oriented historical account of modern Jewish culture since Heinrich Graetz's famous *Geschichte*; it was also the first modern history of Eastern European Jewry to have been written. In the course of his demographic and other research, Philippson pioneered in the use of statistical data provided by the *Büro für Statistik der Juden*, in return for which that bureau received financial support from the *Gesellschaft*. Philippson's research was itself supported by the *Hilfsverein der deutschen Juden*, which provided him with manuscripts relating to the history of Russian Jewry<sup>403</sup> – all this aid underscoring the increased interconnection between *Wissenschaft des Judentums* and a range of specialized scholarly and other German Jewish organizations.

The *Neueste Geschichte* marked the shift within German Jewish scholarship away from activity by the scholar-rabbi towards that of the professional scholar. It was in fact the first social history of Jewry written by a Jewish scholar formally educated as a German historian. Reflecting this broader perspective, Philippson's historiography revealed the political liberalism and strong belief in the prospects for German-Jewish symbiosis that typified the assimilated German Jewish middle class. Nevertheless, Philippson's German patriotism did not overlook an acute awareness of the menace posed by political antisemitism in Germany, and of the catalytic role of antisemitism within modern European Jewish history. This one-sided focus led him to perhaps oversimplify the nature of the Zionist movement, which he considered to be nothing more than a reaction to antisemitism.<sup>404</sup> Arguably, he also under-

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*Freiheitskriegen*, 2 vols. (1880, 1882), *Geschichte der neueren Zeit*, in *Allgemeine Weltgeschichte*, vols. 7–9 (1886), *Der dreissigjährige Krieg und das Zeitalter Ludwigs XIV.* (1887), *Die Zeit des europäischen Gleichgewichts und das Zeitalter Friedrichs des Grossen* (1889), *Kulturgeschichte Europas seit dem Ausgange des Mittelalters bis zur Gegenwart* (1898), *Heinrich IV. und Philipp III. Die Begründung des französischen Uebergewichtes in Europa 1598–1610* 3 vols. (1870, 1873, 1876), *Das Leben Kaiser Friedrichs III.* (1900), *Ein Ministerium unter Philipp II. Kardinal Granvella am spanischen Hofe 1579–1586* (1895), *Westeuropa im Zeitalter von Philipp II., Elisabeth und Heinrich IV.* (1882), *Das Zeitalter Ludwigs XIV.* (1879), *Die äussere Politik Napoleons I. Der Friede von Amiens* (1913).

<sup>403</sup> M. Philippson, *Neueste Geschichte* 3, p. V.

<sup>404</sup> I. Elbogen, 'Martin Philippson, Neueste Geschichte des Jüdischen Volkes', (Heb.) in *Devir* (April/May 1923), pp. 307 f.

estimated the strength of the ongoing Jewish cultural revival in Germany, which, he observed, was in many ways a response to antisemitism.<sup>405</sup> In keeping with his initial address on the founding of the *Gesellschaft* and focusing on liberal Protestant theology and its detrimental effects on educated German Jews, Philippson suggested that all the various supportive structures that had emerged to further Jewish scholarship – the *Gesellschaft*, he indicated, being by far the most important – were a direct reaction to it.<sup>406</sup>

Within the German Jewish community, responses to the *Neueste Geschichte* reflected the strained relations between the different Jewish religious streams. Accordingly, to a large extent the book was judged on the basis of Philippson's description of the conflict, and more generally of the manner in which he evaluated the respective achievements of Reform and Orthodox Jews. *Der Israelit* was nothing short of damning in its assessment: "No man of *Wissenschaft* ... but rather a fanatic wrote this book. God spare us from the third volume!" Philippson, the paper declared, had simply ignored the neo-Orthodox contribution to German Jewry.<sup>407</sup> However, the more moderate Orthodox newspaper *Die Jüdische Presse*, while certainly unhappy with the presentation of recent Jewish history in Philippson's work, conceded that it might become standard within his "contemporary circle" – which would have signified a majority among liberal minded German Jews.<sup>408</sup>

As the introduction to his last volume makes clear, Philippson was himself disappointed at the public reception his work received. He ascribed this to misunderstandings; he had never intended, he indicated, to write a complete history, but rather to describe general developments in a manner suitable to the *Grundriss* framework. A less ambivalent assessment was offered by Max Freudenthal (1868–1937), a Franconia-born rabbi who was one of the most committed spokesmen for religious Liberalism in Germany, and who contributed to the *Monatsschrift*. On the one hand, Freudenthal criticized Philippson for an excessively harsh critique of Graetz's historiography; on the other hand he offered a positive assessment of the happy balance Philippson struck between scholarly detail and popular accessibility, the chief objective of the *Grundriss* project. Strikingly, the non-Jewish press offered the *Neueste Geschichte* broad recognition<sup>409</sup> – undoubtedly a reflection of Philippson being well known in the German academic world. The work's reception within the world of German Jewry was in fact much more ambivalent, a reality epitomized by one incident in particular; a conflict his work sparked with the important *Alliance Israelite Universelle*. As it happened, Philippson's

<sup>405</sup> M. Philippson, *Neueste Geschichte* 2, p. 122.

<sup>406</sup> *ibid.*, p. 147.

<sup>407</sup> *Der Israelit* 51:4 (1910), pp. 1 ff.

<sup>408</sup> *JP*, 38 (1907), p. 472.

<sup>409</sup> See for example: *HVJS* 8 (1910), pp. 419–422; *LZ* 15 (1911), pp. 486 f.

attitude towards this Paris-based Jewish self-help organization – the first to operate on an international basis – was undisguisedly negative, the main areas of contention being the organization’s name, and educational policies which he considered to be assimilationist and ineffective. Philippson suggested that its name provided ‘proof’ of a Jewish world conspiracy to anti-semites; further, he indicated that Francocentrism had led to a break with British and Austrian branches. The quick, sharp and lengthy response of the *Alliance* in the *Die Jüdische Presse* to each of Philippson’s accusations as well as the heated denial issued by French, Austrian, and German offices of the *Alliance* of any effort to separate from one another, all underscored Philippson’s status within the German-Jewish establishment.

The “affair” prompted by Philippson’s attack unfolded as follows: at this time the German chapter of the *Alliance* comprised 18,000 members of a total of 40,000 worldwide. In 1912, a German group within the organization voiced criticism of its central committee regarding the disproportionate emphasis placed on French culture, urging secession of the German branch and the formation of local committees in Germany. In two emergency meetings on 3 and 24 November, the rebellion was stifled, in turn for concessions including the founding of more autonomous local chapters (the *Freie Organisation der deutschen Alliance-Mitglieder*) and the right of the German branch to name its own candidates should a German representative to the central committee in Paris leave office. It is worth noting that Hermann Cohen raised objections to this latter resolution, seeing it as detrimental to the interests of the *Alliance* and presumptuous on the part of German Jewry; the fact that the resolution was passed suggests that the rebellion within the German branch had more supporters than the French officials wanted to admit.<sup>410</sup>

This episode had its follow-up some two years later, which is to say in the crucial year 1914, when the *Alliance*’s official newspaper in Germany published a ten-page article denying any pro-French leaning and emphasizing its complete national neutrality; German language classes, the article indicated, were actually being taught in several *Alliance*-run schools, including those in Constantinople, Saloniki, Bulgaria, Jerusalem, Adrianople, and Bagdad.<sup>411</sup> In this and similar ways, the criticisms that Philippson had voiced found ample resonance, underscoring the often surfacing tension in the post-Enlightenment Diaspora between Jewish international and national imperatives, even if in the end the German branch of the *Alliance* maintained its ties with the french organization.

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<sup>410</sup> See *Ost und West* 12 (1912), pp. 1135–1142.

<sup>411</sup> *Ost und West* 14 (1914), pp. 186–194.

Georg Caro: *Sozial- und Wirtschaftsgeschichte der Juden im Mittelalter und in der Neuzeit* (1909)

Georg Caro (1867–1912) was born in Glogau. He studied history in Freiburg, Munich, and Berlin and wrote his dissertation on ‘*Die Verfassung Genuas zur Zeit der Podesta*’ at the University of Strasbourg in 1891. In 1896 he received his doctorate at the University in Zurich, where he became a lecturer in 1896.<sup>412</sup> His settling outside Germany reflected the fact that due to his being Jewish, his chances for an academic career in the German university system were practically nil. Specializing in Italian medieval history and local Swiss history; Caro published *Genua und die Mächte am Mittelmeer 1257–1311* (1895–1899), and *Studien zu den älteren St. Gallener Urkunden* (1901–1902). A shift of interest was then marked with *Beiträge zur älteren deutschen Wirtschafts- und Verfassungsgeschichte* (1905–1911) and *Neue Beiträge zur deutschen Wirtschafts- und Verfassungsgeschichte* (1911).

In contrast to the other *Grundriss* authors, Caro had not received any formal Jewish education as an adult; nor had he published a scholarly work with a specifically Jewish content. The total omission of Jewish (as opposed to Christian) medieval sources from his *Sozial- und Wirtschaftsgeschichte* – an aspect of the work criticized by Simon Bernfeld<sup>413</sup> – thus stemmed from his inability to access them. Despite this limitation, reviews of the work’s first volume (Frankfurt am Main 1908)<sup>414</sup> by both Jews and non-Jews were positive.<sup>415</sup> At the same time, a striking number of book reviews – across the religious spectrum – focussed on the theme of Jewish mercantilism, although it is doubtful Caro intended to give the theme as much weight as did the reviewers, who tended to contest his explanation of Jewish moneylending. As Caro saw it, the medieval Jews had been coerced into that business through economic necessity; in this manner he refuted a prejudice that was treated as accepted historical truth among Jews as well as Christians. In response, some Christian reviewers simply insisted that the “mercantile spirit” was ingrained in the Jewish character,<sup>416</sup> while others blended such insistence with an acknowledgment of the historical facts presented by Caro.<sup>417</sup> Yet others went further, admitting for instance that Caro’s “manifold examples and objective de-

<sup>412</sup> L. Lucas and M. Heitmann, *Stadt des Glaubens*, pp. 288 f.

<sup>413</sup> See S. Bernfeld, ‘Eine Sozial- und Wirtschaftsgeschichte der Juden’, in *AZJ* 73 (1909), p. 34.

<sup>414</sup> Caro did not live to see the publication in 1920 of the second volume of the work, which was reconstructed by his widow from a stenographic manuscript. See G. Caro, *Sozial- und Wirtschaftsgeschichte der der Juden im Mittelalter und in der Neuzeit*, p. VI.

<sup>415</sup> See for example *HJB* 31 (1910), p. 354; *LZ* 48 (1909), p. 1558.

<sup>416</sup> See for example *LZ* 48 (1909), p. 1558.

<sup>417</sup> See for example Paul Puntchart in *HVJS* 12 (1909), p. 410.

scriptive approach suggest a somewhat milder judgement regarding the usury accusation.”<sup>418</sup> In turn, the *Allgemeine Zeitung des Judentums* insisted: “The book’s most pertinent and meaningful merit is the exhaustive, documented proof that the medieval Jews were by no means the only money merchants and usurers, as particularly the most recent social-historical studies tend to portray.” That paper’s reviewer continued as follows: “Caro refutes the fairy tale, believed by everyone including Jews, of the excessive attraction medieval Jews felt for commerce and especially for financial commerce. This is a scholarly finding of such importance that it alone would give Caro’s work great value.”<sup>419</sup>

Kaufmann Kohler: *Grundriss einer systematischen Theologie des Judentums auf geschichtlicher Grundlage* (1910)

Kaufmann Kohler (1843–1926) was born in Fürth and attended *Gymnasium* in Frankfurt, where he came under the influence of S.R. Hirsch, although he was later drawn to Reform Judaism. He studied at the universities of Berlin and Erlangen, receiving his doctorate in 1867. The radical Bible criticism manifest in his dissertation, *Der Segen Jakobs*, prevented him from finding a rabbinic position in Germany and in 1869 he moved to Detroit to take up a rabbinic position. Kohler was decidedly the most radical Reform scholar among the *Grundriss* authors; he remained a lifelong religious “zealot”,<sup>420</sup> playing a significant role in the history of American Reform Judaism. In 1885 Kohler convened the Pittsburgh Reform Conference, famous for its radical program, and in 1903 he was appointed president of the Hebrew Union College. Throughout these years he remained in close contact with the German Jewish scholarly community, eventually emerging as a “contact” for the *Gesellschaft* in the United States. Kohler was a prolific writer, contributing some 300 articles to the *Jewish Encyclopedia* alone (he was editor of the encyclopaedia’s philosophy and theology sections).

Before Kohler’s work for the *Grundriss*, there had been several attempts by Jewish scholars to describe the essence of Jewish theology, including Moritz Lazarus’s two-volume *Die Ethik des Judentums* (1898–1911), Güdemann’s *Jüdische Apologetik*, and David Neumark’s *Geschichte der jüdischen Philosophie des Mittelalters* (1907–1910). Non-Jewish efforts of this sort included Ferdinand Weber’s *System der altsynagogalen palästinischen Theologie* (1880), Wilhelm

<sup>418</sup> *HJB* 31 (1910), p. 353.

<sup>419</sup> *AZJ* 73, 5, 29 Jan. 1909, p. 56.

<sup>420</sup> M. Meyer, *Antwort auf die Moderne: Geschichte der Reformbewegung im Judentum*, p. 387.



Bousset's *Die Religion des Judentums im neutestamentlichen Zeitalter* (1903), and Emil Schürer's three-volume *Geschichte des jüdischen Volkes im Zeitalter Jesu Christi* (1898–1902). But their Jewish studies had essentially been limited to focus on specific questions of Jewish faith and their non-Jewish counterparts, and while often sweeping in scope, revealed standard Christian prejudices. A systematic overview of Jewish theology by a German Jewish scholar had been missing.<sup>421</sup> Appearing in 1910, Kohler's work thus aimed to fill a gap by offering a systematic construction of Jewish dogma. In his introduction, while observing that Jewish scholars had neglected to analyze the “inner sanctum of Jewish divinity”, he pointed to the dominance within that domain of the school of the Christian theologian Friedrich Delitzsch, who, as indicated, had offered a new formulation of the central Christian theological challenge to Judaism, grounded in its definition as a preparatory stage for Christianity. While Kohler himself saw Judaism as mainly a law-based religious-cultural system, in *Grundriss einer systematischen Theologie* he intended to describe its ethical essence.

Kohler's book was divided into three parts, ‘God’, ‘Man’, and ‘Israel and the Kingdom of God’, investigating the relation between old Israelite belief and the other Oriental religions on the one hand, and the later development of Judaism's central tenets, on the other hand. In his intellectual approach, Kohler revealed the ambivalent position of Liberal Judaism regarding Jewish religious law: as did the Protestant biblical critics, he viewed Judaism to be a legalistic religion – but (and this marked a crucial difference) one whose earlier “priestly-legal” approach eventually was balanced off by a “prophetic-ethical” current. In any event, Kohler's criticism of Pharisaic “legal piety” did have strong affinities with the main Christian theological criticism of rabbinic Judaism.<sup>422</sup>

At the time of its publication, Kohler's book received wide recognition, Christian scholars applauding it for its critique of Jewish religious legalism while rejecting its depiction of early Christianity.<sup>423</sup> As could be expected, Jewish reactions to the work were divided. While Orthodox scholars rejected the book as anti-rabbinic, Samuel Krauss called it “one of the most essential and useful works in the *Grundriss*” and expressed the hope that it would “have an internal and external effect of enlightening, doing away with prejudice, and paving the way for reciprocal understanding.”<sup>424</sup> In our time, Michael

<sup>421</sup> S. Krauss in *LZ* No. 8, 18 February 1911, p. 259.

<sup>422</sup> See C. Wiese, *Wissenschaft des Judentums*, pp. 163 f.

<sup>423</sup> See for example W. Bousset in *ThLZ* 27 (1912), pp. 227 ff.

<sup>424</sup> S. Krauss in *LZ* 62 (1911), p. 259. See also the D. Neumark's positive review in *AZJ* 74 (1910), pp. 608–609, 619–620. Also see J. Lewkowitz in *DLZ* 23 (1910), pp. 1431 ff., who criticised the lack of a cohesive concept of philosophy.

Meyer has described the *Systematische Theologie* as essentially a compilation and a defence of nineteenth century Reform Judaism, defined as the latest stage in an ever-evolving religion.<sup>425</sup> But however accurate this assessment, in our context we need to recall the underlying intention of the *Grundriss* project: a compilation of concise information contributing to a synoptic presentation of *Wissenschaft des Judentums*. In this respect, the *Systematische Theologie* appears to have fulfilled the project's mandate.

Samuel Krauss: *Talmudische Archäologie* (1910/1911/1912)

In the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, “Jewish Archaeology” was generally understood to be scholarly research into “all life-circumstances, customs and rites, and civic and religious institutions of the Hebrews or Jews,”<sup>426</sup> grounded in a philological study of the objective descriptions in the Bible and Talmud. To be sure, biblical archaeology, understood in a more modern sense, was a field that had received considerable attention due to Christian theological interest in Jewish history up until the time of Jesus. But any research regarding Jewish life after the destruction of the Second Temple was considered relatively insignificant, not directly adding to an understanding of the development of Christian civilization. The few volumes on early Jewish culture in Palestine written by contemporary Jewish scholars<sup>427</sup> simply proved the rule – the subject was firmly under the control of Christian scholarship. Samuel Krauss thus succinctly observed that “in this entire research area, Jewish scholars participate very little.”<sup>428</sup>

At the same time, as the collection of articles in H. L. Strack's *Einleitung in Talmud und Midrash* confirmed, post-biblical archaeology had received the attention of Jewish scholars alone.<sup>429</sup> There were two reasons for this: first, it was mostly Jews who were concerned with Jewish life in the Middle East after the destruction of the Jewish commonwealth; second, on a very practical level, a thorough knowledge of primary sources was a prerequisite for post-biblical research. This included both material written or recorded in the Palestinian and Babylonian Talmuds and the Midrashic literature. The resulting situation in the broader world of German scholarship was commented on by Krauss in 1914:

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<sup>425</sup> M. Meyer, *Antwort*, p. 394.

<sup>426</sup> *JL* 1, p. 450.

<sup>427</sup> See for example: S. Jampel, *Vorgeschichte Israels und seiner Religion* (Frankfurt 1913).

<sup>428</sup> *JL* 1, p. 452.

<sup>429</sup> H. L. Strack, *Einleitung*, pp. 192–194.

For historical *Wissenschaft*, classical antiquity, and classical philology, these countless testimonies of rabbinic literature are forgotten and buried; even the fact that they exist is considered pointless. For a century, Jewish scholars have tried to unearth these treasures and introduce them into the general process of *Wissenschaft*, but they are still mostly ignored, and not only left alone but also pushed aside.<sup>430</sup>

When it came to such Jewish scholarly effort, one pioneering work was S. J. Rappoport's *Erech Millin* (1852), an encyclopaedia of the Talmud. Unfortunately, this work was never completed. The Hungarian rabbi Leopold Löw (1811–1875) and his son Immanuel Löw (likewise a rabbi, 1854–1944) contributed other groundbreaking work soon afterwards, with Leopold focusing on Jewish antiquities and Immanuel on the natural-biological environment in Talmudic times, his most outstanding work being *Die Flora der Juden* (4 volumes, 1924–1929).<sup>431</sup>

The *Gesellschaft's* decision to include Talmudic archaeology – a subject that Christian scholarship had, considered insignificant – as a subcategory of *Wissenschaft des Judentums* in its *Grundriss* reflected a new self-confidence; and the choice of Samuel Krauss an acknowledgment of his enormous erudition. Born in 1866 in Ukk, Hungary, Krauss received his religious education in a yeshiva and directly from Salomon Breuer, the rabbi of Papa. Between 1882 and 1889 he studied at the *Landesrabbinerschule* in Budapest, after which he attended the University of Budapest and – between 1889 and 1893 – the *Lehranstalt* in Berlin. In 1893 he wrote his dissertation, *Zur griechischen und lateinischen Lexicographie aus jüdischen Quellen*, at the University of Giessen, and the following year was appointed professor of Hebrew at the Budapest rabbinical seminary. In 1906 Krauss became lecturer for Bible, history, and liturgy at the *Jüdisch-Theologische Lehranstalt* in Vienna, advancing to head of the seminary in 1932 and succeeding Adolf Schwarz as rector in 1937.

Samuel Krauss' scholarly output was enormous, consisting of over 1300 articles. His larger studies covered history, the Bible and biblical geography, the Talmud, Christianity, and medieval Hebrew literature and included his early, important two-volume *Griechische und lateinische Lehnwörter im Talmud, Midrasch und Targum* (1898–1899, repr. 1964).<sup>432</sup> The three-volume *Talmudische Archäologie* was his magnum opus. The first volume was published in 1910, the next two installments appeared in the two subsequent years. In his methodology, he closely followed H. L. Strack's division of the existing literature on

<sup>430</sup> S. Krauss in *Monumenta Judaica*, 5, p. 1: *Griechen und Römer*, p. V.

<sup>431</sup> See Elbogen, *Ein Jahrhundert*, p. 19; L. Löw, *Ha-Mafte'ah* (1855), *Beitraege zur jüdischen Alterthumskunde*, I: *Graphische Requisiten und Erzeugnisse bei den Juden* (2 vols., 1870–1871) and *Lebensalter in der jüdischen Literatur* (1875). See also Leopold Löw *Gesammelte Schriften* (5 vols. 1889–1900). Some other of his well-known works are *Aramäische Pflanzennamen* (1881) and *Aramäische Fischnamen* (1906).

<sup>432</sup> See E. Strauss, *Bibliographie der Schriften Samuel Krauss, 1887–1937*.

the material culture of Late Antique Jewry into a range of topics: community life, life-cycle events, slavery, crafts and technology, agriculture and hunting, housing and clothing, books, coins and weights.<sup>433</sup> Krauss' own subdivisions served as a comment on the enormous labour involved in his work: the first volume, which included 29 illustrations, covered living space and utensils, food and its preparation, clothing and decoration, and bodily care; volume two, containing 35 illustrations, covered family life, agriculture, trade, and traffic and commerce. Volume three, with seven illustrations, additions, corrections, and separate registers in Hebrew, Arabic and Greek, covered social affairs, leisure, writings and books, and the school system. Immanuel Löw, whom Krauss considered "the greatest scholar in the field" and to whom the first volume was dedicated, contributed many annotations.<sup>434</sup> The individual chapters were further subcategorized into three hundred working titles, thus covering a vast spectrum of Jewish civilization in the Late Antique period.

In line with the *Gesellschaft's* ethos, Krauss was careful to make his work understandable to an educated lay public, relegating much of the specialized material to footnotes, in order for the main text to maintain its status as what he termed "a description of a people's highly interesting life."<sup>435</sup> In respect to the vastness of his synoptic enterprise, Krauss was well aware that no single scholar could be "theologian, philologist, archaeologist, mason, tailor, farmer, blacksmith, musician and so forth" at once.<sup>436</sup> Nevertheless, his work succeeded in both remaining true to the basic ethos of the *Gesellschaft* and correcting a widespread stereotype of Christian scholarship, pointing to Jewish life in Antiquity as a highly developed and colourful culture.

Within the German-Jewish community, Krauss' magisterial work triggered an interesting discussion regarding Jewish clothing in late Antiquity, Krauss maintaining that married Jewish women did not necessarily cover their hair, as would later be required by Jewish law,<sup>437</sup> a thesis promptly challenged in *Der Israelit* through a citation of opposing rabbinic sources. (The crux of the dispute lay in the meaning of the words "*Pru'a*" and "*Mechussa*". Whereas traditional translations render the words as, respectively, "open" and "covered," Krauss translated them as "loose" and "ordered," i.e. "combed.")<sup>438</sup> In general, each volume of Krauss' work was received with unrestrained enthusiasm in both the German Jewish and non-Jewish press.<sup>439</sup> In the latter

<sup>433</sup> See S. Krauss's reference to Strack in *JL* 1, p. 453; H. L. Strack, *Einleitung*, pp. 192–194.

<sup>434</sup> S. Krauss, *Archäologie* 1, p. IX.

<sup>435</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>436</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>437</sup> *ibid.*, p. 195.

<sup>438</sup> See *Der Israelit* 6 (9 February 1911), p. 12.

<sup>439</sup> For Jewish reviews, see for instance S. Rubin, 'Berichtungen zum Sklaven-

realm, H. L. Strack's review was particularly effusive; Strack also underscored the support furnished by the *Gesellschaft* to Krauss' work – which included, it is worth noting, research trips to Egypt, Italy, and Palestine.<sup>440</sup>

Krauss had meant to add two supplementary volumes to the *Talmudische Archäologie*, entitled *Synagogale Altertümer* and *Politische Altertümer*.<sup>441</sup> Although the manuscript for the former work was made ready for printing,<sup>442</sup> the outbreak of World War I, with the ensuing shortage of printing personnel, prevented publication. *Synagogale Altertümer* was published in 1922 (not under the *Gesellschaft*'s auspices, but by Benjamin Harz, Berlin and Vienna); the work offered a detailed description of the external development of Jewish houses of worship from earliest times.

Ismar Elbogen: *Der jüdische Gottesdienst in seiner geschichtlichen Entwicklung* (1913)

Some of the first major contributions to *Wissenschaft des Judentums* had been studies of the history of Jewish liturgy. In part, this interest can be explained by the intense debate between Reform and Conservative Jews regarding the modernization of Jewish worship. Both Leopold Zunz and S. L. Rappoport (1790–1867) had contributed early studies to this field,<sup>443</sup> which would attract the interest of the Christian theologian Franz Delitzsch.<sup>444</sup> Other more specialized studies include Michael Sachs's work on the liturgy of Spanish Jewry,<sup>445</sup> and the study of Hebrew poetry by Leopold Dukes' (1810–1891).<sup>446</sup>

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rechte in der talmudischen Archäologie von S. Krauss', in *MGWJ* 59 (1915), p. 268; 'Israelitische Monatsschrift', in *JP* 30, (1913), p. 25; S. Rubin, 'Berichtigungen zum Sklavenrechte in der talmudischen Archäologie von S. Krauss', in *MGWJ* 59 (1915), p. 268. For non-Jewish reviews see for instance V. Aptowitzer in *Deutsche Literaturzeitung* 22 (1911), 1372–1375; S. Landauer in *Literarisches Zentralblatt* 13 (1912), 429; H. L. Strack in *ThLZ* 38 (1913), p. 516 f.; *Theologie und Glaube – Zeitschrift für den Katholischen Klerus*, 3 (1911), p. 503 f.

<sup>440</sup> See '3. Jahresbericht der GFWJ', in *MGWJ* 50 (1906), p. 126.

<sup>441</sup> For acceptance by the *Gesellschaft*'s board of Krauss's request to make these additions to the *Grundriss*, see 'Ausschußsitzung der GFWJ vom 24.06.1912', in *MGWJ* 56 (1912), p. 512.

<sup>442</sup> See '13. Jahresbericht der GFWJ', in *MGWJ* 59 (1915), p. 313. In 1912 Krauss was assigned to work on *Biblische Archäologie*, but the work did not materialize for unknown reasons.

<sup>443</sup> L. Zunz, *Die gottesdienstlichen Vorträge der Juden*; S. L. Rappoport, 'Toldot Rabbi Elasar ha-Kalir', in *Bikkure Ha-Ittim* X (1830), pp. 115 ff. and p. XI (1831), pp. 100 ff.

<sup>444</sup> F. Delitzsch, *Zur Geschichte der hebräischen Poesie*, (1836).

<sup>445</sup> M. Sachs, *Die religiöse Poesie der Juden in Spanien*, (1845).

<sup>446</sup> L. Dukes, *Zur Kenntnis der neuhebräischen religiösen Poesie*, (1842).

Shorter studies on the literature of synagogue liturgy were undertaken by Abraham Berliner<sup>447</sup> and Kaufmann Kohler.<sup>448</sup>

Ismar Elbogen's first interest in Jewish liturgy was manifest in his *Geschichte des Achtzehngebetes*, for which he received the first prize in a contest run by the *Jüdisch-Theologisches Seminar*. Elbogen's essay was published in the *MGWJ*, where he would continue to offer valuable studies on the development of Jewish worship.<sup>449</sup> In 1907, he published *Studien zur Geschichte des jüdischen Gottesdienstes*, which contained some early results of research being supported by the *Gesellschaft*.<sup>450</sup> His major work in this field, *Der jüdische Gottesdienst in seiner geschichtlichen Entwicklung*, was published in 1913.

Elbogen divided his work into three major sections. In the first section, he described the synagogue service on weekdays, the Sabbath and the holidays. In the second section he outlined the history of the service from its inception onwards. In the last section he offered an account of the service's organization, focusing on organizational requirements such as the synagogue building and the community, its functionaries and its administration. Elbogen generally concentrated on the German liturgy as, in his words, "a great majority of Jews follow this custom".<sup>451</sup>

In his introduction, Elbogen staked the claim of his effort being the first of its kind. According to the plan of the *Grundriss*, he explained, his work's basic aim was not to be adding more detailed knowledge to already established historical facts, but rather to present readers with a *Gesamtbild*, a systematic and holistic image.<sup>452</sup> Methodologically, the work broke new ground in that it moved away from the hitherto predominant concern with *piyyutim* (lyrical compositions accompanying the liturgy), towards a mode of literary history.<sup>453</sup>

As indicated, the question of reform of the synagogue liturgy had been a prominent bone of contention between progressive and Conservative German-Jewish factions for a long time – ever since the introduction of a new prayer book by the *Neuer Israelitischer Tempelverein* of Hamburg in 1818.<sup>454</sup> In

<sup>447</sup> A. Berliner, *Randbemerkungen zum täglichen Gebetbuch*, 2 vols., (1909), 1912.

<sup>448</sup> K. Kohler, 'Über die Ursprünge und Urformen der synagogalen Liturgie', in *MGWJ* 37 (1893), pp. 441–451, 489–497.

<sup>449</sup> I. Elbogen, 'Geschichte des Achtzehngebetes', in *MGWJ* 46 (1902), pp. 330–357, 427–439, 513–530; *idem*, 'Die Tefilla für die Festtage', *ibid.*, 55 (1911), pp. 426–446, 586–599, *ibid.*, 58 (1914), pp. 323–325.

<sup>450</sup> '5. Jahresbericht der GFWJ', in *MGWJ* 52 (1908), p. 124.

<sup>451</sup> I. Elbogen, *Der jüdische Gottesdienst in seiner geschichtlichen Entwicklung*, p. IX.

<sup>452</sup> *ibid.*, p. VII.

<sup>453</sup> *ibid.*, pp. VII f.

<sup>454</sup> See A. Brämer, *Judentum und religiöse Reform: Der Hamburger Israelitische Tempel 1817–1938*, pp. 45–56. Concerning the early conflicts in Berlin, see L. Geiger, *Geschichte der Juden in Berlin* 1, pp. 165–168; *ibid.* 2, pp. 210–234; M. A. Meyer, 'The Religious Reform

his *Gottesdienstliche Vorträge der Juden*, Zunz had demonstrated that the synagogue liturgy had in fact undergone many changes throughout the centuries, one of his main conclusions being that “no organized Jewish institution and no community can be prevented from introducing new prayers or abolishing such additions which, because of their length, their incomprehensibility, and offensive content rather hinder than further spiritual elevation.<sup>455</sup> In this context, Zunz called for a return from a “torpid” to a “living” liturgical structure.<sup>456</sup> The possibility of scholarly support for reform of the religious service continued to be raised at the various rabbinic assemblies, although no unified position could be agreed upon. The result was that over time progressive prayer books, for the most part displaying only minor distinctions, were published by local communities; members who opposed changes to the liturgy, or the introduction of organ music to the service, organized traditional services – often after having seceded from the main community.

At the end of the nineteenth century this controversy erupted anew. In 1894, Rabbi Heinemann Vogelstein published a new Liberal prayer book under the auspices of the Westphalian Jewish communities. The book’s main innovations were a shortening of certain prayers concerned with the temple sacrifices and the translation of certain prayers into German. The book’s appearance led to protests from the state’s Orthodox minority, which in 1896 founded the *Verein zur Wahrung der religiösen Interessen des Judentums* (Association for the Preservation of the Religious Interests of Judaism). Similar Orthodox organizations were founded in the Rhineland (1902) and Baden (1903).<sup>457</sup> The animosity between the different German Jewish religious streams intensified from this point onward; in 1903 the publication of the first draft of the Reform prayer book of the Jewish communities of Baden provoked more disapproval from both Orthodox and Zionist circles, on account of modifications of the traditional text including elimination of passages referring to a future return to Zion.

Another point of conflict regarding liturgical modernization centred on the permissibility of synagogue music. In one of Cologne’s synagogues, organ music was introduced in 1906, resulting in an Orthodox withdrawal from the general Jewish community. In Berlin, a discussion about the introduction of a Sunday service for businessmen sparked renewed hostility. With the issue

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Controversy in the Berlin Jewish Community 1814–1823’, in *LBI Year Book* 24 (1979), pp. 139–156.

<sup>455</sup> L. Zunz, *Gottesdienstliche Vorträge*, p. 492.

<sup>456</sup> *ibid.*, pp. 493 f.

<sup>457</sup> See M. A. Meyer *Deutsch-Jüdische Geschichte* 3, p. 116. For orthodox reactions see D. Ellenson, ‘Traditional Reactions to Modern Jewish Reform: The Paradigm of German Orthodoxy’, in D. H. Frank and O. Leaman (eds.), *History of Jewish Philosophy* pp. 732–758.

of liturgy having remained a central issue for German Jewry since the start of its acculturation, a comprehensive work clarifying the different positions in a scholarly framework had thus become a great desideratum – such a work could count on considerable resonance within the Jewish community.

Elbogen was well aware of the contemporary implications of his work, viewing the questions that had come to surround the Jewish service as nothing less than questions of survival for the Jewish community.<sup>458</sup> In his study, he focussed largely on modern times, as the “continued struggle permanently reminds us of the endeavours of the modern era.”<sup>459</sup> Despite the longstanding nature of the basic conflict involved here, he now insisted, rather dramatically, that Judaism was being challenged “for the first time in a thousand years to try to develop and recreate the synagogue service in order to generate historical life”.<sup>460</sup>

The motif of a living Judaism was present in all of Elbogen’s discussions of *Wissenschaft des Judentums*. In his most detailed essay on the discipline’s history, he went so far as to argue that “service to a living Judaism” was the only phenomenon giving Jewish *Wissenschaft* a right to exist; such *Wissenschaft* was thus defined as “the scholarship of a living Judaism in the stream of development as a sociological and historical unity.”<sup>461</sup> For Elbogen, then, in contrast to many of his *Gesellschaft* colleagues, the chief motivation for the society’s founding was not defence against Protestant scholarship but contemporary philosophical “idealism”, a form of Jewish historicism with strongly vitalistic elements.

Although *Der jüdische Gottesdienst in seiner geschichtlichen Entwicklung* undoubtedly held interest for some Christian theologians, the work was mainly aimed at Jewish readers, whom Elbogen expected to “have a Jewish prayer book at hand and to be familiar with its content”.<sup>462</sup> In line with the *Grundriss* ethos, he underscored that specialized knowledge was not a prerequisite to reading the book.<sup>463</sup> The broad interest in the work within the German Jewish community is made clear in the pre-publication of extracts in the *Allgemeine Zeitung des Judentums*.<sup>464</sup> Following publication, a review in the same periodical by the Liberal Rabbi Paul Rieger referred to a “standard work” whose contents were of contemporary importance as “the history of Jewish synagogue service is also a guide for its future development.”<sup>465</sup> Despite Elbogen’s own

<sup>458</sup> *ibid.*, p. 431.

<sup>459</sup> *ibid.*, p. VIII.

<sup>460</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>461</sup> I. Elbogen, *Ein Jahrhundert*, p. 43.

<sup>462</sup> I. Elbogen, *Gottesdienst*, p. VIII.

<sup>463</sup> *ibid.*, p. VII.

<sup>464</sup> *AZJ* 77 (1913), pp. 570–572.

<sup>465</sup> P. Rieger in *AZJ* 78 (1914), pp. 465–468.



wish that his book not be used as a weapon by any faction in an internal Jewish struggle, Rieger cited it as justification for several Liberal liturgical practices, such as women being called to the Torah reading and the recital of prayers in the vernacular (as had been customary in Talmudic times). Ellbogen had also defended the triennial Torah reading cycle, leading to criticism by one Conservative reviewer in *Jeschurun* to speak of a “broadly constructed work that regrettably propagates one-sided party efforts.”<sup>466</sup> Another reviewer – while praising the work as a whole – similarly rebuked Ellbogen in the *Jüdische Presse* for having “palliated” the institutions and customs of the “Liberals and the Reformers” and “having been unable to suppress his personal attitudes.”<sup>467</sup> Such reservations notwithstanding, the work was immensely popular, with three editions being published before the outbreak of World War II. Since its first appearance, it has been translated into many languages – into Hebrew as early as 1924<sup>468</sup> – and continues to be the standard work in the field of Jewish liturgy.

Eduard Mahler: *Handbuch der jüdischen Chronologie* (1916)

Born in Sziffer, Hungary, Edward Mahler (1857–1945) worked as an astronomer, mathematician, and orientalist during the course of his life. Starting in 1882, he was a researcher at the Vienna Observatory; from 1885 onwards he worked at the Institute of Weights and Measures. After receiving significant recognition for his mathematical studies, he published *Astronomische Untersuchungen ueber die in der Bibel erwahnte aegyptische Finsterniss* (1885) and *Astronomische Untersuchung ueber die in hebraeischen Schriften erwahnten Finsternisse* (1885), where he focused on the three days of darkness mentioned in the Torah, relating that incident to a total eclipse of the sun. This study was followed by *Biblische Chronologie und Zeitrechnung der Hebraeer* (1887), a commentary on Maimonides entitled *Kiddush ha-Hodesh* (1889), and *Der Pharao des Exodus* (1896), all three works arguing for the accuracy of biblical data relating the Exodus. In 1896 he became an assistant at the Institute of Trigonometry in Budapest, and in 1912 director of the newly founded Egyptological Institute, where he was appointed professor in 1914. Finally, in 1922 Mahler became director of the Oriental Institute at the University of Budapest, where he taught as Professor of Oriental History. Other subjects he concerned himself with were the *Bibel-Babel* controversy, the Elephantine documents, and calendar reform. In his *Handbuch der jüdischen Chronologie*, Mahler presented different Jewish calen-

<sup>466</sup> Prof. Dr. Kaatz [*sic*] ‘Zur Frage des dreijährigen Zyklus’, in *Jeschurun* 3, (1914), p. 83.

<sup>467</sup> A. Posner, ‘Israelitischer Lehrer und Kantor’, in *JP* 36 (1914), p. 26.

<sup>468</sup> See ‘Ausschußsitzung vom 14.02.1924’, in *MGWJ* 68 (1924), p. 96.

dars and time-systems, cataloguing the coordination of biblical and medieval reckonings with biblical events, with tables for date conversions. This effort included an examination of the relation between the date for Easter and that of Jesus's death, pointing to the significance of *Wissenschaft des Judentums* for non-Jewish as well as Jewish scholarship. At the same time, the publication of Mahler's work in the *Grundriss* framework reflected the widening of the scope of Jewish *Wissenschaft*.

The Great War put an effective end to the *Grundriss* project. The last two works to appear were Hermann Cohen's famous *Religion der Vernunft aus den Quellen des Judentums* published posthumously in 1919, and Albert Lewkowitz's *Das Judentum und die geistigen Strömungen des 19. Jahrhunderts*, which was published as late as 1935. Cohen's book has been the subject of a vast amount of commentary and will not be further discussed in this context; Lewkowitz's book, appearing on the verge of German Jewry's demise, will be briefly returned to below. In any event, between 1906 and 1935 nine works were published out of the total of thirty-six envisioned for the *Grundriss*, seven of these before or during World War I. The *Gesellschaft's* board twice revised plans for the project to account for personal and methodological changes – something manifest in the altering of the list of the initial plan included with each new publication. The first changes were announced in 1910, with the re-introduction of a fifth category, following its original incorporation into the *Grundriss* and subsequent elimination due to failure to find a competent scholar on 'Mosaic and Talmudic law'. The scholar who had now been identified was Mordche Wolf Rapaport (1873–1924), a rabbi and *privatgelehrter* from Stryj (Galicia) who had been one of the first to introduce research on Jewish law into the academic world.<sup>469</sup> The second list of changes was presented in 1913, the most important of these being the addition of a category on 'Judaism and old Oriental religions', itself subdivided into 'Judaism and Parsism', 'Judaism and the Egyptian religion', and 'Judaism and the Babylonian religion'.<sup>470</sup> This inclusion clearly reflected the heightened interest in the influence of surrounding religions on old Israelite culture, as had been substantiated by many archaeological findings in recent decades.

Implicitly, the enduring gaps in certain categories pointed to a shortage of qualified Jewish scholars. When it came to the category of 'comparative religion', for example, no replacement could be found after Benzion Kellermann (1896–1923) retracted his contribution on Judaism and Christianity in 1906.<sup>471</sup> Similarly the category of 'history of the Jewish people until the Babylonian exile' could not be filled after Benno Jacob (1862–1945) left the

<sup>469</sup> See in this respect *JL* 4/1, pp. 1233 f.

<sup>470</sup> 'Ausschußsitzung der GFWJ vom 17.06.1913', in *MGWJ* 57 (1913), p. 512.

<sup>471</sup> '4. Jahresbericht der GFWJ 1906', in *MGWJ* 51 (1907), p. 119.

project following a personal quarrel with the board. The categories of ‘epigraphics’ and ‘numismatics’ remained vacant after Chajes withdrew his support. At the same time, deaths of various contributors played a role in the failure to complete the *Grundriss*. The death of Heinemann Vogelstein in 1911 left ‘practical theology’ without a qualified scholar, leading to that category’s elimination, together with ‘ethics of practical religious precepts’: both these topics were in fact fraught with religious-ideological controversy, so that – practical causes aside – their elimination appears to have reflected the effort to exclude pure theology from the disciplines acknowledged as belonging to *Wissenschaft des Judentums*. Another notable loss was Wilhelm Bacher, who had been responsible for ‘Hebrew linguistics’ – a topic originally divided into ‘Biblical Hebrew’ and ‘modern Hebrew’, but now united and covered by Max Margolis (1866–1932). Similarly, with Gustav Karpeles deceased, the category of ‘general Jewish literary history’ was taken over by Alexander Marx. The fact that both Marx and Margolis lived in America may have been an indication of the shortage of qualified German-Jewish scholars.

Hoping that the situation could be remedied in a timely manner, the *Gesellschaft* approached the Jewish theological seminaries to recruit suitable candidates to work on the vacant categories of the *Grundriss*.<sup>472</sup> It had become more and more apparent that the rabbinate would be overburdened as long as its members alone were expected to shoulder the responsibilities for advancing Jewish academic scholarship; a fact reflected in that only one *Grundriss* author, Moritz Güdemann, was a practicing rabbi. The emerging fate of this most ambitious *Gesellschaft* project made one thing very clear; only a new class of highly professionalized, academically trained scholars would be able to secure the future of *Wissenschaft des Judentums*.

### 3. The Critical Editions of the *Gesellschaft*

#### The *Corpus Tannaiticum*

Whereas the target readership for the *Grundriss* was clearly the educated lay public, the *Corpus Tannaiticum* was a project focussed on specialists. For some time, the lack of critical editions of the Talmudic and Midrashic literature had been an acknowledged problem – such editions were an obvious precondition for any scholarly evaluation of that literature. In February 1903 H. L. Strack referred to this lacuna as a scandal, particularly in light of the abundant critical editions available for the corpus of ancient Greek and Latin texts.<sup>473</sup> Given

<sup>472</sup> ‘Ausschußsitzung der GFWJ vom 26.06.1911’, in *MGWJ* 55 (1911), p. 384.

<sup>473</sup> *AZJ* 67 (1903), p. 2.

Strack's enormous influence on Jewish scholars, his remarks may well have prompted the plans, finalized only two months after he made them, for the *Corpus Tannaiticum*, the project's central goal being to "collect all existing texts from Tannaitic times in philologically faultless editions."<sup>474</sup>

Over the centuries, both mistakes by copyists, self-imposed censorship and decrees by the church had produced serious discrepancies between various versions of the texts. Additions and modifications were pseudepigraphically inserted at later points and scribes sometimes arbitrarily modified the texts according to personal inclinations. To the extent that critical comparison of manuscripts was practised, medieval rabbis had been aware of the problem of the accurate transmission of the early rabbinic literature. In contrast to the approach to the biblical texts, Jewish scholars had never had reservations about correcting distorted Talmudic passages if logic and positive proof so required. In particular cases, new readings could even result in alterations of religious law. Nevertheless, modern philological methods and the discovery of many new manuscript fragments meant the emergence of a new situation for post-Enlightenment Jewish scholarship.

In the nineteenth century, Heinrich Graetz had already put forward a concise plan for an encyclopaedic treatment of the Talmud; the plan had been shelved for lack of appropriate personnel.<sup>475</sup> Clearly, the sheer enormity of the task involved called for a collaborative effort. The *Gesellschaft* thus made plans to publish separate critical editions of the *Mishnah*, the *Tosephta*, the halachic *midrashim* (*Mechilta*, *Sifra*, *Sifre*) and the halachic and haggadic *Beraitot* of both the Jerusalem and Babylonian Talmud.<sup>476</sup> A first expert committee was founded consisting of Eduard Baneth, Jakob Guttmann, Saul Horovitz, Ferdinand Rosenthal (1839–1921) and David Simonsen. These individuals were meant to present the committee with a detailed plan involving division of the project among several scholars. It was decided that the main work would be divided between the *Lehranstalt* and the *Jüdisch-Theologisches Seminar*, Eduard Baneth preparing publication of the *Mishnah*, Johann Krengel that of the *Tosefta*, and Saul Horovitz (1859–1921) collecting the dispersed medieval material related to the project. Likewise, the orientalist Eugen Mittwoch was to write a dictionary of the language of the *Mishnah* (later extended to a "vocabulary of the entire Tannaitic epoch") serving as an introduction to the *Corpus Tannaiticum*, preparatory research for this dictionary being estimated at two years. Rosenthal and Leon Horowitz, a lecturer at the *Jüdisch-Theologisches Seminar*, were also assigned as active researchers for the project, and various other scholars were enlisted as the project proceeded.

<sup>474</sup> *MGWJ* 49 (1905), p. 114.

<sup>475</sup> *MGWJ* 61 (1917), p. 412.

<sup>476</sup> See 'Mitteilung zum Corpus Tannaiticum', in *MGWJ* 56 (1912), p. 256.

The financial and logistical difficulties involved in a project of this sort began with the need to access manuscripts dispersed in a range of countries. Photographs of Geniza fragments at Oxford and Cambridge were taken and sent to Berlin. Johann Krenzel travelled to Vienna to examine another manuscript collection. Additional material and related literature was acquired by the *Gesellschaft* and duly put at the researchers' disposal. One researcher was sent to Rome to examine manuscripts at the Vatican library. As it happens, despite such serious efforts to move the project forward, the *Gesellschaft* was only able to publish a few preliminary works – a fact partly due to the outbreak of the Great War. After the war the Chief Rabbi of England, Joseph Hermann Hertz (1872–1946) – a longstanding member of the *Gesellschaft* – would be helpful in sending Talmudic manuscripts from London to Berlin.<sup>477</sup> But preparation of individual instalments of the *Corpus Tannaiticum* could only proceed extremely slowly; with the different Talmudic editions not being located in any central institution, the physical collection of the material was itself an arduous task. By 1923, Julius Theodor had published several instalments of a critical edition of *Bereshit Rabba*; in 1919 he had been employed by the *Akademie für die Wissenschaft des Judentums* for this work, which was eventually taken over by Shalom Albeck. Further critical editions of the Talmudic text *Sifre Numeri* were prepared and published by Saul Horovitz in 1917, and in 1921 Israel Rabin published a critical portion of the *Mechilta d'Rabbi Ismael*. From 1927 onwards, several instalments of *Sifre Deuteronomium* were published by Louis Finkelstein (1895–1991).

### The *Germania Judaica*

In the late nineteenth century, a decade before publication of Heinrich Gross' *Gallia Judaica*, the *Deutsch-Israelitische Gemeindebund* had made plans to compile a massive, synoptic history of German Jewry; these plans, however, had never come to fruition. In making its own similar plans, the *Gesellschaft* itself followed Gross' example, envisioning a listing “in alphabetical order of all provinces and localities within the German Empire where Jews have settled from earliest times until the Treaties of Vienna ... by briefly describing their history and achievements based on existing sources, and understandable to the general reader.”<sup>478</sup> The finished product was meant to serve as a basis for all subsequent historical scholarship concern-

<sup>477</sup> ‘Ausschußsitzung der GFWJ vom 27.12.1920’, in *MGWJ* 64 (1920), p. 316.

<sup>478</sup> See ‘1. Sitzung der Kommission der Germania Judaica, 13.06.1905’, in *MGWJ* 49 (1905), p. 508.

ing German Jewry.<sup>479</sup> In 1905, an expert committee including Moritz Steinschneider and chaired by Jakob Guttman and Markus Brann was formed to oversee the project; Steinschneider's participation is interesting in that previously he had never been formally associated with any German-Jewish scholarly organization. He now single-handedly prepared the project's preliminary working plans – the *Index geographicus*.<sup>480</sup> This text was distributed to a wide range of German scholars (Jewish and non-Jewish); a number of the *Germania Judaica*'s preliminary articles would appear in the *Monatsschrift*.<sup>481</sup>

The *Germania Judaica* was meant to be divided into three periods; from ancient times to the charter of Jewish privileges granted by Emperor Friedrich II (1238), from the *Fridericianum* until the early modern period (1238–1500), and from then to the Congress of Vienna (1500–1815). The work was to include a separate discussion of each German-Jewish community, taking into all major events tied to its the external and internal history and its most prominent members, both these dimensions addressed in chronological fashion. The project's historical focus was on each community's emergence and legal position within the wider society, the identity and economic standing of its members, its buildings, statutes, organizations, administration, and jurisdiction, and the religious instruction and institutions it supported.

As with all other *Gesellschaft* publications, a premium was placed on the *Germania Judaica*'s readability; hence footnotes and a bibliography were placed at each article's end and each volume included a synopsis.<sup>482</sup> The first volume was edited by Markus Brann and Aron Freimann. From 1907 until 1917, Hayim Tykocinski (1862–1942), a Polish-born private scholar, revised and authored most of the articles. Although the *Gesellschaft* hoped to complete the first volume in five years, that volume's first part (Letters A–L) was only published in 1917. After Brann's death, many articles that had been completed for the subsequent volume could not be located, explaining the long gap between publications. The second part (Letters M–Z) only appeared in 1934, and as political circumstances had meanwhile become increasingly perilous, in 1936 the decision was made to accelerate publication of the second volume – a sign, it seems, not only of a sense of time running out on German Jewry itself and a concomitant determination to get whatever one could onto historical record,<sup>483</sup> but of a despairing hope in the project's enlightening function.<sup>484</sup>

<sup>479</sup> See *JP* 38 (1907), p. 24.

<sup>480</sup> 'Ausschußsitzung der GFWJ vom 10.07.1905', in *MGWJ* 49 (1905), p. 507.

<sup>481</sup> See *MGWJ* 53 (1909), pp. 90–107, 344–375, 589–615, 674–678.

<sup>482</sup> See I. Elbogen, A. Freimann and H. Tykocinski, *Germania Judaica* 1/2, (Breslau 1934), pp. IX–XV.

<sup>483</sup> Z. Avneri (ed.), *Germania Judaica* II, 1, p. IX.

<sup>484</sup> See 'Ausschußsitzung der GFWJ vom 04.06.1936', in *MGWJ* 80 (1936), p. 371.

The material for the second volume was lost during World War II, although research had continued until its onset. At that point, an estimated four hundred articles had been submitted to the *Gesellschaft*, but in November 1938 the work was harshly interrupted, the volume's edited manuscripts were confiscated by the Nazis and brought to Otmar Freiherr von Verschuer's so-called *Institut für Erbbiologie und Rassenforschung* (Institute of Hereditary Biology and Race Research) at the University of Frankfurt, where they were presumably destroyed. After the war, the project was taken up again by some of its earlier surviving coordinators, who had meanwhile emigrated to Palestine/Israel. These postwar scholars saw themselves confronted with a new problem: while most of the Hebrew sources were concentrated in Jerusalem, there was now a widespread lack of non-Jewish sources. Zvi Avneri (1901–1967) thus made several trips to Europe to search for and explore archives; over the years he was able to establish the first postwar relationship between Jewish and German historians and archivists. This would play a role in the second part of the *Germania Judaica*, covering the period from the early thirteenth to the mid-fourteenth century, and published in 1968; the first part of Volume Three was published in 1987 and the second part in 1995, together covering the years 1350–1519. A fourth volume (1520–1650) is currently in progress.

### The Maimonides Project

The idea of writing a biography of the great Jewish philosopher, physician and legal scholar Moses ben Maimon (1135–1204) was first suggested by Gustav Karpeles. In a sense, it is surprising that the proposal had not been made long before. For Maimonides was “a thinker rooted both in Judaism and in the general wisdom of his time,”<sup>485</sup> which is to say that both personally and ideologically, he successfully synthesized Judaism with surrounding Arabic Aristotelian culture, assimilating contemporary scientific knowledge even when it contradicted the literal meaning of the Torah and rabbinic sources. Beyond this, he even challenged the Torah's anthropomorphic images of the divine a challenge that would catalyze intense disputes within Judaism over the centuries. At the same time, he skilfully communicated with ordinary literate Jews in a number of non-specialized texts, and offered concise, systematic treatments of the Torah and Talmud. In all of these respects, Maimonides was an obvious figurehead for *Wissenschaft des Judentums*, embodying its most firmly held Enlightenment ideals, and the *Gesellschaft* stood for the very poss-

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<sup>485</sup> M. Brann, D. Simonsen, and J. Guttmann (eds.), *Moses ben Maimon: Sein Leben, seine Werke und sein Einfluß* 1 (Leipzig 1908), p. VII.

ibility of integrating *Wissenschaft des Judentums* into the body of general secular scholarship. More broadly, for cultivated German Jews of the nineteenth century, the popular German-Jewish saying to the effect that “from Moses to Moses there was no one like them”, a reference to Moses the lawgiver and Moses Maimonides, had become fused with a simultaneous reference to Moses Mendelssohn, the very founder of modern German Judaism.

In this context, the introduction to the first volume of the *Gesellschaft's* Maimonides project clearly stated that “a society which made its goal the furtherance of *Wissenschaft des Judentums* cannot ignore the impact of a Moshe ben Maimon” seems as reasonable as it is self-evident. Due to its inherent complexity, the project was conceived as collaborative. Its impetus was the 700th anniversary, in 1904, of the Jewish philosopher's death; the suggestion to correlate the two events came from David Simonson, former Chief Rabbi of Denmark, now a private scholar. A large group of scholars from Germany, Austria, Hungary, Denmark, England, France, and Poland agreed to support the project,<sup>486</sup> and the expert committee consisted of Wilhelm Bacher, Markus Brann, Jakob Guttmann, and David Simonsen.

Thirty essays were submitted of which the committee accepted thirteen.<sup>487</sup> Simonsen's title suggestion having been approved, the first volume of *Moses ben Maimon. Sein Leben, seine Werke und sein Einfluss* appeared in 1908. It covered various highlights of Maimonides' life, together with his philosophical masterpiece (Philipp Bloch, ‘*Charakteristik und Inhaltsangabe des Moreh Nebuchim*’), his ethical system (Hermann Cohen, ‘*Charakteristik der Ethik Maimunis*’), his influence on Christian thinking (Jakob Guttmann, ‘*Der Einfluß der maimonidischen Philosophie auf das christliche Abendland*’), his medical writings (Julius Pagel, ‘*Maimuni als medizinischer Schriftsteller*’), his religious-legal work (Bernhard Ziemlich, ‘*Plan und Anlage des Mischne Thora*’), his relationship to the Gaonic leadership (Adolf Schwarz, ‘*Das Verhältnis Maimunis zu den Gaonen*’), his biblical writings (Simon Eppenstein, ‘*Beiträge zur Pentateuchexegese Maimunis*’), his use of Arabic language and style (Israel Friedländer, ‘*Die arabische Sprache des Maimonides*’ and ‘*Der Stil des Maimonides*’), and his controversial religious writings and their critical reception (Moritz Peritz, ‘*Das Buch der Gesetze, nach seiner Anlage und seinem Inhalte untersucht*’, and Ferdinand Rosenthal, ‘*Die Kritik des maimonidischen ‘Buches der Gesetze’ durch Nachmanides*’).

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<sup>486</sup> The scholars were Israel Abrahams, Wilhelm Bacher, Eduard Baneth, Ludwig Blau, Phillip Bloch, Markus Brann, Heinrich Brody, Hermann Cohen, Ismar Elbogen, Simon Eppenstein, Aron Freimann, Jakob Guttmann, Leon Horowitz, Israel Levy, Julius Pagel, Moritz Peritz, Samuel Poznanski, Ferdinand Rosenthal, Moise Schwab, Adolf Schwarz, David Simonsen, and Bernhard Ziemlich.

<sup>487</sup> See ‘Ausschußsitzung der GFWJ vom 27.12.1905’, in *MGWJ* 50 (1906), p. 127.



The twelve authors of the first volume included six rabbis and six secular scholars, the Maimonides project once again confirming the Conservative primacy within the *Gesellschaft*. Of the rabbis, (Philipp Bloch, Simon Eppenstein, Jakob Guttmann, Moritz Peritz, Ferdinand Rosenthal, and Bernhard Ziemlich), five were former students at the *Jüdisch-Theologisches Seminar*, the exception being Rosenthal, as were three of the other authors – Cohen, Elbogen, and Schwarz. Both Friedländer and Rosenthal were Orthodox scholars, the former a graduate of the *Rabbinerseminar*, the latter a personal student of Esriel Hildesheimer at the *Eisenstadt Yeshiva*. One author, Julius Pagel, was actually an outsider to *Wissenschaft des Judentums*, being a medical historian and co-author of a handbook on medical history (three volumes, 1901–1905). Overall, the Maimonides project can be considered a successful collaboration between Orthodox and non-Orthodox scholars at a promising moment in the history of Jewish *Wissenschaft*.

The *Allgemeine Zeitung des Judentums* lauded the publication of the project's first volume as a "standard work" – one recommended for the "educated layman as well as for the serious scholar."<sup>488</sup> The *Theologische Revue*, while criticizing the lack of "both order and system" among the contributions, commended Guttmann's chapter on Maimonides' influence on Christianity.<sup>489</sup> One interesting response to the book was a long, anonymous article in the *Wormser Zeitung* in part discussing the impact of Maimonides' life and work on Christian-Jewish relations. "It is actually remarkable", the author observed, that people such as Christians and Jews, who share such an enormous part of their religious history and even have the same religious writings, are so mutually strange, even directly hostile, in their manner of coexistence," then continuing as follows:

700 years ago in far-off Egypt, a Jewish philosopher and wise man died; Moses ben Maimon, also known as Maimonides. In his memory, the *Gesellschaft zur Förderung der Wissenschaft des Judentums* will publish a two-volume work, the first volume of which, with about 500 pages, has now been printed. What an abundance of intellectual work one sees here: A treatment of the highest ancient erudition through the full extent of serious ethical and religious Jewish research! The whole wealth of a cultural epoch, which as much as any other was the foundation for our own times and from which we have much to learn! The study of such a work is earnestly recommended to the contemptuous and to those maligning Judaism, whose cheap, indolent and superficial generalities and distortions find, regrettably, all too fertile ground in our public, and at least to those among them who have not yet sunk into the gross misdemeanour of losing all honesty and sense of justice to prevailing vulgar pleasures and low jests. For all just thinkers, the raw antisemitic agitation of our time must strengthen the conscience and the respect for Judaism as a cultural revelation, as human nature. We must never

<sup>488</sup> *AZJ* 73 (1909), p. 168.

<sup>489</sup> *ThR* 5 (1909), pp. 150 f.

forget that we have a common holy task before God and eternity: to fulfil the ethical destiny of mankind, as Maimonides already desired and strove for with all his might 700 years ago.

Published in a non-Jewish newspaper, the article was considered important enough by the *Gesellschaft* that it was decided to reprint it in full in its annual report.<sup>490</sup>

Although negotiations with authors for the second volume of *Moses ben Maimon* were underway long before the first volume was printed, the second volume was not published until 1914 – when it was greeted with striking enthusiasm in the non-Jewish press.<sup>491</sup> Remarkably, only one of that volume's authors was an active rabbi (Jakob Guttmann), another reflection of the shift within Jewish *Wissenschaft* towards a professionalization of the discipline. The publication included a portrait of Maimonides' personality (Simon Epenstein, '*Lebens- und Charakterbild des Maimonides*'), a rebuttal of the opinion, maintained by Abraham Geiger, that Maimonides had outwardly converted to Islam (Abraham Berliner, '*Zur Ehrenrettung des Maimonides*'), and discussions of his interpretation of Aggada (Wilhelm Bacher: '*Die Agada in Maimunis Werken*'), his relationship to earlier Jewish philosophers (Jakob Guttmann: '*Die Beziehungen der Religionsphilosophie des Maimonides zu den Lehren seiner jüdischen Vorgänger*'), his chronological and astronomical works (Eduard Baneth, '*Maimonides als Chronologe und Astronom*'), his linguistic achievements (Wilhelm Bacher, '*Zum sprachlichen Charakter des Mischne Thora*'), and his approach to religious law (Michael Guttmann [1872–1942], '*Maimonides als Devisor*'), together with an historical appreciation of the *Mischne Thora* (Ludwig Blau, '*Das Gesetzbuch des Maimonides historisch betrachtet*').

A third and final volume of *Moses ben Maimon*, including a systematic appraisal of his philosophy and a complete bibliography, was projected but never published.

### The *Gesellschaft* and Christian Scholars

In the period leading up to the first decade of the twentieth century, the relationship between official Christian theology and the *Gesellschaft* had remained wary at best, with representatives of *Wissenschaft des Judentums* receiving ambiguous signals from the non-Jewish world. On the one hand, there were some encouraging gestures such as the following telegraphed message from the dean of the theological faculty of the University of Berlin on the occasion of the *Lehranstalt's* inauguration in 1907: "I do not need to emphasize how

<sup>490</sup> '7. Jahresbericht der GFWJ', in *MGWJ* 54 (1910), p. 121.

<sup>491</sup> See *ThLZ* 42, (1917), p. 366; *ThR* 13/14, (1917), pp. 310f.

important progress in the field of *Wissenschaft des Judentums* is for Christian theology.”<sup>492</sup> The presence of the Prussian minister of education at the celebration – he even delivered a speech – seemed to mark new momentum in the discipline’s struggle for acceptance by German society and the German academic world. On the other hand, newspapers reported on the event less enthusiastically, the socialist *Vorwärts* even indicating that “from a scholarly [*wissenschaftlich*] standpoint, this enterprise seems entirely useless. Whatever is *wissenschaftlich* within *Wissenschaft des Judentums* has already been dealt with, and has been highly developed by the non-Jewish side in particular.”<sup>493</sup> The *Deutsche Tageszeitung* and *Tägliche Rundschau* voiced similar opinions, while the *Staatsbürgerzeitung* specifically warned against this most recent Jewish institution.

In view of such opinions the *Gesellschaft* was well aware of the defensive function of its work, which it viewed as intrinsically tied to its quality – a self-imposed obligation which is evident in this self-congratulatory passage from its ninth annual report:

The effectiveness of our society is manifest beyond the spiritual existence of the religious community. The society’s increasing status in the scholarly world, as well as among the educated public, the attention and participation with which our publications are met ... are all successes over which our members can sincerely rejoice. ... We have made the ... joyous observation that our efforts have not been without success. This has revealed itself not only in the external strengthening of our *Gesellschaft*, and the growth of membership, but also in the increased understanding for Judaism and its *Wissenschaft* in Jewish and non-Jewish circles. ... Due to their solidity and scientific character, especially works published by the *Gesellschaft* have found, unreserved recognition among both specialists and the educated public, and have create, however small the intention, all the more excellent an apologetics for Judaism and its teachings.<sup>494</sup>

The society was thus always sensitive to non-Jewish reactions to its work. When an ordinary priest living in Australia expressed his appreciation at being accepted as a member, his entire letter, full of praise as it was for the society’s work, was read aloud by the steering committee and even reported on in the *Monatsschrift*.<sup>495</sup> The response to positive reviews by Christians was similar, and the *Gesellschaft*’s collective outlook was increasingly fused with optimism, reaching a crescendo in the annual report for 1914.

By that time, an increasing number of university and state libraries had opted to join the society. One of its most prominent Christian members was Nikolaus Müller, professor of theology at the University of Berlin. Müller had been involved with the society from a very early stage; in the spring and fall of 1906, 1907, and 1909, the *Gesellschaft* had financed his trips to Rome to in-

<sup>492</sup> See ‘Gemeindebote’, in *AZJ* 71 (1907), p. 1.

<sup>493</sup> See *Vorwärts*, 23.10.1907.

<sup>494</sup> See ‘9. Jahresbericht der GFWJ’, in *MGWJ* 55 (1911), p. 757.

<sup>495</sup> Cf. *MGWJ* 71 (1927), p. 156.

investigate a newly discovered Jewish catacomb, even paying for the workmen needed to free the necropolis from debris.<sup>496</sup> Because the plot's owners and the Italian authorities repeatedly blocked Müller's work, he was compelled to publish his incomplete research results in 1912; he died in 1915 before he could publish the rest of his findings. The faculty of New Testament studies in Berlin now contacted the *Gesellschaft* to collaborate on a more complete study of the catacomb, still to be published under Müller's name; the contract for this work was signed by both parties on 17 July 1915. This collaborative enterprise – hailed ebulliently in the Christian press<sup>497</sup> – involved Christian scholars Hugo Gressmann (1877–1927), Strack, and Adolf Deißmann (1866–1937) and Jewish scholars Otto Hirschfeld and Eugen Mittwoch, who advised the publisher, Nikos Bees, on questions of Judaica.<sup>498</sup> In the society's tenth annual report, the volume was referred to as among the “finest achievements of our society so far.”<sup>499</sup>

In this manner, over the first few decades of the century – in a period extending some time beyond the end of the Great War – there were a number of auspicious gestures by the German academic world towards Jewish *Wissenschaft*. These signs were greeted with reciprocal enthusiasm on the Jewish side. In two articles of 1912 and 1913, Martin Rade, a non-Jewish former colleague of Hermann Cohen, thus called for the establishment of a Jewish theological faculty at the newly-founded University of Frankfurt:<sup>500</sup> a call, supported by the theologian Willy Staerk among others,<sup>501</sup> that can be seen as a definitive change in the public estimation of *Wissenschaft des Judentums*.<sup>502</sup>

On 3 and 4 June 1914, the *Gesellschaft* held its annual meeting in Frankfurt; that the possibility had recently arisen to establish a faculty for Jewish *Wissenschaft* in Frankfurt was certainly no coincidence. In effect, the meeting emerged as a public statement of interfaith relations, with the inclusion of non-Jewish personalities, among them the mayor of Frankfurt. During

<sup>496</sup> N. Müller, *Die jüdische Katakomben am Monteverde zu Rom*, p. 20.

<sup>497</sup> See *ThLZ* 47 (1922), pp. 152 f.

<sup>498</sup> N. Müller, *Die Inschriften der Jüdischen Katakomben am Monteverde zu Rom*, pp. V–IX.

<sup>499</sup> See ‘10. Jahresbericht der GFWJ’, in *MGWJ* 57 (1913), p. 118.

<sup>500</sup> *CW* 26 (1912), p. 266; *Süddeutsche Monatshefte* 10 (1913), p. 68.

<sup>501</sup> Together with his colleague A. Leitzmann, Staerk was one of the few non-Jewish authors to publish with the *Gesellschaft*. Their joint publication *Die Jüdisch-Deutschen Bibelübersetzungen von den Anfängen bis zum Ausgang des 18. Jahrhunderts* appeared in 1923.

<sup>502</sup> Other examples of this process include the praise heaped on the society for its activities and contribution to German-Jewish understanding by the theologian and former vice-director of the *Institutum Judaicum* in Leipzig, Paul Fiebig, (1876–1949) in *CW* 21 (1907), pp. 631 f. and 26 (1912), p. 361; the statement by Bonn rabbi Elias Kalischer, responding to Martin Rade, in *AZJ* 76 (1912), p. 414: “Recently the signs have been increasing that the state of isolation of *Wissenschaft des Judentums* is coming to an end. At least the injustice of a superficial and minimizing attitude of many Christian scholars toward Jewish scholarship is being admitted.”

sight seeing and educational excursions, arranged by the *Komitee zur Erhaltung und Wiederherstellung jüdischer Baudenkmäler*, the city's old Jewish buildings and landmarks, the Rothschild house, the synagogue on the Börneplatz, and the cemetery were visited by the delegates.

In his address to the Jewish gathering, the mayor presented the greetings on behalf of the entire magistrate of Frankfurt. Referring to the close ties between Jewish and German spiritual life, the mayor recalled the contribution of the Jewish people to modern civilization, praising Judaism's spirit and culture. The festive dinner – for around one hundred members and guests – was followed by a trip to the nearby city of Worms, site of one of the oldest Jewish communities in Germany. After a visit to the Worms synagogue and Jewish cemetery, the assembly was welcomed in the town hall by dignitaries headed by the city's mayor, and president of the Chamber of Hessen, Heinrich Köhler (1859–1924), who with obvious pride spoke of the longstanding Jewish presence in Worms, without neglecting to discuss the many episodes of medieval persecution that had occurred there. The municipal archivist had prepared an exhibition on the history of Worms Jewry; after the accompanying lecture and a visit to the archives, the guests had lunch in the city's banquet hall. Naturally, the board of the *Gesellschaft* was delighted by the meeting's "successful course", as it was put in the twelfth annual report – the meeting was in fact perceived as a kind of apogee to relations with Germany's non-Jewish world; it served as proof "that the importance and the success of our work is being recognized in ever larger circles of German Judaism."<sup>503</sup>

The Jewish faculty in Frankfurt did not materialize. The main reasons were a strong opposition from separatist Jewish Orthodox circles as well as financial problems; the faculty would have had to be sponsored by the Jewish community, which decided not to cooperate.<sup>504</sup> This state of affairs notwithstanding, the high point of success clearly enjoyed by the society in the period just before the outbreak of the Great War – a success reflected in both literary output and membership – was unmistakably accompanied by increased recognition within Germany's non-Jewish world. This recognition went beyond the scholarly sphere. In the 1915 annual report, the encouraging situation, believed to be destined to continue was summed up as follows:

That our labour is not useless is demonstrated by the reception of our publications in the scholarly world and by the competent judgement of significant scholars. The ... work by Elbogen, *Der jüdische Gottesdienst*, is described as "epoch-making" by the *Theologische Rundschau* and as an "outstanding scholarly work" through which the author has "earned himself lasting scholarly merit" in the *Theologische Literaturzeitung*. The *Theologische Literaturblatt* calls Bacher's *Tradition und Tradenten*, which we both published

<sup>503</sup> '12. Jahresbericht der GFWJ', in *MGWJ* 59 (1915), p. 48.

<sup>504</sup> In Christian Wiese's view, this development reflected a concern at appearing "too Jewish". See C. Wiese, *Wissenschaft des Judentums*, p. 345.

and mentioned in our last annual review, “a masterpiece of scholarly labour that will instruct Talmudists and Christian theologians alike”. Another critic writes about the same publication: “Through publishing this work, the *Gesellschaft zur Förderung der Wissenschaft des Judentums* has added another immeasurable merit to its previous ones. Only a decade ago, the publication of such a work would have been impossible. Both the Christian and Jewish scholarly worlds have had reason to be thankful to the *Gesellschaft* for having dared to publish this work in such a critical time”. This is how the work of our *Gesellschaft* is being valued, and we are noting these judgements with satisfaction.<sup>505</sup>

After H. L. Strack’s death in 1922, the *Institutum Judaicum* was incorporated into the theological faculty of the University of Berlin, which renounced its previous missionary activity, in keeping with a general decrease of such activity after the war,<sup>506</sup> and corresponding to the expressed wish of Hugo Gressmann, a successor of Strack at the *Institutum*. In 1925 to 1926, this development made it possible to organize a lecture series closely tied to both the *Gesellschaft* and *Wissenschaft des Judentums* in general; the lectures, published the following year under the title *Entwicklungsstufen der jüdischen Religion*, were delivered by Ismar Elbogen, Juda Bergmann (1886–1949) Michael Guttman, Julius Guttman, and Leo Baeck (1873–1956). In this unprecedented forum, Gressmann expressed his view “that the same right by which the Christian church demands its Protestant and Catholic faculties, must be extended to the Jewish ‘church’”.<sup>507</sup> For Gressmann, the lecture series were a sign of “recognition of Jewish scholarship”, serving as an effective means against increasing social, academic, and political antisemitism.<sup>508</sup>

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<sup>505</sup> ‘13. Jahresbericht der GFWJ’, in *MGWJ* 59 (1915), p. 316.

<sup>506</sup> Golling and von der Osten-Sacken (eds) *Hermann L. Strack*, p. 87.

<sup>507</sup> H. Gressmann, *Entwicklungsstufen der jüdischen Religion: Vorträge des Institutum Judaicum Berlin* (Gießen 1927), pp. 1 f.

<sup>508</sup> H. Gressmann, *Entwicklungsstufen*, p. 2 f. Of course not everyone welcomed Gressmann’s approach: the *Allgemeine Evangelisch-Lutherische Kirchenzeitung*, in lamenting the abandonment of the *Institutum*’s missionary purpose, observed that the “Protestant Institute for researching post-biblical Judaism had become a Jewish-theological seminary”. This outstanding episode of Jewish-Christian dialogue within German academic theology was discontinued after Gressmann’s death in 1927. See R. Golling and P. von der Osten-Sacken (eds.), *Hermann L. Strack*, p. 116.

## XI. 1917–1939: The *Akademie für die Wissenschaft des Judentums* and the last years of the *Gesellschaft*

The years of the Great War took a severe toll on all German scholarly institutions; many could resume their work only partially, and even then only with foreign support. The sphere of Jewish scholarship was no exception in this respect, with the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee proving particularly helpful in the provision of financial assistance.<sup>509</sup> In addition, starting in 1924 the *Gesellschaft* received aid from the Emergency Society for German and Austrian Sciences and Art.<sup>510</sup>

Resuscitating the organization in the post-World War I period was made particularly difficult by the death of a number of its founding members, including Cohen, Geiger, Güdemann, Eschelbacher, and Philippon. In 1919, the orientalist Moritz Sobernheim (1872–1933) was elected chairman. As a member of the Baalbeck expedition organized by the Prussian government and under the auspices of the *Institut français d'archéologie*, he had travelled several times to Syria and Palestine and had published several works on Middle Eastern inscriptions. As had been the case with the *Gesellschaft's* first chairman, Martin Philippon, Sobernheim was neither a rabbi nor a typical representative of Jewish *Wissenschaft*, but rather an individual with some political standing in Germany's Jewish and non-Jewish communities. Along with being a leading figure in several scholarly organizations, since 1896 he had been active in the Zionist colonization society Esra; he was vice chairman of the *Deutsch-Israelitische Gemeindebund* and a member of the *Pro-Palästina Comitee*. In 1918 he was appointed *Legationsrat* for Jewish political affairs in the foreign ministry.<sup>511</sup>

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<sup>509</sup> *CV-Zeitung* 19 (1923), p. 153.

<sup>510</sup> See 'Ausschußsitzung der GFWJ vom 12.11.1924', in *MGWJ* 68 (1924), p. 342.

<sup>511</sup> See F. Nicosia, 'Jewish Affairs and German Foreign Policy during the Weimar Republic. Moritz Sobernheim and the Referat für Jüdische Angelegenheiten', in *LBI Year Book* 33 (1988), pp. 261–283.

Sobernheim's term as chairman coincided exactly with the years of the Weimar Republic, when decisive changes, closely connected with Germany's political upheaval, took place in both the activities of the *Gesellschaft* and the scholarly scope of *Wissenschaft des Judentums*. Demands for new approaches to learning had become stronger; in the realm of Jewish learning the most pronounced were being voiced by Franz Rosenzweig, whose initiative led in 1919 to the founding of a new institution, the *Akademie für die Wissenschaft des Judentums*.

Unlike the *Gesellschaft*, the *Akademie* has received extensive academic attention, partly a reflection of Rosenzweig's fame, partly a consequence of the period of its founding and its status as the last German-Jewish scholarly institution to emerge before the destruction of German Jewry. Over recent decades, it has become a synonym for the renaissance of *Wissenschaft des Judentums* in the Weimar Republic.<sup>512</sup> What has been overlooked, however, is the correlation of the *Akademie* to its predecessor, the *Gesellschaft*, a relation that is imperative in evaluating the *Akademie's* founding ideology.

While still a soldier on the Macedonian front, Rosenzweig had written a letter to Hermann Cohen, published soon after under the title *Zeit Ist's* (1917), calling for a radical rethinking and reorganizing of *Wissenschaft des Judentums*. The title of this text came from Psalm 119:126: "It is time to work for the Lord; they made void Thy teachings" – a verse traditionally understood as a call for action.<sup>513</sup> The new measures Rosenzweig called for were highly practical; creation of a professional cadre of about 150 teachers, representing a new genre of Jewish scholars fundamentally different from the traditional rabbinic establishment in their sole focus on teaching and research, for the sake of reviving the discipline. As Rosenzweig envisioned their rôle, this cadre would spend half its time engaged in educational work in the community. In short, he proposed nothing less than a total secularization of *Wissenschaft des Judentums*, the institutional replacement of the *Rabbiner-Doktor* by the teacher-scholar.

While *Wissenschaft des Judentums* had slowly been moving in the same direction that Rosenzweig was proposing, albeit in far more radical form, his critique was nevertheless partly directed at the *Gesellschaft* which he emphasized, had limited its central activities to the publication of scholarly works.<sup>514</sup> It is apparent that Rosenzweig was very much aware of the *Gesellschaft's* activities,

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<sup>512</sup> See D. N. Myers, "The Fall and Rise of Jewish Historicism: The Evolution of the *Akademie für die Wissenschaft des Judentums* (1919–1934)", in *Hebrew Union College Annual* 63 (1992), pp. 107–144.

<sup>513</sup> F. Rosenzweig, 'Zeit ist's', in *NJM* 2 (1917/1918), pp. 133 ff.

<sup>514</sup> See Rosenzweig, 'Einleitung', in *Jüdische Schriften* 1, p. LXI.



suggesting its leadership involvement to Cohen when discussing the question of whom to approach with his idea.<sup>515</sup> In addition, Rosenzweig's father had been a member of the *Gesellschaft* since its founding,<sup>516</sup> and Rosenzweig himself both read and recommended various volumes of its publications.

Hermann Cohen enthusiastically took up the idea of founding the *Akademie*, expressing his thoughts on the matter in an essay of 1918 that takes on particular interest against the backdrop of the text he drafted for the appeal leading to the *Gesellschaft's* founding some sixteen years earlier; for the last time in his life, Cohen could use the weight of his authority to support such an endeavour. Many of Cohen's arguments resembled those he had expressed on the earlier occasion. As in 1902, he defined *Wissenschaft des Judentums* as a "bastion of our continuing survival", the neglect of which would result in the abandoning of Judaism by many educated Jews. Cohen again addressed the problem of Protestant scholarship, which he still considered a source of enormous harm to Jewish social emancipation. Finally, he addressed the disparity between general philanthropic donations within German Jewry and those made for *Wissenschaft des Judentums*.

In contrast to the earlier appeal, Cohen identified – in an already-cited passage – the reason for Jewish "powerlessness" as "our inadequacy ... to confront head-on the temptations of our enemies who desire to destroy us". This situation, according to Cohen, was to have been remedied by the *Gesellschaft*, which, although strong in its planning and execution of collective works, was, to be criticized for perpetuating precisely the situation he found so unsatisfactory; not working to attract a meaningful number of new scholars but entrusting its projects to the old rabbi-scholars.

Rosenzweig later realized that his own demand for an independent caste of scholars had already been expressed by Cohen in 1907, while juxtaposing the existing *Gesellschaft* and an *Akademie* to come.<sup>517</sup> It is clear that Rosenzweig and Cohen were essentially correct in their estimation of the single major difficulty facing *Wissenschaft des Judentums* in general and the *Gesellschaft* in particular: the lack of ability to attract new researchers and to present them with a financially viable alternative to the rabbinate. Although, Cohen indicated, the methodological innovations exemplified by the *Grundriss* were important, the unfinished project only highlighted that difficulty. "The number of free scholars," he insisted, "must not be limited to the number of practising

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<sup>515</sup> See letter of Rosenzweig to Cohen, 23.03.1917, in E. Rosenzweig (ed.) *F. Rosenzweig/Briefe*, (Berlin 1935), p. 176.

<sup>516</sup> See membership list of the *Gesellschaft*, 1905. After the death of Georg Rosenzweig, his widow renewed the membership and voluntarily raised her contribution to 12 marks.

<sup>517</sup> See H. Cohen, 'Zwei Vorschläge', pp. 133–141; Rosenzweig, 'Einleitung', p. LXI.

clerics”; that situation defined German Jewry’s “greatest deficiency, the deepest emergency from which we are suffering.”<sup>518</sup>

What neither Cohen nor Rosenzweig chose to underscore was that the *Gesellschaft* and its founders had recognized the basic problem from the start, specifically confirming in its constitution an intention to financially support young researchers in order to give them an alternative to the rabbinate. Likewise, in his essay on *Wissenschaft des Judentums und Wege ihrer Förderung*, Leopold Lucas had carefully laid out the central condition for the *Gesellschaft*’s success and ability to publish systematic works: the employment of young scholars; the expert committees only editing the completed manuscripts.<sup>519</sup> That despite these good intentions only partial employment had proved possible was a result of disappointingly limited funding. Through coordinated efforts the *Gesellschaft* had succeeded, nonetheless, in initiating fresh research and offering a financial perspective, however limited, to Jewish scholars trying to start their careers.<sup>520</sup>

In any case, the true novelty of Rosenzweig’s plan lay in his demand for creating a “secular Jewish intelligentsia;”<sup>521</sup> in its practical execution, this meant an exclusion of rabbis from a professional *Wissenschaft des Judentums*. This was a radical approach, particularly because modern German rabbis had been able to partially compensate for the loss of their religious and legal authority through academic training that manifested itself, precisely, in a furtherance of *Wissenschaft des Judentums*.<sup>522</sup> Importantly, the rabbis active in the *Wissenschaft* movement had always been in favour of promoting the work of younger scholars and redistributing some of the burden they shouldered. Nevertheless, the assumption that they would have agreed to be replaced by secularized professional personnel, to be, in Rosenzweig’s words, “on equal footing with the rabbis”, was very doubtful indeed.<sup>523</sup>

It thus comes as no surprise that the ideas for the *Akademie*, originating with two figures who were not rabbis (and not scholars of *Wissenschaft des Judentums* in the strict sense), was met with initial scepticism by many traditional

<sup>518</sup> H. Cohen, ‘Zur Begründung’, p. 213.

<sup>519</sup> L. Lucas, *Die Wissenschaft des Judentums*, pp. 12–13.

<sup>520</sup> In this respect, see also Elbogen’s statement, that “the *Akademie* has taken over part of the *Gesellschaft*’s goals, such as taking cooperative work into its program and furthering the upcoming scholarly generation and communal work, the challenge of scholarly growth”, I. Elbogen, ‘Zum Jubiläum’, p. 5.

<sup>521</sup> F. Rosenzweig, ‘Concerning the Study of Judaism’, in Glatzer (ed.), *On Jewish learning*, p. 44 (italics are author’s emphasis).

<sup>522</sup> See I. Schorsch, ‘Emancipation and the Crisis of Religious authority. The Emergence of the Modern Rabbinate’, in *From Text*, pp. 9–50; A. Altmann, ‘The German Rabbi: 1910–1939’, in *LBI Year Book 19* (1974), pp. 31–49; A. Jospe, ‘A Profession in Transition. The German Rabbinate 1910–1939’, *LBI Year Book 19* (1974), pp. 51–59.

<sup>523</sup> F. Rosenzweig, ‘Concerning the Study of Judaism’, p. 51.

scholars.<sup>524</sup> Accordingly, at the founding meeting of the *Akademie* in 1919, the background of the participants was markedly non-theological and only loosely connected to *Wissenschaft des Judentums* – traditional representatives of the discipline such as Ismar Elbogen and Leo Baeck were the exception. The meeting was dominated by an eclectic group of influential Jewish activists such as the founder of the *Hilfsverein der deutschen Juden* and prominent spokesman for Liberal German Jewry Paul Nathan (1857–1927); the director of the national bank Jakob Goldschmidt (1882–1955); the director of the Kaiser-Willhelm Institute for Physics and member of the Prussian Academy of Sciences Albert Einstein (1879–1955); the professor of philosophy Ernst Cassirer (1874–1945); the Zionist Orthodox graphic artist Hermann Struck (1876–1944); the president of the Zionist World Union and professor of botany Otto Warburg (1859–1938); the corporate lawyer for the Berlin chamber of commerce – and co-founder of the Centralverein – Max Abt; the director of the *Deutsche Bank* Oskar Wassermann (1869–1934); and the professor of bacteriology and director of the research institute for experimental therapy of the *Kaiser Willhelm Gesellschaft* August von Wassermann (1866–1925). Also participating were the eastern European historian Mark Wischnitzer (1882–1955) and two businessmen from eastern Europe, Leon Horowitz and Elias Schalit.

Rosenzweig's plans would be largely thwarted by the fact that the first director of the *Akademie*, historian Eugen Täubler (1879–1953), concentrated his efforts on raising Jewish scholarship to the general standards surrounding it; the idea of inserting the researchers into the educational framework of the German Jewish communities was discarded – Täubler was simply too much a part of the “old school” of *Wissenschaft des Judentums*, with its focus on raising the discipline's standards to those prevalent in the German universities. If we accept David Myers's argument that Rosenzweig's main objective had been to separate *Wissenschaft des Judentums* from what Myers terms “the cultural imperative of Emancipation – that is from the demand to rehabilitate Judaism in order to win social and legal acceptance,”<sup>525</sup> then it seems clear that precisely the “responsive scholarship”, that Rosenzweig had meant to overcome remained the central ethos of the *Akademie*.<sup>526</sup>

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<sup>524</sup> See J. Guttman, ‘Jüdische Wissenschaft’, p. 489; idem, ‘Die Akademie für die *Wissenschaft des Judentums*’, in *Festgabe zum Zehnjährigen Bestehen der Akademie für die Wissenschaft des Judentums, 1919–1929* (Berlin 1929), p. 3. See also Arc.Ms.Var. 308, letter by M. Brann to M. Gaster, 08.09.1920.

<sup>525</sup> Myers, ‘Fall and Rise’, p. 110.

<sup>526</sup> See in this respect E. Täubler, ‘Das Forschungs-Institut für die *Wissenschaft des Judentums*’, in *AWJ-KB 1* (1919), p. 10: “With singular exceptions, *Wissenschaft des Judentums* was not able to reach the average level of comparable sciences; hence the goal must be to reach this average and on this basis achieve higher levels.”

The *Akademie* was nevertheless successful in creating the first pure research institute for *Wissenschaft des Judentums*. It facilitated the recruitment of new scholars by offering them careers, hence financial perspectives. Initially only four scholars were employed full-time; Fritz Baer (1888–1980), Hanoeh Albeck (1890–1972), David Baneth, and Arthur Spanier (1889–1944). At its peak, the *Akademie* would employ twenty-five scholars, a third of whom had permanent positions. In accordance with Rosenzweig's plan, the full time employees were not rabbis, with the single exception of Julius Theodor, who had been working for many years on a critical edition of *Bereshit Rabba* for the *Gesellschaft*. The institution also financed publications by its researchers; starting in 1926 it had its own publishing house, the *Akademie-Verlag*. There was an annual *Korrespondenzblatt*, with both scholarly articles and information about the institution's development. Notably, the *Akademie* and the *Gesellschaft* collaborated on several projects, the most ambitious being the publication of a critical edition of Moses Mendelssohn's collected writings. Additionally, many members of the different committees formed for the scholarly work looked for the *Gesellschaft* as their methodological model and had been active within it.

Because of the Nazi rise to power the *Akademie* was short-lived. Its productivity was prematurely ended in 1934, with the emigration of its director Julius Guttman to Palestine; in total, six scholarly volumes would be published under its auspices. In retrospect, the *Akademie* did become a forerunner of things to come. The secularization of Jewish *Wissenschaft* would continue outside of Germany. In 1925, the Hebrew University in Jerusalem opened its faculty for Jewish Studies, where many scholars involved with the German institution would continue their work. That same year, the YIVO-Institute for Jewish research was inaugurated in Vilna, its aim being the documentation of and research on Eastern European Jewish culture, in line with the highest standards of secular scholarship. In the same period, two additional projects were initiated in Germany in the framework of Jewish *Wissenschaft*: the *Jüdisches Lexikon* and the *Encyclopaedia Judaica*. The highly ambitious aims of both these encyclopaedic efforts have been summarized by Michael Brenner:

first, to restore the treasure of Jewish culture to the Jewish community (and to illustrate it to the non-Jewish world); second, to consolidate the leading role of German *Wissenschaft des Judentums* among international Jewish scholarship; and third, to create a modern Jewish consciousness among German-speaking Jews by redefining the contents of Judaism.<sup>527</sup>

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<sup>527</sup> M. Brenner, *Renaissance*, p. 112.

After several years of delay, the *Jüdisches Lexikon* was published in five volumes between 1927 and 1930. The first volume of the *Encyclopaedia Judaica* appeared in 1928; the project would end with the tenth volume in 1934, containing entries through letter L.

In 1934 the orientalist Eugen Mittwoch was elected chairman of the *Gesellschaft*, with its whole range of activities still continuing, including publications, the general meetings, the academic lectures. Reports of the board meetings and the annual reports hardly offer any indication of the drastically altered political situation – which is only occasionally alluded to. In the annual report for 1932, Elbogen indicated that difficulties had emerged, but that “we trust in God’s help, which has repeatedly guided us through difficult times.”<sup>528</sup> Membership fluctuated greatly. In 1934 the mood was actually more optimistic – “through persevering work,” we read, “the *Gesellschaft zur Förderung der Wissenschaft des Judentums* was able to make beneficial scholarly progress; the seventy-eighth volume of the *Monatsschrift* almost doubled in size.”<sup>529</sup>

In the increasingly ominous, if unspoken threatening political environment, the emphatic recommendation given in the 1934 annual report to the last volume published in the *Grundriss*, in 1935, *Das Judentum und die geistigen Strömungen des 19. Jahrhunderts* by Albert Lewkowitz (1883–1954), is highly telling. “This educational work,” the report observed, “has received overall justified recognition in the present spiritual struggle . . . . If at any time, Judaism requires the strengthening of its spiritual forces, then it is now.”<sup>530</sup> In light of the considerable historical literature treating Jewish self-defence under the Nazis that has emerged over recent years,<sup>531</sup> we can understand this statement, not as much as a naïve, near-religious faith in the rational power of *Wissenschaft*, but as a powerful awareness – if only in prescient form – of something that would become overtly manifest in the hell of Theresienstadt, and even Auschwitz; that in the worst of circumstances, the form of sustenance culture and knowledge offered German Jewry could help it defy those planning its end.

In 1935, the *Gesellschaft* announced that “in the future, replies and reviews will no longer be included in the *Monatsschrift* in any form.”<sup>532</sup> But even the severe shock of Kristallnacht (9 November 1938) would not entirely end its work. After its chairman Eugen Mittwoch emigrated to England, Leo Baeck assumed responsibilities for the society, even managing to edit the eighty-third volume

<sup>528</sup> *MGWJ* 78 (1934), p. 380.

<sup>529</sup> ‘Geschäftsbericht 1934’, in *MGWJ* 79 (1935), p. 275.

<sup>530</sup> *ibid.*, p. 276.

<sup>531</sup> See A. Paucker (ed.), *Deutsche Juden im Kampf um Recht und Freiheit*.

<sup>532</sup> See ‘Ausschußsitzung der GFWJ vom 12.06.1935’, in *MGWJ* 79 (1935), p. 278.

of the *Monatsschrift*, which would be printed in 1939 in Leipzig. This “last monument to German Jewry” was confiscated and destroyed by the Gestapo in 1941.<sup>533</sup> Some copies were saved, and reprinted in 1963.

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<sup>533</sup> M. Kreuzberger (ed.), *Gesamtregister zur Monatsschrift für Geschichte und Wissenschaft des Judentums 1851–1939*, p. VII.



## Epilogue

A significant interval has occurred since the initial inception of the foregoing systematic history of the *Gesellschaft der Wissenschaft des Judentums*. While reviewing its contents and reflecting on its legacy my admiration for its founders, contributors, members and sympathizers has only deepened with the passage of time.

Looking back, what makes their efforts pioneering is the manner and extent to which they set for themselves – against considerable odds – the hitherto elusive goal of academic recognition as an essential step towards full social equality.

In knocking at the doors of Christian theological faculties, the *Gesellschaft* sought to challenge an often biased and unbalanced Protestant and Catholic scholarship, which had become normative throughout German academia. The founders hoped to realize their aspiration through uncompromising professional and scholarly diligence.

At the same time the *Gesellschaft* was fully aware that the means available for achieving its goal were hopelessly inadequate and that a successful reversal of prejudiced scholarship was not likely to occur during their lifetimes.

To be sure, there were noteworthy successes: in addition to an impressively researched series of publications by a ‘who’s who’ of scholarly talent, the *Gesellschaft* facilitated a limited, yet unprecedented degree of professional cooperation across religious lines. During an era that was no less riven than ours by turf wars and factionalism, the enterprise was successful in integrating orthodox, liberal and conservative Jewish scholars. For this alone the *Gesellschaft* merits contemporary reconsideration.

By and large, however, and during its day, progress remained slow and often imperceptible.

This, of course, begs the question: What was the driving force that kept the *Gesellschaft* going, when membership drives fell short of expectations and when year after year German universities continued to ignore its plea for an equal place among Protestant and Catholic theological faculties?

In re-examining the society’s history one is left with the inescapable conclusion that part of the contributors’ motivation may have stemmed from their fundamental pride in their cultural heritage and an unerring respon-



sibility – felt oftentimes on a daily basis – to defend Judaism against prejudice and unfair treatment by the majority of the theological elite.

The underlying motivation however, shared by all members of the intellectual elite, was the deep reverence and awe of the transformative power of normative scholarship, the hallmark of this era. It was the deep-seated conviction – axiomatic for Enlightenment thinking – that there exists a “truth”, which can be accessed and verified through diligent, unbiased research and which will ultimately prevail, abolishing prejudice and injustice in its wake.

In this sense, the refusal of the German scholarly world to embrace and recognize the achievements of the *Gesellschaft* and Jewish scholarship in general is significant. It acts as an instructive paradigm of the limitations of rational thought and the failure of German academia to confront the absurd, bizarre and ultimately poisonous ideology of the Third Reich.

And yet, it is precisely the tenacity and uncompromising loyalty to the tenets of scholarship – in spite of its frailties and limitations – which remains the *Gesellschaft's* most enduring legacy.

To this day, historical revisionism and denial of past events continue to distort and pollute the public as well as the academic debate. The searingly relevant question – if and how rational thought and scholarship can be successfully employed to eliminate prejudice and the distortion of historical truth – remains as pressing and inspiring as ever.

While the members of the *Gesellschaft* were cognizant of the Sisyphean enormity of their struggle they continued to soldier on; true to the spirit of the Talmudic dictum:

“You are not obligated to complete the work, but neither are you free to desist from it.” (Ethics of the Fathers 2:21)

US Military Academy at West Point, January 2013

## Appendix 1: The Appeal

To our co-religionists! Both individual opinion concerning the significance of the truth of Judaism and appreciation of our teachings and history by fellow citizens of another faith stand in direct proportion to the position taken by *Wissenschaft des Judentums*.

*Wissenschaft des Judentums* gave former generations security and hope, and constantly provided our champions with a direction for defence and resistance. Our scholarship has not only not lost its importance in modern times, but its problems have widened and become even more clear through generally practised scholarly methodology. We acknowledge that the free scholarly investigation of our literature is one of the most vivid and deepest sources of general culture, of the spiritual and especially of the ethical progress of humanity, and should be recognized as such in every cultivated state. Those scholars teaching *Wissenschaft des Judentums* at the universities have indeed had laudable achievements, which we have not failed to acknowledge. Nevertheless we cannot overlook that their prejudice against Judaism taints their objectivity and that their knowledge usually extends to the church canon but not to the later sources of Judaism. But we can neither forego a purely objective judgement, nor, for the sake of the later development of our religion and history, renounce academic recognition. To take a stand here is a duty of self-preservation; the holiest duty in our religion, but equally a duty to *Wissenschaft* and general culture. In his deep wisdom, Zunz has stated that our ghetto will only disappear when the ghetto of our scholarship ends. With confidence, we must also aim at the establishing of university chairs for our scholarship, free of all bias; however these troubled times have taught us that our emancipation is still far away. We are thus called upon to help ourselves and create an organization whose grandeur matches the significance and duties of our scholarship. We are planning a *Gesellschaft zur Förderung der Wissenschaft des Judentums*. This organization shall primarily support talented young people who have completed their education at both a university and one of the theological seminaries and whose

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<sup>538</sup> Translation by the author from *AZJ* 66 (1902), pp. 398 f.

inclination and vocation moves them towards scholarly work. They will be endowed with sufficient stipends, assuring us of an adequate base of teaching support, which we desperately need in order to educate our theologians and present our scholarship with dignity. We thus will require solid and comprehensive works, covering the whole of our scholarship, to be promoted and generously supported by our society. Thirdly, the *Gesellschaft* will hold annual assemblies, as is customary in other academic branches, where the representatives of our field will meet to debate the state of research and coordinate necessary measures. Finally it seems necessary to publish a journal or support an existing publication in which important studies will find a place and appropriate publicity, and where thorough and unbiased reviews of new publications in the field can be presented. We are announcing an assembly for interested parties on Sunday the 2nd of November at 10 a.m. in Berlin, Wilhelmstrasse 118, where the preparations and founding of the society will take place. We do not doubt that our co-religionists will recognize and cherish the importance of our plan, and will support it wholeheartedly. Out of the enthusiasm of the study of our precepts, which was always part of our religion, may there develop a new strong scholarly life.

An unsere Glaubensgenossen! Die Ueberzeugung des Einzelnen von der Bedeutung und der Wahrheit des Judentums sowie auch die Werthschätzung unserer Lehre und unserer Geschichte durch die andersgläubigen Mitbürger steht in genauem Zusammenhang mit der Stellung, welche die Wissenschaft des Judentums einnimmt. Die Wissenschaft des Judentums gab den früheren Geschlechtern Halt und Hoffnung, sie gab auch unseren Vorkämpfern stets die Richtung für die Vertheidigung und die Abwehr.

Unsere Wissenschaft hat in der Neuzeit nicht nur nicht an Bedeutung verloren, sondern ihre Probleme haben sich erweitert und durch die allgemeinen Methoden der Wissenschaft sind sie selbst bestimmter geworden. Wir erkennen, daß die freie wissenschaftliche Bearbeitung unseres Schriftthums eine der allerlebendigsten und tiefsten Quellen der allgemeinen Kultur, des geistigen und insbesondere des sittlichen Fortschritts der Menschheit ist und als solche in jedem Kulturstaate anerkannt werden sollte.

Diejenigen Gelehrten, welche die Wissenschaft des Judenthums an den Universitäten lehren, haben in der That rühmliche Leistungen hervorgebracht, denen gegenüber wir es an lauter Anerkennung nicht haben fehlen lassen. Wir dürfen darüber aber nicht übersehen, daß ihre Befangenheit dem Judenthum gegenüber ihre Sachlichkeit beeinträchtigt; auch erstreckt sich ihr Wissen meistens auf den Kanon, nicht auf die späteren Quellenwerke des Judenthums. Wir können jedoch auf rein sachliche Beurtheilung und für die spätere Entwicklung unserer Religion und unserer Geschichte auf wissenschaftliche Beachtung nicht verzichten. Dafür einzutreten ist eine Pflicht der

Selbsterhaltung, die heiligste Pflicht gegen unsere Religion, aber auch gleich sehr eine Pflicht gegen die Wissenschaft und die allgemeine Kultur.

Zunz hat in seiner tiefen Einsicht es ausgesprochen, daß unser Ghetto erst dann schwinden wird, wenn das Ghetto unserer Wissenschaft aufhört. Unsere Zuversicht muß auch darauf gerichtet werden, daß an den Universitäten die von jeder Befangenheit freien Lehrstühle für unsere Wissenschaft begründet werden; die Noth der Zeiten lehrt uns aber, daß diese unsere Emanzipation noch weit im Felde sein dürfte. So gilt es, selbst Hand ans Werk zu legen und eine Organisation zu schaffen, deren Größe der Bedeutung und den Aufgaben unserer Wissenschaft entspricht. Wir planen eine "Gesellschaft zur Förderung der Wissenschaft des Judenthums".

Diese Gesellschaft soll zuvörderst begabte junge Leute, welche das Universitätsstudium sowie einer der theologischen Anstalten absolviert haben, und welche Neigung und Beruf zur wissenschaftlichen Arbeit treibt, mit ausreichenden Stipendien versehen, damit aus ihnen ein Stamm von zulänglichen Lehrkräften uns gesichert werde, dessen wir zur Ausbildung unserer Theologen sowie zur würdigen Ausgestaltung unserer Wissenschaft dringend bedürfen. Wir fordern weiterhin gediegene und ausgebreitete, das Ganze unserer Wissenschaft umfassende Werke, welche durch unsere Gesellschaft gefördert und in ausgiebiger Weise unterstützt werden sollen. Die Gesellschaft soll drittens Jahresversammlungen veranlassen, wie sie in anderen wissenschaftlichen Zweigen üblich sind, zu denen die Vertreter unserer Wissenschaft sich einfinden, um den Stand der Fragen zu erörtern und eine Verständigung über die auszuführenden Maßnahmen zu erzielen. Endlich erscheint die Herausgabe einer Zeitschrift oder die Unterstützung eines schon bestehenden Unternehmens geboten, in der werthvolle Einzeluntersuchen eine Stelle und genügende Verbreitung finden, und in der ein gründliche und unparteiische Besprechung aller in Frage kommenden Neuerscheinungen veröffentlicht wird.

Wie berufen auf Sonntag, den 2. November, 10 Uhr Vormittags eine Versammlung der interessierten Kreise nach Berlin, Wilhelmstraße 118 III, in welcher die Vorbereitungen stattfinden werden und die Konstituierung der Gesellschaft erfolgen soll.

Wir zweifeln nicht daran, daß unserer Glaubensgenossen die Bedeutung unseres Planes einsehen und beherzigen und mit Begeisterung für denselben eintreten werden. So möge aus dem Enthusiasmus der allezeit für das Studium der Lehre mit unserer Religion verbunden war, neues kraftvolles wissenschaftliches Leben sich entwickeln.

# Appendix 2: Organization of the *Grundriss der Gesamtwissenschaft des Judentums*

## A. Linguistics

### 1. Hebrew Linguistics

Biblical Hebrew	(negotiations not finalized)
Modern Hebrew	(negotiations not finalized)

### 2. Aramaic Linguistics

Prof. Samuel Landauer

History of Hebrew Linguistics

Prof. Wilhelm Bacher

## B. Historical and literary topics

### 1. Biblical times

Introduction to the Bible	Prof. Ludwig Blau
Biblical Antiquities	Rabbi Dr. Paul Rieger
History of the people of Israel until the Babylonian exile	Rabbi Dr. Benno Jacob
Jewish-Hellenistic literature (including apocrypha)	Prof. Leopold Cohn
History of biblical-exegetical literature	Rabbi Dr. Simon Eppenstein

### 2. Talmudic times

Introduction to the Talmud	Dozent Dr. Baneth
Talmudic Antiquities	Dr. Samuel Krauss
History from the Babylonian Exile to the completion of the Talmud	Rabbi Dr. Hermann Vogelstein
History of Talmudic literature	
History of Halacha	Prof. Adolf Schwarz
History of Haggada	Rabbi Dr. Philipp Bloch

### 3. Post-Talmudic times

History from the completion of the Talmud until the present

Until Mendelssohn	Dozent Dr. Markus Brann
Since Mendelssohn	Prof. Martin Philippon
Economic History	Privatdozent Dr. Georg Caro
Literary History	
Rabbinic History	Prof. Louis Ginzberg
Religious-philosophical	Rabbi Dr. Jakob Guttmann
Other (poetical, mystical, etc.)	Dr. Gustav Karpeles, Salomon Buber, Prof. Adolf Büchler, Abraham Epstein, Prof. Ludwig Geiger, Rabbi Dr. Heinrich Gross, Dr. Albert Harkavy, Rabbi Dr. Moritz Kayserling, Rabbi Dr. Immanuel Löw, Rabbi Dr. Nathan Porges, Rabbi Dr. Samuel Poznanski, Rabbi Dr. Siegmond Salfeld and other scholars.

### 4. Auxiliary historical topics

Geography of Palestine	Rabbi Dr. Johann Krengel
Chronology	Rabbi Dr. Max Grunwald
Study of sources	Director Dr. Moritz Stern
Epigraphic, Paleography and Numismatic	Dr. Hirsch P. Chajes

## C. Systematic Topics

Systematic Theology	Dr. Kaufmann Kohler
Ethics and Philosophy of Religion	Prof. Hermann Cohen
Ethics of practical religious precepts	Rabbi Dr. Theodor Kroner
Apologetics	Chief Rabbi Dr. Moritz Güdemann
History of Jewish Religion:	
In general	Rabbi Dr. Leo Baeck
History of Jewish sects	Rabbi Dr. Samuel Poznanski
Comparative Theology	
Judaism and Christianity	Dr. Benzion Kellermann
Judaism and Islam	Prof. Ignaz Goldziher

## D. Practical Topics

Practical Theology (including community administration and organized societies)	Rabbi Dr. Heinemann Vogelstein
Homiletics	Rabbi Dr. Moritz Levin
Pedagogic	Rabbi Dr. Samson Hochfeld
Liturgy	Dr. Ismar Elbogen

## Appendix 3: Publications of the *Gesellschaft*

This list includes all publications by the *Gesellschaft* between 1904 and 1938. Also included are new editions, and special prints from the *Monatsschrift*.

1904

Hermann Cohen, *Ethik und Religionsphilosophie in ihrem Zusammenhange*.  
Abraham Yahud, *Prolegomena zu einer erstmaligen Herausgabe des Kitab Al-hidaja "ila fara" id al qulub (Bachja ibn Pakudas Herzenspflichten)*.

1905

Leo Baeck, *Das Wesen des Judentums*.  
Philipp Bloch, *Die Kabbala auf dem Höhepunkte ihrer Entwicklung und ihre Meister*.  
Josef Eschelbacher, *Das Judentum und das Wesen des Christentums*.

1906

Moritz Güdemann, *Jüdische Apologetik*.  
Leopold Lucas, *Die Wissenschaft des Judentums und die Wege zu ihrer Förderung*.

1907

Josef Eschelbacher, *Das Judentum im Urteile der modernen protestantischen Theologie*.  
Martin Philippon, *Neueste Geschichte des jüdischen Volkes*, 1.  
Israel Schapiro, *Die haggadischen Elemente im erzählenden Teil des Korans*.  
Arthur Süßmann, *Die Tilgung der Judenschulden unter König Wenzel*.

1908

Wilhelm Bacher, Markus Brann, David Simonsen a.o., *Moses ben Maimon. Sein Leben, seine Werke und sein Einfluß*, 1.  
Georg Caro, *Sozial und Wirtschaftsgeschichte der Juden im Mittelalter und in der Neuzeit* 1.  
Josef Eschelbacher, *Das Judentum und das Wesen des Christentums*, 2nd edn.  
Nathan Porges, *Joseph Bechor Schor, ein nordfranzösischer Bibelerklärer des 12. Jahrhunderts*  
Julius Guttmann: *Kant und das Judentum*.

1910

Gustav Karpeles (ed.), *Über Juden und Judentum. Vorträge und Aufsätze von Prof. Dr. H. Steinthal*.  
Kaufmann Kohler, *Grundriss einer systematischen Theologie des Judentums auf geschichtlicher Grundlage*.

Samuel Krauss, *Talmudische Archäologie 1*.  
 Martin Philippon, *Neueste Geschichte des jüdischen Volkes, 2*.  
 Isert Rösel, *Die Reichssteuern der deutschen Judengemeinden von ihren Anfängen bis zur Mitte des 14. Jahrhunderts*.

1911

Saul Horowitz, *Die Stellung des Aristoteles bei den Juden des Mittelalters*.  
 Samuel Krauss, *Talmudische Archäologie 2*.  
 Martin Philippon, *Neueste Geschichte des Jüdischen Volkes 3*.

1912

Ismar Elbogen, *Ludwig Philippson*.  
 Samuel Krauss, *Talmudische Archäologie 3*.  
 Nikolaus Müller, *Die jüdische Katakomben am Monteverde zu Rom*.

1913

Ludwig Blau, *Papyri und Talmud in gegenseitiger Beleuchtung*.  
 Ismar Elbogen, *Der jüdische Gottesdienst in seiner geschichtlichen Entwicklung*.

1914

Wilhelm Bacher, Markus Brann, David Simonsen, *Moses ben Maimon. Sein Leben, seine Werke und sein Einfluß 2*.  
 Wilhelm Bacher, *Tradition und Tradenten in den Schulen Palästinas und Babyloniens*.  
 Hermann Cohen, *Die religiösen Bewegungen der Gegenwart*.

1915

*Festschrift zum 70. Geburtstage Jakob Guttmanns*.  
 Nathan Porges (ed.), *Sifra, der älteste Midrasch zu Leviticus Kommentar zum Buche Leviticus*.

1916

Eduard Mahler, *Handbuch der jüdischen Chronologie*.  
*Beiträge zur Geschichte der deutschen Juden: Festschrift zum Geburtstage Martin Philippons*.  
 Jakob Guttmann, *Die religionsgeschichtlichen Grundlagen des Isaak Abravanel*.

1917

Philipp Bloch, *Gedächtnisrede zu Ehren Prof. Dr. M. Philippons*.  
 Markus Brann, Aron Freimann, *Germania Judaica 1 (A–L)*.  
 Saul Horowitz, *Sifre ad Numeros*.

1919

Nikolaus Müller, *Die Inschriften der jüdischen Katakomben am Monteverde zu Rom*.  
 Hermann Cohen, *Religion der Vernunft aus den Quellen des Judentums*.

1920

Georg Caro, *Sozial und Wirtschaftsgeschichte der Juden im Mittelalter und in der Neuzeit 2*.

1922

Martin Philippon, *Neueste Geschichte des jüdischen Volkes 1, 2nd edn*.



1923

Willy Staerk, Albert Leitzmann, *Die Jüdisch-Deutschen Bibelübersetzungen von den Anfängen bis zum Ausgang des 18. Jahrhunderts.*

1924

Ismar Elbogen, *Der jüdische Gottesdienst in seiner geschichtlichen Entwicklung*, 2nd edn.

1925

Gustav Karpeles (ed.), *Heyman Steinthal: Über Juden und Judentum*, 3rd edn.

1926

Louis Lewin, *Die Landessynode der großpolnischen Judenheit.*

1927

K. Anklam, *Die Judengemeinde in Aurich.*

Tassilo Hoffmann, *Jacob Abraham und Abraham Abramson, 55 Jahre Berliner Medaillenkunst (1755–1810).*

1928

Max Freudenthal, *Leipziger Meßgäste. Die jüdischen Besucher der Leipziger Messen in den Jahren 1675–1764.*

David Herzog, *Der jüdische Grabstein in der Burg zu Graz.*

Armand Kaminka, *Studien zur Septuaginta an der Hand der zwölf kleinen Prophetenbücher.*

Max Markreich, *Die Beziehungen der Juden zur Freien Hansestadt Bremen von 1065 bis 1848.*

Karl Preis, *Die Medizin in der Kabbala.*

1929

Fritz Bamberger, *Die geistige Gestalt Moses Mendelssohns.*

Hermann Cohen, *Religion der Vernunft aus den Quellen des Judentums*, 2nd edn.

Jacob Obermeyer, *Die Landschaft Babyloniens im Zeitalter des Talmuds und des Gaonats: Geographie und Geschichte aus talmudischen, arabischen und anderen Quellen.*

1930

Martin Philippon, *Neueste Geschichte des jüdischen Volkes 2*, 2nd edn.

Jefim Schirmann, *Die hebräische Uebersetzung der Maqamen von Hariri.*

1931

Ismar Elbogen, *Der jüdische Gottesdienst in seiner geschichtlichen Entwicklung*, 3rd edn.

Saul Horowitz, Israel Rabin, *Mechilta d'Rabbi Ismael I–VI.*

1934

Ismar Elbogen, Aron Freimann, Hayim Tykocinski, *Germania Judaica I, 2 (M–Z).*

*Germania Judaica Gesamtband I (A–Z).*

Armand Kaminka, *Beiträge zur Erklärung der Esra–Apokalypse und zur Rekonstruktion ihres hebräischen Urtextes.*

*Festschrift Immanuel Löw zum 80. Geburtstage.*

1935

Abraham Heller, *Die Lage der Juden in Rußland von der Märzrevolution 1917 bis zur Gegenwart.*

Albert Lewkowitz, *Das Judentum und die geistigen Strömungen des 19. Jahrhunderts.*

Wolf Rabinowitsch, *Der Karliner Chassidismus.*

*Festschrift zur 800. Wiederkehr des Geburtstages von Moses ben Maimon.*

1937

Alfred Grotte, *Synagogenspuren in schlesischen Kirchen.*

Jakob Winter, *Deutsche Übersetzung des Sifra.*

*Festschrift Eugen Mittwoch zum 60. Geburtstag.*

*Verzeichnis der Schriften von Felix Perles.*

1938

Maximilian Landau, *Beiträge zum Chasarenproblem.*

*Gesamtregister der Monatsschrift für Geschichte und Wissenschaft des Judentums 1.*

Samuel Kraus, *Talmudische Archäologie*, 1–3, 2nd edn.

*Gesammelte Schriften von M. Mendelssohn: Vol. 7.*

Louis Finkelstein, *Sifre Deuteronomium*, 1, 2.

Louis Finkelstein, *Sifre Deuteronomium*, 3.

Louis Finkelstein, *Sifre Deuteronomium*, 4.

Louis Finkelstein, *Sifre Deuteronomium*, 5.

## Appendix 4: The lectures at annual meetings of the *Gesellschaft*

In line with § 6c of the constitution of the *Gesellschaft*, lectures were held at the annual assemblies, which were subsequently printed and sent to all members.

06.01.1904: Berlin

Hermann Cohen: 'Die Errichtung von Lehrstühlen für Ethik und Religionsphilosophie an den jüdische-theologischen Lehranstalten'.

26.12.1904: Berlin

Phillip Bloch: 'Die Kabbala auf dem Höhepunkte ihrer Entwicklung und ihre Meister'.

27.12.1905: Berlin

Leopold Lucas: 'Die *Wissenschaft des Judentums* und die Wege zu ihrer Förderung'.

05.01.1907: Berlin

Markus Brann: 'Die Geschichte der Monatsschrift'.

Josef Eschelbacher: 'Das Judentum im Urteil der modernen protestantischen Theologie'.

23.12.1907: Berlin

Nathan Porges: 'Joseph Bechor Schor'.

Jakob Guttmann: 'Kant und das Judentum'.

28.12.1908: Berlin

Nikolaus Müller: 'Der älteste jüdische Friedhof des Abendlandes: Die Katakomben der Porta Portese in Rom'.

29.12.1909: Berlin

Leopold Cohn: 'Die griechische Bibelübersetzung und das Christusbild in den Evangelien'.

27.12.1910: Berlin

Saul Horowitz: 'Die Stellung des Aristoteles bei den Juden des Mittelalters'.

03.01.1912: Berlin

Ismar Elbogen: 'Gedächtnisrede auf Ludwig Philippson'.

30.12.1912: Breslau

Ludwig Blau: 'Papyri und Talmud in gegenseitiger Beleuchtung'.

30.12.1913: Berlin

Hermann Cohen: 'Über die religiösen Bewegungen der Gegenwart'.

09.06.1914: Frankfurt am Main

Jakob Guttman: 'Die Bedeutung der *Wissenschaft des Judentums*'.

Isidor Kracauer: 'Die Geschichte der Israelitischen Gemeinde in Frankfurt am Main'.

28.12.1915: Berlin

Behrend Pick: 'Die jüdischen Münzen'.

27.12.1916: Berlin

Philipp Bloch: 'Gedächtnisrede für Martin Philippsohn'.

N. B. Between 1917 and 1919 no annual assemblies were held.

28.12.1920: Berlin

Phillip Bloch: 'Worte der Erinnerung an Prof. Dr. Guttman und Prof. Dr. Brann'.

02.11.1922: Berlin

Leo Baeck: 'Die Wissenschaft vom Judentum'.

07.02.1923: Berlin

Julius Guttman: 'Nachruf auf Professor Dr. Philipp Bloch'.

18.02.1925: Berlin

Hermann Vogelstein: 'Religion und Staat im nachexilischen Judentum'.

04.03.1926: Berlin

Isaak Heinemann: 'Philons griechische und jüdische Bildung'.

23.02.1927: Berlin

Adolf Kober: 'Von den ältesten jüdischen Grabstätten in Deutschland, ihrer archäologischen und geschichtlichen Bedeutung'.

16.11.1927: Berlin

Ismar Elbogen: 'Aufgaben und Leistungen der Gesellschaft zur Förderung der Wissenschaft des Judentums'.

04.06.1928: Köln

Fritz Bamberger: 'Die geistige Gestalt Moses Mendelssohns'.

20.03.1929: Berlin

Gotthold Weil: 'Reiseeindrücke aus dem Vorderen Orient'.

19.03.1930: Berlin

Isaak Heinemann: 'Die geschichtlichen Wurzeln des neuzeitlichen Humanitätsgedankens'.

25.02.1931: Berlin

Harry Torczyner: 'Die Bibel und die Literaturen des alten Orients'.

09.03.1932: Berlin

Albert Lewkowitz: 'Die Stellungnahme zum Judentum in der Geistesgeschichte des 19. Jahrhunderts'.

12.06.1935: Berlin

Isaak Heinemann: 'Griechische Wissenschaft und Jüdische Frömmigkeit bei Maimonides'.

04.06.1936: Berlin

Fritz Kaufmann: 'Religion und Kunst'.

14.06.1937: Berlin

Benno Jacob: 'Über den Dekalog'.

## Appendix 5: The *Gesellschaft's* subsidies

This following list includes all financial grants for the publication or pursuit of research, with descriptions in the original German. Exceptionally, financial support was granted after publication of a work or to individuals as a token of appreciation for their general contribution to *Wissenschaft des Judentums*.

1903

- Baeck, L.: Zu Studien über die jüdische Religionsphilosophie.  
Brody, H.: Zur Herausgabe der weltlichen Dichtungen Salomo Ibn Gabirol's.  
Eppenstein, S.: Zur Herausgabe von Abraham Maimuni's Pentateuchkommentar im arabischen Original mit deutscher Übersetzung.  
Ginsburger, M.: Zu einer Studienreise nach Frankreich.  
Jampel, S.: Zur Beendigung seiner Studien über die Entstehung des Judentums.  
Lewin, L.: Zur Drucklegung seiner *Geschichte der Juden in Lissa*.  
Stern, M.: Zur kritischen Bearbeitung der Akten des Trientiner Prozesses von 1475.  
Theodor, J.: Zur Fortsetzung seiner Edition des *Bereschit rabba*.

1904

- Berdyczewky, M. J.: Zur Herausgabe einer systematischen Bearbeitung der ethischen und aggadischen Sprüche der talmudischen Literatur.  
Cohen, H.: *Ethik und Religionsphilosophie in ihrem Zusammenhange*.  
Eppenstein, S.: Zur Vollendung seiner Studien über den Bibel Kommentar des Abraham Maimuni.  
Jampel, S.: *Studien über die Entstehung des Judentums*.  
Krauss, S.: Studienreise nach dem Orient.  
Lewin, L.: *Geschichte der Juden in Lissa*.  
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