Happy New Year 5783

NEWSLETTER

Building project
[Renewal and Renovation]

Events from the past year
[Last season]

Encounters, Visits
[and New Collaborations]
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Dear members, fellows and friends of the Leo Baeck Institute.

On the eve of the New Year, 5783, we, as always, extend our blessings for a good year, a year of learning, health, well-being and good deeds. This year we are happy to repeat our invitation to host many guests in our home at Bustenai Street in Jerusalem, as nothing compares to presence, eye contact and havruta.

I want to tell you a bit about our endeavors last year. We held a series of online lectures called “Voyages”, while in the next year we are planning to offer a new series called "Reform. Transformation: History, Religion and Culture", to mark the 150th anniversary of Rabbi Dr. Leo Baeck. In this series, we will discuss the question of tradition, an open tradition, with room for learning, play and interpretation. This is our approach to the tradition of German Jewry, which we believe has left us with heritages worthy of reform: reinterpretation, relevant to life in Israel, certainly now, to the test of Jewish-Arab relations, of the future of democracy, issues of ethnicity and gender, law, religion and society, the denunciation of violence, and the wish for good neighborly relations.

Last year as well we had the privilege of hosting research groups as a platform for new studies, led by young researchers from Israel and worldwide, together with book symposiums, conferences and joint readings. In June 2022, the Institute led the Annual Conference on German Studies, together with the university research institutes and chairs on German history. The Leo Baeck Institute will continue fulfilling its mission of serving as the academic leader of the conference in the upcoming years.

The Jewish New Year is a time for renewal and renovation: recently, the Leo Baeck Institute has decided to undertake the task of renovating its home in Jerusalem. Every time is right to join us in this effort.

This is a time for renewal, but also a time for parting. This year we parted from our Board Member Dr. Yitzhak (Heinrich) Steiner (b. Laupheim, Germany, 1931), who passed away in March 2022. Steiner was raised and educated in Switzerland. In 1965, he immigrated to Israel and first specialized in the field of controlling, and later in legal history. His hobbies included playing music and choir singing. Steiner was devoted to Conservative Judaism for many years he also served as the international treasurer of the Leo Baeck Institute. We had the privilege of knowing him as a loyal friend and supporter of this Institute. May his memory be blessed.

Sincerely,
Galili Shahar
Chairman of the Leo Baeck Institute Jerusalem
Dear Friends of the Leo Baeck Institute Jerusalem.

A year of transition and growing is coming to an end and a new year with just another transition seems right ahead of us.

As much as we do not want to think about COVID-19 any longer, it changed our personal lives but also our work at the institute. The digitization of our programs brought our contents to many more people in and beyond Israel. It gave us the possibility to reach out to new audiences, to stay in contact with scholars outside of Israel and to engage in new conversations. It brought the Leo Baeck Institutes in London, New York/Berlin, the WAG (Wissenschaftliche Arbeitsgemeinschaft des Leo Baeck Institutes) and our Friends' Organization much closer than in the past.

I would like to take this opportunity to warmly thank my colleagues Dr. William Weitzer, Director of the LBI New York/Berlin and Dr. Daniel Wildmann, Director of the LBI London. Both will head for new adventures and will be missed in the organization. I am very grateful for your good cooperation and the good changes that we were able to realize together.

On the backside of all this, we miss(ed) our audience at the institute — and hope that we will have more opportunities to meet, to engage in dialogue and to learn together in the new year.

During the transition ahead of us, we will concentrate on the physical place, on the home of the Institute at Bustenai 33, Jerusalem, which we want to turn into a meeting space for culture, academia and society. You will find more information on this on the next pages of this newsletter.

The end of the year is always a good opportunity to look back and to be thankful for all the support, good cooperation and interest in our programs.

I would like to thank especially the German Ministry of Interior that increased our annual project funding in a very considerable way and thus enabled us to strengthen and enlarge our programs extensively. I also would like to thank the German Foreign Office for their support of the digitization of our historical archives, which we could conclude a couple of months ago.

My special thanks go to the board of our Friends' Organization in Germany, headed by the former Ambassador to Germany Shimon Stein, for their support of our work in Jerusalem. I want to thank the board members of the Leo Baeck Institute Jerusalem for their commitment, trust and support. And last but not least — all this would not have been possible to realize without the dedicated team at the LBI: Dr. Sharon Livne for her thorough and creative preparation of our events and coordination of our academic programs; our activities coordinator Raya Michaeli for her sympathetic ear for everyone and for keeping the house together; our consultant Heike Grunewald for her continuous help in connecting us with new partners and supporters, Yael Ben Avi and Arije de Haas — our media team — for making it possible to reach out with our programs digitally to new audiences; our archival team Meirav Reuveni and Bettina Farack for making the LBI Jerusalem collections together with Arieh Bashan and the LBI New York digitally accessible and for making our collections fruitful for new research on German-Jewish History; our accountants Shimrit Radai and Hani Haham for their professional administration. And our volunteers — Leander, Lisa and Marianne for all their great contributions to our work in the last year. You all did an excellent job!

Toda raba!

Happy New Year! May you all have a wonderful new year ahead of you. I am looking forward to welcoming you at Bustenai 33 in Jerusalem.

Irene Aue-Ben-David,
Director of the Leo Baeck Institute Jerusalem
When it was first founded, the Institute’s mission was almost exclusively the documentation of the strong cultural contribution of prominent German-speaking Jews and the research of their past. In recent years, the Leo Baeck Institute Jerusalem has expanded the scope of our activities, exploring in greater depth the way the cultural and intellectual legacy as well as the historical experiences of German Jewry relate to central issues in contemporary Israeli discourse.

We are delighted to announce our plans for a revamped, renewed, and modern Leo Baeck Institute Jerusalem

Courtyard of the Leo Baeck Institute Jerusalem
To make the most of this organizational growth and serve the community better, while staying true to the original mandate, we are embarking on an exciting physical growth project of our premises in the heart of Jerusalem. The project will include:

- **Interior renovation and careful preservation of the historically significant building exterior**, which was created in 1962 by the German-Jewish architects Lotte Cohen and Yehuda Lavie.
- **Investment in optimal climate conditions for preservation of historical documents in the archives**.
- **Installation of mobile shelving in the library** to optimize use of the limited space.
- **Adaptable reading room layout** that will enable it to serve both for individual and group use, as well as a lecture hall or meeting space fitted with up-to-date technological equipment.
- **Accessibility and safety upgrades**.
- **Redesigned office space** to accommodate growing professional team.
- **Redesign of the courtyard**.

During recent visits to Berlin by our Executive Director Dr. Irene Aue-Ben-David, wheels were set into motion for a strong partnership with the German-Israeli Future Forum, the Würth Group and the German Confederation of Skilled Crafts that will bring together young German and Israeli artisans and building professionals for this project. (For more, see page 9).

**We'd love to hear from you!**

If you are interested in being involved in bringing this project to fruition, please contact Dr. Irene Aue-Ben-David at irene.abd@leobaek.org.

We are building working committees internationally, as well as strategic partnerships to help us reach our goals: the purchase, renovation processes and the joint Israeli-German manufacture project for young professionals.
ENCOUNTERS, VISITS AND NEW COLLABORATIONS

After the many difficult months of the pandemic, we were very glad that in spring 2022 we finally could meet again in person, work together, welcome new and old colleagues and guests at the institute in Israel or meet with them in Germany and start picking fruits of many projects planned during the pandemic.

During the last months we began a new cooperation with the Leibniz Institute for Jewish History and Culture — Simon Dubnow, the research project, “German-Jewish Heritage Relocated: Postwar Dispersion of the Library of the Hochschule für die Wissenschaft des Judentums”, funded by the German Research Foundation (DFG), (see pp. 17-19).

As part of this research project, LBI Jerusalem will document the history of its library holdings. The results of this work, the provenance data will be made publicly accessible through the online database of the cooperation Looted Cultural Assets. Moreover, to help advance the search for Nazi looted books LBI Jerusalem and Looted Cultural Assets are currently exploring the potential of a mobile application. Because an app will make it much easier to become actively involved with the complex topic of provenance research, we expect it to open up a field hitherto dominated by experts to a much broader audience.

In May 2022 we had the honor of welcoming the Federal Government Commissioner for Culture and the Media Claudia Roth and her delegation at the institute in Jerusalem. After a first encounter in March 2022 in Berlin, her visit gave us the opportunity to present her in detail our current programs as well as our future vision for the institute — a leading and innovative research institute as well as a cultural center in the heart of Jerusalem.

LBI Jerusalem entered recently a new cooperation with the Leibniz Institute for Educational Media — Georg Eckert Institute (GEI) in the framework of a new project of the German-Israeli Schoolbook Commission. In June 2022, Professor Eckhardt Fuchs, Professor Alfons Kenkmann, Dr. Dirk Sadowski, Dr. Martin Liepach and Anja Neubert participated in a first workshop in Jerusalem. Together with the LBI Jerusalem team — Dr. Irene Aue-Ben-David, Dr. Sharon Livne, Bettina Farack and Arije de Haas — we discussed the current status and the potential of the use of digital material in history lessons in German and Israeli schools. The aim of this three-year project is to prepare and present digital source material from the collections of the LBI Jerusalem to schools in Germany and Israel.
At the end of the academic year, we welcomed all students and scholars that are connected to German studies in Israel to annual German Studies Conference on the topic «Language, Culture and Society».

More than seventy participants attended our packed conference program with almost forty speakers who presented their research in history, literature, visual studies, philosophy, theater studies, cultural studies, and exile studies. The lectures are accessible at our YouTube channel. All this could only be realized in cooperation with all the relevant institutions in Israeli academia: the Minerva Centers in Tel Aviv and Jerusalem, the DAAD in Haifa and Jerusalem, the Bucerius Institute in Haifa, the Open University of Israel, the Department of German Language and Literature at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, the Avraham Harman Institute for Contemporary Jewry at the Hebrew University, the Center for Austrian and German Studies at the Ben-Gurion University of the Negev, the Samuel Braun Chair for the History of the Jews in Prussia at Bar Ilan University and the support of the Austrian Embassy in Israel. We were thankful for the warm greetings of the outgoing German cultural attaché, Hayato Richard Xu-Yamato.

Finally, we would like to mention a very special new cooperation between the LBI Jerusalem and the German-Israeli Future Forum. This Berlin-based organization headed by Dr. Tamara Or dedicates its work to creating and strengthening contacts between the younger generation of Germans and Israelis in various professional, social and cultural contexts. LBI Jerusalem stands for supporting the research of young scholars. But here, we will take part in connecting another group of young Israelis and Germans: LBI Jerusalem and the Future Forum intend to bring together young crafts professionals from the two countries, who will work together to renew our building in Jerusalem. Thanks to the Wuerth Group and its director Daniela Schily we had the opportunity to present this idea for the first time at an event in the Würth House in June 2022 in Berlin, together with Germany’s First Lady Elke Büdenbender, the former Minister of Justice Brigitte Zypries, the President of the Skilled Crafts in Germany, Hans Peter Wollseifer, Secretary of State, Dr. Tobias Lindner, the Head of Economic and Scientific Cooperation at the Israeli Embassy, Hila Engelhard and others.

At this stage we can only say — stay tuned!
The event season at the LBI is over, and this is a great opportunity to thank all participants! During the year we have held a wide variety of academic and public events.

The events have been held in online or hybrid format, enabling people to participate from far and wide. All are accessible on our YouTube channel.

We started the year with the online lecture series “Voyages: Migration, Knowledge and Property in the German-Jewish World”. Together, we embarked on a journey of broad horizons, focused on some of the major milestones in German-Jewish life, some of which extended to additional spaces — children literature, music, tourism and convalescence homes — and touched upon the socioeconomic and cultural issues that have shaped German-Jewish history.

At the same time, we continued with our flag events. In October 2021, we launched the 23rd issue of Chidushim, which dealt not only with the history of the Jews in the German-speaking space but also with the relationship between Judaism and German culture in general. We started 2022 with an event marking the launch of the Jewish almanac "Nature — Landscapes from the Jewish World", discussing the relationship between nature, Jews and Judaism — the relevance and importance of the environment in both Israel and Germany.
Another event held jointly with the Rosenzweig-Minerva Center was a conference on the life and work of Sammy Gronemann, who established the genre of Zionist comedy. The event examined the relationship between Gronemann and Nathan Alterman and included readings in Hebrew and German.

During the year we also promoted international collaborations. Together with the New York and London LBI s, we held an evening on the book "In Hitler’s Munich: Jews, the Revolution, and the Rise of Nazism" by Prof. Michael Brenner, International President of the Leo Baeck Institute.

Together with the Rosenzweig-Minerva Center at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, the Institute for Jewish Studies at the University of Antwerp and the Department of German Language and Literature at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, we held the fourth annual lecture on the poet and queen of expressionism Else Lasker-Schüler.
Another evening was devoted to Prof. Michael A. Meyer's book on Leo Baeck, which followed the life of the rabbi, educator, intellectual and community leader, one of the most important Jewish figures in prewar Germany. German Jewry in the 1930s was central to another two book launches: Prof. Guy Miron's "To Be a Jew in Nazi Germany", which uses diaries, correspondences and memories to shed light on various aspects of the daily life of German Jews during this dark time; and Tamar Cohen Gazit's "In the Talons of the Third Reich: The Jewish Community in Breslau".

During the last year, we organized several book launches like the evening on Mati Shemoelof's The Prize, a book that deals with the German-Israeli relations with a unique and provocative voice, offering a self-conscious satire of the book industry and the charged relationships between cultural advocacy and political activism. Dr. Omri Ben Yehuda's "I Will Not Show You: On the Collapse of the Author in Modern Jewish Literature" offers a culture-critical, queer and Mizrahi reading of the prose of S.Y. Agnon, particularly in two of his distinct reflections on the Yishuv, in the novels The Day Before Yesterday and Shira.
To mark International Women’s Day in March 2022 we held, together with Dr. Smadar Sheffi, two events devoted to the painter Greta Wolf Krakauer. Krakauer was active in Vienna in the time of its cultural efflorescence. In Israel, she co-curated with Joseph Zaritsky one of the earliest exhibitions of contemporary art, and created one of the most popular print albums for Keren HaYesod. In 1969, a year before her death, she won the Jerusalem Prize for Painting.

For the first time this year, we created a series of short films with researchers from various areas, shedding light on diverse aspects of two key subjects. Under the title “Women at the Center”, we produced films launched on International Women’s Day, dealing with German-Jewish women almost ignored by historical research. This series was hugely successful, and you are welcome to view it on our YouTube channel. Most recently, we dedicated four films to Walter Rathenau, who was assassinated on 24 July 1922.

This year we also continued the oral history workshop together with the Oral History Department at the Institute for Contemporary Jewry at the Hebrew University and the Israeli Oral History Society. The workshop included Hebrew and English lectures on oral history projects related to German Jewry and related issues.
Over the past year, four research groups were active in the Institute. In the frame of these groups, we addressed a variety of topics central to our research mission, as well as subjects of public importance related to current affairs.

The local group “Jews, Innovative Education and Nation Building: A View from Israel on the German-Speaking Space in the Late Modern Era” deals with the importance of that space for the history of education, Jewish and Israeli education in particular, with emphasis on transnational aspects, local histories, transfer of knowledge and their agents, the establishment of professions, and professional and other networks – out of awareness of the entangled histories methodology, which is currently central to the study of the history of education. This group is headed by Dr. Miriam Szamet.

The international group “Between Jewish Languages: Literature, Thought and History” deals with questions of bilingualism, cultural encounters and translation that arise out of texts written in all Jewish languages, eastern and western alike. The group is led by Dr. Jan Kühne, Dr. Avner Ofrah and Mr. Gilad Shiram, and it acts in collaboration with the Rosenzweig Minerva Center for German-Jewish History and Literature at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem and the Laub Center for Jewish Studies at Stanford.
Another international group, “Environmental History of Europe’s Jews”, seeks to define the role of Jewish and Zionist history as part of the history of the environment and to examine in which senses this case study differs or is similar to others, with emphasis on the transnational, global and comparative aspects in Jewish history. This group is headed by Dr. Dominik Hünniger and Dr. Netta Cohen in collaboration with the WAG (Wissenschaftliche Arbeitsgemeinschaft des Leo Baeck Instituts).

This year we mark the 70th anniversary of the signing of the Reparations Agreement, the focus of the international research group “The Luxemburg Agreement and Its Impact Reviewed”. Headed by Prof. Regula Ludi and Dr. Iris Nachum, the group was designed to teach, discuss and reflect together on the agreement, and to understand its influence on other cases of historical injustices. The group collaborated with the Jacob Robinson Institute for the History of Individual and Collective Rights at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, the Minerva Center for Human Rights at the Tel Aviv University, and the Goldstein-Goren Diaspora Research Center at Tel Aviv University.

The Leo Baeck Institutes serves as the research groups’ home, promoting their activity by providing an open and attentive atmosphere, one that combines dialogue among researchers in various stages of their academic career, who can benefit from the discussion and use it to promote their own research projects.
In early 2022, after almost three years of work, the digitization of the LBI’s historical archive was completed with the support of the German Foreign Ministry and in cooperation with our colleagues from the LBI New York. After the collection has been catalogued and uploaded to the DigiBack platform of the New York Center for Jewish History, the digitization of the original documents makes them available to scholars and laypersons from all over the world. In addition, this allows linking them with other collections in the catalogue, and prevents the wear and tear of the original manuscripts.

In the framework of the project, we scanned nearly all archival documents – materials from the late 18th century to the mid-20th century, including family collections, immigration documents, memoirs, correspondences, and photos. The scanning was made in high quality by an expert in the offices of the LBI Jerusalem, and the scans were further processed by members of LBI New York. The Jerusalem team supervised the scanning to prevent errors and make sure copyright-protected documents and those containing private information are not scanned. In some cases, special equipment was used to scan special items such as WWI medals, or exceptionally large posters. Each scanned file was uploaded together with a detailed catalogue description, helping understand its content and historical context, as well as keywords that help expand the search for other relevant information.

All in all, more than 700 files were scanned, with a total of some 160,000 pages. According to data provided by the Center for Jewish History, the number of views of the archival materials has increased by 5000% compared to before the project, and we expect to observe an additional increase since the numbers underlying this conclusion encompass only a fraction of the time period over which we usually conduct our usage statistics.

Despite the difficulties of the pandemic, work on the project continued nearly without pause. The social distancing restrictions and the limitations on international travel have heightened the importance of digitization for creating archives available for viewing from anywhere in the world, without the need for physical visit to the archive. Nevertheless, our archive continues to offer its services as usual, and you are welcome to consult, make an appointment and review the original materials. Our ambition is to promote the documentation and study of German-speaking Jewry, and the archive’s digitization is an important step forward to fulfill that task.

Meirav Reuveni, Archive Manager
NEW RESEARCH PROJECT

German-Jewish Heritage Relocated: Postwar Dispersion of the Library of the Hochschule für die Wissenschaft des Judentums

In autumn 2022 we will mark the 150th anniversary of the foundation of the Hochschule für die Wissenschaft des Judentums in Berlin as well as 80 years to its destruction by the Nazi regime. It is thus a great pleasure for us to announce that the Leo Baeck Institute in Jerusalem had launched a new research project devoted to the legacy of this noble institution.

Since its foundation in 1872, the Hochschule served as one of the leading Jewish academic institutions in Germany, and developed its own unique tradition of learning that promoted a broad and rather liberal understanding of Jewish culture and thought. Until the institute’s dissolution in 1942, it was a spiritual home for numerous prominent Jewish intellectuals, including Abraham Geiger, Hermann Cohen, Ismar Elbogen, Julius Guttmann, Eugen Täubler, Emil Fackenheim, Abraham Joshua Heschel, Solomon Schechter, and, last but not least, Leo Baeck himself. The vast majority of scholars and students associated with the Hochschule perished in the Holocaust. At the same time, however, the Hochschule’s legacy was kept alive against all odds. It was upheld by some of its prominent personalities who managed to flee Germany and continued their intellectual work in new homelands. Furthermore, it was also preserved in the Hochschule's library, the parts of which survived the war and were disseminated between numerous countries in the immediate post-war period. In our project, we seek to focus on both material and intellectual legacy of the Hochschule after 1945, and to illuminate how it was fostered outside the geographical borders of today’s Germany.

The project is conducted in cooperation with the Leibniz Institute for Jewish History and Culture – Simon Dubnow and entails two complementary modules. The first module explores the postwar initiatives to preserve the Hochschule’s heritage which emerged in Israel, Great Britain and the United States, shedding light on the role the pursuit to salvage its precious legacy played in creating a unique network of people and institutions dedicated to the preservation of German-Jewish culture and thought in the wake of the Holocaust. The second module – coordinated by the LBI Jerusalem – focuses on the dispersed books from the Hochschule’s library. It examines their transfer to the new destinations and discusses the socio-political conditions that influenced their status in the new surroundings. In order to do so, we are set to investigate the archival holdings of the National Library in Israel, which was one of the major recipients of the Nazi-looted German-Jewish libraries in general and the Hochschule’s books in particular, and to conduct an extensive provenance research in our own book collections, among which some of the books that belonged to the Hochschule are to be found, while recreating their routes from Europe to the institute’s holdings. In our work, we intend not only to map the dispersion of the library, but also to demonstrate what its postwar history can reveal about the status of German-Jewish heritage after the Holocaust.

Funded by the German Research Foundation (DFG), the project intends to attract not only experts and library professionals but also the wider public, and to advance a dialogue with the broader readership interested in the history of the Hochschule. We will be happy if you join us for the events that will be organized within its framework. Stay tuned!

Anna Holzer-Kawalko
We asked Bettina Farack, a doctoral student at the LBI and a member of the project research team, a few questions about our new project and her part in it.

Q: The books of the Hochschule library play a decisive role in "Rediscovering Traces of German-Jewish Heritage". What is so special about the Hochschule library?

A: The library of the Hochschule was one of the most important Jewish libraries in prewar Germany. It contained about 60,000 volumes and was one of the main factors why Berlin was considered the perfect place to study from the end of the 19th century throughout the time of the Weimar Republic. Publicly accessible libraries allowed students from poor families to pursue their studies. Without them someone like Leo Baeck, who, all during his student days, had to collect candle stumps from cafés to light his apartment, would not have been able to complete his studies.

Besides that, it is simply impressive that the Hochschule librarians routinely maintained contacts with other institutions as far away as the Jewish National and University Library in Mandate Palestine or the library of the Hebrew Union College in Cincinnati, because they were always trying to get the latest publications for their readers in Berlin.

Q: What happened to the library of the Hochschule and how come that some of their books ended up on the shelves of LBI Jerusalem?

A: While other important Jewish libraries of the German Reich were destroyed or plundered already during the November pogrom in 1938 or shortly after, the library of the Hochschule continued to exist until 1942. Only after the Hochschule was forced to close in the summer of 1942, its library was seized and transported to Berlin-Schöneberg, where the Reich Security Main Office [RSHA] was busy setting up a library exclusively built of stolen books. When the Allied air raids intensified the main part of this so-called Zentralbibliothek was evacuated to depots outside of Berlin, mainly in the Bohemian Lands. This is where the stolen books met the end of the war. They were salvaged and some of them transferred to Jerusalem. It seems that it was the National Library of Israel that then further distributed the books among the smaller institutions of research and education in Israel, just like the Leo Baeck Institute Jerusalem. But how this transfer of the books worked and who was involved we don’t yet know. This is one of the questions we want to answer in the course of our project.

Q: What happened to the rest of the book collection of the Hochschule?

A: This is what we are trying to find out! But I can already give you two examples: A big part of those books that the RSHA had evacuated to the depots in what today is the Czech Republic, stayed there. Today these books, among them books from the Hochschule collection, are being preserved at the Jewish Museum in Prague. A much smaller number turned up at the Offenbach Archival Depot in Southern Germany, one of the central collecting points for abandoned cultural assets set up by the Allied Forces after the end of the war. It seems that these books were transferred to England shortly after, probably because of the intervention by Leo Baeck, who was only one of the surviving scholars who took a lively interest in the fate of the allegedly lost collection.
Q: How do you recognize if a book used to belong to the Hochschule?
A: By its library stamp. The challenge is, that over the 70 years of its existence, the Hochschule used different stamp types and shapes. Things get even more complicated. Because the institution had to switch back and forth between names, sometimes it was called Hochschule, sometimes Lehranstalt. We compiled a small collection of images of some of the stamps that we already know and we invite you to check them out. Do let us know, if you come across a book carrying one of these stamps in your library. We appreciate all the help we can get.

Q: How does searching for Hochschule books work and what does it have to do with the LBI Jerusalem?
A: While we are interested in mapping the current whereabouts of Hochschule books no matter where they are, the focus of our research is on the library of the LBI Jerusalem. We will check each of our 13,000 books for traces by their former owners. If the book does contain one, we take a photo of the provenance mark and we document it. After being photographed and described, the provenance mark needs to be interpreted, this means finding out who was the owner, what happened to him or her and what happened to their book collection? This systematic approach will allow us not only to find books that belonged to the Hochschule, but also to understand where the other books come from, and what role the Hochschule books play within this collection environment.

Q: Where can I see the results of your work?
A: We will document our research data using the database of the cooperative Looted Cultural Assets. This database is available online and can be searched free of charge. LCA is a group of German libraries, that came together to face the complex task of provenance research collaboratively. We are proud to be the first institution from outside Germany to join the group.
The Leo Baeck Research Group on “The Luxembourg Agreement and Its Impacts: New Research, New Insights” met via Zoom during the 2022 Spring semester. This international group came together to mark the 70th anniversary of the Reparations Agreement between West Germany, Israel and the Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany, signed at Luxembourg on September 10, 1952. The aim of the group was to discuss current projects on the so-called Luxembourg Agreement and its global impacts. The group consisted of twelve scholars from a wide range of disciplines (history, political science, law), from different parts of the world (Europe, the US, Israel), and at various stages in their academic careers. The group profited greatly from the participation of several guest scholars and students who joined the discussions.

The group was coordinated by Dr. Sharon Livne of the Leo Baeck Institute Jerusalem and co-headed by Dr. Iris Nachum and by Prof. Regula Ludi, who serves as a professor of modern history at the University of Zurich. In addition, Prof. Ludi acts as a senior researcher at the Interdisciplinary Institute for Ethics and Human Rights, University of Fribourg, and as Director of a Swiss National Science Foundation Research Project on the History of Voluntarism and Gender Relations since the 1970s. Her main relevant publication is "Reparations for Nazi Victims in Postwar Europe" (2012). The research group has been organized with the support of the Jacob Robinson Institute at the Hebrew University and the Minerva Center for Human Rights as well as the Goldstein-Goren Diaspora Research Center, both at Tel Aviv University.

The group’s major contribution to research on the Luxembourg Agreement consisted in providing a platform for the presentation and discussion of new research projects dedicated to various aspects of the agreement. The group members presented their papers in one of three sessions dedicated to the following topics: (1) Actors and agencies of reparations politics; (2) The impact of reparations on survivors and on Jewish communal life; and (3) Negotiations and the aftermath of the Luxembourg Agreement. The presentations and discussions which followed each paper offered new insights not only into...
the agreement itself, but also into a broad range of fields, such as international relations after 1945, competition over victimhood, and the construction of Jewish identity in the post-Holocaust world. Key questions that have been addressed in the discussions were: Why is the study of the Luxembourg Agreement marginalized in Holocaust historiography? Who uses which terminology (shilumim, Wiedergutmachung, reparations, restitution, reconstruction, etc.) to refer to the agreement? What is the significance of emotions for both the giving and the receiving side?

Head of the research group on the History of Education in the German-Speaking Space Dr. Miriam Szamet speaks about the work of the group:

I am a historian of education and Israeli society, a visiting faculty member at the Mandel School of Educational Leadership and a researcher at the Azrieli Center for Israel Studies at Ben-Gurion University of the Negev. My research focuses on issues related to the formation of Hebrew language instruction and Israeli education during the 19th and 20th centuries; the development of pedagogy as part of modernity; how trends in global pedagogical discourse found expression in the local context; the relations between academia and practice in Israeli education; and education as a case study of major developments and challenges in Israeli society. My forthcoming book, to be published by the Magnes Press, analyses educational discourse in the pre-state Yishuv, the influences on this discourse, and the transfer of educational and pedagogical knowledge to the Yishuv during those years.

The modern era brought with it promises for a new kind of education. The philosophical study of human consciousness, the emergence of psychology and the scientific study of the mind’s development, the growing acceptance of the concept of civic equality, and the rise of the nation-state – all have required a rethinking of the behavior of children as well as youth and gave birth to ideologies and various practices for their implementation. As a discourse and practice, education became one of the markers of modernity, both historically and substantially. This spirit did not leave the Jewish world unaffected, and the changes it demanded led to intra- and cross-community initiatives for the transformation of traditional education. These processes are examined in the specific context of the German-speaking space, which, over the past 250 years, was central to the development of pedagogical ideas, teaching methods, and the institutionalization of a civic education system, with influences felt far beyond its geographical boundaries.

The research group deals with the importance of the German-speaking space for the history of education in general and Jewish and Israeli education in particular, with emphasis on transnational aspects, local history, knowledge transfers and their agents, the establishment of professions, the formation of professional and other networks, using the entangled histories methodology, which is currently central to the study of the history of education. The analyses enabled by this approach transcend the national framework that has dictated historical writings for many years, out of awareness of the wide array of context of nation-building processes and the emergence of national institutes.

The group members are doctoral students whose work involves a variety of subjects during the modern era. Our monthly meetings during the 2020-21 academic year were devoted to methodological discussions, the analysis of significant studies, and the hosting of senior researchers. During this year, 2021-22, the work of the students focused on writing articles, each in his or her research area, sharing a methodological common denominator. The articles are currently in an advanced stage of writing, and we hope to publish them jointly in a peer-reviewed platform as a special issue that will promote the study of the history of education, particularly in the German-speaking space, among Hebrew-speaking researchers.
LBI VOLUNTEER
LISA WELT
ABOUT HER ARCHIVAL PROJECT ON
WOLF HAMBURGER

The Letters of Wolf Hamburger Project

Around a massive table three women bend down, their heads buried in copies of handwritten letters, summaries and research findings. You can almost see their heads spinning from all the scenarios they are mentally tossing and turning. Their conversation requires them to hastily make notes, trying to hold on to all new ideas and links between the clues.

They throw their newest discoveries at each other and juggle with names, nicknames and degrees of kinship. Who was Wolf Hamburger’s “Cousinchen”? Is “Cousinchen” a nickname? Why were there attempts to set Cousinchen up with Wolf’s father?
All these letters contained loads of information which we wanted to analyze. That’s how I got to work together with Marianne, also an LBI volunteer. She and I instantly found a common interest in Wolf and became friends through that. Marianne had taken on the task of writing summaries on each of the 130 letters. From time to time she came over to the LBI and we discussed the letters. She drew our attention to passages that explained questions we had before. I felt like we were a team of detectives, especially when we tried to find out who a person named “Cousinchen” was. Even though in the end, we couldn’t solve the mystery, working together with Marianne showed me how fruitful discussions can be with people that are equally interested in a historical niche, for example the identity of a cousin of a forgotten artist. Uncovering the life of Wolf with Marianne and Bettina showed me how exciting working with archival materials can be.

Lisa Welt, Volunteer of the Austrian organization "Gedenkdienst“ in 2021/2022

During my year as a volunteer at the LBI Jerusalem I had the privilege of joining Bettina Farack and Marianne Schait in the research project on Wolf Hamburger. Growing up in Berlin, Wolf and his family fled to Palestine in 1933. Life there was not right for the aspiring painter, cartoonist and politically involved young man, so he moved from Tel Aviv to Paris on his own when he was only seventeen. He maintained contact with his family through over 130 letters written from 1935-1939. The letters closely document a very personal, moving and multifaceted coming of age journey and a struggle against the fascist regimes in Europe. The tone, content and reasons for writing the letters drastically change over time. First, they concern Wolf visiting art galleries and trying out friendships and romantical relationships and philosophical and political reflections on art. Further on, Wolf reports his involvement in the Spanish Civil War and contribution to the propaganda efforts of the anarchist groups. Back in Paris, he tells his parents about the unsuccessful attempts of obtaining visas, critical health emergencies, bad prospects for his art and his overall hopelessness. Finally, in January 1940, he committed suicide with his wife after having been imprisoned in a French internment camp.
RECENT PUBLICATIONS

Chidushim

Issue 24 of Chidushim addresses the philosophical and historical-ideological discourse of the Jews in the German-speaking space. The articles analyze the thought of Jews who have lived and learned in Germany from the late 18th to the 20th century. Writings and speeches of Gotthold Salomon, Akiba Ernst Simon, Hans Jonas, Josep Schächter, and Martin Buber are described from diverse viewpoints — historical, religious, artistic and philosophical — that offer a fresh and innovative perspective on their intellectual biographies. Moreover, in all articles we can clearly trace the way these intellectuals cope with the tension created between traditional patterns of thought and philosophy, and modern and rational approaches to the processes experienced by Jewish and non-Jewish society, in Europe and in Palestine, during the decades since the end of the Age of Enlightenment to the violent rejection of its insights in the 20th century.

The new issue contains to a large extent articles by researchers currently at the beginning of their academic career, which offers the readers observations and conclusions of research works, much of which are published here for the first time. This gives us a first opportunity to peruse studies that would most likely develop into comprehensive and original works in the future.

The collection opens with an article by Naama Jager-Fluss on the life of the Jewish homilist Gotthold Salomon, who preached at the Hamburg Reform Synagogue in the early decades of the 19th century. Salomon is considered one of the founders of German Reform Judaism, and as Jager-Fluss reveals, his homilies are marked with a combination of religious enlightenment and the religious characteristics typical of the German religious awakening movement, the Protestant pietism. On the one hand, Salomon emphasized the subjective emotional element of religious faith and commitment, and on the other hand he called to include women in public prayers, showing religious openness and tolerance.

The second article, by Noa Avron Barak, examines the meaning of the concept “Jewish soil” as used in Martin Buber's speech in the Fifth Zionist Congress held in Basel in 1901. The article challenges the historiographical interpretations of Buber's words. Through in-depth analysis, Noa shows how the phrase “Jewish soil” did not necessarily reflect an overall Palestine-centered paradigm grounded in the faith that modern Jewish art can only develop once the Jews return to their land, to the Land of Israel. According to the renewed reading she proposes, and in the context of a discussion of Buber's broader doctrine, “Jewish soil” appears as a metaphor for the possibility of a creative Jewish community that actively supports creativity anywhere in the world, and not only in Zion.

A reappraisal of the political thought of German-Jewish philosopher Akiva Ernst Simon is central to the article by Daniel Lerman. Despite being identified with Ahad Ha’Am’s cultural Zionism, Lerman argues that while the latter’s thought was fundamentally secular, Simon believed that cultural Zionism had a religious configuration based on a divine order, which guided the Jewish people. The article shows that as a member of Brith Shalom, Simon believed, that the establishment of a Jewish State was supposed to reflect the vision of the prophets. The future state would realize the humanist Jewish ideals of equality, morality, and justice with regard to both the Jewish and Arab inhabitants of Palestine. This thinking by Simon, argues the author, ran counter the mainstream of general Zionism in the Yishuv.
The issue concludes with an article by Ofer Margalit on philosophers Hans Jonas and Josef Schächter. The two, argues Margalit, offered an ethical response to the crisis of modernity as it affected the various circles of life: individual, society and the environment. From their perspective, cultural nihilism and technological progress have deepened individualism and alienation in modern society. Despite the difference between them, both share an emphasis on the metasubjective argument, that is, locate the ontological anchoring points requires for the ethical argument beyond what exists in the subjective dimension: for Jonas the context is biological, whereas for Schächter it is transcendent. The author’s conclusion is that their philosophical response heightens the recognition for the need of modes of thoughts and action that differed from those conventionally applied until the mid-19th century.

The Jewish Almanac

Published since 1993, The Jewish Almanac offers articles by prominent authors and academics on German-Jewish history and culture, Judaism, and Israeli society. The last issue, exited by Prof. Gisela Dachs in collaboration with Suhrkamp Verlag, addressed a highly important and timely subject: nature.

Over their 2000 years in the diaspora, Jews have often been described as rootless and alienated from nature. In the Zionist project the yearning for the nature of Palestine and for agricultural labor became essential and particularly, for the longings of Jewish nature lovers forced to flee Europe due to exclusion and antisemitism.

Nevertheless, the relationship between humankind and nature is not necessarily harmonious. In the modern world, we are witnessing a complex, coercive relationship, full of conflicts and contradictions. These conflicts and complexities are the subject of the Jewish Almanac issue on “Nature — Landscapes from the Jewish World”. In several fascinating articles, it examines the relationship between nature and Judaism, as well as the meaning of environmental preservation in Israel and Germany.

The Almanac’s next issue, to be published in late October 2023, will deal with the opposites of “Consensus and Agreement” (Konsens/Dissens). Among others, it will include articles by Yehuda Bauer, Rebekka Grossmann, Moshe Zimmerman, Dan Diner, Noam Zadoff, Orly Ganany Dagan.

New Book in the Gesharim Series

Dr. Eyal Levinson’s book “And the Boys Grew: Gender and Sexuality in Medieval Germany” was published in June as part of the Gesharim Series, a joint project by the LBI Jerusalem and the Zalman Shazar Center. The series offers the Hebrew readership new or classical studies on the social, religious and cultural lives of German-speaking Jews in the modern era. Levinson’s book tells the story of Jewish adolescents in Germany of the 11th - 15th centuries.

It provides an intimate look into the Jewish youth culture and the gender interrelations experienced by youth in the taverns and dancehalls, in the synagogue courtyards, in the private homes and on the streets of the cities of northwestern Europe. The book focuses on young Ashkenazi men in the Middle Ages and the values that contributed to shaping their identity, as well as the daily interactions and the values of masculinity they shared with their Christian neighbors, who were exposed to different and diverse models of masculinity. The stereotypical cultural images used by adults to describe these boys and girls, youth culture, and the life course intended for them are central to this fascinating book.
A NEW BEGINNING & A FAREWELL

We welcome Dr. Anna Holzer-Kawalko to our team! Anna will be joining us for our new project “German-Jewish Heritage Relocated”, that is dedicated to researching the material and intellectual legacy of the Hochschule für die Wissenschaft des Judentums. Anna will lead the investigation focusing on the National Library of Israel.

Anna Holzer-Kawalko

I am a postdoctoral fellow at the Leo Baeck Institute Jerusalem, within the research project “German-Jewish Heritage Relocated: Postwar Dispersion of the Library of the Hochschule für die Wissenschaft des Judentums”. I earned my PhD at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem with the dissertation “Vanishing Heritage: Nation-building, Cultural Restitution and German-Jewish Libraries in Postwar Czechoslovakia” (2022). Before joining the LBI, I was a research fellow at the Baroness Ariane de Rothschild Doctoral Program (2016–2020) and at the Franz Rosenzweig Minerva Research Center at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem (2020–2021). Over the past few years, I have also been a visiting scholar at the Deutsches Literaturarchiv in Marbach, the Leibniz Institute for Jewish History and Culture - Simon Dubnow and the Freie Universität in Berlin. My research interests include Jewish cultural property after 1945, heritage and migration studies, and historical study of material culture. At the LBI, I research the fate of books stemming from the Hochschule für die Wissenschaft des Judentums that were incorporated into the holdings of the Jewish National and Hebrew University Library in Jerusalem after 1945.
We welcome Philipp Grosinger, our new Austrian volunteer, who will work with us in the coming year.

My name is Philipp Grosinger, I am 18 years old and I have just graduated from high school in Vienna. Since I have a great interest in history and politics, working as a memorial servant (Gedenkdiener) for one year after school has always been one of my goals. Now that I am about to start my memorial service at the Leo Baeck Institute in Jerusalem, I am very happy to have received such an opportunity. Contemporary witnesses are an essential key to remembering and their stories should be told. The institute itself and the Austrian Heritage Collection have left a great impression on me and it will be an honor for me to work here!
Over the past year, it has been a pleasure working together with our volunteers Lisa Welt and Leander Albrecht.

The volunteers’ roles are rich and diverse: working in the archive and library, meetings and interviews as part of the Austrian Heritage Collection Project, translations of historical documents, and more. Volunteering enriches young people with knowledge about the history and culture of the German and Austrian Jewry and deepens the relations between the various cultures in Israel, Germany and Austria.

Lisa came to us from Vienna in September 2021 on behalf of the Austrian organization Gedenkdienst, which sends volunteers to several countries worldwide in order to work in Holocaust museums and research centers.

Leander came to us from Leipzig in October 2021 on behalf of Aktion Sühnezeichen Friedensdienste — ASF (Action Reconciliation Service for Peace) — Israel, which sends volunteers to various countries and/or populations that have suffered under Nazi rule. We thank our wonderful volunteers for their investment and dedication, that have turned the volunteering year into a successful one, rich in experiences and achievements!
Leander Albrecht

My name is Leander Albrecht and I have volunteered at the LBI Jerusalem for the last 12 months as a representative of ASF. Quite early during my stay here I was asked to develop a display concept for an exhibition on foreign language editions of books written by Martin Buber. It was a very interesting and valuable experience to be part of that project, which included not only putting up a few books on a shelf, but also cataloging, selecting and designing all the different parts of the exhibition. Another very interesting part of my work was the cooperation with a researcher, that investigated the history of a Jewish family that was separated in World War II. She was mostly working with old letters she had received from one of the surviving family members, but because they were in German, she turned to the LBI for a translation. That’s when I was tasked to work with her: letter by letter I dived deeper into the history of that family, which helped me to get a deeper understanding of what Jewish people had to go through at that time.

I also took part in the oral history interviews for the Austrian Heritage Collection (AHC). I accompanied our multimedia content creator Arije to a few interviews — mostly helping out with the cameras and lights. To hear first-hand accounts and to be able to on the one hand preserve them digitally but also in my own mind was a powerful experience. A few days ago, I also was able to conduct the first interview myself.

In conclusion I can say I witnessed a lot during my time at the Leo Baeck that surely will leave an imprint on my life for the years to come. I’m really thankful that I got the opportunity to be here and in Israel as a whole, experiencing this land and this place in particular in a way I hadn’t thought was possible. By the time this newsletter will be published I’m already going to be on my way back to Germany, so I’d like to officially thank all of the staff at the LBI for the great time and wish all of you guys all the best in the future.

Lisa Welt

Boker tov, good morning, guten Morgen! Walking into the LBI to start my day is always a nice reminder of the German-Jewish academic microcosm the LBI created in the ground-floor apartment in front of the small evergreen patio on Bustenai Street no. 33. Whenever I meet new people, I eventually tell them that I am a volunteer at the LBI. Almost always I have to explain what I do there. I recently started to say thinks like “did you know there were Jewish knight-tournaments in the Middle Ages?” or “do you know what life was like in the Ghetto of Shanghai where many Jewish refugees fled to?” or “Do you know where in Israel you can watch old German movies?” What is also really special, are these moments when a researcher visits the LBI, tells you with enthusiasm about their research and eventually leaves a bit of their drive and ideas with you.

A very important aspect of working is the people you work with. I am very grateful for each one of the people at the LBI. I spent most of my time with Leander, I am glad that he became one of my best friends. Most of the tasks at the LBI came from Bettina, who has infected me with her passion for provenance marks and who likes to-do lists even more than I do. Irene is so kind that I can never be bugged for too long with her last-minute way of things. I admire Arije, and was so excited about our interviews. I found a role model in Yael. I love the mix of English, German and a little Hebrew I speak with Sharon, who is full of ideas. I did not really work together with Shimrit, but I was so excited when she invited us to the Brit and the Bar Mitzvah of her sons, where I danced my heart out with her daughters. No one is funnier than Chani. And of course there is the one and only Raya, whom I love so much that I am sick of her (I think that is how that Hebrew saying goes). This year will always be close to my heart, wherever I go.
UPCOMING EVENTS — A LOOK AT NEXT YEAR

The year 2023 will mark the 150th anniversary of Rabbi Leo Baeck’s birth. We will dedicate our annual series to the subject of reform, under the title “Reform. Transformation: History, Religion, and Culture”. Reform is redesign, revision, rethinking, change and development. Reform can be immediate and radical or slow and gradual. Several different reforms took place in the German-Jewish space, some of them bearing considerable historical meanings, while others were minor but worthy of our attention.

In 2023, we will devote a short series of four meetings to the way Jews are reflected in German cinema, from the 1920s to the present. In those meetings, David Witzthum will hold an open dialogue with a researcher on various periods in German cinema, and together they will delve in the history and cinema of 20th-century Germany, and the way Jews are reflected through its lenses.

Several book symposiums are planned for late 2022 and early 2023. One will be dedicated to Prof. Christoph Schmidt’s book on his family history, “Meine Reise in das verzauberte Haus” (My Voyage to the Haunted House). Together with the Shazar Center, we will celebrate the launching of Dr. Eyal Levinson’s book, “And the Boys Grew: Gender and Sexuality in Medieval Germany”. We will mark the new translation of Moses Mendelssohn’s book “Jerusalem: Or on Religious Power and Judaism”, edited by Prof. Shmuel Feiner (translated by Yiftach Hallerman-Carmel). Finally, we will meet to honor Prof. Debra Kaplan’s book, “The Patrons and Their Poor: Jewish Community and Public Charity in Early Modern Germany”.

Last but not least, we will continue with the annual meetings devoted to Heinrich Heine’s work and to the annual Else Lasker-Schüler lecture; we will devote an evening to mathematician Emmy Noether, in the context of knowledge transfers and the status of Jewish women in German academia; we will go on presenting new studies in the annual oral history workshop; we will expand the project of interviews with researchers dealing with German-Jewish history and literature; and promote new research groups. As always, we welcome you to use our archive and library collections, and we will be happy to see you in our reading room.

From the bottom of our heart, we wish to thank our partners in holding these events, who support us with funds, joint thinking and ongoing activities that promote research and knowledge.
Do you want to take an active role in preserving the history of German Jewry and carrying its contribution into the future?

*Your donation to LBI Jerusalem will:*

- Provide scholarships for students
- Publish scientific books of outstanding Israeli researchers
- Build community around German-Jewish heritage in Jerusalem and in Israel
- Renew our historical home

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Please reach out to our executive director, Dr. Irene Aue-Ben-David, at irene.abd@leobaek.org.