Haifa, January 2021

Dear Board Members of the ZEIT-Stiftung,

it is my pleasure to present you the planned activities and goals of the Bucerius Institute for the period of 2021–2023. First of all, I would like to thank the ZEIT-Stiftung for the support we received during the pandemic. In a period of great incertitude, your support during the year 2020 has allowed us to continue with our research projects and our assistance for junior and more advanced researchers—all while the pandemic was hitting the world economy, the academic world, and impacting the national and international collaborations between scholars. I am very grateful for this sign of support. It gave us great encouragement in our daily work, but also in our long-term hopes and initiatives.

Thanks to your support, we have continued during 2020 working to transform the Bucerius Institute into a vibrant and leading research hub which serves as a prestigious academic home for promising junior and senior scholars from Israel and Germany, but also from across Europe and North America. As you can see from the list of our future activities, the Bucerius Institute has already achieved important successes in this direction, by realizing a series of high-profile publications, conferences and workshops, and winning important grants. We are also implementing gradually new technological potentialities in our research projects (digitalization) and in the format of our academic events, using new technological platforms for dialogue and exchange. Therefore the list presented in the following pages focusses on projects which are less dependent on the mobility of researchers and lecturers.

For the sake of clarity, in what follows I will present our planned activities along the three main lines that define the mandate of the Bucerius Institute:

1. **Autonomous research** on a wide range of topics linked to contemporary German history.
2. **The organization of academic** **events** and **academic exchanges** between Israel and Germany.
3. **Scholarships and support** for researchers.

Offering my sincere thanks for your attention, I remain at your disposal for any questions or clarifications.

Best regards from Haifa,



Dr. Cedric Cohen Skalli

Director – Bucerius Institute

**Planned Activities of the Bucerius Institute*,* 2021–2023**

**I. AUTONOMOUS RESEARCH AND PUBLICATIONS**

During 2021–2023, we will continue to develop and publish innovative research on a wide range of topics linked to contemporary German history, with a special focus on German-Jewish history, philosophy, political science, literature, diaspora studies, and German-Israeli relations.

The following list details the projects planned by the Institute’s fellows:

**Dr. Cedric Cohen Skalli (Director)**

Main research fields:the history and future of Jewish philosophy in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, the legacy of the German-Jewish model, and German and European philosophy in the Middle East.

While Islamic and Jewish philosophy were central to the development of European thought during the Middle Ages, by the early modern period they had lost much of their social and political function. Modern philosophy was shaped at a time when Jewish and Muslim thinkers played only marginal roles. However, beginning with Moses Mendelssohn, and especially from the time of Hermann Cohen (1842–1918) on, Jews, especially those of German origin, began to increasingly play a role in nineteenth- and twentieth-century western philosophy. The Jewish return to the history of philosophy sparked an important transformation in twentieth-century thought—including new conceptualizations of the religious and political interactions between majority and minority, the ethics of the Other, a renewed interest in messianism, and a new concept of language—and remains an important factor in contemporary philosophy, especially in the context of its expansion and globalization. Similar evolutions occurred also in Arabic an Islamic thought in the Liberal Age and later in the decolonization period in dialogue with European and German intellectuals.

BOOKS:

**1. Skepsis and Antipolitics, the Alternative of Gustav Landauer**

Following a successful conference held in November 2019 at the University of Haifa marking the 100th anniversary of Landauer’s death, seventeen papers, written by German, Israeli, and international scholars from a wide range of disciplines, have been collected and submitted to the publisher Brill. So far, we have received an excellent review from the first referee and are awaiting the second review. The volume, edited by Dr. Cedric Cohen Skalli and Dr. Libera Pisano, will be published as part of the Brill series *Maimonides Library for Philosophy and Religion*, headed by Prof. Giuseppe Veltri, director of the Maimonides Center at the University of Hamburg, in collaboration with the Bucerius Institute. Publication is expected in early 2022. It is also worth mentioning that in connection with this conference and book project, another important article has recently been published in a leading journal in Jewish philosophy:

* Cedric Cohen Skalli and Libera Pisano, “Farewell to Revolution! Gustav Landauer’s Death and the Funerary Shaping of his Legacy,” *The Journal of Jewish Thought and Philosophy* 28 (2020): 184–227.

**2. The Rediscovery of Jewish Political Thought by Jewish-German Émigrés in the 1930s**

Don Isaac Abravanel (1437–1508) is acknowledged as one of the last great medieval Jewish philosophers, but also one of the first early modern Jewish thinkers to integrate Renaissance humanism and republican ideas into his exegetical and philosophical work. However, the history of the modern rediscovery of Abravanel’s political thought, as well as its philosophical and political context after the fall of the Weimar Republic in 1933 and during first years of the Nazi regime, remains largely unknown. This research project is devoted to reconstructing this important chapter in early twentieth century German-Jewish scholarship. The completed book manuscript will be submitted to a major US publishing house in 2021. A first article on the topic has been published:

* Cedric Cohen Skalli, “Between Yitzhak Baer and Leo Strauss: The Rediscovery of Isaac Abravanel’s Political Thought in the late 1930s,” *DAAT* 88 (2019): 161-289. This essay has received great attention and will be translated into Spanish.

**3. New Perspectives and Documentation on Hannah Arendt’s years in Paris after 1933**

(in collaboration with Dr. Thomas Meyer)

Based on archival research conducted at the Central Zionist Archive in Jerusalem, this project reveals entirely new documentation on Arendt’s work for the organization *Kinder- und Jugend-Aliyah* (English: *Youth Aliyah*) between Paris and Palestine in the 1930s. The objective of the research is to present the readership with an edition of new documents linked to Arendt’s years of Zionist activism in Paris, along with a new interpretation of the role this period played for her intellectual trajectory and work.

ARTICLES:

**1. The Rebirth of Jewish Political Philosophy in a Time of World War: The Legacy of Hermann Cohen (1842–1918)**

This project touches on Cohen’s novel interpretations of Jewish history, diaspora, and messianism, as well as on his legacy in twentieth-century philosophy in Europe, Israel, and North America. Based on new archival research conducted at the *Auswärtiges Amt* in Berlin into Cohen’s efforts to support the German war effort of 1914–1918, this study will be published as a series of articles on the politicization of the Jewish concepts of diaspora and messianism during World War I and its aftermath in Germany, and on the role Cohen’s thought played for the rebirth of Jewish political philosophy in the twentieth century. Three articles have been accepted and one has recently been published:

* Cedric Cohen Skalli, “A la croisée des chemins: Martin Buber et le sionisme,” *Commentaire* 169(2020): 97–106.
* Cedric Cohen Skalli, “Cohen’s Jewish and Imperial Politics during World War I,” in Hartwig Wiedebach and Heinrich Assel (eds.), *Cohen im Netz* in the prestigious German series *Religion in Philosophy and Theology,* Mohr-Siebeck, Tübingen (Forthcoming).
* Cedric Cohen Skalli, “The Resort to *Geistpolitik:* Two of Buber’s Early Theological-Political Debates,” *Journal of Ecumenical Studies* (Forthcoming).

**2. Jewish Art, History, and the Politics of a Concept**

This study examines the religious, cultural, and political debates surrounding the modern idea of Jewish art, with a special emphasis on the German-speaking world. It focuses on the intense and complex relationships between artists, intellectuals, and collectors in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries and their role in the development of modern Jewish art. The study addresses antisemitic discourse on Jewish aniconism, as well as Jewish responses to such accusations (by Buber, Cohen, Rosenzweig, David Kaufmann, Freud, and Levinas). This project dovetails into the Bucerius Institute’s new collaboration with the Hermann Struck Museum and Archives in Haifa, and its ongoing cooperation with the University of Osnabrück and the Felix Nussbaum Museum to study the archives of painter Felix Nussbaum.

GRANT APPLICATIONS

**1. The Jewish Communities of Niedersachen between Germany and Israel (1949–1970): Rebuilding Jewish Life between Migration and Return**

(in collaboration with Dr. Sebastian Musch, University of Osnabrück)

This project focuses on the rebuilding of Jewish life in Niedersachsen after the Holocaust through the study of Jewish mobility between Germany and Israel. Based on the archives of Jewish communities in Niedersachsen, the project will examine three factors that impelled people to either remain in, leave, or return to Germany: personal reasons, including marriage and divorce, employment opportunities, and safety concerns; interactions with public and governmental institutions and civil society; and political and societal developments in Germany and in Israel, including the establishment of diplomatic relations between the two countries in 1965. By considering both German and Israeli history, the project hopes to gain a better understanding of which factors were decisive **in** individuals’ decisions to migrate or return, as well as to shed light on how the small Jewish communities in Niedersachsen consolidated in the decades after the Holocaust. The researchers are in the process of applying for a grant for this project at the *Volkswagenstiftung*.

**2. Conspiracy Theories and Social Critique in the Twenty-First Century**

(in collaboration with Dr. Balazs Berkovits)

This new research project developed in collaboration with Dr. Balazs Berkovits, post- doctoral fellow at the Bucerius Instistute, has recently been presented to the Israel Science Foundation and is currently also under review at the *Zentrum für Antisemitismusforschung* at the Technische Universität Berlin for a collaboration between our two institutions. The research addresses the historical crises of the first two decades of the twenty-first century, from 9/11 to the current coronavirus pandemic, which have sparked much discussion about conspiracy theories as the latter exerted their detrimental impact on the public sphere, public reason, and democratic institutions. This renewed interest has been kindled in particular by the ever-growing presence of various so-called “alternative” news outlets that refute or reject mainstream news media coverage and framing. Yet, conspiracy theories seem to no longer have an exclusively fringe or “alternative” status, as they have made inroads into mainstream political opinion, often being enunciated from positions of power. Conspiracy theories per se are often viewed in a very different light as they are being considered as a voice of protest against the obscure workings of state administrations, bureaucracies, and business dealings. For conspiracy theories also have a close connection to the idea of social critique, as is evidenced by the debates in which they are discussed in connection with free speech and the proper functioning of democracy, as opposed to secrecy and the rule of an anti-democratic elite. This view leans on the fact that the interpretive structure of conspiracy theories is present in critical social science as well. Any attempt to make sense of and criticize the conspiratorial phenomenon will therefore encounter a difficult paradox in need of being resolved: there can hardly be a democratic, open, and free public debate when conspiracy theories tend to adopt a predominant role in its framing; however, there can be no democracy, and no critical social science, without a certain amount of conspiratorial thinking. The goal of our research is to come to terms with this paradox by conducting an investigation on three levels: historical-political, epistemological, and normative. The research draws on a wide-ranging selection of German social and philosophical theoreticians.

**3. German-Jewish Writers, Artists, and Intellectuals in Haifa**

(in cooperation with the Akademie der Künste, Berlin)

This project aims to map the files and information on German-Jewish writers, artists, and intellectuals who migrated to live in the city of Haifa, stored in the archives of the Akademie der Künste in Berlin. The project will include a series of social and cultural studies on displaced intellectuals that will consider how displacement affected their lives, writing, and relationships to their German heritage. Such a cultural microhistory of German-Jewish intellectuals has never been undertaken before.

**Dr. Natasha Gordinsky**

**(Department of Comparative Literature, University of Haifa)**

Main research fields: Hebrew, German, and Russian literature; migration studies; history and memory; modernism; geocriticism.

BOOKS:

**1. Post-Soviet German-Language Fiction**

Dr. Gordinsky is preparing a monograph on post-Soviet German-language fiction. In the past decade, post-Soviet Jewish writers, poets, and artists living and working in Germany have been playing a crucial role in the ongoing debate about the various forms of migrant belonging in contemporary German culture. This book explores, among other topics, how these different cultural agents reflect and performatively de-stabilize the meaning of “Heimat,” a concept that is highly charged both in the German and Soviet contexts. In December 2020, she presented a subchapter of the book at a research colloquium of the Department of Slavic Studies at the University of Potsdam under the heading “Drobyzkyj Jar: Räume des Holocaust in Jan Himmelfarbs Roman Sterndeutung.” In October 2020, she gave another related lecture at the Leo Baeck Institute in London entitled “’Your Heimat is our Nightmare’: Post-Soviet Poetic Interventions in German Culture.” The lecture will be published as an article.

**2. Disseminating Jewish Literatures: Knowledge, Research, Curricula**

(co-edited with Susanne Zepp, Ruth Fine, Kader Konuk, Claudia Olk, and Galili Shahar*;* De Gruyter, 2020)

Large segments of this volume are devoted to German-Jewish literature.

**3. Handbook of German-Jewish Literature in German Language**

This handbook will present a wide range of German-Jewish writers, addressing especially the spatial dimension of post-Soviet German-speaking literature. One of the focus areas of the book will be the representation of Soviet cities occupied by Germans during World War II.

ARTICLES:

**Fluid Borders and “Contaminated Landscapes”: Judith Hermann’s Critical Discourse on Eastern Europe**

This article on the canonical contemporary German writer Judith Hermann explores representations of Eastern Europe in her short fiction. Dr. Gordinsky argues that the relevant short stories, published between 1998 and 2016, are not merely another exemplification of the genre of travelogues describing former East Bloc countries, but rather that they offer a subtle, multilayered critique of the very concept of Eastern European space as perceived from the Western vantage point. The article will demonstrate how, on the cultural level, Hermann’s stories epitomize a radical thought change within Europe—what the eminent German historian Karl Schloegel called the spatial revolution of 1989—in whose wake the idea of Europe itself was reconceptualized.

**Dr. Yotam Hotam**

**(Faculty of Education, University of Haifa)**

Main research fields:the relations between modern “secular” and “religious” in thought, society, politics, and education. His research covers a variety of themes such as religion and theology in the modern secular world, secular and post-secular debates, critical theory, political theology, Jewish nationalism, and ethics.

BOOKS:

**1. The Critical Theologies of Modern German-Jewish Thought**

This work offers a fresh perspective on the relation between critique and theology. It seems hard to imagine a concept more significant to modern Western thought than that of critique. Particularly in the wake of the Enlightenment, critique came to denote not only a method of investigation, a form of understanding, and a central facet in the development of the social sciences, but also—to quote Talal Assad’s compelling description—“the essence of secular heroism.” Based on a close reading of selected and previously less discussed writings of four influential twentieth-century German-Jewish thinkers (Sigmund Freud, Walter Benjamin, Theodor Adorno, and Hannah Arendt) this book demonstrates, however, how such an “essence” of secularism concurrently emerges out of theological traditions and can in many ways be traced back to them. Rather than pointing to the separation between modern-secular critical investigations and religious traditions, the book shows that there are in fact intricate links between them—even if these surface in different forms, within different intellectual disciplines, and in the different social-political contexts of the first and second halves of the twentieth century. Touching upon Jewish and Christian religious traditions, modern secular critique seems to present a much richer, and perhaps more composite phenomenon than previously assumed.

ARTICLES:

**Bildung: Liberal Education and its Devout Origins**

This article will investigate the blending of secular and spiritual components in the German Enlightenment concept of *Bildung*. It aims to reexamine the intimate relations between the secular, rational Enlightenment ideals of education, which played a seminal role in the formation of the concept of *Bildung* at the turn of the eighteenth century, and the religious and mystical foundations of these very ideals.

**Dr. Orr Scharf**

**(Cultural Studies Program, University of Haifa)**

Main research fields: cosmopolitanism, modern German intellectual history.

As a fellow at the Bucerius Institute, Dr. Scharf’s plans to develop group research projects and publications centered on the topic of cosmopolitanism. His work is based on the premise that a multivalent and contentious concept such as cosmopolitanism requires multidisciplinary research that explores the theoretical, historical, and cultural dimensions of multicultural encounters. Such research will go beyond the popular perception of the term as denoting identities, settings, and activities promoting affinities and positive interactions between cultures. As a scholar of modern German intellectual history, he will base these projects on research into the contribution of German thinkers to the discourse on cosmopolitanism.

BOOKS:

**1. Jews and the Cosmopolitan Condition**

In this monograph, Dr. Scharf aims to explore key questions raised by the power relations at play in multi-cultural encounters, and the latters’ corresponding risks and prospects. The book will argue that since the late eighteenth century through the early twentieth century, German Jews were simultaneously members of an underprivileged minority and significant contributors to the intellectual discourses of the majority group (i.e., German Protestants). The book will use selected historical case studies to analyze and reflect on the risks and prospects of cosmopolitanism, connecting the insights gathered in them to contemporary theoretical issues arising around this multivalent concept (the articles and events below present the case studies under consideration to be included in this project).

**2. Nebulous Affinities: Walter Benjamin’s Jewishness Revisited**

(in collaboration with Dr. Caroline Sauter, Goethe University)

This essay collection aims to reframe Walter Benjamin’s relation to Jewishness as a central aspect of his entire oeuvre, in addition to presenting a closer look at the texts in which he refers to the issue explicitly. Among other topics, essays will address Benjamin as an itinerant intellectual and literary scholar, his aesthetics, his interpretation of Marxism, and his approach to the Bible, to the corpus of traditional Jewish writings, and to religiosity and religious conversion. In addition, the volume will review the reception history of the Jewish dimension of Benjamin’s work by subsequent thinkers and critics.

ARTICLES:

**1. Time as Space and Space as Time: Walter Benjamin's Urban Reflections as a Form of Secular Mysticism**

The paper argues that Benjamin’s writings on places are a form of “secular mysticism,” in which the fundamental categories of time and space are inverted as part of the attempt to penetrate the secrets of “absolute reality.” Focusing on *Das Paris des Second Empire bei Baudelaire*, the article shows how under Benjamin’s pen, time (manifested by history) is localized as a site of artistic, political, and social gestures, whereas space (manifested by the city) is temporalized as a means of measuring and marking the passage of time. Based on these distinctions, Benjamin's reflections on urban landscapes and histories are characterized as important examples of his fusion of modern epistemology with religious esotericism.

* Article to be submitted to *Religions*.

**2. From Sinai to “This Day”: Hermann Cohen’s and Franz Rosenzweig’s Recasting of the Giving of the Torah**

This article examines Franz Rosenzweig’s and Hermann Cohen’s historical interpretation of the scene of the giving of the Torah at Mount Sinai.

* Article under revision after review by the *Jewish Quarterly Review*.

**3. Franz Delitzsch’s New Testament and the Protestant Revival of Hebrew**

The article will revisit Franz Delitzsch’s scientific motivations for producing a Hebrew translation of the New Testament in light of his missionary ideology. The analysis will be used as a case study for the “Science and Power” cluster in Dr. Scharf’s cosmopolitanism project.

* Article based on a paper delivered at the 2019 MLA Congress in Lisbon, Portugal, and at “Divine Logos and Transmission: Translating and Interpreting Foreign Revelations,” Center for Advanced Studies, Bad Homburg, 2019.

**4. The Orientalizing Jew: Martin Buber Between East and West**

The article will present Martin Buber’s intellectual trajectory as a paradigmatic example of the flexibility of perspectives unique to the modern Jewish condition that emerged as Jews gained access to both the underprivileged and privileged position in cosmopolitan settings. The article will contrast Buber’s early work on Hasidism with his later studies of the Hebrew Bible, demonstrating a shift from self-identification as a member of the “Orient” towards an orientalising perspective on ancient Israel and its modern “heirs,” the indigenous Arab population.

* Article based on a paper delivered at the 2019 AJS Conference, San Diego, California.

**Dr. Gilad Sharvit**

**(Department of Philosophy and Religious Studies at Towson University)**

Main research fields: Jewish philosophy, German-Jewish literature and culture, German and continental philosophy, psychoanalysis and critical theory.

BOOKS:

**1. Judaism and Heresy**

This study offers a new framework for rethinking the place of heresy in Jewish modernity by uncovering its hitherto under-researched crucial political and social implications. In what follows, it will be suggested that the concept heresy plays a critical role in a political-theological discourse through which communities create, negotiate, and modify their collective identity. In general terms, in this discourse, a group (people/nation) is able to create a previously absent cohesiveness by marking out the border between the heretic and the other members of the group. To support this claim, the study contests the negative definition of heresy as mere deviance and builds instead on Foucault’s work on discourse analysis and power relations to demonstrate the positive, constructive role of heresy. This work therefore contributes to recent debates in the history of ideas and philosophy of religion by reestablishing the importance of heresy as a modern philosophical and political category—with the goal of offering a rereading of Jewish heretic thought within the basic trajectories of twentieth-century philosophy. Most importantly, in establishing the constitutive role of heresy in the construction of communal experiences, the project lays the groundwork for modern debates on community. The research employs an interdisciplinary approach and focuses on a diverse group of Jewish thinkers, writers, religious leaders, and community activists within the European Jewish world, such as Isaac Deutscher, Moses Mendelssohn, Martin Buber, Bertha Pappenheim, Abraham Isaac Kook, Hans Jonas, and Hannah Arendt.

ARTICLES:

**Deutscher’s Heretics and Arendt’s Pariahs: Between Jewish Particularity and Universality**

This essay will address the constitutive role of heresy in Jewish modernity. Heresy—defined here under the token of assimilation—is commonly considered as destructive to Jewish tradition. This work, in contrast, investigates Hannah Arendt’s writings on the figure of the Jewish pariah and Isaac Deutscher’s notion of the Non-Jewish Jew to locate a model of heresy in which the latter structures a new, modern Jewish tradition. In Deutscher, the analysis shows, the tradition of heresy is seen as leading to a universal worldview that eventually empties Judaism of any and all particular content. Arendt, on the other hand, connects the possibility of Jewish particularity in the present with her ideal of the pariah-as-heretic. Heresy is not a source of assimilation or rejection of Judaism, but rather offers a new foundation for Jewish particularity. The argument shows how the heresy of the pariah is also foundational to early formulations of Arendt’s politics of plurality.

GRANT APPLICATIONS

1. **The Role of Heresy in Modern Judaism**

Dr. Sharvit present his book project on Heresy as part of a larger application for a Marie Skłodowska-Curie Individual Fellowship at the Bucerius institute. (See book project above)

**Dr. des. Viola Alianov-Rautenberg**

**(Research Fellow and Minerva Postdoctoral Fellow)**

Main research fields: nineteenth- and twentieth-century German-Jewish and Israeli history, gender history, migration history.

Dr. des. Viola Alianov-Rautenberg was awarded a full-time two-year research fellowship by the Minerva Stiftung for her project “Homemaking as Home-in-the-Making. Practice, Discourse, and Memory of German-Jewish Homemaking in Emigration.”

BOOKS:

**1. Gender and the German-Jewish Immigration to Mandate Palestine**

In the 1930s, the Jewish community of Mandate Palestine absorbed 60,000 immigrants from Germany. This monograph explores how gender, the social construction of the sexes, came into play in this process on both the micro- and macro-level. The book intervenes in three current scholarly discussions—migration history, gender studies, and exile studies. Concentrating on the first decade after immigration, the study sheds light on the struggles of early absorption and the conflictual encounter with the absorbing society, both often omitted in the research literature. Through close examination of archival material in German, English, and Hebrew, the book reveals how gender shaped the levels of discourse, policies, and experiences of this migration process. The manuscript will be submitted to a scholarly press in the US this summer.

**2. Homemaking as Home-in-the-Making. Practice, Discourse, and Memory of German-Jewish Homemaking in Emigration**

Migration challenges the very notion of the sedentary home. Immigrants lose their old homeland as well as physical home. In making a new place their home, economic production and domestic reproduction are equally crucial. Homemaking in the migrant home, that is, conducting unpaid domestic chores, is not only significant because it serves essential human needs. It is also imbued with emotional, social, and religious meaning. After the National Socialist rise to power in 1933, German Jews sought to find new homelands on many continents. The women among them were assigned the task of homemaking and thus also creating a new home-in-the-making. This study explores the nexus of home and migration through a transnational comparison of Jewish housework in Mandate Palestine, the US, and the UK. It will engage with questions of gender, migration, class, and everyday life, linking the levels of practice, discourse, policies, and memory. Through a focus on homemaking, my research will question the notion of the immigrant’s home as an idealized shelter while revealing it to be rather a place of conflict and renegotiation.

ARTICLES:

**1. From Cravat to Khaki. Gender, Sexuality, and Change in the Immigration of Fritz Wolf to Mandate Palestine**

This article offers an in-depth analysis of the relation between gender and change in the migration experience from National Socialist Germany to Mandate Palestine in the 1930s. Choosing a micro-perspective, this article draws on various unpublished writings of Dr. Jur. Fritz Wolf (1908–2006). Concentrating on Wolf’s first encounter with Palestine, this article considers the different stages of migration—journey, arrival and first year in a new homeland—to shed light on the crucial importance of gender in his observations, interactions, and self-perception in this process. While Fritz Wolf is at the center of this case study, gender will be used in this article as a relational category, relating his storyto the experiences of German-Jewish immigrants in general, both male and female. Therefore, this article provides a discussion of changing gender-relations, different masculinities and femininities, and altered concepts of marriage and sexuality within the German-Jewish immigrant community in Mandate Palestine in general.

* The articlehas been accepted for publication and will appear in the Leo Baeck Institute Year Book in 2021.

***2. Kindred Spirits in the Levant?* German Jews and the British Mandate**

In most of the research literature to date, German Jews immigrating to Mandate Palestine from Nazi Germany are described as living in a unique subculture of their own, with little contact with the residents of the absorbing society. However, from the moment they set foot on the shores of Palestine, the newcomers became a part of their new homeland. This articleexplores the relationship between German Jews and the British Mandate. In bringing together the concepts of Orientalism and gender, it argues that their admiration for the British expressed how German Jews in Palestine grappled with the nature of their new society and their place within it.

* This article is currently under review.

**3. Homemaking as Home-in-the-Making**

The article will discuss the home and housework in German-Jewish emigration. Based on memoirs, periodicals, guidebooks, and interviews, it will explore the home of German-Jewish migrants as a place of interaction (between the individual immigrants, the immigrant community, and the receiving society), intervention (of absorbing institutions, advertisers, social workers, the Jewish community), and of renegotiation of the very construction of homemaking and homemakers.

**4.** ***Singing the Song of Immigration*. Songs of German-Jewish Immigrants to Mandate Palestine in the 1930s and 1940s**

This article explores song and performance among immigrants to Mandate Palestine.Methodologically, using such songs means choosing an alternative perspective on the migration process, as they provide a counter-narrative to the contemporary norms and discourses of the Yishuv. Read in such a way, these songs can enrich our understanding of how these immigrants coped with dramatic changes within their own community as well as with the expectations of the absorbing society.

* This article is being prepared in collaboration with the “Performing Exile” seminar of the German Studies Association.

**Dr. Anat Tzur Mahalel**

**(Post-Doctoral Research Fellow)**

Main research fields: psychoanalysis and German literature, Sigmund Freud and the history of psychoanalysis, translation theory, trauma.

In the context of her work on the literary aspects of Freud’s writings, psychoanalytic writing by other authors, and analysands’ memoirs, Dr. Tzur Mahalel is currently broadening her research on psychoanalysis and German philosophy, especially focussing on the relation between the writings of Sigmund Freud and Walter Benjamin. During the same time period, these two distinguished intellectuals wrote on history and historicity from different points of view, yet their ideas suggest an intriguing dialectic affinity.

ARTICLES:

**1. “Are We Dead?”: Time in H. D.’s Dialogue with Freud**

This paper offers a reading of H. D.’s memoir “Tribute to Freud,” focusing on the concept of time elaborated therein in relation to Freud’s and Walter Benjamin’s thinking about the subject.

* The article will be published in the *International Journal of Psychoanalysis*.

**2. Georges Perec’s Zeit-Raum: Creating a Space of Remembrance**

This paper will discuss Georges Perec’s memoir of his analysis with Jean-Bertrand Pontalis focusing mainly on the concept of space, and thus tying into Dr. Tzur Mahalel’s interest in the basic concepts of space and time in relation to psychoanalysis and literature. In this paper she offers a discussion of the significance and elusiveness of space in psychic development by using ideas from Freud and Walter Benjamin.

**Dr. Balazs Berkovits**

**(Post-Doctoral Research Fellow)**

Main research field: antisemitism.

BOOKS:

**1. Social Criticism and the “Jewish Problem”**

This study is situated at the intersection of the philosophy of social science and antisemitism studies. It aims to investigate the reemergence of the “Jewish problem” in contemporary works of social and political criticism by unearthing its theoretical-philosophical foundations and conditions of possibility. The main goal of the project is to examine the academic disciplines, established in the last three decades, that can be gathered under the common heading of “activist social science.” These include “critical whiteness studies,” “critical race studies,” and “settler-colonial studies.” How do these disciplines construe “Jewish whiteness” and envision “Israeli settler colonialism”? How and why does the “Jewish problem” reemerge in critical works in these disciplines, and what are the methodological and discursive means by which they strive to achieve their critique? The project’s objective is to examine and deconstruct the type of critique presented by these “activist” disciplines. In so doing, the study will rely on the writings of the Frankfurt School, especially works by Horkheimer, Adorno, and Habermas that specifically address the problem of critique.

* The manuscript will be submitted to Indiana University Press in 2021.

ARTICLES:

**1. Adorno and Activist Social Science**

Within public debates and academic research, Jews are excluded from the multicultural space of other-dominated ethnic groups, such as Blacks, Latinos, and Muslims, and are reframed as part of the oppressive and racist majority. This representation poses the “Jewish question” anew, although on a seemingly anti-racist basis. In this discursive situation, turning to critical theory, and especially to Adorno’s works on antisemitism (*The Dialectic of Enlightenment*) and his essays on critical social science (*Critical Models*), is crucial in order to disentangle antisemitism from racism (and from color) and to understand that linking Jews with whiteness not only equates them with power and influence, but also transforms them into the epitome of power, a well-known trope of classical antisemitism.

GRANT APPLICATION:

**Conspiracy Theories and Social Critique in the Twenty-First Century**

(in collaboration with Dr. Cedric Cohen Skalli, see above)

**Dr. Sharon Livne**

**(Research Fellow)**

Main research fields: German-Israeli relations in the academy, education, economy, and culture.

ARTICLES:

**1. Fruitful Commerce: The Citrus Trade in Israeli-German Relations**

This project will trace the citrus trade between Mandate Palestine/Israel and Germany from the 1920s into the 1980s, identifying several milestones in this economic relationship: its emergence, the 1933 Transfer Agreement, the boycott on Nazi Germany, the establishment of diplomatic relations in 1965 and its effect on the Israeli citrus export to Germany, and the reduction of trade following the market entry of additional countries. Central to the study is the symbolic meaning of citrus fruit and the economic significance of their trade for the relations between the two countries.

**2. The Symphony Orchestra: Between Israel and Germany**

The Palestine Symphony Orchestra was established in the mid-1930s, and, following the establishment of the State of Israel, renamed as the Israel Philharmonic Orchestra. Since its founding, many of the orchestra’s musicians have been German-Jewish immigrants. In the 1950s and 1960s, it faced multiple dilemmas in the context of Israel’s changing relations with Germany, such as whether to perform in Germany or play works by German composers. The study will to examine these dilemmas as they came to the fore during the decades of rapprochement between Germany and Israel, and their implications for other artistic and cultural domains.

**3. Israel as the Representative of the Jewish People: Holocaust, Politics and International Law**

The study will examine how the State of Israel sought to become the official representative of the Jewish people. It will examine the political, legal, and economic aspects of this process from the late 1940s through the 1950s, in the context of the young state’s development in the shadow of the Holocaust.

* First publication**:** with Amit Kama, “Whose Holocaust is it Anyway?”: The LGBT Memorial Service at Yad Vashem, 1994, Yad Va-Shem Studies, No. 49.1, 2021 (forthcoming).

**Silvana Kandel-Lamdan**

**(Ph.D. Candidate, Department of Jewish History)**

Main research field: the intellectual exchange between modern German-Jewish thinkers and Latin American liberation theology.

ARTICLES:

In addition to completing her research and dissertation in Israel as well as (when possible) on a research stay at a German university, and visiting archives in Germany and South America, she intends to write and submit at least two articles this year:

**1. Hope, Messianism, and Atheism in Ernst Bloch and Jürgen Moltmann**

In the 1960s, several young Christian theologians seeking a Christian dialogue with Marxism met the German-Jewish thinker Ernst Bloch. Among them was the Lutheran Jürgen Moltmann, who believed that the Jewish perspectives on hope, messianism, and eschatology in general, and Bloch’s philosophy in particular, would open up new paths for Christian theology. Bloch attempted to refashion the Judeo-Christian legacy into radical atheism, as expressed in his famous phrase “only an atheist can be a good Christian; only a Christian can be a good atheist.” Moltmann later claimed that Bloch borrowed the second part of this phrase from him. However, both thinkers have a quite different understanding of the concept of atheism**.** The analysis of this difference will shed a broader light on the different conceptions of theological terms, and the cosmovision of the modern world, within Jewish and Christian contexts.

**2. Suffering and Self-Sacrifice as the Motors of History: Jürgen Moltman in Dialogue with German-Jewish Thought**

Although Moltmann’s “Theology of Hope” (1964) has been an influential source for the founders of the Latin American Liberation theology since its beginnings in the late 1960s, his ideas became almost iconic for this trend two decades later when, in November 1989, a Spanish copy of Moltmann’s book “Der gekreuzigte Gott, Das Kreuz Christi als Grund und Kritik christlicher Theologie” (published in 1972), was found, covered in blood, in the hands of one of the six Catholic priests murdered by Salvadorian military forces at the Catholic University of San Salvador (UCA). In the context of this event, the fact that the book focuses on the theology of martyrdom by examining figures like Aristotle, Jesus, and Rabbi Akiva who, according to Moltmann, were willing to die in the name of God (or the truth), became tragically ironic. A central point of the work is Moltmann’s debate with modern German-Jewish thinkers (Bloch, Cohen, Rosenzweig, Buber, Fromm, Baeck, and others) on the role of suffering in the historical progress of humanity towards redemption. The planned article will analyze Moltmann’s reading of these Jewish sources in order to contribute to the study of Jewish-Christian theological dialogue.

**Marie Behrendt**

**(PhD Candidate, University of Potsdam)**

Main research fields: German-Jewish journalism.

ARTICLES:

**1**. **Kein Epilog. Das organisationskulturelle Erbe des Central-Vereins in der Emigration**

This pioneering (German-language) article provides an overview of the history of German-Jewish functionaries of the "Central-Verein" after their flight from Nazi Germany. The historiographical study takes a transnational approach (Germany, England, USA, Brazil) and analyses bureaucratic identities, biographical and institutional continuities from a perspective inspired by studies of organisational cultures. Last but not least, the article reflects on the meaning of "order" for German-Jewish self-definition, juxtaposing the functionaries’ positive evaluation of their work with Hannah Arendt’s and Raul Hilberg’s critiques (1958/1961) of Jewish elites during the Holocaust.

* Behrendt, Marie Ch.: **Kein Epilog. Das organisationskulturelle Erbe des Central-Vereins in der Emigration,** in: Denz, Rebekka und Gempp-Friedrich, Tilmann (Hg.): Centralverein deutscher Staatsbürger jüdischen Glaubens. Anwalt zwischen Deutschtum und Judentum, Oldenbourg: De Gruyter, 2021.

**2**. **Vorpommern waren die ersten Opfer**

On the **occasion** of the 80th anniversary of the first eastward deportation of German Jews by Nazi Germany, this article published in a local daily newspaper commemorates the fate of Jews in Pomerania during the Holocaust. Based on archival material from German and British archives, the text makes hitherto unknown research findings accessible to a wider public audience.

* Behrendt, Marie Ch.: **Vorpommern waren die ersten Opfer**, in: Ostsee-Zeitung (11. Feb. 2020), p. 11.

**Niv Perelsztejn**

**(Research Fellow)**

Main research field: Emanuel Levinas and the German intellectual tradition.

ARTICLES:

**1. Escape to Judaism**

The article will comprise a Hebrew translation of two short papers by Jewish philosopher Emmanuel Levinas from the 1930s, accompanied by an introductory essay discussing the ways in which Levinas disseminatedGerman philosophy in the French intellectual arena upon his return from Germany, and the influences of prominent German thinkers such as Edmund Husserl, Hermann Cohen, Martin Heidegger, and Franz Rosenzweig found in his writings.

**2. Re-reading Messianism: “Text” and “Commentary” Between Emmanuel Levinas and Gershom Scholem**

This article will examine Levinas’ first “Talmudic Readings” on rabbinic messianism (1960–1961) as a polemic answer to Scholem’s “Zum Verständnis der messianischen Idee in Judentum” (1959), beginning with Scholem’s critical answer to Levinas’ letter from 1947. The letter points out the differences between the two thinkers’ respective attitudes toward Jewish “Text” and “Commentary,” which, as will be argued, also represent some key differences between “German” and “French” approaches to the study of Judaism in a nutshell.

**Hovav Akiva Cohen**

**(M.A. Candidate, Department of Jewish History):**

Main research Field: Hannah Arendt.

ARTICLES:

**1. Arendt’s Concept of Conscience**

This article examines how the concept of conscience evolves in Hannah Arendt’s thought during the 1970s. Focusing on two motifs in her writing during that time, the “voice” of conscience and the “personality” of conscience, the article demonstrates that Arendt’s changing attitude towards conscience reflects a broader shift in her later writing—namely that from politics towards a more philosophical approach centered around the life of the mind.

**II. ACADEMIC EVENTS**

In 2021–2023, the Bucerius Institute intends to organize research seminars, workshops, conferences, guest lectures, and academic courses as soon as the public health situation allows it. Some of the events will take place using new technological platforms.

In what follows, we provide a few examples of our planned events. Each event brings together distinguished German and international scholars, faculty members from Israeli universities, and young Israeli researchers and students.

**Research Seminars\Workshops:**

**1. Beirut, Jerusalem, Cairo: Modern Philosophy in the Early-Twentieth-Century Middle East**

(to be conducted by Dr. Cedric Cohen Skalli and Prof. Lukas Muehlethaler, Freie Universität Berlin)

This seminar adopts a new format, taking place in a joint fashion between Haifa and Berlin. It proposes as its topic a story that has not been told so far: the regional history of philosophy in the early-twentieth-century Middle East. The seminar will focus on three intellectual centers: Beirut with its two Christian Universities and its impact on the Nahda movement and early Arab nationalism, Jerusalem with the Hebrew University, European Christian missions, and Palestinian learned societies, and Cairo, the heart of Muslim reformism, as well as Arab nationalism and liberalism**,** as expressed in a wide range of religious, academic, and cultural institutions. The seminar will offer for the first time a comparative approach to the role played by modern philosophy in three intellectual centers of the twentieth-century Middle East. It will study the reception of European philosophy and science by Middle Eastern intellectuals, as well as the philosophical transformation of Christian, Jewish, and Islamic religious traditions in the emerging colonial and national contexts. The seminar will invite students from Haifa and Berlin to interact via new teaching technologies, but hopefully also in in-person joint weekly seminars in both cities. It will also invite scholars from Israel, Europe, USA, and the Middle East to give guest lectures. The joint seminar is planned to begin in next academic year (2021–2022). We intend to further develop it in the two following years.

**2**. **German-Israeli Minerva School in Haifa and Berlin,** joint application with Prof. Dr. Karma Ben Johanan (Humboldt-Universität, Berlin) for a German-Israeli Minerva School in Haifa and Berlin.

The objective of this workshop is to bring together scholars working historically, philosophically, and theologically on intellectual contacts between Judaism and Christianity in unconventional political contexts and realities. Many of the Jewish-Christian interchanges in the second half of the twentieth century were shaped by the experience of the Holocaust with all its implications, one of the most significant ones being the need for reparation or reconciliation between the two faiths. Representatives of both religions approached the other religion in diplomatic, mostly apolitical terms. Consequently, the Christian-Jewish dialogue of this period adopted the patterns and values of the secular, liberal, and wealthy societies of Western Europe (mostly Germany) and the United States, in which it arose and took place.

However, what shapes do interreligious intellectual approaches (not always dialogues) take when they arise from peripheral, profoundly conflictual socio-political realities? How would theologies emerging from communal—rather than individualistic—societies, dealing with extreme poverty and/or challenges around territory and sovereignty, relate to the other religion’s intellectual baggage? It turns out that elements of such exchanges can be found, for example, in the work of some prominent Latin American liberation theologians of the 1960s and 1970s, in the Palestinian liberation theology of the 1980s, and among the Jewish settlers of Gush Emunim, among other peripheral theologies. Rich, diverse, and ambiguous connections exist between (radical) political theologians of both religions. These connections are maintained at several levels: textual influence and dialogue, personal meetings, and geographical affinities. In some cases, the ideas of Jewish thinkers helped Christian theologians to articulate their own perceptions or political inclinations or to oppose those of others. In other cases, the reference to biblical Judaism served as a reflection of their self-definition as peripheral Christians. For others, spending some time in Israel lent prophetic imagery to the messianic aspects of their thought.

**3. Weltliteratur and Cultural Appropriation**(conducted by our Research Fellow Dr. Orr Scharfwith Professor Abigail Gillman, Boston University, since 2020)

This ongoing scholars’ workshop explores the impact of Goethe’s conception of a universal canon of literature on authors from minority and majority groups in the German-speaking world. Participants explore ways in which the notion of a worldwide, “universal” literary canon may contribute to, or hinder, multi-cultural interactions. In addition to welcoming presentations about the roles that Jewish intellectuals and authors assume within this matrix, the group is open to scholars of non-Jewish history and other literary traditions. The group meets bi-monthly via Zoom to discuss pre-circulated texts. Each member runs a personal research project developed in light of, and concurrently with, group meetings.

***Research Group:***

*Weltliteratur and Cultural Appropriation*

Commenced July 2020

*Participants:*

Prof. Abigail Gillman (Boston University)

Prof. Vivian Liska (University of Antwerp and Hebrew University of Jerusalem)

Prof. Galili Shahar (Tel Aviv University)

Dr. Alexandra Richter (Rouen University and Walter Benjamin Archiv, Berlin)

Dr. Chiara Caradonna (Martin Buber Society of Fellows)

Dr. Sivan Goren (Harvard Society of Fellows)

Dr. Maurice Ebileeni (University of Haifa)

Dr. Nassima Sarahoui (Frankfurt)

**4. Empire and Religious Pluralism**

(to be conducted by our Research Fellow Dr. Orr Scharfwith Dr. Alexander van der Haven, Bergen University, Norway, and Professor Claude (Dov) Stuczynski, Bar Ilan University, in 2021–2022)

This workshop will discuss religious pluralism within imperial ruling systems, with a particular emphasis on the German-speaking world. Although the postcolonial discourse of the last four decades has painted imperialism as an evil monolith, certain regimes, such as the Austro-Hungarian Empire, cultivated surprisingly open forms of pluralism with regards to religious praxis and identities. The workshop will bring together historians, scholars of religion, and political theorists to discuss historical precedents and potential models for the institutional accommodation of religious pluralism.

**5. *Wissenschaft* and Power**

(to be conducted by our Research Fellow Dr. Orr Scharf in 2022)

This workshop will examine the application of Hegel’s conception of *Wissenschaft* as a universal project. Participants will present historical case studies from a range of disciplines from the nineteenth century onwards in order to expose power-related considerations and covert interests underlying the scientific projects in question. Presentations will reflect on the contribution of such tensions to the shape of scientific disciplines, as well as to the legacy of Hegelian philosophy of science.

**6.** **Antisemitism and the Left: The Critique of “False Universalism” from Marx to Habermas**

(to be conducted by our Post-Doctoral Research Fellow Dr. Balasz Berkovits)

The main speaker at this seminar will be Professor Philip Spencer (Birkbeck College, UK). Professor Spencer will expand on the discussion presented in his recent book *Antisemitism and the Left: The Return of the Jewish Question*, co-authored with Robert Fine, about the importance of universalism for critical theory and the ways it has been partially or entirely distorted in the works of some well-known thinkers. He argues that this distortion is ultimately responsible for the reemergence of the “Jewish question” among the political left and should be criticized on that account.

**Conferences:**

**1. Jewish Binationalisms – Historical and Contemporary Aspects**

(to be convened by Dr. Cedric Cohen Skalli, Haifa University, and Dr. David Barak-Gorodezky, University of Chicago)

The binational solution to the political problem of Jewish and Arab coexistence in a shared land has ignited the imagination of various Jewish-German thinkers since the early days of Zionism. Binationalism, promoted in Mandate Palestine by such organizations as “Brit Shalom,” appeared to negotiate the moral demands of Jewish tradition with the political precepts of modern nationalism, enabling a Jewish political realization that would not come at the expense of the local Arab population. The prominence of Hebrew University academics among the proponents of binationalism, albeit inconsequential in garnering political clout, also gave rise to extensive research on the topic.

This conference aims to revisit the academic scholarship on Jewish support of binationalism by shedding new light on previously unheard and under-researched voices and understanding them within the greater context of Jewish history and historiography. The conference at the University of Chicago is planned for November 2021, if the public health situation allows it.

**2**. Our Senior Fellow Dr. Yotam Hotam is cooperating with the Faculty of Protestant Theology at the University of Vienna and the Verein der Freunde religiöser Bildung in organizing two international conferences on the topic **Love and Education: Theological, Sociological, Philosophical, and Historical Perspectives.** The first conference was initially planned to be held in April 2020 in Vienna, and the second in Haifa in 2021. The meetings are now being rescheduled and will take place during 2021­–2023, maybe using new technological platforms.

**3**. Our Research Fellow Dr. Natasha Gordinsky will host an annual **International Conference on German Literature**. The first of these conferences, entitled **Kafka Today**, was organized in 2019, and she is now planning a conference on **Poetry and Responsibility** to be held in the academic years 2021–2022 and 2022–2023.

**4**. Our Research Fellow Dr. **Anat Tzur Mahalel** is planning an international conference entitled “**Das Geheimnis” in Sigmund Freud’s and Walter Benjamin’s thought** for the academic year 2022–2023.

**5**.Our Research Fellow Dr. des. Viola Alianov-Rautenberg is planning an international conference on new perspectives in research on Jewish emigration from Nazi Germany. The conference **Gender, Race, and Empire in German-Jewish Emigration** will bring together scholars working on issues of gender, race, and empire in this context. She will submit a grant proposal to the Thyssen foundation to support the conference.

**Guest Lectures:**

The Bucerius Institute plans to annually invite distinguished German scholars and literary figures to give public lectures on German history and culture as soon as the public health situation allows it. We are also considering the option of transforming the lecture into a Zoom event and an hybrid event. These guest lectures will be organized in collaboration with other departments and institutes at the University of Haifa.

**Yearly Bucerius Lectures**:

In collaboration with the ZEIT-Stiftung, contingent on the public health situation, the Bucerius Institute hopes to resume its program of inviting and hosting prominent German public figures to deliver the annual Bucerius Lectures held during the University of Haifa’s board meeting. We are also considering the option of transforming the lecture into a Zoom event and an hybrid event.

**Faculty and Student Mobility:**

We plan on continuing and expanding faculty and student exchanges with German and European universities as soon as the public health situation allows it. The Bucerius Institute is already engaged in various exchange programs with the following universities: TU Berlin, FU Berlin, the University of Potsdam, the Marc Bloch Institute (Humboldt University of Berlin), LMU Munich, the University of Osnabrück, the University of Hamburg, the University of Vienna, the University of Flensburg, the Catholic University of Eichstätt-Ingolstadt, the Dubnow Institute in Leipzig, EHESS in Paris, and the Hanna Arendt Institute at the University of Verona.

The Bucerius Institute also offers an academic framework for international researchers coming to Haifa for their research projects. For instance, Professor Cornelia Wilhelm (LMU) will be hosted at the Institute in 2021-2023 as part of her digital humanities project **MIRA Plus: German Refugee Rabbis in the United States and Palestine/Israel after 1933**. The project aims to establish a full-fledged digital research portal with new source materials (textual, digital audio and video), a collection of articles exploring the transnational lives and careers of the refugee rabbis, and active crowdsourcing and cooperation with the community and local archives for additional digital and textual information.

Our institute will also serve as the academic home for German PhD candidates, yet to be selected, who will work on a monograph on the last generation of the German rabbinate in Mandate Palestine.

**Other Events:**

The Bucerius Institute also supports numerous other kinds of events and initiatives, including film screenings, exhibitions, and stage productions.

**Media Activities:**

Via our Facebook page and Website we inform more than 1800 interested followers about our activities and news. We are continuously enlarging and updating the pool of our Facebook friends and followers.

**III. SCHOLARSHIPS AND SUPPORT**

As in past years, the Bucerius Institute will continue to support its researchers and scholars (MA and PhD students, as well as post-doctoral researchers and faculty) in their work on German history and culture. In the past year, the Bucerius Institute has enlarged its pool of scholars to 12 researchers and thereby broadened its research horizons. This policy will continue during 2021–2023. The financial support given to our researchers enables them to travel, visit archives and libraries in Germany, participate in international conferences, and edit articles and books; the support of the Bucerius Institute is recognized in all of these publications. Each year we support some fifteen projects, mainly by Israeli scholars.

The Bucerius Institute would also like to revive the **Lahnstein Scholarship** for promising young German researchers. This short-term scholarship of up to three months and 4000 EUR of worth is intended for visiting scholars from Germany who will undertake an innovative study in Israel and publish it giving credit to the Lahnstein Scholarship and the Bucerius Institute.