Reading Science in Early Writings of Leopold Zunz and Rifāʿi Rāfīʿ al-Ṭahṭāwī:

On Beginnings of the Wissenschaft des Judentums and the Nahḍa

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ABSTRACT

Reading Science in Early Writings of Leopold Zunz and Rifāʾa Rāfiʾ al-Ṭaḥṭāwī:

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The dissertation is divided into two parts, each containing two chapters. Part I describes two nineteenth century movements and fields—the German Wissenschaft des Judentums (Science of Judaism) and the Arab nahḍa (Renaissance)—moving between what these developments are at their beginnings and what they have come to be through later developments and representations. I argue that both German Jews and Arabs were made to deal with Orientalism and colonialism in the nineteenth century, and that the different forms they encountered shaped how exponents of the Wissenschaft des Judentums and the nahḍa formulated their proposals for reform and their understandings of Europe and of Christianity.

Part II turns to examine in greater depth two foundational literary and programmatic texts which initiate discourse of both movements: Leopold Zunz’ s Etwas über die rabbinische Litteratur (1818), which lays out the foundation for the field; and Rifāʾa Rāfiʾ al-Ṭaḥṭāwī’s travel writing Takhlīṣ al-Ibrīz ilā Talkhīṣ Bāriz (1834). I take science as a departure point for reading these texts, because of the central role sciences play in each. This is not surprising given the post-Enlightenment milieu of which they are a part. From the time of Napoleon’s imperialist ventures, which deeply impacted Prussia as well as Egypt, education and science—whether the Wissenschaft of the philosophical disciplines, or the sciences that drive technology—become foundational for intellectual, spiritual, and/or technological progress.
I read both texts as interventions, aiming to direct and impact their readers in particular ways. The programs they propose are a part of, and responses to, Western Europe’s modernity as it develops from the late eighteenth century into the nineteenth. Their formulations reflect what each writer proposes should be the relation between Europe and Christianity, as he seeks to either participate equally in a wider culture and academy (i.e., Zunz), or learn from Europe’s advances, particularly its technological and scientific ones (i.e., al-Taḥāwī). Each posits a critique of Europe as it seeks to learn from and emulate what it takes Europe to be. Their interventions and effects, or lack thereof, contribute to narrating how Europe’s story came to constitute a common modernity.
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NOTE ON TRANSLATION, TRANSLITERATION AND CITATIONS:

Unless otherwise noted, all translations in the dissertation are mine.

For transliterations from the Arabic, I follow the system of the *International Journal of Middle East Studies (IJMES)*, with the exception that I use full diacritical notation for the names of persons and for the titles of published works. For Hebrew transliterations I follow the guidelines of the Library of Congress.

All references from and to German texts throughout the dissertation preserve the spelling from the works cited. I do not alter titles or citations to reflect new German spelling.
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INTRODUCTION

This dissertation began from the two founding and foundational texts I examine in Part II, namely Leopold Zunz’s *Etwas über die rabbinische Litteratur* (Some remarks on rabbinic literature), first published in 1818, and Rifāʾ Rāfīʾ al-Ṭaḥtāwī’s *Takhliṣ al-ibrīḍ ilā talkhīṣ bārīḍ* (The extrication of gold towards the summation of Paris), first published in 1834. These are literary and programmatic texts, which mark the beginning of discourse of the *Wissenschaft des Judentums* (Science of Judaism) and the *nahḍa* (Renaissance) respectively. When reading them alongside each other I observed several meaningful shared motifs between these two pieces, written by non-Christians as they ruminate on their common predicament: What is and should “our”—whether addressing German Jews or those in Muslim countries—connection be with Europe? And what is Europe? In the face of its scientific advances and civilizational power, how can we assert our differences while emphasizing our commonalities? What is the role of sciences in the present milieu and how can these be made to facilitate collective transformation? In what ways is the present continuous with what preceded it and how does it break from what came before?

The following will draw out meaningful connections between the two aforementioned texts and the wider contexts of which they are a part, without minimizing the significant differences between the authors’ environments and between the intellectual and technological sciences they describe and reckon with in their writings.
On Zunz’s *Etwas*, the *Wissenschaft des Judentums*, and science

Leopold Zunz (1794-1886) is a German Jew, and founder of the *Wissenschaft des Judentums* (Science of Judaism), a movement that begins in Berlin in the second decade of the nineteenth century. Zunz lays out its foundation, if not its name, in his *Etwas über die rabbinische Litteratur* (hereafter *Etwas*), written and published when he was a student at the recently established University of Berlin (1810).

The founding of the University of Berlin marks the “crowning achievement” of the state’s educational reforms carried out during the so-called Prussian Reform Era (1806-1815), a period of increased centralization as the state absorbed and reorganized Church and educational institutions following its humiliating loss to Napoleon in 1806.¹ In the wake of defeat, founding a “new university ‘in the German sense’” (to refer to one of Schleiermacher’s essays from the time) became “a form of subtle, spiritual retaliation” against French imperialism.² This “new creation” built on ‘German *Wissenschaft*’ would enable the state to “replace with intellectual strength what it [had] lost in material resources.”³ It is significant that the *Wissenschaft des Judentums* develops among the first generation of German Jews to attend universities, and that it centers out of Berlin, the first German university, “at least in the formulations of its founders”—

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² Thomas Albert Howard’s *Protestant Theology and the Making of the Modern German University* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006), 150. On the founding of the new university, see Howard’s chapter “Theology, *Wissenschaft*, and the Founding of the University of Berlin” especially 148-152, which considers the events as responding to Napoleonic defeat; and 155-177, which discusses “Grundschriften” (founding treatises) by Schelling, Fichte, Schleiermacher, Humboldt, and Steffens.

³ “A new creation” were Fichte’s words on the new university, cited in Howard, 142. The latter citation is taken from the king’s alleged response to a proposal in 1807 to establish a new university in Berlin, cited in Howard, 149.
and statutes—“if not entirely in actual practice,” to sever “the centuries-old tie between confessionally defined Christianity and university education.”

From Zunz’s *Etwas*, the program he advocates is philological, influenced, in part, by the discipline identified with Philipp August Boeckh (1785-1867) and Friedrich Wolf (1759-1824), who were among Zunz’s professors at the University. When Zunz self-identifies with a tradition, he does so as a corrective to Hebraism, that is to Christian Hebrew Studies, which began in German universities from the late fifteenth century. Initially Hebraists focused on biblical texts, and used their studies to assist the Church’s efforts to convert Jews. Following the Reformation, this changed as Protestant theologians developed the field through their efforts to critique Church dogma. Significantly, from the early seventeenth century, post-biblical (i.e., “rabbinic”) Hebrew writings were brought into the university by Protestant theologians to help clarify the biblical material in their pursuit of the “*Hebraica veritas*,” that is “the accurate understanding of the biblical text.”

It should not be surprising that Hebraism served Christian interests, and made Judaism function “as the other whose negation confirms and even constitutes Christianity.” It is with this background in mind that Zunz writes his essay responding to Christians’ appropriation of rabbinic literature, and critiquing how over the past century “European [literature] gained in strength and identity by setting itself off against the [rabbinic].” As Zunz makes clear, 

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4 Howard, 130.
7 This citation is a modification of a statement by Edward Said in *Orientalism* (New York: Vintage, 2003), which very closely resembles one of Zunz’s arguments, with the substitution of “literature” for “culture” and “rabbinic” for “Orient.” Said writes (3) that *Orientalism* “…tries to show that European culture gained in strength and identity by
Christians have been studying post-biblical Hebrew literature for centuries, for their own purposes, with deleterious consequences. And yet, it is only following the so-called “crisis of emancipation” (returned to below) that the Wissenschaft des Judentums develops, a consequence in no small measure of Jews’ admission into the German university following the Edict of 1812.8

What explanations does Zunz give for why he proposes the program he lays out in 1818? He describes how the time now is especially ripe for Jews, as well as for all those committed to working for Wissenschaft, upon and for which the new German University is built, to investigate Jewish literature scientifically. His remarkable essay—discussed in detail in Chapter 3 and translated in full at the end of the dissertation—names science as the best solution for a twofold “crisis” currently facing German Jews.

Zunz explains that developing this field is especially urgent, because German Jews are neglecting Hebrew and therefore, often without even realizing it, witnessing their literature’s death. While “Jewish literature”—an object whose parameters are shaped and reshaped through early writings of the Wissenschaft—references a multi-lingual, geographically and temporally diverse corpus of texts, Hebrew occupies a special place within it, as the language most widely understood by Jews across time and space, and as the people’s former collective language. If Jews lose their ability to read Hebrew texts, Zunz warns, the Jewish people will no longer exist in the present.

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8 Though the Edict of 1812 allowed Jews entry to German universities and opened up the possibility of their future employment in the same, in 1822 the chance for the latter was closed by a King’s order, since this “could not be effected ‘without great disruption’ and should be withdrawn.” See Ismar Schorsch, “The Religious Parameters of Wissenschaft: Jewish Academics at Prussian Universities,” in From Text to Context: The Turn to History in Modern Judaism (Hanover: Brandeis University Press, 1994), 52, 62n6. For a discussion of the “Gans Affair” which led to the King’s order of 1822, see Hanns Reissner’s “Rebellious Dilemma: The Case Histories of Eduard Gans and some of his Partisans,” Leo Baeck Institute Year Book 2 (1957): 182-84.
The current crisis is not only existential, but political. Beginning in the late eighteenth century, the question of whether Jews can, should, and under what conditions be granted the same social and political rights as Christians have, becomes publicly and heatedly debated.\(^9\) Zunz, along with other \textit{Wissenschaft} practitioners, argues that biased knowledge about the Jews has resulted in inadequate and misguided proposals for Jewish reform and “improvement.” Were the Jews’ literature investigated \textit{scientifically} and not \textit{theologically}, so as to produce accurate knowledge about who this people is, then it may become possible to effectively and justly resolve “the complicated question of the fate of the Jews.”\(^10\)

\textit{A few words on Wissenschaft and science}

The term \textit{Wissenschaft}, which, when translated, I render “science,” gained its modern currency among German idealist thinkers in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.\(^11\) It refers to what develops as human and philosophical sciences, and less so to natural or physical sciences. In the early nineteenth century \textit{Wissenschaft} represents a rigorous systematic method of enquiry, and carries within itself a sense of “disciplinarian holism,” at the same time that it represents “the embodiment of knowledge systematically united into a Whole.”\(^12\) These meanings are present in Zunz’s \textit{Etwas}, where he calls for a vast encyclopedic program for “our

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\(^11\) Fichte, Schleiermacher, Schelling, and Hegel—all of who taught at the University of Berlin—were especially influential in developing \textit{Wissenschaft} as an “academic ideology” in the early nineteenth century. See Howard, 137-77.

\(^12\) David N. Myers, “‘From Zion Will Go Forth Torah’: Jewish Scholarship and the Zionist Return to History,” Ph.D. Dissertation, Columbia University, 1991, 6; citing the entry “\textit{Wissenschaft}” in the \textit{Allgemeine deutsche Real-Encyclopaedie} from 1820.
science,” one which would view the whole literature of the Jews as its object of research, while situating this within a greater whole uniting the literatures of all peoples.

The meanings of Wissenschaft change over the nineteenth-century. In his study Protestant Theology and the Making of the Modern German University, Thomas Albert Howard describes how scholars from the beginning of the twentieth century (e.g., Eduard Spranger, Rudolf Virchow, and Max Weber) differentiate the more “philosophical” idealist Wissenschaft of the first decades of the nineteenth-century, which emphasized the synthetic unity of the whole, from the more “scientific,” positivist Wissenschaft of the second half of the century, which came to refer to academic fields and empirical rigor. Howard argues, however, that this difference is exaggerated, for even though Wissenschaft changes in meaning and use over the nineteenth century, important continuities connect its early idealist and later positivist manifestations, even as emphases shift.13 He explains, for example, that ‘idealist’ Wissenschaft also calls for thoroughly and rigorously advancing one’s particular discipline, even while focusing on the organic unity of knowledge, just as later ‘positivist’ Wissenschaft still pursued unified, comprehensive knowledge even as it became increasingly focused on specialized academic work.

Zunz’s program, which deeply and profoundly reflects the environment of German idealism but neither lacks positivist empirical rigor, illustrates Howard’s argument. Continuities and shifts in understandings of science are visible in debates and disagreements among practitioners of the Wissenschaft des Judentums over the course of the nineteenth century.

13 Howard, 29-32.
On al-Tahtawi’s Takhlīṣ, the nahda, and science

Rifāʿa Rāfīʿ al-Tahtāwī (1801-1873) is an influential figure in nineteenth-century Egyptian and Ottoman contexts. His widely read and disseminated *Takhlīṣ al-Ibrīz ilā Talkhīṣ Bāriz* (hereafter *Takhlīṣ*) is al-Tahtāwī’s account of his sojourn in Paris (1826-1831), as an imam and participant in the first large-scale Egyptian mission sent there by Muḥammad ʿAlī. The mission’s purpose was to study European sciences so as to reduce Egypt’s reliance on foreign instructors and facilitate the governor’s modernization projects.

The *Takhlīṣ* is didactic, explaining the customs of Parisian society to its readers and teaching them about the sciences perfected there, as it advocates for Islamic lands to learn and import those sciences from Europe which would benefit them. It is comparative throughout, relating Cairo to Paris, and Islamic countries to Europe, moving between equations of sameness and difference as it describes the peoples, languages and sciences of the two regions.

Unlike the “*Wissenschaft des Judentums,*” which is coined as the name for an academic field and then developed, the designation “nahda” is not used for the movement and era it would come to signify until its second generation. Thus there are no founders of the *nahda*, but “pioneers” of what would “come to be called” the *nahda*, by the late nineteenth century. Al-Tahtāwī’s *Takhlīṣ* marks the beginning of *nahda* discourse, because this text more than any other initiates a process of “translation and adaptation” of Western sciences, institutions, and thought, into Arabic that informs and characterizes what the *nahda* becomes.

The concern underlying and connecting *nahda* writings over the nineteenth and into the twentieth centuries is the problem of how best to modernize in a world where Europe determines what is modern. The seeds of this ‘problem’ were planted in 1798 in Egypt with the French
invasion and occupation, as was the ‘solution’ nahda intellectuals developed, nurtured as they were by European Orientalists.

Significantly, that mission of which al-Ṭahṭāwī was a part, connects in very direct ways to 1798. The school established in Paris for instructing the Egyptian students, the École égyptienne, was set up and directed by French Orientalist Edmé François Jomard, who himself had suggested a similar project as early as 1811 “for civilizing Egypt by means of education.”\(^\text{14}\)

Jomard had been a member of the Institut d’Égypt, founded by Napoleon in Cairo in 1798, as the scientific arm of the French occupation. Of both institutions, Jomard wrote in 1840: “is [the École égyptienne] anything besides a continuation of the activities of the Institut d’Égypt?”\(^\text{15}\)

A few words on ʿilm and sciences

Science and sciences are central to generating and developing the nahda. What sciences are however, to al-Ṭahṭāwī, and what this term means to the “Franks,”—the term al-Ṭahṭāwī uses most often when referring to non-Ottoman Europeans—differs, as chapter 4 will draw out. The Franks’ understanding impacts al-Ṭahṭāwī’s conceptions of ʿilm and ʿulūm, even as he shapes his perception of their view into a model that can be incorporated into and absorbed by his own.

Al-Ṭahṭāwī uses several terms, which are not always—though they sometimes are—distinguishable from each other. Further, some key words, such as “ʿilm,” have multiple, if connected meanings. ʿIlm, as an abstract substantive, can be translated as “knowledge,” in the


\(^{15}\) Cited and translated in Shaden M. Tageldin’s Disarming Words: Empire and the Seductions of Translation in Egypt (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2011), 111.
sense of true and universal knowledge of a thing. It often appears synonymous to maʿrifā, though al-Ṭaḥṭāwī prefers maʿrifā to represent “knowledge” when this is contrasted against “ignorance” (jahl).

ʿIlm has a second sense in al-Ṭaḥṭāwī’s Tahlīṣ, namely as a science, in other words as the singular of ʿulūm (“sciences”), and as a method through which to better ascertain knowledge of an object, which often means knowing how to put that object to its best use. This meaning too is shared, at times, with arts (funūn) and crafts (ṣanāʾiʿ), although al-Ṭaḥṭāwī clarifies that this is not how the Franks use “science,” which for them is always distinct from “art.”

Marwa Elshakry writes about the “ongoing epistemological reorientation of the word ʿilm, (the broadest word in Arabic for ‘knowledge’),” which took place over the second half of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, which led to the emergence of the idea that ʿilm could refer to positive, experimental science.16 While ʿilm certainly means more than only positive science in al-Ṭaḥṭāwī’s Tahlīṣ, it also means, in some instances, science, or more accurately, a science. As chapter 4 shows, this early nahḍa text provides another avenue through which to consider how categories of knowledge are shaped from the first half of the century. In the case of the Tahlīṣ, this is can be seen through al-Ṭaḥṭāwī’s efforts to translate French concepts into Arabic in ways that his readers will understand.

A few remarks on Orientalism and Colonialism

The Wissenschaft des Judentums and the nahḍa are each impacted by Orientalism and colonialism. The nahḍa develops out of the assault by both at the same time, which occurs on

this side of that post-Enlightenment Western European modernity that would make itself felt so forcefully and persuasively throughout the world. This modernity takes shape in the late eighteenth century and begins to work its havoc on the Near East from the Napoleonic invasion of Egypt in 1798. In Orientalism, Edward Said describes this event as “the keynote of the relationship” that would develop between the two regions, because this was “an invasion which was in many ways the very model of a truly scientific appropriation of one culture by another, apparently stronger one.”

Napoleon’s military and scientific expedition in Egypt signals the conjunction of colonial aggression and the civilizational mission, built upon, strengthened by, and furthering Orientalist knowledge, which together engulfed Egypt “by the instruments of Western knowledge and power.” Said’s three overlapping definitions of Orientalism are brought together and mobilized in this venture, which used knowledge of the Orient to dominate and exert authority over the Orient. The expedition’s team of scientists, even more so than its army, furthered France’s imperial interests in the region, and initiated a process of ruptural transformation, from which the nahda develops its varied responses, be these cultural, linguistic, literary, scientific, political, national, etc.

The impact of Orientalism and colonialism on the Wissenschaft may be less manifest but is no less formative. Before “Orientalism” was made to serve imperial and economic interests of

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17 Said, Orientalism, 42 (emphasis added).

18 Ibid., 79-86. It is worth noting that the French ‘civilisation’ as ‘the triumph of reason over irrationality in constitutional, political, moral, religious, and intellectual life’—used as a legitimizing force for French colonialism from the time of Napoleon—only gained this new resonance during the mid-eighteenth century amid Enlightenment struggles with the Church and Christianity. See Birgit Schaebler, “Civilizing Others: Global Modernity and the Local Boundaries (French/German/Ottoman and Arab) of Savagery” in Globalization and the Muslim World: Culture, Religion, and Modernity, ed. Birgit Schaebler and Leif Stenberg (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 2004), 8-9. In the German context Bildung develops simultaneously and acquires its sense of moral, spiritual, intellectual acculturation and formation. German intellectuals contrasted Bildung, and its closely related Kultur, as internal, natural, and organic, against the French-inflected Zivilisation, as external, artificial, mechanical. See Ringer, 86-90.
modern states, “Hebraism” served the interests of the Church and the Reformation, appropriating Jewish texts to convert the Jews, to counter Christian opponents, and to construct the degenerate rabbinic Oriental “Other” against and through whom the Christian establishes and empowers himself. This scholarly discourse is what precedes its transformation into the imperial institution Orientalism describes, and it is Hebraism that the Wissenschaft des Judentums reacts against and critiques.  

The “colonization” of the Jews, however, begins from their emancipation. Jonathan M. Hess’ *Germans, Jews and the Claims of Modernity* shows how proposals by Christian biblical scholars regarding the civil status of the Jews, whether in favor of granting them citizenship (e.g., Christian Wilhelm Dohm) or against (e.g., Johann David Michaelis), were formulated as colonial projects. The question of “civic improvement” and whether the Jews can be “regenerated” and made into productive citizens able to contribute to the economy and self-sufficiency of the secular state is a colonial question.  

More significantly, Hess’ work illuminates that these political questions correspond with a shift from pre-modern Hebraism as a primarily theological discourse to modern Orientalism, as a secular and scientific enterprise that uses its intellectual authority to assert political authority over Jews and the Orient. He shows how both Dohm’s and Michaelis’ political proposals advising the “secular” state on how to deal with its Jews, connect to their scholarship on Jewish history and Mosaic law respectively. The shift to modern Orientalism is especially pronounced in

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19 Gil Anidjar, *Semites*, 49. I am indebted to Anidjar’s essay on “Secularism” for helping me to think through the transformation from “Hebraism” to “Orientalism.”


21 Daniel Boyarin uses Dohm’s treatise to show how the ideology of Jewish emancipation as formulated by liberal European Christians is “functionally akin to a colonization.” *Unheroic Conduct: The Rise of Heterosexuality and the Invention of the Jewish Man* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997), 280-81. Boyarin highlights this connection in order to consider and critique Herzl’s political Zionism as colonial mimicry.
Michaelis’s work, which effects a racial division separating the Oriental (Jew and Arab) from Christian Europe. The increasingly racist responses that subsequently develop within discourse on Jewish emancipation reveals that “distinctly modern forms of antisemitism” should be understood “not as a reaction to the Enlightenment but as an integral part of it.”

In this way, Hess’ work illustrates how Christian patterns survive “reconstituted, redeployed, redistributed” in and through secular Enlightenment universalism, as Hebraism transforms into modern Orientalism.

It is thus significant, and not surprising, that German Jews only enunciate a program rebelling against the Christian Hebraism of the past several centuries after they have already begun to be “civilized” through processes of emancipation. Theirs may be a “revolt of the colonized,” but it is a rebellion bound and enabled by their colonization.

Figures of the Wissenschaft des Judentums embrace modernity so strongly at the same time that many of its proponents are anti-Christian. This separation is possible because of the perception of distance between Christian Hebraism and post-Enlightenment society. This dynamic differs from nahda intellectuals who faced the simultaneous and combined forces of Orientalism and Western imperialism. This explains why, at least initially, nahda figures more often embrace the European together with European modernity. It is not until the more devastating effects of twentieth-century colonialism that nahda exponents come to see the adversary in the European.

22 Hess, 208.

23 Said, 121.

24 Susannah Heschel presents historians of the nineteenth-century Wissenschaft des Judentums as constructing a counterhistory of Christian counterhistory, which she calls a “revolt of the colonized.”

25 This does not mean that these ‘anti-Christian’ Jewish Germans do not also “mimic” Christianity as they rebel against it. Chapter one will address this further.
Organization and structure:

The dissertation is divided into two parts, each containing two chapters. Part I describes the *Wissenschaft des Judentums* and the *nahḍa* in the nineteenth century and discusses portrayals of both by scholarship over the twentieth. Chapters 1 (on the *Wissenschaft*) and 2 (on the *nahḍa*) move between narrating what each movement is and what they have come to be. I draw attention to the diversity of ways in which these fields and developments are described, note when significant shifts in their portrayals occur, and consider what these changes reflect and effect. I refrain from referring to chapter 1 in chapter 2 and vice versa, in an effort to avoid reading the *Wissenschaft* through the *nahḍa* and the *nahḍa* through the *Wissenschaft*, though I hope the reader may be compelled by the presentation to draw connections between the two.

The choice of focus for chapters 1 and 2 connects to Part II of the dissertation where I focus on the two aforementioned works, Zunz’s *Etwas* (chapter 3) and al-Ṭahṭāwī’s *Takhlīṣ* (chapter 4). I chose these texts because of their founding and foundational status in narratives of the *Wissenschaft des Judentums* and the *nahḍa* respectively. Thus one of the aims of Part I will be to prepare the reader to consider if the texts I read in Part II warrant the foundational status they have been accorded. Do they foretell the movements who trace their lineage to them? Do they illustrate characteristics that typify the *Wissenschaft* and the *nahḍa*?

I argue that both texts are literary and fictional objects, which are foundational because ruptural, by which I mean that both describe and aim to effect important transformations, and have been made foundational through how they are read. However, neither text nor figure founds, fathers or pioneers a “movement”—as each comes to be characterized. This is not only because, as I will show, the view of their relation with or within Europe differs from what is subsequently seen to develop, but neither text can be read apart from its efforts to engage,
understand, develop, and shape itself in relation to, or as part of, Europe. It is more useful to read these as beginning texts, rather than as founding ones. And what do they “begin” and how? I approach this question by taking “science” (‘ulūm and Wissenschaft) as departure points for considering what each text does and how it works.

I chose “science” to begin my readings because of its central place and use in each piece, and because both Zunz’s *Etwas* and al-Tahtāwī’s *Takhlīṣ* identify science(s) with what Europe currently is or is characterized by. “Sciences” also connect to questions mentioned above regarding the universality of Enlightenment rationality and responses to French imperialism. In Prussia, as in Egypt, education and science—whether the Wissenschaft of the philosophical disciplines, or the sciences that drive technology—are what modernizes. And in both contexts, the impetus for scientific development—be it intellectual, spiritual, and/or technological—was, at least in part, shaped by, and in reaction to, French imperialism.

Chapters 3 and 4 highlight how differently Zunz and al-Tahtāwī respond to Europe’s modern secular modernity. This variation is shaped by each non-Christian writer’s view of Europe’s Christianity as he seeks to either participate in a wider European culture and academy (i.e., Zunz), or learn from Europe’s advances, particularly its technological and scientific ones (i.e., al-Tahtāwī). Despite the variation between them, both Zunz and al-Tahtāwī engage and critique European science in their efforts to shape what Europe and their societies are to become. Their interventions and effects, or lack thereof, contribute to telling a part of Europe’s story as it unfolds in relation to its internal and external others.

I include two appendices at the end of the dissertation. Appendix I contains my complete translation of Zunz’s *Etwas*, alongside the German taken from his *Gesammelte Schriften*. A partial translation exists in Paul R. Mendes-Flohr and Jehuda Reinharz’s collection *The Jew in
the Modern World. The most significant shortcoming of this published excerpt is that it includes a mere three of Zunz’s more than 80 notes. This omission has meant that many layers of the text have for too long been unavailable to the English reader: the scope of Zunz’s erudition; the expanse of the program he proposes; and, most importantly, his extensive commentary, critique, and reliance upon the already existent field of scholarship on rabbinic literature, built almost entirely by Christian scholars. I hope that others can benefit from the translation here.

An excellent and much acclaimed English translation of al-Ṭaḥṭāwī’s Takhliṣ by Daniel L. Newman was published in 2004. Newman’s An Imam in Paris is thorough, meticulously and extensively annotated, and admirably succeeds at rendering the different stylistic registers and genres of al-Ṭaḥṭāwī’s Arabic into English. I can make no claims to improve upon his achievement. For this reason, Appendix II contains my translations only of those passages from Ṭaḥṭāwī’s Takhliṣ that I cite extensively in chapter 4. These are included alongside passages from the 1834 edition. I refer the English reader to Newman’s expert translation for the remainder of the work.
CHAPTER 1

The Wissenschaft des Judentums: Emancipation, Assimilation, Revolt

The phrase *Wissenschaft des Judentums* (Science of Judaism) first appears in print in an essay from 1822, aiming to inspire readers to take up the task of building a Science of Judaism. Soon thereafter the term also comes to reference the nineteenth-century movement that shapes the field. Despite its singular name, the *Wissenschaft des Judentums* develops in different directions as exponents disagree over what practices best actualize the ideal of a Science of Judaism and how to bring the most benefit to society in general and German Jews in particular.¹

What the *Wissenschaft des Judentums* refers to is a contested matter, shaped by experiences, motivations and positions of those who appraise it. The treatment below illustrates this diversity. After reviewing twentieth-century translations and interpretations of the term I turns to reconsider the *Wissenschaft*’s beginnings and explore how and why differences within the movement take shape from the 1840s onward. After discussing some documents from the second and third decades of the nineteenth-century, I move to survey later trends in scholarship’s portrayals of the *Wissenschaft*’s motivations, characteristics and methodology. Throughout this review, I reflect upon disagreements, and call attention to areas of oversight. I conclude with a closer examination of two accounts of the movement from influential figures in the field of Jewish Studies: Gershom Scholem’s harsh denunciation of the movement and Susannah

¹ In this chapter, I use the English “Science of Judaism” to specify the new scientific discipline built upon the concept (see for example, the Immanuel Wolf’s essay first published in 1822 “Über den Begriff einer Wissenschaft des Judentums,” discussed below), and the German “Wissenschaft des Judentums” to refer to the movement and its practitioners who take up the task of building the new field.
Heschel’s more laudatory reappraisal. I present the positions of both and suggest how to productively read them together.

**Translations and Interpretations**

Translations and descriptions of what exactly the *Wissenschaft des Judentums* is vary across time and discipline, between writers and even among works by the same author or in a single text. The inconsistency in translation connects, in part, to challenges in interpreting and rendering both “Wissenschaft” and “Judentum.”

From the mid-twentieth century, the nineteenth-century movement and field is often depicted as the beginning of “Jewish Studies” or “(modern) Jewish scholarship.”

“Wissenschaft” is frequently translated as “study” and qualified as scholarly, academic, or

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scientific. When rendered “science,” a note may be added to explain that the “Science” of the Wissenschaft des Judentums, in this context, means “scholarship” or “study.”7 “Judentum” too is translated in different ways, partially resulting from the wider meaning of the German term which may refer to “Judaism,” “Jewry,” and even some abstract “Jewishness.”8

The perception that “Jewish Studies”9 or “Jewish scholarship”10 and the “study of Judaism” describe the same field is illustrated by the interchangeable use of these expressions across works by the same author, sometimes even in the same text.11 While a ‘Jewish study’ is not the same thing as ‘studying Judaism,’ this equivalence is not entirely unfounded. After all, the twentieth-century field of Jewish studies does have some roots in parts of the nineteenth-

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7 Such discomfort is found, for example, when Maher explains (168n1) that the Wissenschaft des Judentums is not easily translated, and that the English “Science of Judaism” is “translation English,” and he therefore suggests that “a more appropriate term might be ‘Scientific Study of Judaism.’” See also, Myers, “From Zion Will Go Forth Torah,” v; Mitchell Bryan Hart, Social Science and the Politics of Modern Jewish Identity (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2000), 15; Nil Roemer, Jewish Scholarship and Culture in Nineteenth-Century Germany: Between History and Faith (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2005), 3.


9 For example, Susannah Heschel describes the Wissenschaft des Judentums as “Jewish Studies” in her “Jewish Studies as Counterhistory” and as “the scholarly study of Judaism” in her “Quest for the Aryan Jesus.”

10 Ismar Schorsch describes the phrase as “modern Jewish scholarship” in his “Breakthrough into the Past” and translates it as “the academic study of Judaism” in both his articles “Emergence of Historical Consciousness” and “The Ethos of Modern Jewish Scholarship,” in From Text to Context: The Turn to History in Modern Judaism (Hanover: Brandeis University Press, 1990), 158, 164. David N. Myers translates the Wissenschaft des Judentums as the “scientific study of Judaism” in his “From Zion Will Go Forth Torah” and presents it as “modern Jewish historical scholarship” in his Resisting History: Historicism and its Discontents in German-Jewish Thought (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2003), 20.

11 For example, Meyer translates the “Wissenschaft des Judentums” as “the modern critical study of Jews and Judaism,” which he then references as “Jewish Studies,” “Jewish scholarship,” “modern Jewish scholarship,” and “critical Jewish scholarship” throughout his article “Two Persistent Tensions,” 105-19.
century *Wissenschaft des Judentums.* However, not only are there significant distinctions between the fields, but eliding them in a developmental narrative obscures meaningful disagreements and debates within the *Wissenschaft des Judentums,* which will be elaborated below.

One additional point regarding the variety of translations and interpretations deserves mention: Portrayals of the movement tend to emphasize it as historical, literary, or theological. The *Wissenschaft des Judentums* is commonly described as “Jewish historical scholarship” and identified in particular with the development of modern “Jewish historiography,” even though its founders rarely describe their work as history but as science. Others emphasize its method as historical-theological or as historical-philological, and describe its purpose as “the scientific

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12 Texts which present “Jewish Studies” at universities as achieving unrealized aims of the nineteenth-century *Wissenschaft* include: Jospe; Céline Trautmann-Waller, “Zunz and the Hochschule für die Wissenschaft des Judentums,” in the *Yale Companion to Jewish Writing and Thought in German Culture 1096-1996,* eds. Sander L. Gilman and Jack Zipes (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1997), 199-204, esp. 204; Meyer, “Two Persistent Tensions”; Salo W. Baron, “Jewish Studies at Universities: An Early Project,” *Hebrew Union College Annual* 46 (1975): 357-76.


16 In her Foreword to Christian Wiese’s *Challenging Colonial Discourse,* Heschel presents two nineteenth-century disciplines—“*Wissenschaft des Judentums*” and “Protestant Theology”—alongside each other as parallel, comparable developments, suggesting one may read the *Wissenschaft des Judentums* as “Jewish Theology.” Throughout the piece she fluctuates between referring to its practitioners as “Jewish historians” and as “Jewish theologians.”

investigation of Jewish history and literature” or less commonly as “Jewish literary studies.”

The dissertation aims to show that such distinctions were far from fixed, especially in writings from the first half of the nineteenth-century. Additionally, it will clarify how certain choices, such as qualifying the project as Jewish and detaching it from science, cannot be dissociated from later nationalist developments in the field of Jewish studies. Nationalist readings of the Wissenschaft tend to either overlook or disparage the movement’s early efforts to engage and shape science as a human universal, and not as an exclusively Jewish project.

Beginnings:

The Wissenschaft des Judentums begins in Berlin in the period 1818-1823. Leopold Zunz (1794-1886) launches its program with his Etwas über die rabbinische Litteratur (Some remarks on rabbinic literature), a text hailed as inaugurating the Science of Judaism (though one which precedes the expression’s first use). Zunz was also a founding and active member of the Verein

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19 Kilcher provides an offset definition of the Wissenschaft des Judentums as “Jewish literary studies,” which he later qualifies as “secular.” Tellingly (as will become more clear throughout the discussion below), he makes this assessment by identifying the Wissenschaft des Judentums near exclusively with Leopold Zunz and Moritz Steinschneider. Andreas B. Kilcher, “‘Jewish Literature’ and ‘World Literature’: Wissenschaft des Judentums and its Concept of Literature,” in Modern Judaism and History Consciousness: Identities, Encounters, Perspectives, eds. Andreas Gotzman and Christian Wiese (Leiden: Brill, 2007), 301, 302.

für Cultur und Wissenschaft der Juden"²¹ (Society for culture and science of the Jews, hereafter the Verein), an organization active from 1819-1824, among whose meetings and publications the term first takes shape.²² Due to the foundational status of Zunz’s *Etwas*, together with his involvement in the Verein and the high appraisal of his subsequent publications, from the second half of the nineteenth-century he is widely acclaimed as the founder of the Wissenschaft des Judentums.²³

In 1823, the Verein published the first, and only, volume of its journal, the Zeitschrift für die Wissenschaft des Judentums (Journal for the Science of Judaism), edited by Zunz.²⁴ The


²⁴ Three issues of the journal appeared—the first two in 1822 and the third bound together with the others in 1823. The Zeitschrift is available online at http://www.compactmemory.de.

The first recorded use of “Wissenschaft des Judentums” appears in the Verein’s handwritten minutes, from a discussion of possible names for the Society during a meeting held May 27, 1821. Eduard Gans proposed “Verein zur Beförderung der Kultur unter den Juden und der Wissenschaft des Judentums” (Society for the Advancement of
Zeitschrift presents the earliest printed record of the phrase “Wissenschaft des Judentums,” both in its title and announced as the topic of its opening essay “Über den Begriff einer Wissenschaft des Judenthums” (“On the Concept of a Science of Judaism”), written by Immanuel Wolf (Wohlwill) and edited by Zunz. Shortly thereafter the Verein dissolved. That the Science of Judaism did not cease with the Zeitschrift’s disappearance and the Verein’s dissolution becomes credited to Zunz, the “soul” and “living spirit” of the Verein, who alone “rescued the Wissenschaft des Judentums…out of [its] ruins.”

Zunz’s Etwas from 1818 introduces the program for what the new science should entail, and his Die gottesdienstlichen Vorträge der Juden, historisch entwickelt (The Homilies of the Jews, Historically Developed), published in 1832, is the first work to put that program into practice.

Development and Dissension: Wissenschaft, Reform, Nationalism

The historian Heinrich Graetz (1817-1891) is among the earliest writers to reflect on and appraise the Wissenschaft des Judentums. He is best known for his 11-volume comprehensive Jewish history Geschichte der Juden von den ältesten Zeiten bis auf die Gegenwart (History of the Jews from the most ancient times to the present), first published from 1853-1876. He has

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Culture among the Jews and for the Science of Judaism). The chosen name of the society—Verein für Cultur und Wissenschaft der Juden—was accepted during a meeting on July 5, 1821. Ucko, 19.


himself been called “the most energetic, versatile, and durable practitioner of Wissenschaft des Judentums in the nineteenth century,” though he disparages the Berlin-centered Wissenschaft.29

In 1870, Graetz publishes the eleventh volume of his History, entitled Die Zeit des wachsenden Selbstbewußtseins (The time of awakening self-consciousness), covering the years 1750-1848. In this volume he differentiates and juxtaposes two concepts: the localized, apologetic, and elitist Berlin Wissenschaft des Judentums; and the more positive, national conception and practice that develops across German and Galician lands he calls jüdische Wissenschaft.30

Graetz positively writes of how the Verein began from a desire to conspire against the Christian state and was driven by earnest ideals of science, freedom, and idealism. Its failure—as he sees it—connects to three errors: it was apologetic; it was pretentious; it misunderstood Judaism. The society was driven by “the false presupposition…that if the Jews would acquire solid education in the arts and sciences…then German hatred of the Jews would disappear all at once…and the state would not deny them equality” (439). “Its ostentatious wisdom was blinding,” and it could not see “what Judaism should mean” (442). These charges would be repeated by scholars over the twentieth-century, especially Zionist critics.31

While the Verein should be credited with the aim of awakening “love for the Science of Judaism” (439) its leaders themselves “did not correctly know what this phrase meant, nor what


30 Heinrich Graetz, Geschichte der Juden von den ältesten Zeiten bis auf die Gegenwart: Aus den Quellen neu bearbeitet, vol. 11 (Leipzig: R. Friese, 1870), 438 ff; further citations to this text will be given parenthetically above. These two phrases the Wissenschaft des Judentums (Science of Judaism) and jüdische Wissenschaft (Jewish science) both appear in nineteenth-century writings identified with the movement. Not all writers distinguish their meaning so clearly or significantly as does Graetz.

31 The most well-known and oft-cited review is published by Gershom Scholem in 1944, a piece which will be returned to below.
they should do to cultivate and fertilize it” (447). Developing a meaningful enterprise required what Graetz calls “the Galician School,” whose development he traces to eastern central Europe, and in particular to two figures who wrote in Hebrew: Nachman Krochmal (1785-1840) and Salomon Yehudah Rapoport (ShIR) (1790-1867). Even though the Verein’s productions precede those coming from Galicia chronologically, Graetz argues that the “fruitful conversations between Krochmal and Rapoport” represent “the birth of Jewish science from its historical standpoint” (494). Counter to the work coming out of Berlin, their researches, undertaken with love and warmth, should be considered “as national acts and not as products of idle erudition” (495). He sees Krochmal and Rapoport as realizing authentic Judaism, which recognizes, understands, and preserves the national dimensions of Judaism alongside the religious. While he cannot but admire Zunz’s Die gottesdienstlichen Vorträge, he mitigates praise for its author by highlighting the overwhelming influence of Rapoport upon the work (497).32

Graetz’s antipathy towards the Berlin Wissenschaft connects to his aversion to Jewish Reform; after all “nothing could sprout forth from Berlin’s ground, silted [as it was] by [the early reformists] Friedländer and Jacobson” (447). Reform entails “the christianization of Judaism,” a process and program Graetz commits to fight against “to [his] last breath and with all the

32 A commonly cited story of Zunz and Graetz’s first meeting illustrates tension between the two men: Graetz was introduced to Zunz, in the home of Michael Sachs, as the author of a Jewish history. Zunz asked pointedly “Another history of the Jews?” To which Graetz replied, “Certainly, but this time a Jewish history!” The earliest description I have found of this story is in an article by Philipp Bloch, “Heinrich Graetz: Ein Lebensbild” Monatsschrift für die Geschichte und Wissenschaft des Judentums 48.5 (1904): 314.

Graetz included a snub against Zunz in the preface to the first edition of the fifth volume of his Geschichte der Juden, which was removed from subsequent editions: “Dr. Zunz’ mehr verwirrender als aufhellender Notizenkram und dürre Nomenclaturen haben meine Arbeit nur wenig gefördert” (Dr. Zunz’s more confounding than illuminating pile of notes and dry nomenclatures have been of little help to my work). Heinrich Graetz, Geschichte der Juden vom Abschluss des Talmud (500) bis zum Aufblühen der jüdisch-spanischen Cultur (1027) (Magdeburg: A. Falckenberg, 1860), vi.
weapons at [his] command.” Graetz’s position against Reform shapes the whole of his lifelong work, and is directed most severely against another prominent figure of the *Wissenschaft des Judentums*: Abraham Geiger (1810-1874). In Geiger’s hands, Graetz accuses, science was not an aim in itself, but rather “the means to empty Judaism of its content and its distinctiveness” (503).

From the 1840s Zunz too, whose earlier writings buttress reform, came to severely criticize Reform’s “Wissenschaft,” on similar grounds. In an essay defending circumcision, at a time when some Reformers were advocating eliminating the practice, Zunz criticizes the renunciation of the Talmud and the Messiah, and likens abolishing circumcision to cutting the life of Judaism in two, adding “suicide is not reform.” The following year Zunz publishes his collection of essays *Zur Geschichte und Literatur* (1845). Towards the end of its first essay, “On Jewish Literature,” Zunz asserts that “our science should first of all emancipate itself from the [Reform] theologians,” because they make science into a handmaiden of theology, which is incompatible with the pursuit of truth. Though he does not publicly rebuke Geiger, in his private correspondence Zunz dismisses Geiger’s lengthy review of the 1845 work, since “party people lose judgment.” In another letter he describes a new Reform prayer book as “making a strange


34 Ibid.


37 From a letter to Philipp Ehrenberg in 1845, printed in Glatzer, *Leopold and Adelheid Zunz*, 132.
impression on a Jew,” for it seems to him to be stamped with either “hidden or open Christianity.”

The debates and issues connected with Reform are too large to delve into here. However, by at least pointing to these, this section calls attention to the development of divergent positions among Wissenschaft practitioners, especially from the 1840s onwards. At the center of these differences is the question of what delimits and comprises the unity of Judaism as a singular historical phenomenon. What is Judaism and what should it be, to whom does and should this matter, and what can science say and do about it? For Graetz, as he lays out in an essay from 1846 Die Construction der jüdischen Geschichte, the foundation and unity of Judaism is its national history; it is a social structure with religious and political dimensions. For Geiger, the progression and development of religious ideas and principles unify and circumscribe Judaism throughout its history. For Zunz, literature is the foundation and justification for the unity of Judaism, which sustains the Jews.

A Note on the Language of Scholarship

Graetz’s discussion of the German and Galician schools, both of which contribute to the development of “Jewish Science,” presents German and non-German scholarship in the nineteenth century as a unified collective enterprise, undertaken by and for Jews, though composed of different strands. Following Graetz, in the first half of the twentieth-century it is common to find Hebrew and German figures placed alongside each other, as builders of the same

38 Letter to Philipp Ehrenberg, printed in Glatzer, Leopold and Adelheid Zunz, 139.

39 Ismar Schorsch has translated and introduced this work in a collection, The Structure of Jewish History and Other Essays (New York: Jewish Theological Seminary of America, 1974).
Wissenschaft des Judentums (Elbogen 1922; Bamberger 1932; Waxman 1936). This trend shifts by mid-century, as scholarship emphasizes the role of German writers and texts as shaping and constituting the nineteenth-century Wissenschaft (Scholem 1944; Altman 1958; Glatzer 1964; Meyer 1971, 2004). 

It is not until the last quarter of the twentieth-century that Hebrew and German nineteenth-century writings are separated, and the relation between them theorized. For example, Ismar Schorsch (1974, 1983) distinguishes between Hebrew (e.g., Rapoport in Galicia and Samuel David Luzatto (ShaDaL) in Italy) and German scholarship, identifying the former as part of the haskalah (Enlightenment), a development beginning from the mid-eighteenth century by the figure and followers of Moses Mendelssohn, and the latter as a break from it, shaped by the extended process of partial emancipation which influenced and shaped nineteenth-century German-Jewish scholarship in particular. Shmuel Feiner (1994, 2002) likewise distinguishes between the two, though refutes the position that the Wissenschaft des Judentums represents an innovative break from the more traditional haskalah. Rather, he argues, that the Wissenschaft des Judentums and the haskalah represent two developmental fronts for “modern Jewish

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40 Elbogen, “Ein Jahrhundert Wissenschaft des Judentums,” 108ff; Bamberger, “Beginnings of Modern Jewish Scholarship”; Waxman. These accounts emphasize three writers in particular: Nahman Krochmal and Solomon Yehudah Rapoport in Galicia (as described by Graetz above) and Samuel David Luzatto (ShaDaL) (1800-1865) in Italy.


Scholom, intriguingly, chooses the Hebrew term “hokhmat yisrael” to refer exclusively to nineteenth-century German-Jewish scholarship, from which he excludes the writings of Nahman Krochmal. Scholem, “Mitokh hirhurim,” 389-90. His essay will be discussed below.

42 Schorsch, “Ideology and History”; idem, “Emergence of Historical Consciousness.”

43 In particular, Feiner identifies the birth of modern historical consciousness, if not historiography, from the haskalah (in his Haskalah and History, 2002) and describes the eighteenth-century maskil as “the modern, secular Jewish intellectual” (in his “Seductive Science and the Emergence of the Secular Jewish Intellectual,” Science in Context 15.1 (2002): 121-135). As will be described below, both innovations (i.e., historical consciousness and a secular approach to texts) are most often credited to the Wissenschaft des Judentums.
awareness,” responding to different ideologies: the haskalah first developed in German circles, among those who were struggling for internal reforms in Jewish society; the Wissenschaft des Judentums was born several decades later among German Jews, whose struggle was then emancipation. The latter were, for the most part, trained in the Prussian universities and not in the beit midrash as were the maskilim (the Enlighteners), and correspondingly for them the language of scholarship was German, and not Hebrew. Both Schorsch and Feiner emphasize how neither the haskalah nor the Wissenschaft des Judentums developed in isolation from the other and that Hebrew and German scholars read and responded to works in both languages.

David Myers (1991, 2003) adds to the discussion by offering a corrective to scholarship from the early- and mid-twentieth century, which designated nineteenth-century German and Hebrew research by the same long-standing Hebrew term ḥokhmat yisra’el (“the wisdom of Israel”). He argues that nineteenth-century Hebrew scholarship from Galicia and Italy should be distinguished as ḥokhmat yisra’el, whose roots are in the haskalah and in earlier Jewish writings, in contrast to the German Wissenschaft des Judentums, which responds to the particular crises of emancipation and assimilation affecting German Jews in the nineteenth-century. Myers contends that the Wissenschaft des Judentums is a unique development responding to the “age of anxiety” afflicting German Jewry as it struggled to obtain equal rights while preserving

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44 See his “Nineteenth-Century Jewish Historiography” (1994), where Feiner describes the contemporary coincidence of two different tracks within modern Jewish historiography: the “high” or “higher” German elite scholarship of the Wissenschaft des Judentums, and the Hebrew historiography of Eastern (primarily Galician) maskilim (the Enlighteners).

45 This term will again appear in the discussion below of Gershem Scholem’s 1944 essay “Mitokh Hirhurim ‘al Ḥokhmat Yisra’el,” to which Myers’ critique responds. Scholem’s idiosyncratic use of ḥokhmat yisrael encompasses only nineteenth-century German scholarship, and excludes Hebrew writings of that century.

46 Myers, “From Zion” 1-51; idem, Resisting 20-21.
Jewish identity, and that contemporary Hebrew (i.e. ḥokhmat yisraʾel) writings, belong to a different context and tradition.

This dissertation treats only German scholarship as part of the Wissenschaft des Judentums, which is not to discount the connections and influences between writers and texts in Hebrew and in German, during the nineteenth-century. It is important to realize that most Wissenschaft leaders were able to write in Hebrew and used Hebrew for certain texts and contexts. That the Wissenschaft des Judentums chose to write in German, and not in Hebrew, or another “Jewish” language, reflects its aim to reach an audience including non-Jews. Those who would conflate Hebrew and German scholarship under a single Wissenschaft des Judentums or ḥokhmat yisraʾel, overlook or diminish the significance of Wissenschaft efforts to engage non-Jewish society, regardless of the effectiveness and outcomes of such endeavors.

From the Verein’s Founding (1819) to the Science of Judaism (1822)

The first recorded use of the term “Wissenschaft des Judentums” is from May 1821, in the Verein’s minutes. In 1822 the new concept and science appears in print, announced to the public in the article opening the inaugural issue of the Verein’s journal, Immanuel Wolf’s “Über den Begriff einer Wissenschaft des Judenthums” (“On the Concept of a Science of Judaism”).

The discussion below begins from a speech delivered by Joel Abraham List in 1819, at the meeting that founds the Verein. His address illustrates concerns motivating those who would build the new field a few years later. The Verein formalizes its aims and activities in 1821, with the approval of its statutes. One can view these as a bridge connecting List’s idealistic speech to

Wolf’s programmatic essay. The section below concludes by examining “the concept of a Science of Judaism,” as articulated by Wolf.\textsuperscript{48}

On the 7th of November, 1819, Joel Abraham List delivers a speech to six young university-educated men in his apartment.\textsuperscript{49} He calls this group together to found a society, in order to avert an existential crisis threatening the Jews’ survival.\textsuperscript{50} He describes this danger as a consequence of transformed relations between the state and its Jewish subjects who now seek to become its citizens, and between Jews and non-Jews. He traces this development to the Enlightenment, and to increased interactions between Jews and non-Jews. List views these changes as “a natural outcome of the development of reason” and one which is positive—so long as the nation’s “ancient uniformity (\textit{altes Einerlei}) dissolves into a rational multiplicity (\textit{vernünftiges Vielerlei}).” He fears the transformation underway may cause the collectivity to disappear. To prevent this loss, the nation needs to integrate in a manner that preserves itself among others.

Throughout his speech List uses the collective first person and addresses the Jews as “our nation.” He searches for the essential bond which creates and sustains the nation, so that this may be protected and nourished. List explains how this cannot be “our venerable religion” (\textit{unsere ehrwürdige Religion}), even if this was once one of the elements which held the nation together.\textsuperscript{51} This is because all positive religions err, and especially because the severity of its laws are

\textsuperscript{48} There are many significant parallels and connections between the “Science of Judaism” Wolf articulates in 1822 (in a piece edited by Zunz, as mentioned above) and what Zunz advocates in 1818 (see chapter 3 of the dissertation) and calls “our science.” However, if one is to speak of the first self-conscious articulation and introduction to the “Science of Judaism,” this must begin from Wolf’s piece, where it is named.

\textsuperscript{49} The seven founding members were: Isaac Levin Auerbach, Dr. Eduard Gans, Joseph Hillmar, Isaac Marcus Jost, Joel Abraham List, Moses Moser, and Leopold Zunz. Ucko, 5.

\textsuperscript{50} This is printed in Ucko, 9-11. All citations here are from 10-11.

\textsuperscript{51} No where does List refer to this religion as Judaism, or Jewish.
destructively divisive. On one hand there are those who stubbornly adhere to the law, and on the other, those who frivolously and violently cast it off. This has caused a schism within the nation and even the real defection of some. Without intervention, conversion, he predicts, will only become more common and striking with time.

After explaining that religion cannot be the bond, List arrives what this has always been and what it can now only be: “[W]e feel and we recognize that what is particular to our nation is our pure nationality (unsere reine Nationalität), not mere fruit of the times, not a passing phenomenon.” Preserving the nation requires developing awareness of its nationality and dissociating and detaching this from religion, especially from “rabbinism.” Accordingly, List enunciates two goals for society: First, it must spread the “true idea of our inner unity” and actualize this.52 Second, it must topple rabbinism (Rabbinismus), which “disfigures and degenerates the nation.”

List’s proposal portrays the present as a transformative moment, which requires Jews to become what they have always essentially been—a nation, held together by feeling, sentiment, and awareness of itself as a nation. He distinguishes nationality, as internal and permanent, from religion, as external and transient. Aside from “toppling Rabbinism” the content to the changes he seeks are vague, and the method absent.

List’s cofounders share his idealism, his concern with effecting the Jews’ proud integration with and simultaneous distinction from non-Jewish society, his antipathy towards a legalistic Judaism disparagingly referred to as “rabbinism,” and his preference for describing the

52 He mentions (Ucko, 11) the intellectual, industrial, and civil improvement of the Jews (à la Dohm) as secondary aims, which the Society need not address for these are concerns of all of humankind and the duty of governments under which Jews live.
Jews’ particularity as national and not religious.\textsuperscript{53} Still, it would not be until 1821 that its members work out the organizational form and activities the society should take. From Eduard Gans’ assumption of its presidency in March of 1821, through the last quarter of 1823, the Verein puts its ideas into action. The destructive aim of toppling Rabbinism is replaced by the constructive goal of educating Jews through scientific—and decidedly non-religious—educational activities.

Minutes from a meeting held on December 22, 1821 speak to this development. Isaac Levin Auerbach proposes that “religion” should be taught as a subject in the Verein’s school. Members present statements in favor and against the proposal before it is brought to a vote. Arguments supporting teaching religion focus on the need to counter conversion, by responding to the appeal and abuse of Christian writings and showing that Judaism can be as rational and philosophical as Christianity. Nowadays Jewish youths usually read only Christian writings on such subjects as God, immortality, determination, etc., whereas they should know that “their religion” also solves these problems. As more Jews are becoming baptized, it is especially important for the school to teach a pure, national Judaism. The main arguments against the measure are voiced by Zunz, who emphasizes that teaching religion is impossible because Jewish religion cannot be taught in a classroom, but only instilled though one’s upbringing at home. The school’s focus must be on purely scientific instruction, which precludes religion.\textsuperscript{54} The proposal is narrowly defeated. In the end general agreement is reached that the “Jewish character” of the school would be secured by introducing Hebrew as a subject.\textsuperscript{55} It is worth emphasizing that those

\textsuperscript{53} On the Verein and views of its founding members, see Schorsh, “Breakthrough into the Past,” esp. 10-17.
\textsuperscript{54} Ucko prints this discussion from the protocol, 17-19.
\textsuperscript{55} Ucko, 17.
who advocate teaching “religion” (e.g., Wolf, Schönberg, and Marcus), are driven by a two-fold ambition: the need to guard against the appeal and abuse of Christian writings, which leads to conversion; the desire to show that Judaism can be as rational and philosophical as Christianity.

The Verein’s statutes confirm that its activities are to be limited to the “purely scientific” (das rein wissenschaftliche).56 These were published in 1822 and enunciate the society’s self-conception as well as its outlook and goal. The Verein represents itself as a select group of educated Jews who have taken it upon themselves to work towards the idealistic and pragmatic goals of bringing the Jews “into harmony with the age and the states in which they live.” They open by emphasizing the Jews’ separation from Europe and calling on them to integrate. In order to lead Jews to “the same standpoint that the rest of the European world (die übrige europäische Welt) has reached,” the Verein urgently demands “a complete reworking of the peculiar education and life’s purpose (eigenthümlichen Bildung und Lebensbestimmung) that still endures among the Jews.” It seeks reform and works towards this goal through the following activities: operating a scientific institute, at which lectures are presented; maintaining an archive for correspondence pertaining to Jews and Judaism; operating a school for poor Jewish boys; and publishing a journal. The latter’s aim is threefold: to enlighten the Jews about their circumstances and needs; to exert a reforming influence upon the proper study of these; and to prescribe, in general, the direction through which to better strive for Jews and Judaism.

The inaugural issue of the Verein’s journal, the Zeitschrift für die Wissenschaft des Judentums, appears later in 1822. As mentioned above, this marks the earliest appearance in print of the expression “Wissenschaft des Judentums.” Zunz’s editorial foreword introduces its

56 The Verein’s statutes are reprinted in their entirety in Edith Lutz, Der “Verein für Cultur und Wissenschaft der Juden” und sein Mitglied H. Heine (Stuttgart: J. B. Metzler, 1997), 273-83.
lead article as a first attempt “to state what such a science means.”\(^{57}\) From the opening sentence of Wolf’s essay, he brings the concern of clarifying what “Judaism” is to the fore:

When speaking of a Science of Judaism, it is self evident that here the word “Judenthum” is taken in its most comprehensive meaning, as comprising the whole relations, particularities and achievements of the Jews, in reference to religion, philosophy, history, legal system, literature in general, civil life and all human affairs—but not in that more limited sense, in which it means only the religion of the Jews.\(^{58}\)

Wolf reinforces what the Verein began articulating: Judaism, which defines the Jews, encompasses something far greater than what is presently understood as “religion.” Two aims are at work in this passage. First, Wolf dissociates Judaism from religion and makes it able to outlive religion. In the current post-Enlightenment age of reason, rational knowledge is distinguished from and elevated above religious beliefs. As described by List above, now that all positive, which is to say revealed, religions are known to err, “religion” cannot be what makes the Jew a Jew, less the foundation for his existence be faulty. Second, because “science” now supercedes a thing called “religion” as the means to ascertain truth, it falls to Wolf to prove that Judaism is an entity suited to be made into the object of a science. By emphasizing its “comprehensive meaning” which encapsulates all human affairs, he begins laying the groundwork for his case.

More than half of Wolf’s essay describes and explains Judaism, justifying it as an object worthy for treatment by science. He produces Judaism’s central precept—“the idea of the absolute unity in the universe (die Idee der unbedingten Einheit im All)”—and emphasizes that its presence throughout world history and influence upon human civilization are indisputable (2-

\(^{57}\) Zunz writes (iii): “One has attempted to state what such a Science [of Judaism] means in the essay which opens this present volume; gradually, however, complete insights will consider that which is given [in this essay] as approximations and as attempts.”

\(^{58}\) Immanuel Wolf, “Ueber den Begriff einer Wissenschaft des Judentums,” Zeitschrift für die Wissenschaft des Judentums (1823): 1; further citations to this essay will be made parenthetically in the text above.

An English translation was published as “On the Concept of a Science of Judaism (1822),” trans. Lionel E. Kochan, Leo Baeck Institute Year Book 2 (1957): 194-204. All translations here are my own.
3). Through this idea, Wolf credits Judaism with realizing the philosophical base of universalism, an honor which confirms its suitability to science, for “the essence of science is universality (das Wesen der Wissenschaft ist Allgemeinheit)” (21).

Wolf clarifies that the central idea of absolute unity has carried and sustained Judaism throughout its development, though this is not all that Judaism represents. Judaism is also “an idiosyncratic, independent whole” (2), which has existed since the Jewish people first lost its external autonomy and found “its own inner independence, its nationality,” in its peculiar religious world (5). Jewish religion became an expression of its national life, once the people’s political sovereignty ended. Wolf suggests that this dual dimension of Judaism, which connects it to the human spirit in general and to the Jewish people in particular, justifies the new field of the “Science of Judaism.”

Judaism needs to be investigated from the standpoint of science. Until now, it has been treated theologically, by both Jewish and Christian scholars. Regardless of intention, theology is biased, whereas science is objective. Science aims at nothing other than revealing its object as it is. Unlike theology “it needs to serve no use other than itself.” The human spirit needs and pursues it because it works for the truth. Paradoxically, every science—including the Science of Judaism—exerts “the most meaningful influence not only on other sciences, but also on life” precisely because science is unswayed by external influences (17-18).

Wolf describes two ways in which the Science of Judaism may benefit the living: The first of these pertains to Europe’s relation to the Jews. Because “science alone is elevated above the partisanship, passions and prejudices of ignoble life,” the outcomes of the Science of Judaism—namely the acquisition of “scientific knowledge of Judaism” (die wissenschaftliche Kunde des Judenthums)—is what must adjudicate on the merit or demerit of the Jews, on their
capacity or incapacity to be positioned and valued the same as other citizens (23). Only science can be trusted to discern the truth regarding Judaism’s essential nature, and consequently it is what is needed to effectively address the issues surrounding Jews’ citizenship and rights.

The second benefit this Science will serve, pertains to the Jews themselves and their relation to and within Europe. Wolf claims that Judaism’s central idea is again striving to develop itself in accord with the spirit of the times. This can only happen through the means of science, for “the standpoint of scientificity (der Standpunkt der Wissenschaftlichkeit)” is the characteristic of the present age. The Jews must elevate themselves together with their principle through the Science of Judaism. This will facilitate their incorporation into European society, for “science” is “the standpoint of the European life” (der Standpunkt der Wissenschaft… ist der Standpunkt des Europäischen Lebens). He closes the essay with a statement of great optimism for a future unified through the progress of the universal: “If a bond is to wrap around the whole of humankind, it will be the bond of science, the bond of pure rationality, the bond of truth” (24).

List’s speech from 1819 identified a crisis but not a program. Wolf’s essay announces the “Science of Judaism” as the solution needed to facilitate the Jews’ productive transformation. The Science of Judaism will enable Jews to integrate with Europe (and Europe with the Jews), without sacrificing their particularity, because it can reveal Judaism and the Jewish people’s development for what they truly are, and thereby correct errors and eliminate discord. Further, it will demonstrate Judaism’s longstanding influence upon Europe, showing how the Jewish is integral to what the new Europe is yet to become. Wolf describes the present as a changing time for both the Jews and Europe and it is science that promises to progress both together. In a post-Enlightenment Europe, science is the only truly objective method, able to generate consensus and arrive at truth. A theological method is antiquated, inaccurate, inherently biased and
consequently divisive; it could never arrive at a suitable response to the matter of Jewish emancipation.  

Recounting Motivations of the *Wissenschaft des Judentums*:

The following two sections turn to consider aspects of how the *Wissenschaft des Judentums* has been portrayed, referring largely to writings by twentieth-century American academics in the area of Jewish Studies.

Most narratives of the emergence of the *Wissenschaft des Judentums* mention it as a reaction against the rising tide of anti-Jewish sentiment and action which surfaced in Prussia following Napoleon’s defeat in 1815.  

It is less common to explore its deep roots within the intellectual milieu of the new German University, even though Ismar Schorsch has called it “a direct offshoot” of that University.  

Recently, Leora Batnitzky has called attention to the significance of the movement’s birth in Prussia, where emancipation was a long drawn out process over the course of five decades, during which social and civil rights granted to Jews were

59 As Steven Schapin and Simon Schaffer have shown, “solutions to the problem of knowledge are embedded within practical solutions ot the problem of social order,” and vice versa, for “the problem of political order always involves solutions to the problem of knowledge.” “Science” as the means to arrive at “true knowledge” of a thing, is powerful not because it reveals things as they are, but because it does so in such a way that establishes consensus around “matters of fact.” *Leviathan and the Air-Pump* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1985), 15, 21.

60 Ismar Schorsch describes the revocation of rights over the first half of the nineteenth-century following the Restoration, particularly as these connect to university employment. Ismar Schorsch, “The Religious Parameters of *Wissenschaft*: Jewish Academics at Prussian Universities,” in *From Text to Context* (Hanover: Brandeis University Press, 1994), 51-70.

A ubiquitous event across accounts of the Verein’s founding is the Hep Hep! riots of 1819, used to illustrate anti-Jewish violence shaping the *Wissenschaft des Judentums’* apologetics.

61 See his “Ethos of Modern Jewish Scholarship,” 161.
partial and precarious.\textsuperscript{62} This differs, for example, from France where Jews were granted full citizenship rights in 1791 and from eastern Europe where the modern state did not yet exist.\textsuperscript{63}

Scholem, Myers, Schorsch and others emphasize how the Science of Judaism was a tool to pursue equal rights, in an age when German Jews sought emancipation.\textsuperscript{64} This period generated a crisis or search for identity, as Jews reevaluated what characterized themselves as Jews, while seeking to integrate with Europe.\textsuperscript{65} “Assimilation” is a common trope alongside emancipation, as the path trod by Wissenschaft practitioners en route to their ultimate goal: the acquisition of equal rights.\textsuperscript{66} Others claim precisely the opposite, arguing that the Science of Judaism sought “to stem the ignorance of the ‘assimilationist.’”\textsuperscript{67} As mentioned in the preceding section, the Verein was driven in part to prevent Jewish baptisms. Nonetheless, literature describing the society disparages its commitment to Judaism, often illustrated by calling attention to the conversion of several of its members following the society’s dissolution.\textsuperscript{68}

\textsuperscript{62} Schorsh also emphasizes the importance of this dimension of the Prussian context for shaping the Wissenschaft’s program and development, in his “Ideology and History.”

\textsuperscript{63} Batnitzky, 5.


\textsuperscript{67} Jospe, 300.

\textsuperscript{68} See Graetz’s discussion of the “Culturverein” in his chapter “Reform and Young Israel”; Meyer, “Emergence of Modern Jewish Historiography,” 171; Myers, \textit{Reinventing the Jewish Past}, 18.
What this science is and why some German Jews in the 1820s argue it provides the best method to investigate Judaism can be explored more deeply. It is not only a tool to achieve equal rights, but it is the tool of choice. The Wissenschaft’s program, at least initially, connects to the desire to engage and shape non-Jewish society, so clearly present at its founding. Later critics disregard or discredit this drive as apologetics, and connect it to the overused and underinterrogated charge of assimilation. Assimilation, as it is generally employed, implies a problematic sense of authenticity that not only essentializes peoples, but which deters a meaningful consideration of what “assimilation” is. Instead, efforts by Jews (and non-Jews) to direct what Europe would become are overlooked, and scholarship presumes a fixity to both Europe and the Jews which may not have then been present, nor pass undisputed. Jews are imagined to face two options: either stay who they are and remain apart from the rest of Europe or relinquish their distinct nature and become European. This assumption is a teleological, nationalist one. The practitioners of the Wissenschaft des Judentums at least imagined something else could be possible.

Characteristics and Methodology of the Wissenschaft des Judentums

In the first half of the twentieth-century, the Science of Judaism becomes hailed as entirely innovative: “The new Wissenschaft des Judentums…was not an improved form of Jewish science, but a completely new beginning.” It is “an attitude which in itself was a new

69 Altman, “Jewish Studies,” 84, 90; Graetz, 439; Maher, 140; Meyer, Origins of the Modern Jew, 174; Scholem, “Mitokh hirhurim, 396-97; Schorsch, “Emergence of Historical Consciousness,” 419.

stage in historical development.”  

It “represents a break with the old knowledge (Wissen) for it demands a fundamental difference in method.”  

Appraisals such as these understand the field and movement as illustrating historical rupture. Jewish science may have existed before 1822, or 1818, but what that “science” was is seen as entirely different from what develops out of the Verein and over the nineteenth-century.

The Wissenschaft’s method reflects what Michel Foucault describes as the birth of historical philology in the modern episteme. Its practices are distinguished as historical and philological, which are inseparable from each other in the first decades of the nineteenth-century. The new science of philology inspired how the Wissenschaft sought to systematically and comprehensively gather and read texts, for suddenly any text referencing any Jewish matter, whatever the topic and whomever the author, becomes a historical source. This view of literature differentiates it from “traditional” scholarship which maintained a distinction between sacred and profane texts, and read them differently. From the Wissenschaft, texts were collected and made into a literature, namely Jewish literature, an object used to historicize the Jewish people and Judaism, and situate both within “world history.”

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74 Schorsch, “Emergence of Historical Consciousness.”
75 Schorsch, “Ethos of Modern Jewish Scholarship,” 161, 163; idem, “Ideology and History,” 6; Yerushalmi, 86.
76 Altmann, “Jewish Studies”; Bamberger, “Zunz’s Conception of History”; Biale, Gershom Scholem; Roemer; Schorsch, “Emergence of Historical Consciousness”; Wieseltier; Yerushalmi.
Its focus on science and on historicization became interpreted from the mid-twentieth century as secular and effecting secularization. However, disagreement exists over what the Wissenschaft secularizes, be it “Jewish history,”79 “the Jews,”80 or “Judaism.”81 This confusion connects, in part, to the meaning the term “secular” has come to have and its implied oppositional relation to “religious.”

Michael Meyer critiques the view of the Wissenschaft as secular. He highlights the irony that the Wissenschaft des Judentums, “for all its novelty and even iconoclasm,” was, “for most of its history,” a “predominantly…religious enterprise.”82 This statement, which he defends by pointing out how most of its practitioners were rabbis who used the Science of Judaism to construct their theological positions, implies that the “religious” represents continuity and excludes the iconoclast. Comparing Jews and non-Jews, David Myers focuses on the religious as something new, and juxtaposes it not against the secular but against the national. Whereas “their non-Jewish contemporaries,” focused on building the national community, Myers describes how nineteenth-century German Jews used the Science of Judaism to set the boundaries of “the

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78 Bamberger, “Zunz’s Conception of History,” 7-8; Biale, Gershom Scholem, 10; Blumenthal, 543; Wieseltier, 138-39; Schorsch, “Ethos of Modern Jewish Scholarship,” 163.

Uncomfortable with how the Wissenschaft is derogatorily described as “secularization” for destroying the “normative character of Jewish tradition” (7), Bamberger attempts to adjust this appraisal. He asserts that it “is not secularism as such [?] which characterizes the innovation in Zunz’s Science of Judaism. Zunz’s secularization is historicization.” “Zunz’s Conception of History,” 8.

79 Schorsch, “Ideology and History,” 5; Yerushalmi.

80 Myers, “From Zion Will Go Forth Torah,” 337n5, citing Max Wiener’s Die jüdische Religion im Zeitalter der Emanzipation.

81 Ucko, 17, 19-20.

Religionsgemeinschaft—a community defined by religious affiliation.” Batnitzky explains how this came to be. She calls attention to the seemingly paradoxical observation that even if the Wissenschaft des Judentums initially “sought to free the study of Jewish history from the authority and self-understanding of Jewish tradition...[and to] secularize Judaism,” in practice it worked to help “crystallize Judaism’s new standing as a religion.” Her work argues that the secular and the religious are two sides of the same particularly modern coin. Premodern Judaism and Jewishness encompassed religion, nationality, and culture. It is only with the onset of modernity, which Batnitzky defines as “the acquisition of citizenship rights for Jews,” that German Jews make Judaism into a “modern religion in a Protestant sense,” through their efforts to demonstrate its compatibility with the requirements of the modern nation-state.

It is worth noting that in her discussion of the Wissenschaft des Judentums, Batnitzky, like Meyers, focuses only on rabbis. She does not include two important figures from the Wissenschaft’s first and second generation, namely Leopold Zunz and Moritz Steinschneider (1816-1907). Both men were prolific and influential, though neither’s works illustrate the arguments of Meyer, Myers, or Batnitzky. Their object of research was the history of Jewish literature and they agreed the university was the only appropriate setting for Jewish studies, not exclusively Jewish institutions whose main function was training rabbis. Both too expressed great reservations regarding Reform, in the German-Jewish debates of the nineteenth century. Here then, one sees part of what differentiates those who depict the Wissenschaft as a “religious”

83 Myers, Re-inventing the Jewish Past, 19.
84 Batnitzky, 36.
85 Batnitzky, 2-6. Compare with Wael Hallaq’s presentation the shari‘a, which he argues meant something entirely different, and far more comprehensive—encompassing legal, moral, cultural and economic practices—to premodern Islamic societies, that is, before it became fundamentally transformed through its defeat at the hands of the modern nation-state. See his “What is Shariya?” in the Yearbook of Islamic and Middle Eastern Law (2005-06), esp. 151-56.
enterprise from those who present it as a “secular” one, namely the choice of which figures represent the movement and field. When Zunz and Steinschneider are highlighted, then it appears as “secular.” If viewed through the careers of Graetz and Geiger, it appears “religious.” A second factor connects to whether one contrasts it against its predecessors or its successors. In comparison to what came before, it appears “secular” in opposition to the “religious” view of earlier Jewish scholarship. On the other hand, when looking at what comes after, it appears “religious” against the “nationalist” view of Zionist scholarship.

One final note should be made regarding the term “secular.” This descriptive misreads Zunz and Steinschneider’s method and criticism, because the term as presently understood has come to imply an opposition to the religious: These figures do not oppose religion. They are critical of theology, and argue that theology and science are incompatible methods for reading texts and building a literature capable of sustaining a people. They dispute Reform’s revisioning of Judentum, and reject the theological approach to the study of history and literature of their predecessors and contemporaries.

The Wissenschaft des Judentums: Towards Whom and What Is It Directed?

The efforts of early exponents to solicit non-Jews’ involvement in and support for the Science of Judaism were largely ineffective and efforts to incorporate the new field into the German University unsuccessful. This certainly speaks to limitations and obstacles its practitioners faced, though what later Wissenschaft practitioners are able to accomplish should not direct how those earlier limitations are understood. In other words, praising or deriding earlier efforts because these are presently viewed as successes or failures, produces teleological readings of past events. Such readings inform the identification of the Wissenschaft’s
“institutional stage” as progress and a positive move forwards. Against the early Wissenschaft’s “failure” to achieve institutional support from the state’s universities, German Jews transformed the obstacles they faced into advantages. They achieved their own “success” by founding independent institutions to provide the support they were denied by the state. A speech delivered at the dedication of a new building for the [Reform] Lehrenstalt [Hochshule] für die Wissenschaft des Judentums in 1907 reads the past in just this way. Sigmund Maybaum, a founder of the rabbinical society of Germany and lecturer of homiletics at the Hochshule, explains how fortuitous it was that the Science of Judaism was not incorporated into the German university, because, as is now known, this field should be built by and for Jews alone, free from the compromising and corruptive influence of state supervision.

Maybaum’s celebratory strategy conceals ways Wissenschaft was pressed to transform itself into a program practiced by and for Jews alone, when this was not the aim of its founders nor some of its later exponents. It also diverts attention away from questioning why certain goals were not achieved, by suggesting these were originally misguided or illegitimate.

Alfred Jospe replicates, in certain ways, Maybaum’s interpretation of success and failure, as well as his preference for a Jewish studies that strives to better the Jewish community over and above the wider academic one, from which it is separated. In his “Study of Judaism in German Universities before 1933” Jospe describes a bifurcation “in the definition of the goals and purposes of Jewish studies at the university,” which first appears among Zunz and his

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86 The name of the “Hochschule für die Wissenschaft des Judentums” (founded in 1872), was changed by government order to the “Lehranstalt für die Wissenschaft des Judentums” from 1883-1923, and again from 1933-1942. Unofficially, among German Jews, the institution continued to be referred to as the “Hochshule.”

87 Sigmund Maybaum, “Die Wissenschaft des Judentums,” Monatschrift für Geschichte und Wissenschaft des Judentums 51 (1907): 653-54. Minister von Ladenberg’s lengthy rejection of Zunz’s 1848 proposal for a chair in Jewish history and literature at the University of Berlin is included as an addendum to the printed speech, 654-58.
contemporaries. He explains this division through a heavily weighted question: “Should Jewish studies be pursued solely as a pristine scholarly enterprise, or should they also serve the practical needs of the community?” His inclusion of the word “also” implies that by aiming “solely” at the scientific ideal, one necessarily disregards the community’s needs, whereas Jewish studies should aim at both. The question is misleading, for Jospe presents Zunz as an example of one committed to only the pristine scholarly enterprise,” even though a page earlier he cites Zunz’s statement that “the social and political equality of the Jews will emerge from the equality accorded to the Wissenschaft des Judentums.” Thus it would seem that Zunz, at least, believes in a fundamental correlation between the scholarly ideal and the community’s practical circumstances. The wording of Jospe’s question, however, dismisses Zunz’s view as disingenuous or inaccurate.

Jospe’s discussion of bifurcation also repeats Maybaum’s emphasis on failure, and as a consequence overlooks the meaningful contrasts between different proposals to incorporate Jewish studies into the university. For example, he presents Zunz’s call (in 1848) for a chair in “Jewish history and literature,” as representing detached scholasticism and Geiger’s call (1836-38) for a faculty in “Jewish theology,” as illustrating his commitment to also meeting the Jewish community’s needs. Jospe describes how both attempts failed to incorporate the same “Jewish studies” into the university, which leaves the substantive disagreement between the two uninterrogated. Each man is committed to both the scholarly enterprise and the community. Where they disagree is regarding what field would best serve both interests: a position in Jewish

88 Jospe, 301, 305.
89 Ibid., 301.
90 Ibid., 300. This is the closing sentence from Zunz’s essay “Die jüdische Literatur” (1845).
theology through which rabbis would receive modern training and thereby become better able to lead the community; or a position in Jewish history and literature, which, by integrating the Science of Judaism into the German university, would lead to the equalization of Jews in society.91

Denunciation and Regeneration: Two Critiques

This section takes two widely divergent accounts of the movement as a case study for illustrating how and considering why the nineteenth-century field can be portrayed so contrastingly. The first is from a dominating figure in the field of twentieth-century Jewish Studies, Gershom Scholem (1897-1982). His damning essay Mitokh Hirhurim ‘al Hokhmat Yisra’el (Some thoughts on the wisdom of Israel), first published in 1944, is cited in nearly every portrayal of the Wissenschaft which follows.92 It was not until the 1970s that responses began to

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Zunz’s “proposal” takes the form of letters, which he submits directly to the government. Ludwig Geiger reprints three letters (from 1840, 1843, and 1848) in his article “Zunz im Verkehr mit Behörden und Hochgestellten,” Monatschrift für Geschichte und Wissenschaft des Judentums 60 (1916): 261-62, 323-24, 335-36. It is only in Zunz’s third letter that he explicitly proposes establishing a full-professorship for “Jewish history and literature” at the Berlin University. His proposal generates a faculty commission and report, which the Minister of Education and Religious affairs, Minister von Ladenberg, uses to reject Zunz’s proposal. The text of the faculty report is printed in Geiger’s “Zunz im Verkehr,” 337-41, and von Ladenberg’s response to Zunz is printed in Maybaum, “Die Wissenschaft des Judentums,” 654-58.

At the time of Geiger’s proposals, Zunz refrained from commenting on the popular topic of a “Jewish theological faculty.” However, in his personal correspondence he articulates his opposition to any such proposal on the grounds of it being a theological faculty, and thus a compromised one which cannot be “purely scientific.” Letters referencing this subject are contained in Glatzer’s two collections: Leopold and Adelheid Zunz, 102-3; and Leopold Zunz, 199-200.

temper and attenuate its criticism. The second comes from Susannah Heschel, a distinguished professor of Jewish Studies currently teaching at Dartmouth College, who refutes Scholem’s denunciation and presents a compelling counterargument. Both scholars’ depictions make important and founded arguments about how the *Wissenschaft* can and should be understood, even as they disagree fundamentally over what it was.

*Dancing Among the Graves: Scholem’s Condemnation*

In *Mitokh Hirhurim ‘al Ḥokhmat Yisra’el* Scholem uses ḥokhmat yisra’el to refer to the German *Wissenschaft des Judentums*, but which he extends to include twentieth-century Zionist scholarship to his day.93 His choice to use ḥokhmat yisra’el and not the more literal Hebrew *mada’e ha-yahadut* (in use at the time) connects to his vision of and for the field. Scholem aims to impact the direction and orientation of contemporary Hebrew research through his critique of nineteenth-century German scholarship.

On what grounds does he critique ḥokhmat yisra’el? Scholem highlights three inner conflicts which together caused “its grotesque visage” in the nineteenth-century (387). These are: 1. the contradiction between its repeated declarations about “pure science” (*mada’ tahor*) and objectivity, and “the blatancy of the political mission” it sought and came to fulfill (387); 2. the tension between its foundations in the rationalist enlightenment and in romantic science, which confused its “men-of-science” (*anashe ha-mada’*) such that they did not know whether to build or dismantle the Jewish people and the Jewish nation (388); and 3. the central conflict between its preservative and destructive tendencies, which are bound together—a dialectic Scholem

93 Such is accepted by Chipman who consistently translates “ḥokhmat yisrael” as the “Science of Judaism” when it references nineteenth-century figures and works, but more often uses “Jewish studies” or “Judaic Studies” for twentieth-century scholarship. Scholem’s use of a single name emphasizes continuity over the two centuries.
explains historical criticism cannot avoid. The natural and conspicuous function of historical criticism is destructive, however, it also holds the potential to free data that may transform entire perspectives, turning traces of the past into signs of wonderful life—understanding this duplicity is what gave the scholars of romantic science their greatness. And yet, how awful was the paradoxical position of ḥokhmah yisraʻel, whose scholars did not realize or understand how to work within this dialectic: their historical consciousness did not permit them to realize the positive use hidden in its method, with the result that their productions appear as “a terrifying burial rite” (389).

Scholem mentions one exceptional text from the nineteenth century: Nahman Krochmal’s Moreh Nevukhe ha-Zeman. Identifying this anomaly, he asserts that those writers who identify Krochmal as having impacted the development of ḥokhmah yisraʻel in his day are entirely mistaken—his work affected nothing in the nineteenth century.⁹⁴ Scholem insists: “Rabbi Nahman Krochmal was not influential because his brilliant book was not at all suited…to the interests of ḥokhmah yisraʻel in those generations. Only with the change in atmosphere did the brilliance of the hidden treasure also sparkle” (390). Scholem addresses this problematic case because it resonates in the present. He extracts it from the nineteenth-century in order to deny his Zionist reader the chance to absolve himself through redeeming any aspect of nineteenth-century ḥokhmah yisraʻel.

⁹⁴ Scholem’s choice to reference nineteenth-century German scholarship and twentieth-century Zionist scholarship by the same term—ḥokhmah yisraʻel—forces him to address the work of Nahman Krochmal. Had he presented the nineteenth-century ḥokhmah yisraʻel as “Wissenschaft des Judentums,” or even as madaʻe ha-yahadut, then there would not be the same need to excise Krochmal’s Hebrew work from the nineteenth century for it could be located in a different tradition (i.e., ḥokhmah yisrael). Scholem accepts this limitation in order to emphasize a particular lineage through which to critique the scholarship of his own day.

Scholem makes no mention of the well-known fact that Krochmal’s posthumous work was introduced and edited for publication by Zunz, as requested by Krochmal himself. He likewise overlooks its appraisal as foundational by Graetz. Ismar Schorsch, “The Production of a Classic: Zunz as Krochmal’s Editor,” Leo Baeck Institute Year Book 31 (1986): 281-91. Graetz, esp. 495-96.
Scholem specifies three men in whom the cythonian aspect of hokmat yisra’el is
powerfully visible: Zunz, Steinschneider, and Geiger. His depicts the first two far more
ambivalently than the third, distinguishing Zunz and Steinschneider (who, he admits, have
always attracted him) from among their contemporaries as “truly demonic figures” (391)—a
characterization which in Scholem’s use is not exclusively or necessarily negative, as suggested
by his description of the dialectics of history and historical criticism described above. However,
Zunz and Steinschneider’s destruction faced inward towards productive despair, for they knew
only how to memorialize the dead and not how to build life-generating constructions through
their historical method. They are unique in their nihilism and their complete lack of
sentimentality. Scholem describes their “matter-of-factness”—which can be irritating and
gloomy, refreshing and restrictive—as amazing (391-92). Their writing is dry and cold. And at
other moments, their books encircle the dead, and the authors themselves seem to dance among
the graves while seeking redemption (392). They are sparks of very great souls from “the world
where life and death are mixed up together” (392). Scholem admires their learning and their
scholarly rigor, though their drive towards only destruction is frightening, for it leads to death
and memorial, whereas hokmat yisra’el must direct its forces towards construction and
generating life.

Scholem describes Geiger quite differently. His words reek of (Christian) priestly
hypocrisy (tsevi'ut galḥit), and the ambition of a bishop. Unlike Zunz and Steinschneider, with
whose breadth of knowledge he cannot compete, Geiger was extremely talented at building great
historical constructs. He has “a sovereign power, which produces the great historian, to rape the
facts for the sake of [his] construction, and to clarify contexts through historical intuition” (392-
93). Scholem explains this intuition is a dangerous creative power, one found also in Graetz, and
entirely absent in Zunz and Steinschneider (393). Geiger’s is a liberalism that is not liberal at all, but a kind of “deistic papism” (*apifyorit de’ištit*), and “woe to the annals of Israel humiliated by this priestly-liberal philosophy of history!” (393). Geiger’s construction destroys by creating something that would seem to be more Christian than Jewish.

Towards the end of the essay, Scholem’s damning account of nineteenth-century German scholarship turns to critique the current state of ḥokhmat yisra’el, which he argues has yet to effectively rebel against its forebears:

> All of these afflictions [of the nineteenth-century] have now put on a national dress. We cultivated a national homiletics and a national rhetoric in science in place of the religious homiletics and the religious rhetoric. In both cases, the real forces that worked in our world, the real “demonic,” remained outside of the picture we have created. (402)

Twentieth-century Zionist scholarship has yet to fully understand the errors of its forebears and consequently has so far been unable to effectively excise them. Clearly, Hayim Nahman Bialik was mistaken when he identified the “original sin” of ḥokhmat yisra’el as its alienation of the Hebrew language, for, Scholem argues, the language of scholarship was never its problem (395). 95 Sentimentality, superficiality, distorting the past by refusing to explore what Scholem calls “the real ‘demonic,’”—these foundational sins are all replicated in the present. In fact, nineteenth-century ḥokhmat yisra’el’s most “fundamental, original sin which outweighs all others” was its removal of the irrational and the demonic from Jewish history by means of an exaggerated theologization and spiritualization (396). Contemporary Hebrew scholarship has inherited this, and only dressed it in national garb, replacing the nineteenth century’s emphasis on Judaism’s rationality, with the current Zionist nationalist rhetoric of science. Scholarship then

95 His criticism of Bialik here refers to an “Open Letter” Bialik published to the editors, in the Hebrew journal *Devir* 1 (1923): viii-xiii.
and now, in German and Hebrew, excises the irrational, distorts the past, and consequently produces a flawed construction.

Scholem’s especially bitter treatment of Geiger connects to his leading role in what Scholem identifies as הָוָּה קִנְחָת יִשְׂרָאֵל’s “original sin.” Geiger, the theologian-historian who fathered Reform Judaism, may be responsible more than any other for making Judaism into a religion of spirit, belief, and theology, and eliminating practices and rituals deemed unsuitable to post-Enlightenment rationality. Hokhmat yisra’el worked to hide any elements from the Jews’ history that could be considered disturbing by non-Jewish society, whose acceptance it sought. In this way, its apologetic agenda can be seen as an anti-Jewish one, even if, Scholem admits, it was also anti-Christian.

Counterhistory and Revolt: Heschel’s Reappraisal

In her article “Revolt of the Colonized: Abraham Geiger’s Wissenschaft des Judentums as a Challenge to Christian Hegemony in the Academy,” Heschel responds to Scholem’s attacks on the Wissenschaft des Judentums. She argues that as a proponent of Zionist historiography, Scholem’s view of the Diaspora colors and limits his evaluation of the movement’s motivations and accomplishments. Second, his focus was on internal Jewish self-understanding, and he did not engage the wider context of German Protestant theological scholarship. This prevented him from recognizing “the subversive quality of the Wissenschaft des Judentums,” which she argues is directed at “undermining the configurations that mark the history of the Christian West” (70).

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96 Susannah Heschel, “Revolt of the Colonized: Abraham Geiger’s Wissenschaft des Judentums as a Challenge to Christian Hegemony in the Academy,” New German Critique 77 (1999): 67-70. Throughout this section, citations to this article will be included parenthetically in the text above.
Heschel analyzes Abraham Geiger’s work and the reactions it elicited from Protestant theologians. She contrasts the markedly different reception of two of his works. In 1833, Geiger published a text on the origins of Islam: *Was hat Mohammed aus dem Judenthume aufgenommen* (What Muhammad borrowed from Judaism). By comparing rabbinic literature alongside Muhammad’s revelation, Geiger demonstrated that the Qur’an’s variations of biblical stories stemmed from midrashic material. This publication was hailed throughout Europe as an important work of scholarship (70-71).

Such was not the case 30 years later when Geiger published *Das Judentum und seine Geschichte* (Judaism and its History). This text reconstructed Christianity’s origins through a similar method. Geiger used early Christian and rabbinic texts to depict the life and religion of Jesus. Geiger became the first scholar and Jew to claim Jesus was a Pharisee, whose views reflected common rabbinic teachings of his day. Christianity’s origins belong to Paul, who corrupted Judaism’s monotheism (as taught by Jesus) in order to create a religion more palatable to the pagans to whom he proselytized (72-73). Heschel argues that Geiger made Christianity, as he had done to Islam before, into a “handmaiden of Judaism,” asserting Judaism as the one original and universal religion of the three.

Liberal Protestant theologians’ reactions were vitriolic and condemnatory. They could not, however, deny that Jesus was a Jew, so they countered Geiger’s arguments by distinguishing Jesus ever more sharply from “repugnant” first-century Judaism. Heschel reads the outrage Geiger’s scholarship elicited as evidence of his rebellion. She instructs that Geiger’s writings on

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97 The parallel between the two works as depicted by Heschel is not entirely analogous. Geiger’s work on Islam portrays revelation as originally rabbinic, suggesting Islam is derivative of rabbinic Judaism. On the other hand, Geiger presents Christianity as a corruption of Judaism and argues that Jesus is more Jew than Christian. He thereby claims Jesus for Judaism and challenges Christians: if you want to follow Jesus’ teachings you should become a Reform Jew.
Christian origins “should be understood not as an effort at assimilation, but...as an attempt to subvert Christian hegemony and establish a new position for Judaism within European history and thought” (64).

The term Heschel uses to describe Geiger’s historiographical argumentation is “counterhistory,” a genre she claims has existed since antiquity, but was only identified as such in the works of Amos Funkenstein and David Biale. Her definition comes from Funkenstein, who describes counterhistory as “a form of historical narrative (and, *eo ipso*, action) which...consists of the systematic exploitation of the adversary’s more trusted sources against their grain...[Its] aim is the distortion of the adversary’s self-image, of his identity, through the deconstruction of his memory.” This genre has long since characterized “Christian theologies,” which revised Jewish sources as theological promises of the coming of Jesus and used them to illustrate “the degenerate state” of post-exhilian Judaism (64-5).

Counterhistory, she argues, is similar to European Orientalism as described in by Said, because Christian studies of Judaism were used to control and manipulate Jews to the Church’s advantage. Similar to the role the Orient, or later East, would come to play in the nineteenth-century Orientalist’s imagination, “Judaism came to function in Christian theology as the other whose negation confirms and even constitutes Christianity” (63). She suggests that Christian theologians’ use of Jewish texts foretells how modern colonialism would use knowledge over the Orient to subjugate those it colonized. Geiger, as “the first Jew to subject Christian texts to detailed historical analysis from an explicitly Jewish perspective,” wrote the first *Jewish

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counterhistory of Christian origins. Heschel calls Geiger’s counterhistory a “revolt of the colonized,” because of the substantial similarities between the Christian theologian and the modern orientalist. Based on this parallel and overlap she asserts that the *Wissenschaft des Judentums* “is one of the earliest examples of postcolonialist writing.”

She closes her essay on Geiger’s “Revolt,” by addressing an important question: why was Geiger, and others from the *Wissenschaft des Judentums*, so fascinated with Christianity’s origins? Why not dismiss or ignore Jesus and the gospels? She explains that Jewish theologians chose this path because their own project of Jewish self-definition required destroying the image of Judaism that Christian theology had constructed. They chose this path because Christian theology built a mythology that oppressed Judaism and the only way to destroy a myth’s power and subvert its meaning is to enter the very world that produced it and attempt to rewrite it (83).

What she finds most interesting in Geiger’s work is not only that he criticizes Christian anti-Jewish myths, but how he reclaims them and empowers the Jewish victim of Christian persecutions through his Jewish retelling of the Christian story (84).

**Some Closing Remarks on Modernity, Assimilation, and Revolt**

Scholem and Heschel’s appraisals can be made to compliment each other, even if they cannot be reconciled into a single answer or way out of modernity’s confines. Their disagreements resonate with material from the rest of this chapter, and connect to broader questions the dissertation explores.

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The most problematic dimension of Scholem’s analysis is not what he writes, but how his piece has been read. As David Myers points out, Scholem’s article received “a certain canonical status” and his judgments over nineteenth-century “European-Jewish scholarship” became widely accepted as “statements of facts rather than polemical assertions.” Through this, the very scholarship Scholem’s piece aimed to presently impact and change extricated itself from his judgment.

Scholem’s essay is not only, nor arguably even primarily, a critique of the *Wissenschaft des Judentums*, but of the confines of a modernity where Jews’ desire to become citizens of a secular (i.e. scientifically-oriented and non-theological) nation-state, led them all too willingly—whether in nineteenth-century German or the Hebrew of the twentieth—to sacrifice themselves in the process. Scholem argues modern Jewish scholarship has so far failed to navigate the challenges of modernity in an authentically Jewish way. Paradoxically, the search for authenticity is itself a symptom of the modernity, from which Scholem seeks to free Jewish Studies. This is why the path he arrives at (i.e., returning the irrational and the demonic to Jewish history), while astute and significant as an attempt to critique the particular rationalist conception of knowledge dominating European modernity, remains unable to effectively liberate.

Heschel’s work contributes an important dimension to the critique of “Jewish Studies,” by emphasizing how writers of the *Wissenschaft* challenged Christian hegemony. However, this does not mean that they do not also fashion Judaism and their revolt into a mold that subjugates them. This is the bind of a Jewish counterhistory of Christian counterhistory. Heschel twice admits (66, 76, citing Funkenstein: 48) that “the forger of a counteridentity of the other renders his own identity to depend on it.” Because of the political power of the Church, its counterhistory

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did not subjugate itself to the Jews; it only made Christianity dependent on the Jews’ continued existence, and invested in their degenerate survival. A counterhistory by the “colonized,” however, faces far greater restrictions: by approximating the values of that counterhistory oppressing itself, it participates in the very structures that continue its subjugation. When Geiger uses the figure and faith of Jesus the Pharisee to argue that Judaism holds a more legitimate claim to originality and universality than Christianity (and Islam), his construction affirms Jesus as the embodiment of ethics and means to illustrate the universal ideal. When Heschel proclaims Geiger did not try “to Christianize Judaism,” but rather sought “to Judaize Christianity,” she highlights this interdependence.\(^{103}\) Likewise, when Scholem attacks Geiger, he voices opposition to the destruction implicit in Geiger’s counterhistory.\(^{104}\)

Counterhistory is something to be examined and theorized, but not necessarily celebrated. Heschel’s important contribution is to demonstrate how Wissenschaft writings *attempt* to subvert Christian hegemony, even as they authorize and aggravate it. Scholem’s critique arguably still stands: the Wissenschaft was apologetic, rationalizing, and was responsible, at least in part—as Heschel acknowledges (61-2)—for developing Judaism in mimicry of Christianity.

Instead of arguing that Geiger’s research into Christian origins should be understood as subversive *instead of* as assimilationist, it is important to ask why Geiger’s revolt looks a lot like Christianity, even if—and this is important—it is also expressly anti-Christian. The *Wissenschaft des Judentums* fights back against the Christian character of modernity, but does so in a way that reinforces what it aims to overthrow.

\(^{103}\) Heschel, *Abraham Geiger*, 3.

\(^{104}\) Graetz too reacts against this, when he calls Reform “Christianization.” However, despite this similarity, Scholem and Graetz fundamentally disagree over what the Judaism is that Geiger destroys.
Assimilation itself needs to be rethought. While Jewish nationalists may have once monopolized this weapon against their critics, political Zionism, as Daniel Boyarin convincingly argues, can be seen to represent the most complete form of Jewish assimilationism. Any movement claiming to speak for what Judaism is or the Jews are, can be seen to further or use some variety of assimilation. The question that remains, then, is why do the range of Jewish efforts to construct collective identity from the time of Emancipation appear assimilationist?

105 See Daniel Boyarin’s chapter on “The Colonial Drag: Zionism, Gender, and Mimicry” in Unheroic Conduct, for a convincing discussion of Jewish nationalism as the ultimate form of assimilation and colonial mimicry.
CHAPTER 2

The Nahda: Modernity and Loss

This chapter illustrates how a presumably understood term—nahḍa—is far more equivocal than generally taken to be. It begins by looking at ways the term has been translated and qualified, and draws out the multiple connected objects it designates, as movement, period, and outlook. Following this it examines one of the earliest Arabic accounts of the nahḍa’s development, from one of its prominent exponents—Jurjī Zaydān (1861-1914). It uses Zaydān’s account to illustrate some of the nahḍa’s characteristics before turning to consider subsequent portrayals of the nahḍa as movement and how it reflects the paradox of modernity in non-European societies. By retracing its beginnings and appraisals the chapter highlights the centrality of the “impact of the West” motif in narratives of the nahḍa’s emergence and shape, though scholarship increasingly disputes the degree and manner of Western influence. After discussing more recent efforts to revision the dynamics between East and West, and to correct earlier Eurocentric biases by emphasizing the agency of the East—which, by extension and necessity, alter perceptions of the nahḍa—the chapter closes by reconsidering the significance of 1798 and the relation between modernity, colonialism, Orientalism and nahḍa.
Translations and Definitions: Limitations of a Problematic Term

The developments that came to be called *al-nahđa*, describe a literary, political, cultural movement and period in the Arab world, spanning the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. This name was not in use before the late nineteenth century.¹

The *nahđa*’s most common English-language equivalent is ‘renaissance,’ presented parenthetically,² or offset by commas.³ Often, either (or both) “*nahđa*” or “renaissance” is placed in scare quotes, intimating that the translation is not without qualification, though reasons for

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¹ Thomas Philipp traces the *nahđa*’s first printed use in the sense of “renaissance” or “revival” to an article published in *al-Muqattat*, in 1888, titled “Nahdat al-Tīb fī Miṣr” (The revival of medicine in Egypt). Because the article makes no attempt to explain this new use for a long-existing word, Philipp suggests its new meaning was understood by that time. Thomas Philipp, *Gūrğī Zaidān: His Life and Thought*, Beiruter Texte und Studien 3 (Beirut: Franz Steiner, 1979), 6-7. Cf., J. Brugman, *An Introduction to the History of Modern Arabic Literature in Egypt* (Leiden: Brill, 1984), 9-10n3.

Neither Lane’s *Lexicon* nor Buṭrus al-Bustānī’s dictionary *Muḥīṭ al-Muḥīṭ*, both from the mid-nineteenth century, define *nahđa* as pertaining to any collective movement, revival, or renaissance. Both describe it as an individual’s single act of rising, motion, or movement, or abstractly as ability and strength. Edward William Lane, *An Arabic-English Lexicon, derived from the best and most copious eastern sources*, vol. 8, ed. Stanley Lane-Poole (London: Williams and Norgate, 1893), 2860; Buṭrus al-Bustānī, *Muḥīṭ al-Muḥīṭ*, vol. 2 (Beirut: 1867), 2137.


these vary.\textsuperscript{4} For example, in his \textit{An Introduction to the History of Modern Arabic Literature in Egypt} (1984), J. Brugman expresses reservations at the phrase “Arabic renaissance” because its parallel to “the European Renaissance” is “inaccurate.”\textsuperscript{5} Echoing the incomparability of the two movements Nada Tomiche, in her entry on “Nahḍa” (1993) in the \textit{Encyclopaedia of Islam}, explains that “renaissance” is “a problematic translation, for it refers implicitly to 16th-century Europe and to the movement of return to the Greco-Roman past.”\textsuperscript{6} Both Tomiche and Brugman maintain the European Renaissance as paradigmatic. Their commentary neglects or discounts how and why many \textit{nahḍa} exponents intentionally built connections between the European and Arabic renaissances, especially as they came to also designate Europe’s as a \textit{nahḍa}, at least from the early-twentieth century.\textsuperscript{7} Further, views like Brugman’s and Tomiche’s maintain the European as an authentic revival, when what a renaissance births is never a return to a past that was. There are important differences between the European and Arabic renaissances, but to suggest these are rooted in authenticity and imitation obfuscates the matter.


\textsuperscript{5} Brugman, 9-10.


\textsuperscript{7} Phillip explains that “\textit{nahḍa},” in “its modern abstract meaning” is translated as “renaissance,” and notes how “[t]he Arabs themselves came to designate the European Renaissance with the same term,” citing two issues of \textit{al-Muqtataf} from 1917 and 1946 as illustration. Thomas Philipp, “The Role of Jurji Zaidan in the Intellectual Development of the Arab Nahda from the Beginning of the British Occupation of Egypt to the Outbreak of World War II” (Ph.D. Dissertation, University of California, Los Angeles, 1971), 7.

Jurji Zaydān refers to the Europeans’ Renaissance as their \textit{nahḍa} as early as 1914 in his \textit{Tārikh ʿudāb al-lughah al-`arabiyya}, vol. 4 (Cairo: Dār al-Hilāl, 1957), 144.
Others critique “renaissance” on entirely different grounds, rejecting the term’s requisite acceptance of a preceding period of decline, which recent historical scholarship has refuted. Scholars using post-colonial theory, such as Stephen Sheehi and Joseph Massad, explain how nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century nahda figures themselves came to describe their present as a renaissance because they internalized Arab-Islamic history as taught by European Orientalists. They view this internalization as one the nahda’s problematic foundations, upon which it built and replicated a developmental narrative of universal history where Europe sets the standard for progress and modernity, legitimizing the West’s colonial projects. Such interventions are important, especially given the longstanding narrative of Ottoman decline and decadence which plagued presentations of the Orient throughout much of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, and legitimized (and continues to do so) Western imperialism. However, arguing that the nahda’s “renaissance” is flawed because it legitimizes European domination,

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does not necessarily get at the root of the problem. After all, as Partha Chatterjee suggests, how could it have been otherwise?\(^{10}\)

Uncomfortable with how the \textit{nahḍa} was not really a renaissance, alternatives exist which aim towards greater accuracy of meaning. Among the most common are “awakening” or “rise” because such alternatives “would be closer to the sense of the root [\textit{n-h-d}] and therefore more satisfactory.”\(^{11}\) Nonetheless, “Renaissance” (either capitalized or in lower case) remains the \textit{nahḍa}’s most common English-language designation, though it frequently appears alongside “revival,” “rebirth,” and/or “awakening” as alternatives, reminding the reader that the translation is approximate.\(^{12}\) Not only are multiple-yet-imprecise versions presented, these are also qualified by a wide range of adjectives, such as Arab, Arabic, literary, cultural, modern, national, scientific, intellectual, etc., reflecting diverse and divergent developments all of which “come to

\(^{10}\) Partha Chatterjee, \textit{Nationalist Thought and the Colonial World: A Derivative Discourse} (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1986).

\(^{11}\) Tomiche, 900. Additional examples which clarify the term based on the root’s meaning include: Philipp (“Role of Jurji Zaidan,” 7-8), who states that “awakening” or “rise” would be a more appropriate translation than “revival,” “rebirth” or “renaissance,” because the former would preserve the “original meaning of the word [\textit{nahḍa}]”; likewise, Brugman (9-10) explains how “the Arabic word for this Renaissance, \textit{nahḍah}, …means not so much ‘rebirth’ or a related notion, as ‘rising up’”; Elizabeth Suzanne Kassab follows her first use of “Nahḍa” with the parenthetical “(meaning ‘rise’),” though she subsequently renders it “the Arab Renaissance” in her \textit{Contemporary Arab Thought: Cultural Critique in Comparative Perspective} (New York: Columbia University Press, 2010), 13. Cf., Samah Selim, \textit{The Novel and the Rural Imaginary in Egypt, 1880-1985}, (New York: Routledge Curzon, 2004), 234n2.

be called” *al-nahḍa*. This diversity accounts for how the same word “*al-nahḍa*,” can be defined as a “literary renaissance of the Arabs in the nineteenth century,” parenthetically explained as a “cultural and scientific renaissance” and presented as an expression for “the project of national renaissance.”

Another interesting feature of the term, is that English-language texts which do not mention the *nahḍa* have become authoritative descriptions of it. In fact, the *nahḍa*’s “main reference,” which “has long been considered the authoritative book on the subject,” is Albert Hourani’s *Arabic Thought in the Liberal Age, 1798-1939* (1962), a work which neither uses “*nahḍa*,” nor claims to focus on a movement of revival or renaissance. Hourani once mentions “the literary renaissance of the Arabs,” though this is a subject of no more than a few pages and cannot be equated to “*nahḍa*,” nor, if it were, would it justify the work’s appraisal as the main text on the subject.

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14 Makdisi, “‘Postcolonial’ Literature,” 90.


16 Kassab, 20.

17 Levy, 58–49.


Two additional texts cited as describing the *nahda*, though neither claims to do so, are George Antonius’ *The Arab Awakening* (1938), a study of “the Arab national movement,” and Hisham Sharabi’s *Arab Intellectuals and the West* (1970). Sharabi even differentiates “the Arab awakening,” which aimed at “cultural rebirth and modernization” and is the focus of *Arab Intellectuals*, from *al-nahda*, a term he mentions only once as a parenthetical translation for “enlightenment.” He writes, “the enlightenment (*al-nahda*) was the main rationalizing force within Christian intellectualism” (54), linking the *nahda* to Christians and separating it from Muslims.

Aspects of all three of the above-mentioned works reflect paradigmatic views of the *nahda*, from Hourani’s dating and emphasis on Western influence, to Antonius’ focus on the development of Arab nationalism, to Sharabi’s distinction between Christians and Muslims in the Ottoman Empire and the former’s affinity to European thought. Even though these texts do not claim to speak of the *nahda*, they have been made to do so, and in this sense reflect important characteristics of what the term has come to mean.

One last clarification deserves emphasis: The *nahda* is not only a renaissance movement, be it cultural, literary, religious, national, etc. It also refers “to a finite era” dated from Napoleon’s invasion of Egypt in 1798 and ending at some point in the early- to mid-twentieth century, and has even become “coterminous with the whole of Arab modernity as a set of

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20 “*Nahda*” appears twice in transliterated Arabic titles in Sharabi's footnotes, both of which he translates as “Renaissance,” a term absent in the text itself. What he means by “*nahda*” is unclear, though it is certainly not equivalent to what he describes as “the Arab awakening,” nor is it a central focus of his text.

21 “Christian intellectuals” are one of the four populations Sharabi focuses on in his study. The other three are all Muslim: traditionalists, reformists and secularists. For a critique of Sharabi’s fallacious distinction between Christians and Muslims, see Sheehi’s “Failure, Modernity, and the Works of Hisham Sharabi,” esp. 47-50.
historical potentialities,” as Samah Selim points out.  

Selim is one of the few contemporary scholars who clarifies its multiple uses, distinguishing between the “historical nahḍa,” which refers to the Arab world’s translation of European “liberal thought” (à la Hourani), and its second sense as “a continuing historical project of constructing a national culture.” When one speaks of “nahḍa” this could refer to a renaissance or movement, as well as an outlook, a national awakening, or even the whole of (Arab?) “modernity” itself.

Describing the Nahḍa: A Pioneering Account

Unlike the term Wissenschaft des Judentums, which was coined by those who founded the new field, the nahḍa is a retrospective name. Thus, men such as Rifāʿa al-Ṭaḥṭāwī (1801-73) in Egypt, Khair al-Dīn (ca.1825-1889) in Tunis, and Buṭrus al-Bustānī (1819-1883) in Syria, did not describe or theorize the movements they would later be seen to have pioneered.

Jurjī Zaydān (1861-1914), one of the nahḍa’s “second generation,” is “the most eminent of the pioneers to speak of Nahḍa.” The fourth and final volume of his Tārīkh Ādāb al-

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23 Selim, Novel and the Rural Imaginary, 234n2. Two other recent writings which explain how the nahḍa may reference different concepts are Ami Ayalon’s “Private Publishing,” which separates the “cultural” nahḍa from the “political” one. He focuses on the former, which relates to “the upsurge of literary, linguistic and journalistic creativity primarily through the medium of print, which took place in Arabic-speaking provinces toward the end of the Ottoman era” (562). Samir Kassir, a Lebanese academic, journalist and activist assassinated in 2005, presents a view somewhat closer to that of Selim above. He differentiates between the nahḍa “as a historical moment and expression of nationalism,” which ended by the close of World War I, and the nahḍa “as an attitude and an outlook on the world” which “continued to inspire Arab struggles for emancipation.” See his Being Arab, trans. Will Hobson (New York: Verso, 2006), 52-53. Together these examples (i.e., Selim’s, Ayalon’s, Kassir’s) illustrate how even when disentangled, variations persist regarding the precise characteristics of what multiple objects the term represents.

24 Jurjī Zaydān was a prolific writer, authoring twenty-three historical novels—a genre he developed in modern Arabic literature—as well as several multivolume histories of Arabic literature and Islamic civilization. He was born in Beirut, and emigrated to Cairo in 1883. In 1892 he founded the literary and cultural journal al-Hilāl, an important nahḍa periodical. The most extensive English-language study of Zaydān is Philipp’s Ĝurĝi Zaidān.

25 Tomiche, 900.
*Lugha al-‘Arabiyya* 26 (The history of Arabic literature), published in 1914, focuses on the literary and historical epoch Zaydān calls al-nahda, and offers “explicit statements of the new creed.” 27

Zaydān divides the volume into two parts: The first describes “the most important characteristics of this nahda,” (16) detailed in nine sections: 1. Modern schools (17-35); 2. The Arabic press (43-50); 3. Arabic journalism (51-64); 4. Personal freedom (65-66); 5. Literary and scientific societies (67-93); 6. Libraries (94-134); 7. Arab Museums (135-137); 8. The Arab theatre (138-143); and 9. The Orientalists and the Arabic language (144-163). The second half surveys literature of the nahda and provides biographies of those who contributed to and participated in it (164 ff). Zaydān traces the dawn of the nahda to the translation of “modern” or “foreign sciences” (al-‘ulūm al-ḥadīthah also referred to as al-‘ulūm al-dakhīla) from “foreign languages into Arabic,” which began in the first half of the nineteenth-century (164). 28 He provides information about these sciences and those men—“Franks” 29 and “Easterners”—who emerged as translators, writers or editors. After describing this initial stage, Zaydān continues to

26 Jurji Zaydān, *Tārīkh Ādāb al-Lughah al-‘Arabiyya*, vol. 4 (Cairo: Dār al-ḥilāl, 1957). References to this text will be made parenthetically throughout this section of the chapter.

Zaydān explains he “aspired to write literary history as Geistes- und Kulturgeschichte of the Arab people,” and not mere “political history.” For only “the history of science and [of] literature (tārīkh al-‘ilm wa-l-ādāb)…interpret history (shāri‘ī l-l-ātīkh), as they refer historical events to their real causes (yu’allil al-‘asbāba wa-l-hawādith bi-‘ilālilāh l-ḥaqiqiyya).” Cited in Nadia al-Baghdadi, “Registers of Arabic Literary History,” *New Literary History* 39.3 (2008): 445.

Al-Baghdadi’s “Registers” provides a useful discussion of the term ādāb, before and after “Arabic literary studies” came to emulate Western European models. Zaydān’s use employs aspects of both its “classical” and “modern” forms.


28 Zaydān further distinguishes between those sciences that were translated and developed in the first half of the nineteenth-century (the natural sciences, mathematical sciences, military sciences, and religion) and those translated and developed over the second half (judicial sciences, economic sciences, and literature and poetry). *Tārīkh Ādāb*, 165.

29 Zaydān calls peoples of Europe “Franks” (a designation that includes French, German, Austrian, Dutch, English, and Russians), and their shared civilization as “European.”
survey the poets, writers and journalists from the second half of the nineteenth-century, who belong to “the most recent nahḍa.”

It is worth calling attention to how Zaydān uses nahḍa differently in this text, than in one he published a decade earlier—his two-volume Tarājīm Mashāhīr al-Shārqi Qarn al-Tāsiʿ ʿAshar (1902-03) (Biographies of those Eminent in the East in the Nineteenth Century)—because his use reflects changing and expanding meanings of the term. The first volume of Tarājīm contains biographies of the khedival family, rulers, administrators, and political figures in “the East,” as well as “men of deeds and people of piety and reform.” The second volume focuses on “men of science and literature,” which Zaydān divides into four categories: 1. Pillars of the scientific nahḍa (arkān al-nahḍa al-ʿilmīyya); 2. Founders and Writers of the Newspaper; 3. Men of the Pen; and 4. Poets.

What he refers to as “the scientific nahḍa,” in his Tarājīm describes only the nahḍa’s introductory stage in his later work, where al-nahḍa becomes the designation and characteristic of the entire modern age. In Tārikh Ādāb, when Zaydān qualifies nahḍa, it is most often “literary” (adabiyya) or “the most recent” (al-akhīra). His survey of those who shaped it includes figures from the entire second volume of his Tarājīm Mashāhīr, as well as from the “men of deeds and people of piety and reform,” of the first volume. Common to both works is Zaydān’s presentation of a movement and period that includes “people of the East” (Arab and non-Arab)

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31 Included among the “rijāl al-aʿmāl wa-aḥl al-bīr wa-l-īṣālah” are Muhammad ʿAbduh (d.1905), Muṣṭafā Kāmil (d.1908), Qāsim Amin (d.1908), and ʿAbd al-Rahman al-Kawākibī (d.1902), all of who come to be important nahḍa figures. The second edition was updated to include biographies of those who died in the first years of the twentieth-century.

32 Zaydān details eight “pillars of the scientific nahḍa,” naming Europeans, Arab and non-Arab Easterners: Doctor Clot Bey; Shaykh Nāṣīr al-Ŷāziyī; Riṭāʿa Bey al-Taḥtāwī; Butrus al-Bustānī; ʿAlī Pasha Mubārak; Doctor Cornelius Van Dyke; al-Sayyid Jamāl al-Dīn al-Afgānī; and al-Sayyid Ahmad Khān. Tarājīm Mashāhīr, 2: 1-74. Zaydān explains that when figures were active in more than one field, he places them into whichever category they participated in most. Tarājīm Mashāhīr, 2: iii.
as well as “Franks who helped the East and who spent most of their lives in it as if they were its children,” optimistically portraying the nineteenth-century *nahḍa*, in Egypt and in Syria as a movement and a period when science and literature in Arabic were harmoniously shaped by East and West alike.\(^{33}\)

In the final volume of *Tārikh Ādāb* Zaydān focuses entirely on the *nahḍa*, and portrays this period, still underway, as one of dramatic transformation for the Arab world, during which it responds to and emulates Europe. He dates its beginning (9) to “the departure of the French from Egypt in 1801,”\(^{34}\) describes its cultivation during Muhammad Ḍālī’s reign when “Egypt began adopting the means of attaining modern civilization,” and proclaims its maturity under Iṣmāʿīl’s rule, such that one then said: “Truly [Egypt] is a part of Europe even though it is in Africa” (13).\(^{35}\)

When he describes its beginnings, Zaydān differentiates between Bonaparte’s three-year military campaign in Egypt from 1798 and the “scientific campaign” (*ḥamla ʿilmīyya*) that accompanied it. He has no kind word for the French army, though he respectfully describes how, during moments of calm, French scholars and artisans found institutions to meet their needs, such as French schools, newspapers, a theatre, and an Egyptian scientific academy, (i.e., the *Institut d’Egypte*). They made some of their resources available to Egyptians, such as their

\[^{33}\] *Tarājim Mashāḥir*, 2: iii.

\(^{34}\) This date is reflected as well in the volume’s subtitle which reads: “Part IV, encompassing the history of literature of the Arabic language from 1216 h. (1801) to the beginning of the twentieth-century.” The second half of the text (164ff.) offers a modified periodization. There, Zaydān divides the *nahḍa* into three periods, based upon ruler: The first begins not from 1801 but from 1805 (i.e., from to start of Muhammad Ḍālī’s rule) to the beginning of Iṣmāʿīl’s reign; the second runs from the rule of Iṣmāʿīl (1863) until the British occupation in 1882; and the third from the British occupation to the beginning of the twentieth century. *Tārikh Ādāb*, 164.

\(^{35}\) When describing the practices through which Muhammad Ḍālī began “adopting the means of attaining modern civilization” (*iqṭībās ʿasbāb al-madānīyya al-ḥadīthā*), Zaydān describes his new organization of the army, training doctors and administrators, developing industry and modern schools, and sending missions to Europe for education. Under Iṣmāʿīl’s rule, Zaydān describes how schools, presses, and newspapers multiplied and foreigners flocked to Egypt. *Tārikh Ādāb*, 13.
reading room, which contained many valuable Arabic books. He admires how the French are devoted to studying every science and favorably recounts how they would invite Egyptians to observe the foundations of French civilization, by showing them books, images, and scientific instruments (11-12).

Zaydān lists the Franks’ interest and engagement in Arabic literature as one of the distinguishing features of this most recent nahda (16). He credits their studying, spreading, and investigating Arabic books as a primary factor facilitating the revitalization (ihyāʾ) of literature in the Arabic language (144). He devotes 20 pages to describing Orientalists, their translations of Arabic works, and their interest in the languages and writings of the East (144-163). He observes how they are not drawn to recent Arabic literature but, rather, their attention “turns to the Middle Ages, before their last Renaissance (nahḍatihim al-akhîrâ),” which he credits with giving rise to their modern civilization (144). By emphasizing Orientalists’ care for Arabic medieval literature, and his choice to term their Renaissance a nahda, Zaydān implies a parallel or correspondence between the European Renaissance and the current nahda.

As is typical of nahda presentations of Arab-Islamic history, Zaydān’s account employs the narrative arc of a Golden Age (Abbasids), followed by Decline (Ottoman/Mamluk reign), and finally, Renaissance (nahda). He compares the current nahda to the time during the Abbasid Empire when the ancients’ sciences were translated into Arabic and likewise moved that civilization.36 There the similarities between the two periods ends. Zaydān describes how during

36 The Abbasid model is frequent across nahda writings, from Buṭrus al-Bustânî to Muḥammad ʿAbduh. It appears as early as al-Ṭaḥṭāwî’s Takhřîṣ (1834). Stephen Sheehi argues that its pervasiveness and use reflects nahda intellectuals’ effort to inscribe themselves into the (Hegelian) notion of universal history centered on progress. This use confirms Europe as source and standard for the “universal” in two ways: First, it legitimizes the importance of the Abbasids based on their appraisal and use by Europe. Second, it identifies the Abbasids as preservers of Greek science, and not as the producers of original science. Sheehi’s critique of European intellectual hegemony implies that, were the Arabs, or any other colonized people, to have found a native non-European origin through which to assert their historical precedence, they would not have participated to their own subjugation by Europe, as they did
the Abbasid era “the Arab empire was in the season of its development and its activity,” and could thus digest and transform the sciences of other nations, coloring them with its “Islamic-Arab color.” This is entirely different from its relative position at the outset of the most recent nahḍa, when, instead of shaping others’ sciences it became transformed by them, and “the current of modern civilization gained ascendency over its inhabitants,” and compelled them “to move along with it” (15).37

This observation would seem to suggest that “modern civilization” (al-madaniya al-ḥadītha) is other than “Islamic civilization,” a view reinforced by Zaydān’s description of what distinguishes the current nahḍa from all earlier epochs in Arabic literary history. He describes how, since the advent of Islam up until the start of the nineteenth-century, Arabic literature remained entirely “within the domain of Islamic civilization” (14). However, from the nahḍa’s inception, the Arab world (al-ʿālim al-ʿarbī) began moving in an unprecedented way and developing the characteristics of “modern civilization” (5-6, 14-15), the most distinguishing feature of which, he notes, is “the influence of European civilization on it” (14). And yet, Zaydān is explicit that what the Arab world is becoming remains within the parameters of Arab-Islamic civilization. Though its literature is now “colored” by European civilization, it does not become European, as assured by and reflected in the Arabic literary revival.

Zaydān’s narrative is developmental, cyclical, and comparative. Whichever civilization currently masters sciences determines the standard for what is considered “modern,” in the sense of the newest and most advanced. Today this is Europe. A thousand years ago it was the Abbasid

when they came to accept Orientalists’ values and telling of their own history. Orientalists are taken to have replaced the Arabs’ self with a corrupted subjectivity, as though such identities and entities had long since existed. It supposes the mistaken origin is what subjugates the self, and not the privileging of it or search for it. Foundations of Modern Arab Identity, 25-40.

Empire. According to Zaydān, sciences may be developed by any people, in any location and spread to others who may likewise develop them in accordance with their means and needs. For Zaydān, the origins of the nahḍa-as-modernity lie in the earlier “scientific nahḍa,” when sciences most recently advanced in Europe were translated into Arabic. Arab-Islamic civilization became reinvigorated during the nineteenth-century because of the importation and translation of sciences, and was led to becoming, once again, a modern civilization.

The Nahḍa and the Paradox of Modernity

In many ways Zaydān’s account is representative of what the nahḍa is and comes to be. Most centrally, comparison with Europe, which set the standards for progress and modernity, pervades its outlook.38 Nahḍa exponents worked to decipher keys to Europe’s advancement and causes for their own lands’ relative backwardness. This comparative outlook soon led many to question the place and role of religion in modern civilization: Did Christianity help or hinder Europe’s progress? Does Islam have a different relation to modernity than Christianity?39

While the West provides models for how the Arab (or Arab-Islamic) world can realize its own potential, nahḍa writers did not seek to only emulate Europe. Their approach can be described as “selective integration”; they would adopt and adapt only those European sciences and practices that facilitate advancement without threatening the distinct character of the Arab-Islamic world.40 Nahḍa intellectuals’ efforts to revive or preserve Islamic and/or Arab identity

38 Badawi, 11; Makdisi, “‘Postcolonial’ Literature,” 89; Tomiche, 901.
were intimately connected to their calls for reform and modernization. And yet, even while its contributors sought to protect and preserve their cultural identity against European incursion—military and ideological—its revival was significantly shaped by Europe’s Orientalists, who taught Arabs their literature and history. Zaydân’s account highlights this influence, which he positively imagines as productive literary and cultural exchange.

The nahḍa’s two primary aims—that of emulating aspects of Europe so as to progress while preserving or reviving Arab-Islamic culture—are seen to reflect the dilemma of (post)colonial modernity, which strives for both assimilation and separation, that is, for universalism (Europeanization) and particularism (nationalisms). This “problem” marks or plagues nahḍa writings, whose “paradoxical strategy of cultural revitalization” reflects its exponents’ central preoccupation: how can we become like Europe, while also remaining true to ourselves?

Following Hourani’s analysis of Arabic thought in the “Liberal Age” (1798-1939) one typically distinguishes two stages in the nahḍa’s development: its earliest generation of pioneers, beginning from Rifāʿa al-Ṭaḥṣawī, display an optimism and openness to Europe illustrative of

41 Hassan, Tayeb Salih, xi; Sheehi, Foundations of Modern Arab Identity, 34ff.

42 Kamran Rastegar discusses the “modern resurrection” of 1001 Nights, which was shaped by European fascination with the text. See his Literary Modernity Between the Middle East and Europe: Textual transactions in nineteenth-century Arabic, English, and Persian literatures (New York: Routledge, 2007), 55-65. See also, al-Daʿwī’s text, which provides numerous examples of Orientalists constructing Arab-Islamic history. Their accounts were then taught to, and accepted by, Arabs, albeit with certain modifications. Muhammad al-Daʿwī, Arabian Mirrors and Western Soothsayers: Nineteenth-Century Literary Approaches to Arab-Islamic History (New York: Lang, 2002). The second chapter of Said’s Orientalism, remains critically relevant for exposing and exploring ways in which nineteenth-century European Orientalists shaped the Arabic canon and perceptions of Arab-Islamic history, and, by extension, the Orient itself. Edward W. Said, Orientalism (New York: Vintage Books, 1979), 113-97. Cf. Zaydân, Tārikh Ādāb, 144 ff.


44 Tageldin, Disarming Words, 4-5.
their “precolonial” milieu.\textsuperscript{45} Though the British effectively occupy Egypt from 1882, their presence does not initially diminish this openness, as visible in Zaydān’s account. However, following the realization of England and France’s betrayal in the wake of World War I, colonialism revealed its true colors and showed the Arabs that the West is an adversary and cannot be a trusted teacher. The nahḍa’s relation to the West then transformed, as did Arabs’ views of the nahḍa itself.\textsuperscript{46}

From the interwar period and especially after World War II, due to Arab countries’ forced participation in the War and the establishment of Israel which followed, the nahḍa, when invoked, became a more explicit and focused Arab nationalist project, displaying increasing hostility towards “the West.” This change leads to the distinction between the nahḍa as a movement from the mid-nineteenth century through the first decades of the twentieth, when it was marked by optimism and openness to the West, and the nahḍa as it continued on after World Wars I and II in the spirit of a pan-Arab anti-colonial nationalist endeavor.\textsuperscript{47} The devastating Israeli defeat of 1967 brought about the collapse of Arab nationalism and with it the final demise of the nahḍa project.\textsuperscript{48}


\textsuperscript{46} Kassir, 52. Hassan cites two essays by Gibrān Khalīl Gibrān to illustrate Arabs’ turn against the nahḍa after World War I. The first was published during the War and the second in 1923. In the former, Gibrān imagined “French colonialism to be not only benevolent but ‘the architect of our new house. France will help us become a living nation.’” After the war Gibrān charges that the “Arab renaissance was no more than slavish mimicry of Western thought and tastes, a superficial veneer of modernity.” Demonstrating the turn towards nationalist rhetoric and the reframing of the “nahḍa,” Gibrān anticipates that “the true renaissance” will become “embodied in economic cooperation among Arab countries and their political unity and independence.” Hassan, Immigrant Narratives, 70; citing Khalil Gibrān, nuṣūṣ khārij al-majmā‘a, ed. Antoine al-Qawwal (Beirut: Dār Amwāj, 1993), 228, 235-36, 239.


Partha Chatterjee’s discussion of *Nationalist Thought in the Colonial Age* is relevant here. Chatterjee argues that the problem of nationalist thought in the non-European world—namely, that it has no historical alternative other than “to try to approximate the given attributes of modernity” even though that approximation means its continued subjection under a world order that sets its tasks for it—challenges the very universality of the rational and the scientific.⁴⁹ Thought dominates long after military rule ends, and as early *nahḍa* writings suggest, can dominate without military rule, to which it may lead. “Nationalist thought” is not the only object of Chatterjee’s critique, and the implications of his study reach far beyond colonial and post-colonial nationalisms. The core of the problem he identifies is “the bourgeois-rationalist conception of knowledge, established in the post-Enlightenment period of European intellectual history.”⁵⁰ The *nahḍa*, as well as the nationalisms which develop after, alongside, as well as with and through it, regardless of whether they are “open” or “closed” to the West, are all “seduced, apprehended, and imprisoned” by a universal ideal of Enlightenment.⁵¹ Not only is this ideal unattainable because its realization would destroy itself, but its maintainance requires the preservation of dichotomies between the self and the other, the West and the colonized rest, because the ideal exists through asserting its sovereignty over the Other. In other words, modernity’s paradoxical appearance is a consequence of the hegemony of one particular universalism, which requires those with less power to willfully participate in their own subjugation.

⁴⁹ Chatterjee, 10.
⁵⁰ Ibid., 11.
⁵¹ Ibid., 17.
The Nahda: Returning to Beginnings

The “two leading intellectual centres of the Nahda” in the nineteenth century were Greater Syria (al-Shâm, hereafter translated as Syria) and Egypt.\(^{52}\) By the late-nineteenth century the nahda converged in Egypt, especially following the emigration of a large number of Syrians, which secured “the region’s cultural center…on the banks of the Nile.”\(^{53}\)

The date of the nahda’s end varies dependent upon which nahda one describes, as well as whether a writer views Arab nationalism as a stage of its development or the response to its failure. Its beginning is far less equivocal. The nahda develops as a consequence of reverberations emanating from the first modern colonial invasion of an Ottoman territory: Napoleon’s occupation of Egypt from 1798-1801. The French military campaign, along with the accompanying scientific Institut d’Égypte, influenced the region through different but connected mechanisms: the former demonstrated the superiority of Napoleon’s modern army while the latter presented France’s sciences to Egypt’s inhabitants as the means to advance themselves, at the same time that Orientalists affirmed the value of Arabic language and literature.\(^{54}\) The combination of these factors contributed to the shape of what would develop soon after as al-nahda.

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\(^{52}\) Badawi, 12. Cf. Ayalon, 561; Amin, Arab Nation, 30; Brugman, 12; Hafez, 45-48; Zaydân, Tārīkh Ādāb, 6.


Several factors impacted this migration, including: violence in Mount Lebanon and Damascus in the late 1850s and 1860 and continued instability in the region thereafter; the increasingly restrictive censorship policies under Sultan Abdülhamid II (r. 1876-1909); and the British occupation of Egypt in 1882. Many Syrian emigrants relocated to Cairo.

\(^{54}\) Frequently Napoleon’s military and scientific campaigns are separated and described differently, the former presented as an agent of imperial aggression, the latter as one which bestowed advantages upon the region. Hassan, Tayeb Salih, 1. Jurji Zaydân’s portrayal in Tārīkh Ādāb (11-12) described above illustrates this tendency.
One of the most immediate and significant consequences of the three-year occupation, was that it enabled Muḥammad ʿAli to come to power. The interrelated policies he instituted—sending students abroad for education; reforming and developing new schools to educate army officers; and supporting the translation and publication of European military, geographical, scientific, and historical texts—facilitated the nahḍa’s development, even if this was far from the governor’s intention.

Muḥammad ʿAli dispatched the first large-scale organized mission of students in 1826, to the École égyptienne in Paris. This school itself was set up by Edmé François Jomard (1777-1862), best known as the editor of the Description de l’Egypte. The French Orientalist had suggested a similar project as early as 1811, when he submitted a plan to the French Consul in Egypt, Bernadino Drovetti, “for civilizing Egypt by means of education.” Jomard describes how Muḥammad ʿAli rejected the proposal on the grounds that “his subjects were too ignorant to

55 Badawi, 6; Brugman, 11-12; Cachia, “Modern Arabic Literature,” 284-85.

56 Until recently Muhammad ʿAli was extolled as “the nationalist father and founder of Modern Egypt.” It is now more widely accepted that his policies and ruling strategy were driven primarily by his desire to maximize Egyptian autonomy (within the Ottoman State) and establish himself and his family as its rulers. With this reappraisal, his role in the nahḍa’s development is recognized as an unintentional or precursory one. Khalid Fahmy, All the Pasha’s Men: Mehmed Ali, his army and the making of modern Egypt (New York: American University of Cairo Press, 2002).

57 This was not the first time individual students were sent to study in Europe from Egypt or the Ottoman empire, though the École égyptienne was the first institution set up for this purpose. On students trained abroad in the 18th- and early nineteenth-century, see Silvera, “The First Egyptian Student Mission,” 2-6.

58 Jomard first arrived in Egypt in 1798 with Napoleon’s expedition, was a member of the Institute d’Egypt and worked as one of the fourteen engineer-geographers who surveyed and mapped the Nile Valley in 1799.

59 The twenty-volume Description de l’Egypte on ancient and contemporary Egyptian civilization was compiled by those scientists and artisans who accompanied Napoleon’s expedition. Jomard spent over 20 years editing the work before its completion in 1829. Its contents are available online at http://descegy.bibalex.org/index1.html.

benefit from European travel.” About six years later Jomard “[begged] the Viceroy to reconsider” his earlier proposal, this time through Osman Nourreddin once he returned to Egypt after studying in France, which was again rejected. However, by 1826, due to the high cost of employing foreign instructors in Egypt, Muhammad ʿAlī agreed to establish a mission abroad. The Egyptian governor followed Consul Drovetti’s advice and chose to send his students to France instead of Italy.

Jomard was devoted to the École égyptienne. He single-handedly built its curriculum, taught geography there, and co-directed the school—all of which he did for no salary, but only because of “the benefit [it serves] to both countries.” In his entry on the Institut d’Egypte in the Encyclopédie des Gens du Monde (1840), Jomard draws a direct line from the school for Egyptians in Paris to the activity of France in Egypt three decades earlier, when he asks the rhetorical question in its closing paragraph: “This dispatch of a colony of 120 Egyptians [i.e., the École Égyptienne], entrusted to France to study in its womb, is it anything besides a continuation of the activities of the Institut d’Egypt?” Jomard, the link between both institutions, connects the aims and actions of the three-year French occupation to the five-year course of study of

61 Silvera, “Edme-François Jomard,” 212.
62 According to Jomard, Muhammad ʿAlī responded to Nourreddin with the statement: “Now that you’ve acquired all that learning abroad, why don’t you create a school of your own right here with the means at your disposal? When your students have attained a certain level of proficiency I shall send them to Paris.” In accord with this request, Nourreddin established the preparatory school of Qasr al-ʿAini. Silvera, “Edme-François Jomard,” 212-13. Cf. Ridley, 346n42-43.
63 Ridley, 206-08.
65 Cited and translated by Tageldi, in her Disarming Words, 111. The French text is taken from the second part of the 14th volume of the Encyclopédie, 761: “Et cet envoi d’une colonie de cent vingt Égyptiens, confiés à la France pour s’instruire dans son sein, qu’est-ce autre chose que la continuation des travaux de l’Institut d’Egypte?”
Egyptians. Rifāʿa Rāfiʿ al-Ṭahtāwī, “the most eminent member of the [Egyptian] Mission” and its only student to have left a record of his experiences at the school, reflects upon Jomard’s leadership, and the sincerity of the Frenchman’s devotion to Egypt’s betterment. He describes Jomard as enamored both externally and internally with Egypt, and emphasizes how he exhibits “a deep concern for Egypt’s interests,” “as if he were among the sons of Egypt who are devoted to her.”

Al-Ṭahtāwī, “the great revivalist of the nineteenth century,” is the earliest of the nahda’s “pioneers.” Narratives of his foundational role begin from his participation in the mission to Paris from 1826-1831, and tend to emphasize the major impact his European sojourn had upon the modernization of his political and social thought. In his studies in Paris he specialized in translation from French into Arabic. After returning to Cairo in 1831 he became the foremost force behind the extensive translation movement developed during Muhammad ʿAlī’s reign.


67 Rifāʿa Rāfiʿ al-Ṭahtāwī, Takhlīṣ al-ibrīṣ ilā takhliṣ bāriz (Bulaq, 1834), 209, 20, 207.

68 Brugman, 24.


Al-Ṭahtāwī was sent to accompany the mission as its imam, not as a student. However, at the last minute a decree was issued which allowed him to participate in its course of study and to specialize in translation. Jamāl al-Dīn al-Shayyāl, Rifāʿa Rāfiʿ al-Ṭahtāwī 1801-1873, 3rd ed. (Cairo: Dār al-Maʿārif, 1980), 26.

70 When al-Ṭahtāwī returned to Cairo he first worked as a translator at the medical school, then the artillery school. While at the artillery school he submitted a proposal to Muhammad ʿAlī to found a school for training translators and undertaking translations. In response, the school of languages (madrasat al-alsun) was founded in 1835 and al-Ṭahtāwī was made its director in 1837.

From 1837 he directed the School of Languages (madrasat al-alsun), where he supervised hundreds of translations and trained a generation of translators.\textsuperscript{71}

Al-Ṭaḥṭāwī’s name is “particularly prominent” in studies of the nahda, a position justified through the centrality of translation (of texts, ideas, and institutions) to the nahda’s endeavors.\textsuperscript{72} “Inextricably linked with the cultural Renaissance (nahda) of Egypt, in which he was one of its driving forces,”\textsuperscript{73} he is “recast as the harbinger of the ‘nahda’”\textsuperscript{74} and described as its “emblematic figure.”\textsuperscript{75} From among the nahda’s pioneers, he is one of the few to whom different and divergent strands are traced, because his writings and activity are considered foundational for social, political, religious, and literary reform.\textsuperscript{76} The account of his stay and studies in Paris, Takhliš al-Ibrīz fī [ilā] Talkhīš Bārīz (1834), is hailed as the text that initiates nahda discourse.\textsuperscript{77}

\textsuperscript{71} Most accounts describing translation into Arabic and Turkish during the nineteenth-century, whether in Arabic or European languages, highly praise al-Ṭaḥṭāwī and the school of languages he directed. However, one exception to this, contemporary with the language school, deserves mention. As described above, Jomard took a great interest in Egyptian (and African) policies and reforms. In a confidential report to the Muhammad ‘Ali, sent in 1839 on the eve of escalating tensions between the Egyptian army and the Sublime Porte, Jomard offers advice to the governor on how Egypt should reform its economy, agriculture, and educational institutions. He critiques the many vocational schools recently founded, and has particularly harsh words for Sheikh Rifā’a’s work and leadership at the translation school. Silvera, “Edme-François Jomard,” 315-16n40.

\textsuperscript{72} Allen, “Rewriting Literary History,” 251.


\textsuperscript{74} Gürsel, 246.

\textsuperscript{75} Jacquemond, 118-19. Cf. Louca, (11) who identifies al-Ṭaḥṭāwī as the very symbol of the Nahda: “Le nom du jeune cheikh, Rifā’a a at-Taḥṭāwī (1801-1873), sera le plus célèbre du contingent, et le symbole même du mouvement de la Renaissance qui s’engage, la Nahda.”

\textsuperscript{76} For example, Najjar notes how both “the religious-reform movement” and “the liberal-secularist movement” are traced to al-Taḥṭāwī. Fauzi M. Najjar, “Ibn Rushd (Averroes) and the Egyptian Enlightenment Movement,” British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies 31.2 (2004): 196. Cf. Abaza, 302.

\textsuperscript{77} Naṣr Abū Zayd, al-Mar’a fī Khiṭāb al-Azma (Cairo: Dār al-Nuṣūṣ, 1994), 47; Badawi, 16; Hassan, Tayeb Salih, 1; Kassab, 22; Kassir, 45; Salama-Carr, 215.
This view of al-Ṭahṭāwī and the role of the West in awakening him, has not passed unchallenged. The work of Peter Gran has been influential in this regard. Beginning with the publication of his *Islamic Roots of Capitalism in Egypt 1760-1840* in 1979, Gran refutes the interdependent narratives of the region’s centuries-long “decline” and its sudden entry into “modernity” impelled, as is so often claimed, by the arrival of French troops.

Gran presents a vibrant cultural revival underway in Egypt from 1760 to 1790, demonstrating rapid and vast economic and social transformation in the decades preceding Napoleon’s invasion. He shows how both the “so-called neoclassical period” and the “counter-impulse toward linguistic simplification and utilitarianism” preexisted Western incursion by several decades.78 Likewise, al-Ṭahṭāwī’s “progressive intellectual outlook” was due to the education he received before he ever set foot outside of Egypt, and in particular to the instruction and influence of his mentor Ḥasan al-ʿAṭṭār.79 Paris, Gran argues, is wrongly credited with enlightening him.

*Missionaries in Syria: Transmitting and Translating Secularism*

The impact of Muḥammad ʿAli’s reforms and leadership were felt in Greater Syria, especially through the dissemination of Arabic and Turkish books printed on the government

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78 Gran, *Islamic Roots*, xiii-xiv; Cf. 57-75. A. L. Tibawi, a historian of nineteenth-century Syria, similarly refutes the significance given to 1798 as the the point when the West awakened of the East, beginning its turn towards modernity. Instead, Tibawi emphasizes continuity in place of rupture, arguing that “the movement variously described as reform, modernization, or renaissance” is evident prior to 1798 just as “medieval” ideas continued well beyond then. A. L. Tibawi, “Some Misconceptions about the Nahḍa,” *Middle East Forum* 47 (1971): 21.

press in Bulaq from 1822. These became widely available, especially from the time of Muḥammad ʿAlī’s nine-year occupation (1831-40), when his son Ibrāhīm Pasha governed the region. However, the beginning of the nahḍa in Syria is not only, and sometimes not even primarily, seen as a consequence of Napoleon’s and Muḥammad ʿAlī’s occupations, nor the latter’s modernizations. It remains, nonetheless, like the situation in Egypt, described as a consequence of, or response to, the West’s impact. In Syria this is traced to the influence of Christians, Christianity, and missionaries.

George Antonius’ The Arab Awakening (1938) emphasizes the unique role of Jesuit (French) and Protestant (American) missionaries in the region’s development, and credits their efforts with facilitating its awakening. In particular he praises the Protestant mission, whose labors generated “the intellectual effervescence which marked the first stirrings of the Arab [national] revival.” Later scholars temper Antonius’ adulatory appraisal by emphasizing how competition between the Protestants and Jesuits drove both missions’ educational activities far more than philanthropy. Such emendations argue that the nahḍa is better viewed as an indirect outcome of missionary activity, and one that was shaped by Arab Christians themselves.

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81 Antonius’ text would be better read as an illustration of the developing Arab national movement (as his foreword suggests) than as a description of the nahḍa. However, much like Hourani’s Arabic Thought in the Liberal Age, Antonius’ text has been made into a history of the nahḍa, which has also contributed to shaping nahḍa.

82 Antonius emphasizes in particular how the Protestant schools “gave the pride of place to Arabic” and vigorously took up the task of “providing an adequate Arabic literature.” Antonius, 41-43. Cf. Kamal S. Salibi, The Modern History of Lebanon (New York: Caravan Books, 1977), 146.


Examples of such activities include their competing Arabic bible translations and the founding of new schools for elementary and higher education. The crowning achievements of the latter are the still operative (Jesuit) Université Saint-Joseph, founded in 1875, and the Syrian Protestant College, founded in 1866 (later renamed the American University of Beirut).
Christians’ participation and influence in the nahḍa’s developments is repeatedly distinguished from that of Muslims, regardless of whether missionaries are mentioned. This results from their affinity to Europe, which Muslims do not share. Such informs Arabic literary scholar Pierre Cachia’s confident assertion in 1960 that “naturally, Christian Arabs everywhere were more receptive than Muslims to European ideas and ideals.”84 Three decades later, in a section titled “The Christian Contribution” in his introduction to the *Cambridge History of Modern Arabic Literature* (1992), Cachia qualifies his earlier assertion, explaining that “Christian Arabs—mainly Syrians—were in fact to make disproportionately large contributions to several aspects of the Nahḍah in its early stages, if only because (at a time when group loyalties were formed on religious rather than national or ethnic axes) they found it easier than did the Muslims to accept ideas originating in, or transmitted by, Christian Europe.”85 This emendation replicates the underlying premise of his earlier statement, which takes for granted a distinction between Christians and Muslims that divides these populations from each other, at the same time that it brings Christian Arabs closer to Europe, positioning them to serve as conduits for transmitting Europe’s thought into the region.

Similar to Cachia, M. M. Badawi, the literary scholar who edited the Cambridge volume, presents only Muslims as experiencing a crisis of modernity, for the question of “how to westernize or modernize while remaining Muslims,” did not “of course,…arise in the case of Christian Arabs.” He clarifies and illustrates his statement by explaining how some Christians, “like al-Shidyāq [!], adopted an anti-clerical stance or even advocated secularization, like Shiblī

Shumayyil (1860-1917) and Farah Antūn (1874-1922).86 Badawi’s statement uses “secular thought” to stand in for what modernity and the West are, and implies that the idea of a Muslim modernity is inherently paradoxical, because, unlike the Christian, the Muslim cannot be secular, and what is modern must be secular.

This view of Christians as the transmitters of a particularly Western modernity to Syria increasingly has its critics. Historian A. L. Tibawi disputes the view that missionaries initiated or inspired the nahḍa in Syria, and he emphasizes the participation of Muslims alongside Christians in its development.87 He argues that the “fantastic claim” that “the missionaries were instrumental in the ‘rediscovery’ of the Arabic literary heritage” is a distortion of the facts, which disregards “entirely the prior revival in Egypt” and neglects “outstanding Muslim literary figures” in Syria during this period.88 He explains that these erroneous allegations have been propagated primarily by missionaries and their Protestant admirers, as well as by Lebanese-Christian nationalist historians, and he explicitly incriminates both Antonius and Hourani.89

86 Badawi, 11. Lebanese historian Kamal Salibi (141-43) makes a similar assertion, claiming that the “[Lebanese] Christian could easily accept the West” and join “the vanguard of an Arabic literary revival,” unlike the [Lebanese] Muslim who had to abandon much that “was fundamental to the Moslem heritage” in order to westernize. Cf. Hourani.

Sadawi’s example neglects to consider whether and how a conversion challenges such presumably clear distinctions. Ahmad Fāris al-Shidyāq (1804-1887) was born into a Maronite family, converted to Protestantism in 1820 and then to Islam in 1860, when he took the name Āḥmad.


88 Tibawi, Modern History, 145. Regarding the latter point, he names several influential Syrian Muslim literary figures absent in accounts of the region’s development, such as Āḥmad al-Barbir (d. 1821), ‘Umar al-Bakri al-Yāfi (d. 1818), and Amīn al-Jundi (d. 1841). His inclusion of these figures very intentionally predates 1798.

Further, he criticizes studies of the nahḍa for their exaggerated and incorrect emphasis on the impact of foreigners upon those few Muslims from the next generation they do mention, such as Mahmūd Hamzah (d. 1887), Yūsūf al-Asīr (d. 1889), and Ibrāhīm al-Ḥdab (d. 1890). Tibawi, A Modern History, 145-46; “Some Misconceptions,” 18-19, 21-22.

89 Tibawi, “Some Misconceptions,” 17-21. Tibawi does not claim the American missionaries played no role in the nahḍa, but refutes Antonius’ view that they awakened love for the Arabic language and literature. Rather, the
stake in his refutation is the question of who generates and develops modernity in Syria, as well as the degree and nature of Western influence on, and intervention in, the region.

Those who follow Tibawi tend to modify his assertion that the Protestant mission had little to no impact on the nahḍa by demonstrating ways Arabs appropriated information the mission provided and used it for their own needs and benefit, often against the mission’s intentions. For example, Marwa Elshakry investigates Protestant missionaries’ use of science in their proselytizing efforts in Beirut. She demonstrates both the effectiveness of their educational program and its limitations. Focusing on the Syrian-Protestant College, she describes how the mission taught sciences in order to facilitate conversion. Arab Christians and Muslims, however, were able to use what they learned in ways that resisted conversion and were compatible with their own faiths. Not only this, but students at the college even came to impact the mission, which, responding to local needs and demands, was made to offer an education that became increasingly technological and vocational and less concerned with spreading the Gospel. She does not differentiate between Muslim and Christian reactions to the mission’s work at the College, but emphasizes their common response.

It remains far more common, however, to maintain the separation between Christians and Muslims, usually in order to explain how and why “secular thought” first emerges among Christians in Syria as part of the region’s nahḍa. At the root of the matter is the belief that

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missionaries left their mark by providing the market for a simplified neo-classical style, by commissioning Arabs to produce textbooks for use in their schools. Tibawi, *A Modern History*, 144.

Tibawi reproduces information demonstrating that no Catholic or American press published classical Arabic texts during the nineteenth century. Up until the last quarter of the nineteenth century they only printed religious materials and textbooks, of limited interest and distribution. On the other hand, native presses in Istanbul reproduced Arabic works from the beginning of the nineteenth century, and at Bulaq in Egypt from 1820 (which were extensively circulated in Syria during the Egyptian occupation). By mid-century Syrians began their own “secular” presses. It was these that first printed major works of Arabic literature. Tibawi, *A Modern History*, 141-42, 143-44; and “Some Misconceptions,” 16-17.

secular thought is Western in origin and that is was transmitted to, and then adapted by, Eastern Christians. Several questions then arise, which recent scholars have taken up: how did it come to be that Christians transmitted Western thought into the region? Did they shape this thought as they absorbed and adapted it, and if so, how, and in response to what?

In her recent survey of nineteenth- and twentieth-century *Contemporary Arab Thought* (2010), Elizabeth Suzanne Kassab points to Christians’ distinct role in the *nahda*. In a sentence whose many qualifications speak to the challenge of accurately and sensitively describing the matter, she points out how “Christian Lebanese thinkers from the mid-nineteenth century onward offered nonreligious, though not antireligious (but sometimes anticlerical) and certainly not anti-Islamic, views of progress and identity.”91 She relays how Christians’ position in Ottoman society and their contacts with the West, led them to experience “particular advantages” over Ottoman Muslims (e.g., they were more familiar with European languages, and able to respond to Western ideas without religious defensiveness) as well as “distinct inconveniences” (e.g., they were a minority in a Muslim majority, but were also disempowered as “Easterners” in the face of Western Christians and Western Christianity).92 Through this differentiation, Kassab explains why “a number of Arab Christians” advocated “more pronounced secularism,” through which they came to imagine “a vision of identity based on the Arabic literary heritage and common Arab history, as well as a solidarity around this identity across religious divisions.”93 Her portrayal maintains “secularism” as an idea transmitted to Christian Arabs through their contacts with the West, even as she refutes the view that Christian Arabs felt a greater affinity to Western

91 Kassab, 31.
92 Ibid.
93 Ibid., 31-32.
Christians than they did to Arab Muslims. She argues that it was their closeness to the latter that explains why Christian Arabs would use Western ideas to build a new “secular” sense of Arab identity, through which they could improve their disadvantaged minority position within Ottoman society.

The most prominent name among Syrian pioneers is Buṭrus al-Bustānī, a Maronite who was among the few to convert to Protestantism. Several writers (Makdisi 2008; Sheehi 2004; Zachs 2005) have recently treated al-Bustānī as a case study to illustrate the “interactions” and “exchanges” between Arab Christians and Protestant missionaries, and in order to suggest how and why Christians were among the first to articulate secular and nationalist ideas in Syria. Both Stephen Sheehi and Fruma Zachs argue, albeit in significantly different articulations, that secularism in Syria emerged as a reaction against the mission’s teachings and practices, and not as its legacy. For example, Zachs argues al-Bustānī appropriates the missionaries’ vision, transforming their “idea of [a Christian] Syria” into “a secular [Arab] one,” which better suited his needs and context. Sheehi, on the other hand, describes how al-Bustānī’s “secularism” developed “hand in hand with his nationalism,” as he came to distance himself from the Protestant mission because of its prejudiced policies which denied Arab congregations independence and refused converts leadership positions.

According to Sheehi, Syrian Christians were not drawn to secular Arab nationalism through some Christian affinity with the West, but rather the opposite. The lack of affinity they

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95 Zachs, 171; Cf. 127.


97 Sheehi expresses this in strong terms in his “Failure, Modernity, and the Works of Hisham Sharabi.”
experienced through their interactions with missionaries compelled them to realize an “Arab” identity as more meaningful and unifying than a Christian one.

**Shifting Paradigms**

The previous section observed two trends in recent studies of the Ottoman East, which react to and correct earlier misconceptions of the Orient as passive, and as awakened by the West, heralding modernity. The *nahḍa*, whose story is entwined in narratives of the West’s impact and the region’s modernity, is shaped by these shifts.

Whereas scholarship had once approached the *nahḍa*, whether literary, political, scientific, etc., though a lens attuned to its emulation of Western models, it is now increasingly common to seek local or indigenous articulations, in order to correct the Eurocentric biases of earlier research. Scholars whose groundbreaking research focused on Western hegemonic forms, whether or not named as such, have come to question or modify their earlier work. For example, in the preface to the 1983 reissue of *Arabic Thought in the Liberal Age*, Hourani reflects upon how he could have written a very different book. In 1962 he focused on exploring breaks, not continuities, and as such he worries he may have overly emphasized the “modern” [i.e. “Western] in Arabic thought, at the expense of the “traditional.” 98 More recently, renowned literary scholar Roger Allen (2007) calls upon “Arabic studies” to investigate “in greater detail the balance between…indigenous and imported cultural forces,” advocating a view which is open to “continuities” where it had once only imagined “ruptures.” 99 Allen announces this

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98 Hourani, viii-ix.

99 Allen, “Rewriting Literary History,” 253-54, 259. Allen’s work “The Arabic Novel” published a quarter-century earlier, was highly influential in the field of English-language Arabic literary criticism. In that work Allen traces and surveys the development of the “Arabic novel” as a genre whose “origins lie in the Western traditions.” Challenging
change optimistically, predicting that rectifying former imbalances will eventually enable a more accurate and complete understanding of the nahda.

Thanks to the more recent researches considering and revealing indigenous modernities well underway before the West’s violent intervention, it is now more commonly accepted that the East was already en route to some form of modernity before the West intervened and directed it as it would. And yet, 1798 remains pervasive as the starting point from which to narrate modern Egyptian and Middle Eastern history.

In a new introduction to the second edition of his Islamic Roots, Gran ruminates on why, despite all amassing powerful evidence to the contrary, the date of the French invasion remains the watershed moment in the writing of modern Egyptian history. After a lengthy discussion examining the range of possible explanations, Gran proposes the most convincing answer: the continued adherence to the “1798 paradigm” is “bound up with the maintenance of various contemporary hegemonies,” in particular the cultural hegemony of today’s “crusaderist democracies,” such as the United States.100 When modernity is understood as the technological and civilizational advances Napoleon is claimed to have introduced to Egypt, imperialist projects everywhere may be justified.

What is most interesting about Gran’s hypothesis, is not that it refutes the significance of 1798. Rather his observations make this date all the more meaningful, by drawing a direct link between the French mission civilisatrice and present imperialisms, less often named as such. Instead of arguing that 1798 is insignificant, or perhaps not so significant, it would be more

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100 Gran, Islamic Roots, xii, xxx-xxxv.
productive to reexamine how and why it is important and what mechanisms connect it to and differentiate it from what precedes and follows.\textsuperscript{101}

**Reinstating 1798: Colonialism, Orientalism, Modernity**

One consequence of the shift towards investigating indigenous modernities prior to 1798, whether intentional or not, is that it may minimize, and at times would seem to seek to minimize, the impact of colonialism and imperialism on the Middle East and elsewhere.\textsuperscript{102} Shaden Tageldin presents a compelling challenge to this turn, arguing for the centrality of 1798 to modernity’s periodization, and by extension to the entire *nahda* project.

In her *Disarming Words: Empire and the Seductions of Translation in Egypt* (2011), Tageldin critiques recent historiographies of “Egyptian-European cultural contact,” which tend to “downplay the impact of colonialism on Egyptian interest in European knowledge,” and argues that “the significance of the colonial must be exposed.”\textsuperscript{103} While influential scholars such as Hourani portray the first generation of *nahda* writers as precolonial and identify the *nahda*’s decline as a response to colonialism, Tageldin argues that the *nahda*—that “Arab ‘awakening’ that begins at a French daybreak”—is “(post)colonial” from its very start (110).

Tageldin dates the *nahda* from Egypt’s “first colonial confrontation with the modern West,” because this ruptural event generated a “new crisis and reorientation of Arab-Islamic

\textsuperscript{101} Dror Ze’evi argues that modernity is not what Napoleon brought to the Egypt in 1798, but rather, how he brought it. He explains that “what we call ‘modernity’ arose out of a series of very specific and contingent changes which are closely tied to Europe’s domination of or major intrusion into the rest of the world.” Dror Ze’evi, “Back to Napoleon? Thoughts on the Beginning of the Modern Era in the Middle East,” *Mediterranean Historical Review* 19.1 (2004): 86.

\textsuperscript{102} This turn can be seen in the growing preference for “earlymodern” in place of what had been called “precolonial.” It is worth considering whether and how these two designations functionally differ.

\textsuperscript{103} Tageldin, *Disarming Words*, 108; further citations to this text will be made parenthetically above.
consciousness” (110). Those who disregard the unique characteristics and consequences of 1798, who present it as just another spike in the “long and painful interaction between two cultures with two contradictory world-views,” neuter “the coloniality of the Napoleonic occupation” and dismiss “the distinctively (post)colonial cast” that characterizes “Egyptian-European cultural contact” thereafter (110).

Tageldin describes the reoriented consciousness of nahḍa exponents, who believed they could “renew the faded glory of indigenous cultural heritages” by imitating Europe’s literary, philosophical, and scientific modes (5). That they did so in Arabic enabled them to imagine they were maintaining cultural authenticity, even as they were transporting French or English into Arabic. In other words, the nahḍa appeared to “preserve” Arabic, when it was actually “translating” and transforming it (5, original emphasis). In this way nahḍa writings are pervaded by modernity’s paradox, intelligible in that barely audible whisper (“how do I become European?”) underlying the more pronounced and conscious assertion—“Am I not an Azharite/ Arab/ Muslim/ Egyptian?”

This, Tageldin argues, illustrates the (post)colonial condition of the dominated, who are seduced by the colonizer’s flattery into imagining equivalency where it does not exist, suppressing inequalities that threaten to surface, and refashioning their own culture and societies into what the dominator values.

The colonizing text knows how to mobilize “affect,” what Tageldin describes as “the attachment of the colonized to themselves, which…is also an attachment to their lost sovereignty,” in order to “strategically re-present the colonizer as the most flattering ‘likeness’

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104 Here Tageldin is citing and critiquing Hafez’s The Genesis of Arabic Narrative Discourse, 38.
Tageldin argues that writing reflecting this new (post)colonial cast can be seen from the time of the French occupation. She presents Hasan al-ʿAṭṭār’s Maqāmat al-Faransaṣīs (c. 1799), whose “subterranean love plot” she probes, as a text which “launches the (post)colonial nahḍa” (29, 102).

105 Tageldin’s introduction (1-2) makes use of ʿAbd al-Fattāḥ Kiliṭū’s Lan Tatakallama Lughatī (Thou Shalt Not Speak My Language), which articulates this question.
of the colonized” (17). In particular, Orientalism—“a translational form of cultural imperialism” (8)—most effected these developments, because it “translated Europe into Arab-Islamic terms” (7, original emphasis). Orientalist discourse captivated Egyptians because it sounded “like the language of the self” and presented “an illusory footing of ‘equal’ exchange” between the European and Egyptian (9). It “appeared to affirm Egypt’s Pharaonic and Arab-Islamic pasts as unbroken, still vital—uncolonized” (8). It engendered fantasies of Egypt’s equality, even superiority, to Europe, “in a global field that imperial Europe ultimately controls” (9).

Tageldin’s intervention lies in her observation that modern colonialism, and its imperialist afterlives, works most effectively not through domination or imposition, but through “love.” Orientalism produces “a politics of translational seduction,” which “lures the colonized into loving the colonizer as they would themselves” (17, original emphasis). Tageldin specifies three forms of translation building this politics: the interlingual, which renders one language into another; the intercultural, which transacts “epistemic ‘equivalence’ in economies of cultural exchange”; and the intersubjective, which translates “one’s self to resemble an Other’s.” Taken together these divert “the language, epistemes, and very being of the dominated to approximate those of the dominator” (13, original emphasis).

A politics of translational seduction “welds rupture to rapture” (26) enticing the colonized to willfully “endanger their own culture” (15), contributing to a loss of “cultural integrity” (23). Tageldin’s use of this politics connects to why she advocates an understanding of cultural imperialism (following John Tomlinson) as “loss rather than…imposition.” Deviating from

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106 She relates Thomas Trautmann’s study on the British in India, Aryans and British India, to the Egyptian context. Trautmann argues that the British employed “the Aryan idea” to establish a kinship between England and India, which he calls “a love story.” The Aryan idea “empowers the colonized to declare themselves as ‘equal to’ or ‘greater than’ the European,” a thesis made all the more attractive when “issued from the gaze of the colonizer.” As in India, Tageldin argues that “French and British Orientalist projections of affinity with Arabic, Islam, and the ancient Egyptian engender similar fantasies of modern Egyptian sovereignty…in a global field that imperial Europe ultimately controls” (9).
Tomlinson, who ascribes this loss to “the failure of the processes of collective will-formation,” Tageldin posits loss “as a function of the very will of the colonized to rediscover their ‘autonomy’ through the colonizer’s I’ (17-18, original emphasis). In other words, when Orientalists presented Arabs their history and their literature, as they did from 1798 onwards, it affected Arabs’ self-conception. It did this most powerfully, not by exposing deficiencies or “self-lack,” but through presenting the “lure of ‘reciprocity’—and the perception of self-value at its core” (8, original emphasis).

Some Closing Remarks on Cultural Imperialism and Loss:

Given Tageldin’s attention to the importance of self-value, it is surprising that she advocates an understanding of cultural imperialism as “loss.” She explains this choice by clarifying that what she calls “self-value” is only “perceived,” and that in reality the (post)colonial subject loses its true past self, once it comes to see itself through the eyes (and I) of the colonizer. “Loss,” then, is Tageldin’s interpretation of what the “perception of self-value” supplants.

The image of “loss,”—much like the charge of “assimilation” discussed at the close of chapter 1—is predicated on an underlying sense of cultural authenticity. Had the West not intervened as it had, and redirected Egyptian self-consciousness away from its preexisting culture, Egypt would have followed a more natural course of development. Mourning “loss” assumes that cultures are, or should be, autonomous, and that they can be more or less natural. It overlooks that this manifestation of loss, like the notion of culture, is of modern origin.107

Viewed from a different angle, Tageldin’s observations could more aptly show how cultural imperialism works through “[gain] rather than… imposition.” Through Orientalism, the dominated gain a history and a culture. This may or may not be the history or culture one would have wanted for them or they for themselves, but it is nonetheless acquired. The Orientalist (or professor) teaches, and the colonized (or student) learns. This does not mean that Egyptian Arabs (or German Jews, for that matter) do not impact and shape what modernity’s agents place before and ahead of them, as Elshakry’s example from the Syrian Protestant College above illustrates so well. But, as the objects of imperialism and not its agents, they do not set the terms.

The crisis or paradox of modernity is not caused by replacing one culture for another. It is not cultural loss, but the perception of loss, which obfuscates the transformations underway through which cultures and histories take shape as part of the reshuffling of peoples and emerging nations which characterize a secular globalizing modernity. Modernity’s paradox is a consequence of the problem of “Culture” and “cultures” and of “the very conception of the autonomy of cultures”—a problem which afflicts the non-Christian West and the colonized East differently and far more coercively than it has the Christian West.

That modernity’s “crisis” appears among nahda exponents suggests that emancipation is not its only cause, as some Wissenschaft commentators have interpreted. That it emerges among Wissenschaft exponents suggests it is not only a response to geopolitical colonialism.

Allowed entry into the German University, those Jews who found the Wissenschaft des Judentums encountered a transforming Europe they believed was moving, or capable of moving, or being made to move, beyond Christianity, and saw reason and science as what will equalize

\[108\] Chatterjee, Nationalist Thought, 17.
and unite humanity. Like those Egyptians who detached the benevolence of the French from their imperialist ambitions and fantasized themselves Europe’s equals, working together and alongside Europe to advance themselves, the first generation of Jews trained in the new German university believed that science—which bespoke of equivalence and equality across peoples and cultures—promised a better and more just configuration for political and intellectual power than the Christian universal it proclaimed to supersede.
CHAPTER 3

Reading Science in Leopold Zunz’s *Etwas über die rabinische Litteratur* (1818)

Leopold Zunz (1794-1886) is recognized by a general consensus as the founder of the *Wissenschaft des Judentums* (Science of Judaism), whose beginning is traced to his essay *Etwas über die rabinische Litteratur* (Some Remarks on Rabbinic Literature).<sup>1</sup> Written in 1817, while Zunz was a student at the recently founded University of Berlin, and published in May 1818, the work has been described as “the opening programmatic statement of *Wissenschaft des Judentums,*”<sup>2</sup> and as an “epoch-making manifesto,”<sup>3</sup> whose “sudden illumination of the

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Appendix I of the dissertation reprints the German text from Zunz’s *Gesammelte Schriften*, alongside a complete English translation of the essay.

References to *Etwas über die rabinische Litteratur* will be made parenthetically throughout the chapter.

unexpected range of ‘rabbinic literature’ ignited a new ‘scholarly agenda.’” Its contribution towards modern historical research is repeatedly emphasized, as is its singular status as marking “the actual birth of modern Jewish literary criticism.” This piece has been read, praised, and critiqued towards various ends, and yet surprisingly little attention has been paid to the founding and foundational concept of science it articulates. Even when described as a “plan of the science which he wished to be inaugurated” and one which “has long been justifiably revered as the cornerstone of the Wissenschaft edifice,” no exegetic effort has been devoted to the meaning and function of that rich word: science. Most of the attention given its contents has been confined to the essay’s influence on modern Jewish historiography, or summarized through erudite references to Philipp August Boeckh (1785-1867) and Friedrich August Wolf (1759-1824), whose classes Zunz attended while a student at the University. These tend to explain Zunz’s science as the transposition of Boeckh’s philology onto Jewish texts.

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This chapter elucidates the literature Zunz describes and the science he names. It approaches this in two directions. First, it focuses on Zunz’s ambivalence regarding the designation and parameters of “rabbinic literature,” drawing out three neglected interconnected dimensions of this piece: 1. Zunz’s struggle to name and delineate a literature produced by a single people in multiple languages; 2. his effort to defend this literature against Christian Hebraists’ attacks upon it; and 3. his intention to depict an object that both describes rupture and enables continuity. Second, by focusing on the different types of science present and put to use throughout the text, the chapter connects the discussion of “literature” to that of “science,” and shows how these both shape each other.

1818: Etwas über die rabbinische Litteratur

Immediately following its foreword, the essay opens by mentioning the “awe-inspiring remains from the blossoming age of the ancient Hebrews,” referring to “the Hebrew canon,” that is, the biblical literature. These texts contain the remnants of “the revolutions, which developed amidst the Jewish people” and have influenced “the rest of the earth,” and which, Zunz asserts, form “the foundation of the Christian states.” After evoking this highpoint, and calling the reader’s attention—both Jew and Christian—to how the Jewish people have influenced Christian and human life in general, Zunz turns to the subject of this essay: The “later products of the Hebrew nation,” which he argues comprise “a circuit of spiritual industry more admirable than the Greek,” and yet, have never received such appreciation (3).10

10 In this opening Zunz reverses the more commonly drawn distinction between the biblical Hebrews and diasporic Jews by referring to post-biblical works as products of “the Hebrew nation” and describing the (biblical) “Hebrew canon” as containing the ruins of what came about amidst “the Jewish people.”
As its title indicates, the essay provides a partial investigation into “rabbinic literature,” an object Zunz works to redefine and defend. Through describing its merits and illustrating its mistreatment by both Jews and Christians, particularly since the Protestant Reformation, Zunz aims to inspire and direct a neglected field of study he calls “our science.” Among this chapter’s central tasks will be to clarify these two entities—rabbinic literature and our science—and elucidate their relation to each other.

What is Rabbinic Literature?

There are two aspects to Zunz’s portrayal of rabbinic literature which are entirely neglected in discussions of the essay: the causes for its emergence and the multiple factors indicating its present-day disappearance.\(^\text{11}\) Instead, his definition is simply likened to all post-biblical literature, and often only to what is written in Hebrew.\(^\text{12}\) Such equations overlook the difficulty Zunz faces as he works to demarcate and designate a new literature. This omission has led scholars to neglect certain dimensions of the essay, overly emphasize others, and misread important points. A significant example of the latter is the statement that Zunz believes the Jewish people and their history have ended, when what he announces (and aims to effect) is the closure of “rabbinic literature,” not Jewish history.\(^\text{13}\) This misreading obscures how a central aim

\(^{11}\) Among the multiple factors described below, German Jews’ neglect of Hebrew is often the only one discussed.


\(^{13}\) Zunz’s claim (which will be examined below) that the formation of “rabbinic literature” is ending or has ended is repeatedly interpreted as his viewing “Jewish history” to be ending or having ended. For example: Meyer, “Emergence of Jewish Historiography,” 171; David Biale, Gershom Scholem: Kabbalah and Counter-History (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1979), 33; Max Wiener, “Jewish History and Historians,” Contemporary Jewish Record 7.3 (1944): 261; Wallach, 18; Wieseltier, 148-49.
of the piece is to propose and explain a program precisely in order to prevent the Jewish people’s disappearance.

From where does the “rabbinic” emerge? Zunz describes the flourishing and decline of the ancient Hebrew nation, whose intellectual powers of reproduction also decreased following its loss of political sovereignty. This, however, did not remain the case:

As the shadows of barbarism gradually lost ground from the darkened earth, and light spread over everything, likewise over the Jews who were dispersed everywhere, a new foreign learning tied itself to the remains of the ancient Hebrews; minds and centuries worked both into that literature, we call rabbinic. (3)

Zunz describes when rabbinic literature came to be, and provides a partial explanation for its emergence. It originates following an encounter between “the remains of the ancient Hebrews,” preserved among the dispersed Jews as the Hebrew canon, and a foreign learning or culture (Bildung). It develops out of a two stage process: first a foreign element ties itself to the ancient Hebrews’ remains; then, both that learning and those remains (i.e., the external and the internal) are transformed together through time and the activity of people into a new entity, called the “rabbinic.” Two points from this passage are significant for understanding how Zunz intends to use this object: First, the Jews precede the rabbinic, indicating that the rabbinic does not equal the Jews’ collective existence. Therefore its disappearance need not signal the end of the Jewish life.

Second, the rabbinic is the consequence of a profound transformation, impelled by a coming together of two different elements. Both of these—the foreign and the Jewish—are

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14 Zunz’s presentation here and in subsequent works suggests that major transformation within peoples is impelled by encounters (be these peaceful or violent) with other peoples. In his *Etwas*, Zunz does not elaborate upon what characterizes this “new foreign learning” (*neue fremde Bildung*).

In several subsequent works, Zunz develops more detailed periodizations (which vary somewhat from each other) for Jewish, and also world, history and literature. See for example his *Zur Geschichte und Literatur* (Berlin: Veit und Comp., 1845), 22-28; “Jüdische Literature,” (reprinted entry from the 1845 Brockhaus’ Conversationslexicon) *Gesammelte Schriften*, vol. 1 (Berlin: Louis Gerschel Verlagbuchhandlung, 1875), 101-11; *Die gottesdienstlichen Vorträge der Juden, historisch entwickelt* (Berlin: A. Ascher, 1832), 304-308.
transformed through the interaction and shaped into what the exchange produces. His use of the word “Bildung” to describe the non-Jewish entity in this meeting resonates with his present context, where Jews are enrolling in non-Jewish universities, and encountering German Bildung. Zunz calls attention to the conditions surrounding the beginnings of rabbinic literature because he sees a similarly profound change underway in the present.

At this, its first use apart from the essay’s title, Zunz inserts a footnote, instructing his reader how to understand “rabbinic”:

One should understand by this term only those works whose authors or whose content is rabbinic; fundamentally “rabbi,” which courtesy imparts to everyone, has less significance than “doctor.” Why not neo-Hebraic or Jewish literature? (3)

Zunz defines the “rabbinic,” and then asks whether it is the best name for what he describes—a question he poses but does not answer. While he suggests these two alternatives as possibly better suited for what he means by “rabbinic,” throughout the work he continues to employ “rabbinic” with the greatest frequency.15

Why does Zunz propose “Jewish” and “neo-Hebraic” as alternatives and then rarely use them? Several factors contribute to this choice, connected to the specificities of the object he works to build and describe in this particular essay. As presented above, “Jewish” is an inaccurate term, since in Zunz’s own description the Jews precede the emergence of rabbinic literature. “Neo-Hebraic” (neuhebräische) is a word that had been used by biblical scholars to

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15 Zunz uses “Jewish literature” only once more (10), also in a footnote, and “neo-Hebraic” one more time in the body of the essay (4) referring to literature (and twice when specifying post-biblical Hebrew language), whereas he employs “rabbinic literature” an additional seven times in the body of the essay (4 [twice], 5, 14, 23, 25, 31) and in its title. A term used more often than neo-Hebraic when modifying literature, is “Hebrew,” (even when referring to post-biblical literature), which appears twice in the body of the text (22, 26) and three times in the footnotes (22, 24, 29). Additionally, Zunz describes this literature as the: literature of the Jews (5 [twice]); literature of the people (5); literature of a nation (6); literary products of the Jewish people (7); and works of the Jewish nation (30).
distinguish post-biblical from biblical Hebrew (*hebräische*). Zunz, however, rarely maintains this differentiation as he uses “neo-Hebraic” only once more in the essay and refers to post-biblical works throughout as “Hebrew.” Two characteristics of the literature Zunz names make “neo-Hebraic,” or “Hebrew” for that matter, unacceptable categorical designations: First, both Hebrew and neo-Hebraic designate only a portion of that object identified as rabbinic, for Zunz provides examples throughout of rabbinic works written in other languages. Second, as will be clarified below, recent writings in Hebrew exist, which Zunz argues are most definitely not rabbinic.

Aside from the limitations of his suggested alternatives, why does Zunz use “rabbinic literature” most often? There are several interconnected factors informing this: First, Zunz aims to defend “rabbinic literature” against Christians’ attacks on it. Throughout the essay Zunz denounces Christians’ investigations into “rabbinic literature.” He repeats this in its closing paragraph, explaining how he hopes this work will “help dispel the bias generally set against [rabbinic literature]” by illuminating its better parts (30-31). To this he inserts a note explaining that “the sound Friedrich Rühs condemns [this literature] too generally and too strongly” (31n1). Ismar Schorsch has even suggested that one should read Zunz’s essay as “an inspired response” to his “academic adversary” Rühs, whose ancient history course Zunz enrolled in and withdrew from in the winter semester 1815-1816, because, as Zunz notes in his diary, “[Rühs] writes against the Jews.”

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16 An interesting consequence of German scholars having coined “neo-Hebraic” to refer to post-biblical Hebrew, is that Hebrew as it developed from the twentieth-century, in German, is called “Iwrit,” a German transliteration of the Hebrew word for the language (*ivrit*). Thus in German today one distinguishes between *Hebräisch* (biblical Hebrew), *Neuhebräische* (post-biblical Hebrew), and *Iwrit* (modern Hebrew).

17 Schorsch, “Breakthrough into the Past,” 19-20, citing Zunz’s diary, in *Das Buch Zunz*, introduced and published by Fritz Bamberger (Berlin: 1931), 19. Schorsch notes Zunz’s comment as responding to Rühs *Ueber die Ansprüche der Juden an das deutsche Bürgerrecht* (On the Claims of the Jews to German Citizenship), published in 1815 and
Zunz takes the term “rabbinic” from Christian scholars, because this is the tradition he engages with and is the main focus of his critique. This would shift later, once the *Wissenschaft des Judentums* develops. In fact, in an essay published in 1845 and significantly titled “Jewish Literature,” as a corrective no doubt to his terminological choice from this first essay, Zunz explains how “rabbinic literature” is a Christian misnomer for “Jewish literature,” and has been used by theologians to whom the Jews only ever appeared as “Church material.”

This observation, however, should not be understood to equate the two concepts in 1818. What Zunz describes as “rabbinic literature” in 1818 is not the same thing he describes in 1845 as “Jewish literature.”

Zunz prefers the designation “rabbinic” in his *Etwas* because it is especially well-suited to a central aim of the work. Zunz reflects on his current environment and observes that a massive change is underway. From this vantage point “rabbinic literature” appears as what can be made to speak to the discontinuity between the present and what has preceded it. By naming his object “rabbinic” Zunz challenges Christians’ attacks upon a literature they have defined, at the same time that he insists that the rabbinic no longer describes the Jews’ present. This name assists Zunz to defend the rabbinic and rebel against it at the same time.

In this essay, “rabbinic” designates a periodization with both a starting and end point. The Jews existed before it began and will, hopefully, continue after it ends. What Zunz would subsequently call “Jewish” literature includes the biblical literature, as well as what Jews produce in the post-rabbinic present.

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The End of Rabbinic Literature

Zunz observes how German Jews are presently undergoing profound collective transformation, similar in degree to what birthed the rabbinic. What are the conditions that led to this development?

Zunz begins by describing the decline of rabbinic literature. He traces this to a twofold process whereby European literature came to flourish as, and partially through, its attacks on the rabbinic. Zunz dates this from the Reformation, when Christian Europe undertook “a lively study of the biblical books,” accompanied by “a curious zeal for rummaging through the Orient.” These comparative ventures led its scholars to reflect on their own lands and take a new interest in the “fatherland’s [i.e., Europe’s, as opposed to the Orient’s] more amiable products,” an occupation which coincided with attacks upon “rabbinic wisdom” (4). These circumstances came to shape the inverse relation that developed between the two, especially over the past hundred years:

…rabbinic literature declined to the extent that European [literature] flourished, and the Jews began connecting themselves to it. Even what still belongs to the former from the last fifty years, has borrowed only the language from [rabbinic literature] as an accessible learned garment for ideas that must prepare for a time when rabbinic literature will have ceased to live. (4)

19 It is no coincidence that Zunz dates this from the Reformation. This moment marked a change in Hebraism from a venture aimed at converting Jews, to one where Christians turned to the biblical word in their efforts to challenge the authority of the Church.

20 The “fatherland” is not specified, although Zunz’s identification of two literatures—the European and the rabbinic—which connect to “the fatherland’s more amiable products” and “rabbinic wisdom” respectively, suggests “European” as a fitting designation.

21 Zunz does not use the phrase “rabbinic literature” but “rabbinic wisdom,” differentiating between Christian scholars’ attacks on the rabbis, and that new more comprehensive term Zunz calls “rabbinic literature”—about which those scholars are largely ignorant.

Zunz’s observation is remarkably similar to one of Edward Said’s arguments about “modern Orientalism,” namely, that “European culture gained in strength and identity by setting itself off against the Orient.” Orientalism, 3. Before a “secular” Orientalism exercised its knowledge of and over the Orient in the nineteenth-century as part of its colonial and imperial ventures, Zunz observes how Christian Hebraists were denigrating post-biblical literature to serve their religious and later national interests.
Zunz’s observes that the more Christian Europe defined itself against the rabbinic, the stronger the European became and the weaker the rabbinic. As this relation grows more pronounced, some Jews began to attach themselves to the European, furthering the increasingly inverse relation between the two. This change signals the closure of the rabbinic period, which could develop in at least directions: 1. Jews could choose to participate in European literature at the expense of the rabbinic and relinquish any attachment to it, and possibly cease to be a part of the people who produced it; or 2. Jews’ attempts to engage the European—and the impact of that upon them, and vice versa—may effect their productions such that “rabbinic” no longer applies to what they produce.

In the passage cited above, Zunz presents a highly significant, yet little noted, observation, describing the latter development. He argues that literature produced in Hebrew in the last 50 years (i.e., since the time of Mendelssohn) may appear to be “rabbinic” because of the language in which it is written, but, in actuality, shows how the rabbinic has come to its end. Zunz does not disparage this point, but the opposite. He positively points out how the Hebrew language has obtained “a more pure and more beautiful form” in the last hundred years and cites many excellent Hebrew prosaists as illustration.22

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22 His observation evokes Tageldin’s critique of nahda exponents for translating French into Arabic language, through which it transformed the language and the people’s consciousness. Unlike Tageldin, who focuses on the imperial force behind this change, and intimates that this deauthenticates it, Zunz views the influence of the European upon the rabbinic as a potentially very good thing.

23 Examples include (18n2): Moses Mendelssohn (1729-1786), Isaiah Beer-Bing (1759-1805), Isaac Euchel (1758-1804), Naphtali Hirz Wessely (1725-1805), Herz Homberg (1749-1841), Samuel Romanelli (1757-1814), Lipmann Moses Büschenthal (1784-1818), Isaac Satanaw (1703-1805), Baruch ben Judah Löb Lindau (1759-1849), Moshe Chaim Luzzato (1707-1746), and several contributors to the journal Meassef.

In Zunz’s Zur Geschichte und Literatur, (which no longer speaks of “rabbinic” literature but “Jewish) he offers an eleven epoch periodization of “Jewish literature,” beginning from Alexander the Great (330 BCE) through to the present. Nearly three decades after his 1818 essay, he offers the following description of the transformation characterizing the most recent epoch: “In the year 1755, with which the eleventh epoch begins… two young men alone began understanding their course leading to culture and freedom. Led by Lessing and Mendelssohn, European, thus also Jewish, humankind is finally reaching consciousness of its mission. Thus, Jewish literature then also
Zunz’s optimism, however, is tempered by the alarming observation that at the same time that some Jews are beautifying and purifying the Hebrew language, an even greater number of German Jews appear to be abandoning it:

…precisely because in our time we are seeing the Jews—limiting this to the German ones—with greater seriousness seizing upon the German language and German learning, thereby—perhaps often without wanting to or suspecting—carrying the neo-Hebraic literature to the grave, science steps forth and demands an account of that [literature] which has closed. (4)

It is not the closure of the rabbinic that causes alarm; the rabbinic is ending and in fact needs to and should end. However, this change also presents a very serious existential threat: the burial of neo-Hebraic literature. This is Zunz’s one and only use of “neo-Hebraic literature” in the body of the essay, presented here for its juxtaposition against the German language, whose wholehearted embrace—when at the expense of Hebrew—Zunz claims, is threatening to cut Jews off from their own literature and history.

This passage illustrates the advantage *neuhebräische* has over “rabbinic,” namely, its connection to the people’s “former collective language,” which constitutes one of the fundamental elements making the Jews a people.24 Even though rabbinic literature contains writings in multiple languages, Hebrew occupies a unique place among the many languages in which Jews have written. If Jews can no longer understand Hebrew, then they will lose access to the very texts speaking to their ancient unity as a people. Thus, German Jews discarding Hebrew, threatens not only to sever them from some portion of rabbinic literature, but far more significantly from the origins of their collective existence.

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The danger is imminent: without intervention, this literature, together with the people who have produced it, will disappear. There is, however, a way to prevent this from materializing: this crisis requires heeding the demands of “science.”

The Intervention: “Our Science”

It is in response to an existential crisis, that science “steps forth and demands an account of what has closed.” How is its demand to be met? The answer comes through the first mention of one particular science in the text: “our science” (unsere Wissenschaft).

Before explaining what “our science” is, Zunz jumps to describe a use for it, highlighting how the crisis of the present is political as it is existential:

Now, we believe, working on our science on a grand scale becomes an obligation, and an even weightier one, because the complicated question about the fate of the Jews, seems to be able to be answered, in some paragraphs, through it. (4)

The question of emancipation has been widely and heatedly debated in German states beginning from 1781 and the publication of Christian Wilhelm Dohm’s famous treatise On the Civic Improvement of the Jews.25 Most public discussion has been furthered by Christian writers focusing on the rights and duties of citizens and the state to each other, and whether Jews can be made into productive citizens, and if so, under what conditions and limitations. Zunz argues that proposals aiming to answer the “question about the Jews’ fate” have been fundamentally flawed due to misunderstandings regarding the nature of the Jewish people. It is for this reason that “our science”—a field open to Jews as well as Christians, and benefiting both, albeit differently—may be able to help contribute to a just resolution to this question.

Zunz explains that for reforms to be considerate and effective, they must follow from thoughtful and serious investigation. Too hasty innovations confuse the old and the antiquated, and sometimes even value the latter more highly (5)! 26 Zunz instructs:

In order to know and to classify the old as useful, the antiquated as harmful, and the new as desirable, we must thoughtfully and seriously commence with the study of the people and its history, of the political as of the moral. Precisely what produces the greatest harm is that the matter of the Jews is handled just like their literature. One pounces upon both with biased ardor, and has them assessed either too low or too high. (5)

“Our science”—here suggested to be “the study of the [Jewish] people and its history”—would contribute to shaping effective reforms, because it would enable the classification of what from the Jews’ political and moral history is useful (the old), harmful (the antiquated), and desirable (the new). The second sentence of the quotation points to the two parties Zunz views as especially responsible for furthering misunderstandings about the Jews through incorrectly judging their literature: rabbis, who rate the Jews’ literature too high; and Christians, who assess it too low. 27 The problem, as Zunz describes it, is not that “the Jews’ matter” and the “Jews’ literature” are handled in the same way, but that incorrectly knowing and appraising the latter results in misunderstanding the former.

Zunz presents this digression from “the literature of the people to its civic existence” in order to explain the interplay between the two, and also to emphasize why the condition of “our science” should concern the Christian reader as well as the Jewish one. It is only after presenting this use for “our science,” that Zunz takes up the task of explaining how to proceed to be able to

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26 Zunz alludes to Dohm’s 1781 treatise on the Jews’ civic improvement (Über die bürgerliche Verbesserung der Juden), when he claims that “the askewed outcome takes revenge on every inconsiderate so-called improvement (jede rücksichtlose sogenannte Verbesserung),” before noting that “hasty innovations grant the old, and—what is most dubious—the antiquated, a higher value” (5).

27 Zunz would later add two more segments (not necessarily distinct) to those he critiques: those Jews “who offer to sell their antiquity in exchange for Emancipation” and those (Reform) theologians from whom “our science should first of all emancipate itself.” Zunz, Zur Geschichte und Literatur, 17, 21.
give “an account of [that literature] which has closed,” as science demands. His explanation begins with a set of provocative questions, which he addresses throughout the remainder of the essay:

How is it, one could ask, that at a time when a magnificent complete view spreads its clear rays over all sciences, over all human activity when the furthest reaches of the earth are visited, the most unknown languages studied, and no material that serves to build wisdom is disdained—how is it that our science alone languishes? What prevents us from knowing entirely the contents of rabbinic literature, from properly understanding, successfully explaining, correctly judging, and comfortably surveying it? (5)

Our science is not the only particular science for it shares a relation to all sciences, and yet, it suffers uniquely from all others. Why, Zunz asks, in this age of reason and advancement, is only “our science” neglected? What prevents us—and here Zunz begins to describe what this science needs to do—from correctly knowing, understanding, explaining, judging and surveying “rabbinic literature?” Zunz does not name those and what is responsible for this obstruction until after he himself surveys the research done thus far on rabbinic literature, in order to substantiate its current deficiencies.

In the above passage, at the word “judging” (beurtheilen), Zunz inserts a footnote:

We do not fear being misunderstood: Here the entire literature of the Jews, in its greatest extent, is assembled as the object of research, without our caring whether its entire contents should or could also be a norm for our own judgment. (5n1)

Zunz explains the proper posture the researcher must take when investigating rabbinic literature, in order to make it into the object of a science. It must be treated objectively without regard for the potential outcomes and consequences of research. Zunz does not claim that outcomes should not affect society and social norms. In fact, he argues that they should and that they must. However, science and research must direct norms; norms cannot be permitted to direct research. Here, Zunz specifically instructs his Jewish reader, for whom rabbinic literature provides, or has provided, models and guidelines for behavior. It is worth noting that in this directed aside, which
differentiates the requirements of a present held to the standard of science from those of the preceding era, Zunz defines the object of this science as “the entire literature of the Jews, in its greatest extent,” his most expansive definition. Here he would even seem to be describing a different object from what he calls the rabbinic, by omitting any beginning or end to this corpus of texts. In this aside directed at his Jewish readers, he comes closer to what he would subsequently name “Jewish literature.”

How Should “Our Science” Be Researched?

Zunz describes two types of preliminary works which are currently missing, but necessary to be able to think of “our object in question” in clarity (6). While works such as good translations, biographies, correct manuals, etc., are beneficial and needed, Zunz views research that is comprehensive, systematic, and diachronic, taking on the literature of hundreds or even thousands of years as of a higher rank. Even these researches, for example, the explanations of philosophical systems or histories of individual doctrines, however, would fail to meet the “higher demand,” if the scholar neglects to “see the forest for the trees” (6). Zunz advises:

Whoever examines the literature of a nation as the entrance to the complete knowledge of its course of culture (ihres Culturganges) through all times—how, in each moment its being takes shape from the data and the addenda (i.e., from the internal and the external); how fate, climate, manners, religion and chance take hold of one another amicably or hostilely; and how, ultimately the present stands here as the inevitable result of all existing phenomena—truly that person steps with awe before this temple of the gods, and may modestly lead himself into the entrance hall, and from the gable enjoy the exalted view below, once he is more worthy of it. (6-7)

The researcher must remain aware of the bigger picture as he deeply and thoroughly investigates his subject matter. When investigating the literature of a nation, of which “rabbinic literature” is one example, this means that any works examined connect to the greater whole of which they are a part, that is, to the nation’s “course of culture.” Were all the works of a people’s literature from
all times and places known and understood, then together the perfect whole these form would show the development of the people’s being, its singularity, throughout time.

One cannot approach the whole, however, except through its parts. Thus, to achieve this higher view “our science” must be turned into “a complete compartment of sciences.” This will enable “each part is to be tended, so that the whole should not become disfigured by substantial flaws” (7). Zunz illustrates what this entails through a bibliographic survey of “the literary products of the Jewish people.” He introduces this section as wanting to “set in order the more distinguished material from this directory of sciences for the reader’s review” (7).

Zunz moves through this directory categorically. He begins by addressing “what is subject to the church” (theology, mythology, religion) (7-8) before moving onto “that of the state” (legislation, jurisprudence, comparative jurisprudence) (9-10) and then “ethics” which is a “source of both the religious and the juridical principle (10-11). He next examines man “as denizen of the earth,” highlighting those sciences which pertain to his “knowledge of nature” (astronomy, geography, mathematics, natural science, medicine) (11-14) before considering those pertaining to the “use of nature” (industry, trade, technology, architecture) (14-15). The survey culminates in two final categories: those sciences which engage the “universal life of the nation,” where “history” (Geschichte), identified as transient, is distinguished from “knowledge of antiquity” (Alterthumskunde), which is enduring (16); and those sciences (poetry, rhetoric, grammar, lexicography) (16-21) which investigate language, itself described as “the lever for handling and assembling this mass of materials” (16).

All the sciences in this directory connect to “man,” how he perceives his world, and how he collectively engages with it. Zunz aims to demonstrate that “our (particular) science” is a true science, no less legitimate than any science of any other people’s literature, by drawing out its
composite sciences. These exist across it and connect it to others’ sciences. Just as Zunz instructs his reader to approach “our (singular) science” through examining its parts, it appears possible that “our science,” while a whole unto itself, may also be subsumed within a greater one.

*What is the Method of Science?*

How does one investigate these materials? As an answer Zunz sketches out the “theoretical bones of [philological] criticism” (30):

If we now look upon this immeasurable material somewhat more attentively, in order to research, to order, and to produce under the aegis of criticism, then we behold this [aegis] helping us triply in our work, which is to say that we will be able to perceive and to appraise the given thought, the communication [of it], and the modality of our knowledge [of it]. Regarding this we accordingly divide criticism theoretically into three parts: the doctrinal, encompassing the ideas; the grammatical, encompassing language; and the historical (die historische), encompassing the account (die Geschichte) of these ideas from the moment of communication until they reach our knowledge in the present. (7)

Operating under the aegis of criticism means researching, ordering, and producing. This project is investigative (works are to be uncovered and discovered), it is systematizing (works are to be arranged in relation to other works so as to contribute towards a more comprehensive understanding of the whole of which each is a part), and it is creative (the researcher produces studies that illuminate their object, thereby transforming one’s cognizance of the materials “our science” treats). Those events whose perception and appraisal is sought are threefold: 1. the thought (the doctrinal) which is given (as ideas); 2. the communication (the grammatical) of that thought (in language); and 3. the manner (the historical) through which one comes to know of it (as an account). The “given thought” or the “idea” is what links criticism’s three interconnected parts (the doctrinal, grammatical, and historical) together.

Zunz’s description of these divisions connects particulars (ideas; languages; accounts) to their universals (the doctrinal; grammatical; historical). Communication (in language) is the
moment when the account of an idea commences, thus an account of ideas begins in language. Original ideas—what is given, i.e., the data—themselves precede language and thus history. The task of the researcher when examining the literature of a people, is to employ all the tools of language to trace the history of ideas as evident in texts.

Language is an enigmatic, yet invaluable, dimension of criticism. It is able to trace the history of ideas, in part, because it carries its own history within itself. Zunz describes language as the “lever for handling and assembling this mass of materials.” And yet he also depicts it as crossly withholding its higher treasures from the researcher, who must endure its tenacity because of its unique function:

For language is the first friend, who descending, leads us onto the bridges to science, and the last, to whom we longingly return—it alone can tear down the veil of the past—it alone can prepare minds for the future. For that reason one researching must bear its obstinacy, since what centuries begot can only be made more perfect by centuries. (17)

Language initiates the researcher’s investigations and is the bearer of the knowledge he seeks. It is the thread that carries ideas from the origin into and through history, connecting them to the present and the present to the past. It alone can reveal the past for what it was and, more importantly is. Language can fulfill this unique function because it bears its own development within itself, and yet it is this very attribute that frustrates the researcher and demands patience and diligence.

While Zunz’s depiction of language seems to propose that the veil separating the past could be removed so as to reveal events as they once were, he elsewhere suggests that unaltered retrieval is unattainable:

…even equipped with all requisite foundations, knowledges and aids, we always generate new ideas and new material when treating ideas; bibliography, criticism of treatment, and history, are produced, not merely by science but also again by history itself. And just as already found matter [pl.], which we weave into science as something that can be perceived objectively, are originally the subjective treatment of an older idea, so too is
the particular art, through which we appropriate science, turned into new material to be processed by us and by posterity. (26-27)

The cycle of criticism constantly propels itself forward as the researcher generates new ideas, expanding the doctrinal and initiating language and history into new creative processes. The objective understanding of an ancient idea is irretrievable, because all that exists in language is already, by necessity, a treatment of an idea whose origin precedes language. Still, Zunz argues, while it is not possible to recover the past unmitigated, were one to treat materials as subjective and not objective, and to do so objectively not subjectively, then it would be possible to move closer to a more accurate knowledge of what was and came to be.

The preceding citation stands out from the rest of Zunz’s essay, because of the activity and passivity of science it presents. Here, history’s unfolding is responsible for generating new ideas which estrange one from the past. It suggests that if bibliography, criticism of treatment, and history were produced only by science and not also by history, then these would be recoverable. After all, science—unlike history, whose very nature is transient and self-perpetuating—is already fully formed. And yet, another “science” appears in the second half of the passage—one which the researcher makes by weaving material into it [science], thereby treating and appropriating it.

How should one make sense of these two different descriptions of science? To do so requires separating two entities, both of which the above terms “science”—one which acts and one which is acted upon. One exists outside of human activity. And then there is what humans’ create when they attempt to treat “science,” weaving materials into it, thereby coming to appropriate, possess, and create a science.
Why Does “Our Science” Alone Languish?

Once Zunz illustrates the insufficiencies of research thus far on rabbinic literature, as well as the existence of resources and texts which promise to yield fruitful results if investigated according to the rigor and standards of science and criticism, he turns to directly answer (23-26) his previously posed question (5): Why, of all sciences, does only ours languish? He explains that all sciences suffer “the misfortune of human imperfection,” but only “our science” also faces “completely peculiar prejudices” which at least partially explain its decline and have partly caused its defects (23). Zunz holds both Christians and Jews responsible for this state.28

Practical considerations, such as meager or absent opportunities for gainful employment and the great linguistic skills required, equally deter both Jews and Christians from taking up the task of “our science.” However, when it comes to the ideal of objectivity, Jews and Christians face different obstacles. Zunz bemoans how most often Christians have approached this study “not out of love, but rather out of hate,” deploping the partisanship through which “everything that even only superficially looked like evidence against the Jews and Judaism was a welcome find.”29 Christian “scholars culled together half-understood scraps from the corners, in order to publicly shame their eternal adversary” (24). Jews, however, have not been more successful at achieving objectivity, for there exists also “a domestic (einheimischer) fanaticism, accompanying

28 Christians have primarily developed the field Zunz describes and it is their works he largely relies upon. The vast majority of Zunz’s bibliographical citations are taken from the catalogs compiled by Giulio Bartolocci (1613–1687), Carlo Giuseppe Imbonati (c.1696), Johann Christoph Wolf (1683–1739), and Giovanni Bernardo de Rossi (1742–1831). Added to this are a few researches by Jews: Azariah de Rossi (c. 1513-1578), Moshe Chaim Luzzato (1706-1746), Uri Zebi Rubenstein (c. 1806), and Chaim Joseph David Azulai (1724-1807).

29 Christian authors, whose studies Zunz mentions and critiques, include: Giovanni Pico della Mirandola (1463–1494), Johannes Reuchlin (1455–1522), Guillaume Postel (1510–1581), Johann Buxtorf the Elder (1564–1629), Andreas Sennert (1606–1689), Johann Christoph Wagenseil (1633–1705), and Jacopo Gaffarelli (1601–1681), Jacques Basnage (1653-1725), Johann Andreas Danz (1654-1727), Johann David Michaelis (1717-1791), Johann Ulrich Roeder (1739-1816), Friedrich Christian Rühls (1781-1820), Wilhelm Gesenius (1786-1842), and Wilhelm Martin Leberecht de Wette (1780-1849).
alongside the foreign (fremden) one.” A carelessness (eine Sorglosigkeit) due to familiarity, has caused the destruction of important works and “robbed otherwise good minds of their impartiality,” preventing them from viewing “their material with just eyes” (24). Where there was good will, there lacked classical learning (klassische Bildung) and where scholars were learned, they failed to make themselves “native in the Hebrew spirit” and learn how to “feel with the author” (25).

“Our Science,” “The Science,” and the Most Worthy Aim of all Research

Zunz describes several goals of “our science.” Is there a single most worthy aim of all research? Zunz addresses this question towards the end of the essay, where he connects and differentiates “our science” and “the science”—one human, one immortal—at the same time that he binds them together. He assigns “philosophy” a particular role linking one to the other.

“Our science,” like all sciences, is located among the “stomping ground of human activity,” while [the] “science” is elevated physically above. Philosophy mediates between the two. Philosophy is “the essence of wisdom” and also the “higher historical knowledge” of how that wisdom has proceeded through centuries and been recorded, handled, and mishandled, in texts (27). It is due to its dual nature that philosophy can play the mediatory role it does, moving between the “stomping ground of human activity,” (the sphere of “sciences” and history) and what is elevated eternally above (the sphere of “science” and wisdom).

Zunz describes philosophy as “the highest guide, whenever we take it upon ourselves to apprehend the intellectual magnitude (Grösse) of the people and to render what is discerned”

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30 Zunz cites examples of this fanaticism (24n4): He criticizes “a senseless rabbi” who allowed the single existent manuscript of M. C. Luzzato’s psalms to be burned “out of zeal for the Davidian ones,” as well as the writings of baptized Jews, who “often sought to ingratiate themselves through fanatic persecution,” for example, Friedrich Brentzius’ (formerly Samuel) Jüdischer adgestreifter Schlangenbalg (Jewish snakes skinned).
This aim, however, is not the highest or most worthy of all research, though it is a requisite one on the way to realizing that achievement:

In this way, [i.e. by discerning the intellectual greatness of the people] every historical datum...becomes a contribution to the knowledge of man, which alone is the most worthy aim of all research. But also only this higher view is suited to science, which survives exalted above all earthly pettiness, lands and nations; only it can one day lead us to a true history of Jewish philosophy, in which the minds’ course of ideas is determined and understood. (27-28)

That knowledge which is the most worthy aim of all research, of any and every science, is not knowledge of a nation, but contributing to the “knowledge of man,” (i.e., what man knows and what is known about man). Through investigating a particular collectivity one may be led to universal knowledge. This may be the most worthy aim, but it is not the final one. When one ascends to realize some “knowledge of man,”—towards which “our science” may contribute—acquiring that knowledge may lead the researcher (back) to “a true history of Jewish philosophy.”

“What is Science?”

Unlike “rabbinic literature,” which Zunz works to found anew, delineate, and explain, “science” is taken for an understood term throughout the essay, presented without clarification. However, when focusing on its use, it becomes clear that Zunz refers to different things by the same term “science.” There is: 1. universal science; 2. the sciences of people’s literatures (i.e., philologies), of which “our science” is one example; and 3. the sciences which exist within and across those of the second category (e.g., theology, jurisprudence, astronomy, mathematics, etc.). This section aims to differentiate and describe these three categories of science and elucidate the connections between them.
The sciences of the third category never act, but are acted upon, as illustrated by the transformation of “our science” into a whole compartment of sciences. Their use furthers Zunz’s arguments in several ways: First, the presence of these within the materials of rabbinic literature legitimize that literature as an object worthy of being made into an object of research. These sciences connect the literatures of different peoples, enabling comparison because the same concepts (theology, jurisprudence, astronomy, mathematics, etc.) are present across them. Additionally, they model the importance of investigating the whole through its parts. Figure 1 below illustrates the relation between the second and third category of sciences:

![Interconnecting sciences](image)

| Sciences of literatures and the sciences within and across them | 2. A science of a people’s literature (e.g. “our science”) | 3. A science within and across those of peoples’ literatures (e.g. astronomy) |

Figure 1: Interconnecting sciences

The connection between the sciences of the third category and those of the second mirrors, in certain respects, the relationship between the sciences of peoples’ literatures and the universal singular science. Thus, Zunz’s methodological assertion that all sciences of the third type should be investigated so as to ensure the accuracy of the investigation of a science of the second type, foretells the universal implications for “our science” regarding humankind’s cognizance of the knowledge connected to *the* science.

As much as this essay advocates striving for the “knowledge of man,” it is also about doing so through the particular collectivities of humankind known as peoples or nations. This
essay is built upon the relation and connection between “our science” and “the science,”
dynamics which can be generalized to exist between all sciences which make the literature of a
nation into an object of research and the universal science which itself outlives all nations. It is
thus that Zunz identifies the view which seeks to contribute to “the knowledge of man” as the
most worthy aim of all research, towards which “our science,” like others’ sciences, may be
made to contribute. Figure 2 below illustrates the relation between the three categories of
science, including the bi-directional movement of philosophy as mediator between (the) science
(above) and the sciences of peoples’ literatures (below).

Figure 2: On the relation of the three categories of science to each other, including philosophy’s role in their connection

Unlike the interconnected structure between sciences of the second and third type which
requires no mediation, an agent is needed to connect the sciences of the second type to the
universal sublime science above and beyond them. Philosophy is suited to this task because it
contains within itself characteristics of both spheres: wisdom and history. The crux of Zunz’s
eysay is the relation between the science and sciences of peoples’ literatures.
As the survey of sciences above begins to reveal, the first and second categories of science are strikingly contrasted. To begin, only the singular universal science is fixed. No action effects a change within it, though humans’ perception and awareness of it may vary. It is also the only category of science which acts. It is this science which “steps forth” (auftreten) and “demands” (verlangen) an intervention at the moment rabbinic literature disappears (4). It is “mute” (stumm) because it precedes language, which initiates ideas into history (1). It is a thing for which a “battalion of representatives take to the field” (zu Felde ziehen) through writing (1). This singular and universal science serves as a goal, as an aim towards which one is lead, and as a foundation. And finally (the) science “survives exalted above (überleben erhaben) all earthly pettiness, lands and nations,” which produce the materials that particular sciences treat (27).

Contrasted against the fixed immortal science elevated above, “our science” (representative of all sciences of the second category, i.e., those which investigate peoples’ literatures) is affected through its treatment. It is created by humans’ attempts to treat rabbinic literature in accord with the ideal of science. Works may “enrich” (bereichern) it by important discoveries, or may “reform” (umformen) it through new perspectives (6). Each of its parts (i.e. the sciences of the third category) should “be cultivated” (sein gepflegt) so that the entirety (i.e., a science of the second category) is not “deformed” or “disfigured” (werden verunstaltet) (7). In contrast to the physical and temporal location of the singular universal, outliving all earthly matters, independent and elevated above all human activity, “our science” languishes, (literally, “lies on the ground,” daniederliegen), its unfortunate state the result of humans’ mistreatment and imperfection (5).

And yet, these two categories (i.e., the universal science and the sciences of peoples’ literatures) are not only contrasted against each other. Taking “our science” as an example, Zunz
claims it can lead to the most worthy aim of all research, which is not knowledge of the nation, but contributing towards the universal knowledge of man. Still, the only path to approach that sublime universal is by investigating its constituent elements (i.e., through investigating peoples via their literatures). Not only does Zunz link the particular to the universal, but the reverse as well. For only this highest view can lead one back to better realizing the aims of particular sciences.

When one ascends to capture a glimmer of the universal, one’s awareness of the particular below becomes more complete. Thus, the channels between sciences and science move in both directions. In other words, one who has gained knowledge through the ascent (to science) may also gain additional knowledge when descending (to sciences), that is from “man” to “the nation.”

*On History, Literature, and Science: Rupture, Continuity, Transformation*

As much as this piece aims to defend rabbinic literature against Christians’ denigration of it, it also seeks to produce a present that is no longer rabbinic. Zunz describes and seeks to effect rupture, and at the same time aims to build continuity between the past and present. The tools he uses to break with the rabbinic past and strengthen the Jewish nation are history, literature, and science.

The question of the Jews’ survival is dependent upon Christians in a present where a “complicated question about the fate of the Jews” exists. After all, what is this question but a continuation of the Christian prejudices and biases that Zunz goes to great lengths to show have afflicted the study of rabbinic literature over the past three hundred years? This is why he suggests that were “our science” developed, and Jewish literature objectively investigated, then
this complicated question may be resolved. When Zunz bemoans the unique prejudices “our science” alone suffers and praises how “such times are past” (24) due to the “greater culture” (4), he is urging his Christian reader to live up to the present’s ideals.

The way for Jews to continue past the rabbinic and into the present is as a people. What this means is that they have a literature and a history, recognized and valued by other peoples. This explains the bibliographic survey comprising half the essay’s length. In addition to Zunz’s stated aims of proving the deficiencies of past research and illustrating the fruitful possibilities that the study of rabbinic literature promises to yield, he also divides these materials into universal disciplines. Zunz aims to demonstrate to his Christian reader that rabbinic literature is of human universal value, and with it the Jews. The survival of the Jewish people—at stake in the question of the Jews’ fate—will depend on the recognition that its literature is as legitimate as others’ literatures and that its investigation can be just as beneficial to humankind.

Zunz reflects on the present, and expresses great optimism. He portrays the dawn of a new age underway, characterized and distinguished from the preceding one by the ideal and practice of science. Science has now stepped forth and shown the Jews how to continue their existence as a collectivity through their literature. Further the structure of sciences shows how the matter of any people’s literature is a concern to all peoples. In this “more liberal age,” Zunz is hopeful that both Jews and Christians will overcome their theological biases. In the new present, governed by universal science, each people must matter to the collective whole of humankind.
CHAPTER 4

Reading Science in Rifāʿa al-Tahtāwī’s Ṭakhlīṣ al-Ibrīz ilā Talkhīṣ Bārīz

This chapter presents a new reading of a seminal text, Rifāʿa Rāfiʿ al-Tahtawī’s Ṭakhlīṣ al-Ibrīz ilā Talkhīṣ Bārīz (The extrication of gold towards the summation of Paris).1 This text, first published in Cairo in 1834, describes al-Tahtawi’s sojourn in Paris (1826-1831), where he accompanied a mission of students sent to study by Egypt’s governor Muhammad ʿAli.2 The group’s purpose was to learn European sciences so as to reduce Egypt’s reliance upon costly European instructors and facilitate the governor’s modernization projects.3

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1 All citations in this chapter are to the first edition: Ṭakhlīṣ al-Ibrīz ilā Talkhīṣ Bārīz aw al-Dīwān al-Nafīs bi-Īwān Bārīs (Būlāq, 1834), hereafter Ṭakhlīṣ.

A second edition, revised by al-Tahtawi, was published in 1849. It was reprinted in 1861, and then again in 1905. The work’s next publication was not until 1958, during the United Arab Republic (UAR). In the 1970s it appeared in volume 2 of al-Tahtawi’s complete works (1973) as well as in a work on “the roots of modern Arabic thought” in al-Tahtawi’s writings (Usūl al-Fikr al-ʿArabī al-Hadīth ‘ind al-Taḥtāwī), by Mahmūd Fāhmi Hijāzī, in 1974 and reissued in 1994. Readers of the Arabic text seem to have increased from the 1990s, as suggested by several printings in that decade (1991, 1993, 1994), and in the one that followed (2001, 2002, 2005, 2007).

It was first translated into Turkish, in 1839 (which coincides, not coincidentally, with the start of the Tanzimat reforms), commissioned by Muhammad ʿAli, and disseminated to officials throughout the Ottoman Empire. It was well over a century before the work was again translated: In 1988 both a French version (by Anwar Louca, titled Lor de Paris) and a German one (by Karl Stowasser, titled Ein Muslim entdeckt Europa: Die Reise eines Agypters im 19. Jahrhundert nach Paris) were printed. In 1993 a new Turkish translation was published, by Cemil Çifçi. Daniel L. Newman published an English translation, An Imam in Paris: Al-Tahtawi’s Visit to France (1826-1831), in 2004 (2nd edition, 2011). In 2009, V. N. Kirpichenko published a Russian translation (Izvelechenie chistogo zolota iz kratkogo opisania Parizha, ili, Dragotsenynyi divan svedenii o Parizhe).

Appendix II, at the end of the dissertation, contains translated excerpts alongside the Arabic (1834), which are cited at length in this chapter. All translations are my own.

References to Ṭakhlīṣ al-Ibrīz ilā Talkhīṣ Bārīz will be made parenthetically throughout the chapter.

2 In his preface (3-4) al-Tahtawi mentions his mentor Hasan al-ʿAttār’s suggestion to observe and record everything he sees and encounters in Paris that is strange and wondrous. Al-Tahtawi presents this work as following that advice.

Al-Ṭaḥṭāwī’s account is didactic, introducing his readers to Parisian society and teaching them about those sciences presently perfected by “the Franks,”⁴ which Egypt and “the lands of Islam” should develop.⁵ The work is comparative throughout, shifting between equations of equivalence and difference, as al-Ṭaḥṭāwī compares the lands of Islam to those of the Franks, and Paris to Cairo, in terms of languages, peoples, and sciences.

The literature on al-Ṭaḥṭāwī is extensive. The vast majority describes his time in Paris and his studies there as having had a formative impact upon the development and modernization of his social and political thought: Paris modernizes al-Ṭaḥṭāwī; then, al-Ṭaḥṭāwī, contributes to the modernization of Egypt, especially through his role as translator of European books, concepts, and institutions into Arabic.⁶ He is identified as a, if not the, forerunner or earliest pioneer of the nahda, a term which comes to reference a period or movement characterized as an

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⁴ The mission travels to France, whose people are the French. The French are among the Frankish peoples, as France is among the “lands of the Franks” (bilād al-ifrān). The sciences the French master are primarily identified as “Frankish” sciences.

Al-Taḥṭāwī uses the terms “Franks” (al-ifrān) and “the lands of the Franks”—for the most part—as he explains the Ottomans use “ifrānjistān,” namely to refer to non-Ottoman European territories and peoples. When he references the French (al-fransīs or al-fransūsī), he specifies the people of Paris or France. See Takhlīṣ, 12-13.

This chapter retains al-Taḥṭāwī’s designations, rendering “ifrān” as “Franks,” and “fransīs” as French. Examples of those he terms Frankish (ifrānjī) include the French, Dutch, English, and Italians, who, perhaps not insignificantly, were all, or would all become, colonizers of Islamic lands.

⁵ With regards to sciences, those of the Franks are most often contrasted against those present in “the lands of Islam” (bilād al-islām). Elsewhere, al-Taḥṭāwī references Egypt (and occasionally the Ottomans), for example, when comparing a scene or a custom between Paris and Cairo, but seldom when discussing sciences.

⁶ This view has not passed unchallenged, the most well-known critique being that of Peter Gran, Islamic Roots of Capitalism (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1979). Against those who credit Paris with shaping al-Taḥṭāwī’s “progressive intellectual outlook,” Gran argues this was already formed by the time the 24-year-old sheikh stepped foot outside of Egypt. Gran does not dispute that Taḥṭāwī was “progressive,” but challenges at what point in his life, and by which influences, this outlook became formed. Cf. Peter Gran “Taḥṭāwī in Paris,” Al-Ahrām Weekly Online, January 10-16, 2002.; Juan Ricardo Cole, “Rifa‘a al-Taḥṭāwī and the Revival of Practical Philosophy,” Muslim World 70.1 (1980); and Shaden Tageldin “The Sword and the Pen: Egyptian Musings on European Penetrations, Persuasion, and Power,” Kroebner Anthropological Papers 87 (2002): 196-218.

Accounts and references to the \textit{nahḍa} trace its beginnings to al-Ṭahtāwī’s \textit{Takhlīṣ}.\footnote{Naṣr Abū Zayd, \textit{al-Mar'a fī Khiṭāb al-Azma} (Cairo: Dār al-Nuṣūs, 1994), 47; M. M. Badawi, “Introduction I,” in \textit{Modern Arabic Literature}, ed. M. M. Badawi (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 16; Wail S. Hassan, \textit{Tayeb Salih: Ideology and the Craft of Fiction} (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 2003), 1; Elizabeth Suzanne Kassab, \textit{Contemporary Arab Thought: Cultural Critique in Comparative Perspective} (New York: Columbia University Press, 2010), 22; Kassir, 45; Salama-Carr, 215.} This work has been called “the most influential and widely read text” which al-Ṭahtāwī wrote,\footnote{Kassab, 22.} and is heralded as “the landmark publication” of the early \textit{nahḍa}.\footnote{Kassab.} It represents “the most important literary record” from the first half of the nineteenth century in Egypt\footnote{Muṣṭafā Nabil, “Taqdim,” in \textit{Takhlīṣ al-Ibrīz fī Talkhis Bārīz aw al-Diwān al-Nafṣī bī-Īwān Bārīz} (Cairo: Dār al-Ḥilāl, 2001), 5; Cf. Yūnān Labīb Rizq, “Muqaddima,” in \textit{Takhlīṣ al-Ibrīz fī Talkhis Bārīz} (Cairo: Dār al-Kutub wa-l-Wathāʾiq al-Qawmīyah, 2005); and Louis ‘Awad, \textit{The Literature of Ideas in Egypt: Part I} (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1986), 30.} and is one of “the greatest
intellectual monuments” of the entire century. It is frequently mentioned as the first “modern” Arabic account of Europe.

This chapter deviates from the “modern v. traditional” dialectic (and the related “secular v. religious”), typically used to contextualize and understand al-Ṭahṭāwī’s text—a binary which has too often shaped accounts of this text in particular and the nahḍa in general, and one which is fortunately beginning to appear less and less suited to either. Instead, the discussion below takes science as a departure point for investigating what this text does and how it does it.

Legitimizing the Mission

Al-Ṭahṭāwī links the mission’s aims and practices to values esteemed by the “ulama” and rooted in the Qu’ran and the hadith. Beginning in his preface, al-Ṭahṭāwī invokes praise for “‘ilm” (the abstract infinitive noun of the verb ‘alima, in the sense of acquiring or becoming aware of true knowledge) as grounds for the mission’s pursuit of “al-‘ulūm” (“sciences” or “knowledges,” a post-Qur’anic pluralization of ‘ilm, once this term also comes to function as a simple substantive). For example, he describes the unanimous view of the “ulama” that after the Qur’an and the hadith, “the best of all matters is knowledge (al-‘ilm) and it is the most important of all that is important.” He offers this statement to explain why he went as an envoy to Paris, accompanying the effendis learning the sciences and arts (al-‘ulūm wa-l-funūn) there (3).

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12 £Awad, 30.


14 While the relation between the singular ‘ilm and the plural ‘ulūm may be one of simple multiplication (for this relation does come to exist), the singular meaning of “a science” or “a particular knowledge,” is different from, even if connected to, that abstract concept represented by the ‘ilm the “ulama” unanimously praise.
Al-Ṭahtāwī uses specific hadith in support of traveling to non-Islamic lands. For example, he immediately follows the claim that Frankish scholars are the greatest in terms of the “positive sciences” (al-ʿulūm al-ḥikmiyya), with a hadith encouraging the acquisition of wisdom (al-ḥikma), implying that the ʿulūm ḥikmiyya are the means through which to acquire ḥikma, and ḥikma should be sought, “even among the polytheists” (9). While the adjective ḥikmiyya is formed from the noun ḥikma, how al-Ṭahtāwī uses the “ʿulūm ḥikmiyya” (which will be elaborated below) dissociates the phrase from ḥikma, even as this hadith links these (Frankish) sciences to it. He immediately follows the hadith on ḥikma with another—“seek knowledge (al-ʿilm), even in China”—even though, he points out, it is well-known that the people there are idolaters (9). The logic of presenting these two hadith one after the other rests upon a correspondence between ḥikma (wisdom, science, philosophy) and ʿilm (knowledge, learning, science)—two terms which may be considered synonymous, though their pluralizations are not. To praise al-ḥikma as justification for pursuing sciences (al-ʿulūm)—even when qualified as ʿulūm ḥikmiyya—uses language to construct an Islamically sanctioned foundation for the missions’ endeavors. This justification reflects al-Ṭahtāwī’s anticipation of criticism from the ʿulama’, precisely for traveling to “lands of unbelief and obstinacy” in pursuit of sciences (5).

Al-Ṭahtāwī further justifies the mission’s pursuits by presenting its goals as able to strengthen empire and Islam. Expressing the hope that Muḥammad ʿAlī will “unfurl the banners of might and justice, and perfect dignity and benefit upon all Egyptian regions and the Hijazi,

15 The use of traditions sanctioning the pursuit of “ʿilm” in order to legitimize “modern sciences” would become a common trope of subsequent nahda figures, especially those identified with Islamic reform.
17 For example, Lane’s Lexicon from the mid-nineteenth century indicates no pluralization for ḥikma, and Hans Wehr in the mid-twentith presents a pluralization (ḥikam), meaning aphorisms or maxims.
Sudanese and Syrian areas,” al-Ṭahtāwī praises the governor as one who has already “vitalized the sciences through his exertion (bi-ijtihādīhi) and raised the marks of Islam through his warring and his struggle (bi-ghazwihi wa-jihādīhi)” (2). He links these two merits (i.e., vitalizing sciences and raising the marks of Islam) in a single sentence, emphasizing that the mission’s goal—that of pursuing sciences in non-Islamic lands—intends to strengthen Islam. He connects these through the sentence’s parallel structure and by the words themselves, for the verbal noun used to describe each contains the same root—j-h-d—expressing a sense of striving, toiling, and exerting, whether this is a primarily intellectual activity or also embodied in speech and action.

Al-Ṭahtāwī becomes more candid regarding the relationship between certain sciences, military conquest, and spreading religions. He describes the absence of Islam in America, where the Franks converted many of its people to Christianity after conquering them. This is not a consequence of the Frank’s religion, but of their sciences: He explains that Islam is not found there because of the Franks’ strength in the science of seafaring and their knowledge of navigational sciences (16). Were the Islamic countries to learn from the Franks’ example and cultivate these sciences, they would empower themselves to conquer lands and spread Islam.

The Franks are not the only model to follow. Al-Ṭahtāwī uses the history of the Islamic lands as a paragon for greatness. He imagines the present as the dawn of a new age in which the lands of Islam will again achieve the eminence they once held a millennium ago (7-8, 195-96, 210). In this vision, Muḥammad ʿAlī embodies the qualities of the greatest Abbasid caliphs under whom sciences flourished, and Cairo replaces Baghdad as the center from which sciences—and translations—emanate (195). Al-Ṭahtāwī states: “in the time of the caliphs we were the most perfect of all lands.” Even the Franks presently “admit to us that [at that time] we were their teachers in all sciences and were more advanced than them.” And, is it not so that
“credit goes to the predecessor” because “one who comes later takes from what [his predecessor] left behind and is shown the way by his guidance?” (7).

Al-Ṭahṭāwī presents his acceptance of the Franks’ instruction as a reciprocated act: we were their teachers then; therefore there is no shame in learning from them now. In fact, accepting their instruction would be like learning from our own past selves. 18 Al-Ṭahṭāwī states as much in the conclusion, where he summarizes the work’s intention to “urge the people of our countries to import that which brings them strength and valor, and which enables them to achieve perfection, for we are those people—in short—as it was in the time of the caliphs” (210). The Abbasids built the most advanced empire by incorporating ideas and technologies from non-Muslim peoples. We should follow their, which is also our, example and again import and incorporate sciences from non-Islamic lands.

Al-Ṭahṭāwī’s narration reflects the audience for whom he writes and the collectivity/ies within which he positions himself. In places he references “us” (usually ʿindanā) or refers to “our lands” (bilādnā), most often juxtaposed against either “the Franks” or “the French,” though far more often the former. Occasionally, this voice appears to refer to us, in Egypt, but it more often points to us, in Islamic countries. Al-Ṭahṭāwī uses various designations for this larger Islamic collectivity: the lands (bilād, 17,73), countries (diyār, 17,73), and nations (umam, 5) of Islam; the Islamic lands (al-bilād al-islāmiyya, 7); and our lands (bilādnā, 124). Were one to question whether his imagined audience resides only where Arabic is spoken, al-Ṭahṭāwī clarifies that even though this text is in Arabic, he is addressing all nations of Islam—both Arab and non-Arab (sāʾir umam al-islām min ʿarab wa-ʿajam)—in the hopes that a positive reception of his book will awaken them from the sleep of negligence (5).

18 This interpretation is shaped by Shaden M. Tageldin’s discussion of the “lure of reciprocity” in her Disarming Words: Empire and the Seductions of Translation in Egypt (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2011).
The Franks’ Christianity

Islam features prominently when describing the lands and people contrasted against the Franks. Does al-Ṭaḥṭāwī similarly identify the Franks’ or their lands collectively with Christianity?

Al-Ṭaḥṭāwī dissociates the Franks’ commendable qualities and their sciences from the Christianity with which he associates them. This distinction first appears in the work’s introduction, where he claims that those who criticize Muḥammad ṣAlī for welcoming and accepting assistance from Christians are ignorant, and explains that the governor’s interest in the Franks is “due to their human nature and their sciences, and not due to their being Christian (lā li-kaunihim naṣārī)” (8). His defense asserts that what is Christian, and particular, can be separated from the Franks’ human nature (insāniyyatihim) and sciences. By making this division, al-Ṭaḥṭāwī suggests that what is human and is science is potentially universal, and can be learned from and emulated by Islamic lands without incorporating any Christian aspects or influence.

When praising elements of the Franks’ human nature al-Ṭaḥṭāwī employs a noteworthy comparison to assure his (Muslim) reader that the positive attributes he commends are not the product of the Franks’, or French, Christianity: he compares them to those Christians with whom he, and his Egyptian reader, is most familiar—the Copts.19 When he admiringly describes the Franks’ cleanliness, al-Ṭaḥṭāwī points out that this quality is absent among the Copts of Egypt. He even notes the irony that “cleanliness is a part of faith and yet [the Franks] do not have a drop [of it]” (25-26)! Similarly, when he distinguishes the Parisians “from other Christians” on account of their sharp intellect, their precise understanding, and the way they delve into recondite

19 These comparisons clarify that al-Ṭaḥṭāwī writes envisioning a Muslim reader (and certainly not a Coptic one!).


matters, he again contrasts these qualities against “the Coptic Christians,” who are “inclined naturally towards ignorance and stupidity” (49).

These two examples show that al-Ṭaḥṭāwī’s imagined reader is not Christian. They also point to his discomfort, be it personal, political, etc., with seeking knowledge from Christians, and the resultant need to defend this choice, whether to himself, to his readers, or both. One way he undertakes to do this, is to distance the Franks, and the French in particular, from Christianity by erecting a distinction between them and Christians in Egypt, at the same time that he draws the lands of Islam and Egypt closer to France through emphasizing their common humanity and shared characteristics. He uses his own and imagined readers’ presumption of what a Christian is, to affirm that the Franks are more human than Christian, and learning from them does not threaten Islam, but the opposite. Al-Ṭaḥṭāwī’s use of the ‘Coptic comparison’ to separate the Franks from Christianity rests upon the presumption that Western Christendom and Coptic Christianity should be expected to be one and the same Christianity. The comparison also serves al-Ṭaḥṭāwī because through it he asserts authority over Christians in Egypt at the same time that Christians abroad are exerting authority over him, the mission, and the Islamic lands.20

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20 Al-Ṭaḥṭāwī was in Paris when the French invaded Algeria in 1830. He discusses this briefly in his fifth essay, when describing the French revolution of 1830, where he contrasts the wishes of the French people against those of their political and religious leaders. He refutes a false statement given by the French archbishop who claimed Algeria’s fall as a great victory of the Christian community (al-milla al-masihiyah) over the vanquished Islamic one. Al-Ṭaḥṭāwī clarifies that “the war between the French and the peoples of Algeria is merely [due to] political matters and trade disputes, disagreements and quarrels, which are produced by pride and arrogance” (173). He projects this view onto the French people, recounting their rebellion of 1830 against King Charles X as retribution against the government which only days earlier had invaded Algeria. In particular, he relishes in the people’s destruction of the archbishop’s home, as though the people were punishing the archbishop for the falsehood of his proclamation (173). Al-Ṭaḥṭāwī acknowledges, however, that the victory of the French people over their government monopolized the news and their attention, such that the matter of Algeria was forgotten entirely, intimating that al-Ṭaḥṭāwī’s portrayal of the people’s motivations is his willful and wishful projection.

His narration here is exceptional: elsewhere in the Takhliṣ, when al-Ṭaḥṭāwī describes the transfer of power over lands, he consistently mentions when a particular land was either conquered by Muslims, or by Christians, or by one and then the other. He does this when describing the change of hands over al-Andalus (8), Naples (30), and Sicily (26-27), and when describing the absence of Islam (and presence of Christianity) in the Americas (16), and the reverse in Java and in Indonesia (where Islam is present and Christianity rare) (18). It is only in the present case
While at times al-Tahtāwī emphasizes the Frank’s universal human nature over and above their Christianity, in other places he affirms that they are “Christian,” but empties the term of content. He describes the people of Paris as Christians “in name only,” and not in either deed or belief (19, 119-20). Even when challenged on this point, al-Tahtāwī is insistent. In his third essay, in the section headed “on the religion of the people of Paris,” al-Tahtāwī presents Orientalist Silvestre de Sacy’s reaction to his manuscript. While largely positive, de Sacy instructs him to reconsider the statement that the French have no religion and are Christian in name only. Al-Tahtāwī reprints de Sacy’s criticism and dismisses it (120), explaining that the Frenchman holds this opinion because he is one of the few who are religious; however, their numbers are so small that they have no authority! Unlike the preceding examples in which al-Tahtāwī argues that it is possible to incorporate and emulate certain admirable qualities and sciences of the Franks because these are not particular to their Christianity, here he describes the French as unbelievers entirely—though designates them Christian, nonetheless.

One way al-Tahtāwī reconciles the Franks’ irreligiosity, of which he is critical, with his admiration for their sciences, is by explaining why many are Christians in name only: the French do not follow their religion, nor respect their priests, because their religion and priests commit moral and theological errors. Practices such as celibacy for the clergy, confession, and transubstantiation are all foolish (120-21). This can explain why the French experience an incompatibility between reason and religion, which causes them to reject religion. Such is not the

that he clarifies that this was not a Christian victory, and that France’s actions were driven solely by political and avaricious motives.

21 Al-Tahtāwī makes a noteworthy revision in the second edition: When discussing the geography of the world (1849: 16) al-Tahtāwī explains that “the majority among the lands of Europe (bilād urubbā) is Christian.” The first edition (1834: 15), however, reads “the majority among the lands of the Franks is Christian or unbelievers” (aghlabuhā naṣārī aw kafara).
case in the Islamic lands, where Islam is no enemy to light or to knowledge, as Christianity is in France.

**Tracing Science**

This chapter aims to distinguish between al-Ṭahṭāwī’s use of ‘ilm as an abstract substantive without pluralization (hesitantly and imperfectly translated here as “knowledge”) and ‘ilm as the singular of ‘ulūm (rendered as (a) “science”). Delineating these two can be challenging, especially because—as will be clarified shortly—al-Ṭahṭāwī’s concept of “sciences” differs from his perception of what the Franks term “science.” Thus, ‘ilm varies based on whether al-Ṭahṭāwī is portraying his own view, his perception of how the Franks perceive “science,” and whether he is mediating between the two. The section below focuses on al-Ṭahṭāwī’s employment of the term “science” itself—what it does, what is done to and with it, and what it is made to do—in preparation for the comparison of structures of sciences that follows.

The actions of sciences are few. They “spread” (nashara: 9, 20, 155), “advance themselves” (taqaddama: 124), and “increase” (zāda: 124). Far more often, human agency drives and impacts their condition or activity. They are “spread” (intashara) through the assistance of the ruler to his people (8). People may “vitalize” (ahyā) sciences through their exertions (2). Sciences are “cared for” (‘anā) and “strengthened” (qawwaya) (4). Students seek to “acquire” (ḥaṣṣala) them (141).

How do sciences spread? One “teaches” (darrasa) sciences, as is done in the colleges in Paris (132, 133). People “participate in” (shāraka fī) certain sciences (7); they “research” (baḥatha ʿan: 192), “inspect” (tālaʿa: 122), and “learn” (taʿallama: 19, 94, 132, 133, 134) them.
With proper training and aptitude, one may gain “mastery of” (tamakkana min) sciences (123). Sciences may be “sought-after” (matlūba), as are those the mission aims to acquire while in Paris (4, 10).

A science may be “known” (maʿrīfa: 11) or “absent” (mafqūda: 19) among a people, just as a people can possess “knowledge” (maʿrīfa: 121) of sciences, or come to “know” (ʿarafa: 124) a science. By extension, a people may “advance in” (tagaddama fī: 121, 122) sciences and “surpass” (faḍala fī: 124) others in them. Islamic lands, for example, “neglect” (ahmala) some sciences, but “excel” in (baraʿa fī) others (7). Likewise, there are presently sciences in which the Franks excel beyond all others (7, 18, 55). Comparison shows one use to which sciences are put, namely as a means to measure and contrast individuals and peoples. Just as students can be examined and comparatively ranked based on their demonstrated competency in a particular field, so too can different peoples and their societies’ be contrasted and their development ordered, through evaluating the general condition of sciences across them.

Sciences are not only spread and developed, but they can also be shaped. They may be made “sound” (atqana), as the Franks have done for the mathematical, natural, theological, and metaphysical [sciences] (18). One may “beautify” (tahsīn) and “perfect” (takmil) a science (131). Such has been the case with arithmetic (ʿilm al-ḥisāb), a science to which different peoples over time have successively contributed, by “delving deep into” it (tabahhara fīhi) and building on the work of their predecessors, “diversifying” (tanawwaʿa) it and becoming possessed of various “acquirements in” (tafannana fīhi) it, until achieving its perfection (192). This example illustrates what could be described as a transnational and transhistorical view of progress, whereby various peoples work across time and place on a common endeavor, building on the advances that came before until a science is completely known.
An activity may be turned into a science. This is a particular strength of the French, whose wealth, for example, is explained as a result of their “making” economizing and managing expenses “into a science” (jaʿalūhu ʿilman: 118). The French have turned even “the base [activities] (al-danīʿa),” such as cooking, into sciences that may be studied and acquired in schools devoted to their instruction (61). Al-Ṭaḥtāwī admiringly proclaims how the French “mine sciences from a field of non-existence” (163). These sciences categorically differ from others al-Ṭaḥtāwī describes, because the “object” of these is a verb, that is, a human action. It is not a found object made to reveal its truth (as will be described below), but a method that transforms and improves an act into something systematic, collective, replicable, teachable, and efficient.

How do sciences work? Individual sciences are suited to particular purposes. For example, the subject of the science of geometry is designated as measuring the length, width, and depth [of things] (192). Regarding the “science of logic” (ʿilm mantiq), “analogy” (al-qiyās, a source for the determination of law in Islamic jurisprudence) is its foundational goal (188). Through the science of “grammar” (ʿilm al-nahw) one comes to know the correct use of speech and writing in a particular language (178).22 As regards rhetoric (ʿilm al-balāgha), its greatest use is “for accessing knowledge of the secrets of revelation and its inimitability” (186). In these examples, a science is the means through which to acquire certain knowledge.

Al-Ṭaḥtāwī’s elaboration of the relationship between eloquence (al-balāgha) and the “science of eloquence” (ʿilm al-balāgha), that is, “what in Frankish languages is called rhetoric”

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22 In this instance, al-Ṭaḥtāwī argues for using ʿilm al-nahw as a translation for grammar: “Every language must have rules controlling it, in terms of writing and reading. These rules are called “aghramāṭiqā” in the Italian language, and “aghramīr” in the French language. It means the arrangement of speech, meaning the science of regulating language through its syntax. Thus, nothing prevents one from intending with “al-nahw” (syntax) the rules of language as such, which is how we intend it here” (177-78).

In a different passage (discussed in detail below) al-Ṭaḥtāwī suggests the “sciences of Arabic” as a better equivalent to what the Franks’ call “grammar.”
Al-Tahtāwī describes the connection and distinction between an object and the science of that object: “The relationship of the ‘science of eloquence’ to eloquence is like the relationship of prosody to poetry” (186). Much as prosody investigates poetry’s attributes, “rhetoric” investigates eloquence. And just as one who is skilled in prosody may not be poetic, and vice versa, so too can one be a master of rhetoric and not of eloquence. More important, however, is the distinction al-Tahtāwī makes between the purpose of eloquence and the purpose of its science. Eloquence is an attribute of linguistic expression. Its greatest use is in poetry, speeches, and in books of literature and histories because of its impact on the reader, listener, and reciter. The greatest use for rhetoric, however, is entirely different: It is to reveal the inimitable eloquence of the words of God (186). In other words, rhetoric, as “the science of eloquence,” is a tool applied to a text in order to appraise and understand the effects and use of eloquence within it. Eloquence must pre-exist the science that takes it as its object.

Science then, according to this example, appears as a method applied to an object, which enables one to better perceive, understand, and benefit from the knowledge of that object. A science does not have a use apart from the object whose investigation is its purpose. The exception to this is when a science’s aim is to enable another science to actualize its highest purpose. According to al-Tahtāwī’s depiction, any singular “science” is always a particular science. The only singular universal in his vision is the abstract “knowledge” (al-ʿilm), namely, what one seeks to arrive at through the practice of sciences.

Al-Tahtāwī’s Depiction of the Franks’ Sciences

Al-Tahtāwī uses a particular phrase to refer to all the Franks’ sciences together: the ʿulūm ḥikmiyya. Across and within different translations of the Takhliṣ there are a range of
interpretations for this expression. For example, Daniel Newman, in his An Imam in Paris (2004), fluctuates between translating ‘ulūm ḥikmiyya as “philosophical sciences” (109, 251-52) and “intelligible sciences” (125, 130), and he once renders these the “philosophical branches [of the rational sciences]” (105). At its first use Newman includes a footnote, informing his reader that “al-‘ulūm al-ḥikmiyya can also be translated as ‘positive sciences,’ though he does not employ this translation elsewhere in his text (105). Karl Stowasser, in his German translation Ein Muslim entdeckt Europa (Munich: C. H. Beck, 1988), prefers “philosophical” when he employs an adjective at all, translating these once as “philosophischen Disziplinen” (14), twice as “philosophischen Wissenschaften” (17, 146), and twice simply as “Wissenschaften” (29, 33), without qualification. This last suggestion, that of rendering ‘ulūm ḥikmiyya as “sciences” or even “science,” while seeming to deviate most significantly from the text, does follow a certain logic. After all, to read the ‘ulūm ḥikmiyya as “sciences” is to represent this concept from the point of view of the Franks, as al-Ṭahṭāwī relays their view. What is lost in such a translation, however, is the specificity of al-Ṭahṭāwī’s inserted qualification, and his critique, on the Franks’ concept.

What does al-Ṭahṭāwī intend through this phrase? Why does he use it? Translating the ‘ulūm ḥikmiyya as either philosophical or intellectual sciences may incorporate a generally accepted sense of the word ḥikma, however, neither option accurately describes what characterizes the group of sciences al-Ṭahṭāwī means by this term. In the Takhliṣ, the ‘ulūm ḥikmiyya only ever refer to those sciences in which the Franks excel beyond all others (7, 18); it is never used to describe sciences currently present in the Islamic lands (though these are sciences they should acquire and may once have known). Al-Ṭahṭāwī mentions mathematics,
natural sciences, metaphysics, and theology as fields within this category.\textsuperscript{23} Further, he presents philosophy as contained within the ‘ulūm ḥikmiyya (and hence not the total of it). He warns his reader to be cautious when studying those sciences the French have mastered, because some of their “philosophical beliefs” (iʿtiqādāt falsafiyya) are outside the laws of reason. He specifies that their “books of philosophy are completely filled with many of these heresies” (122). Given this critique alongside the fact that the whole Takhlīṣ speaks to the mastery of the Franks and the French in the ‘ulūm ḥikmiyya, it is clear that al-Ṭaḥṭāwī does not intend ḥikmiyya to mean philosophical.

Further, as opposed to the long-standing use of hikma which pertains to more speculative thought, al-Ṭaḥṭāwī later explains that the Franks use “science” to refer to what one reaches via demonstrable proofs (barāhīn). This (Frankish) definition, together with examples of sciences comprising the ‘ulūm ḥikmiyya, suggests that these are closer to something like “positive sciences” then they are to speculative, philosophical, or intellectual sciences. While philosophy may aptly be termed a speculative science and not a positive one, it is precisely because the Franks treat philosophy as a positive science, in which their erroneous claims are established as fact via proof that they err. They are masters of the positive sciences and they err in those speculative sciences which they treat as positivist. What is lost, however, in the translation “positive sciences” is al-Ṭaḥṭāwī’s effort—evident from the phrase’s first appearance alongside

\textsuperscript{23} Al-Ṭaḥṭāwī fluctuates as to whether metaphysics and theology are different names for the same field or whether these refer to separate sciences within the ‘ulūm ḥikmiyya. The first citation (7) elaborates the ‘ulūm ḥikmiyya as mathematics, natural sciences, and metaphysics (al-‘ulūm al-riyāḍīyya wa-l-ṭabīʿīyya wa-mā warāʾ al-ṭabīʿa), while the second citation (18) adds a fourth category to the aforementioned three: theology (al-ilḥīḥāt). In the work’s sixth and final essay, when describing “the Franks’ method” of dividing the sciences and arts (see figure 1 below), al-Ṭaḥṭāwī explains that theology is also called the metaphysics. This would seem to be al-Ṭaḥṭāwī’s rendition of the Franks’ method, and not necessarily his own, though the passage on 18, raises ambiguity as to whether al-Ṭaḥṭāwī considers this a single or separate fields.
hadith encouraging the acquisition of ḥikma—to familiarize or Islamicize these “Frankish sciences” for his Muslim reader.

A distinction between al-Ṭahṭāwī’s view and his perception of the Franks’ view is discernable as well in the differentiation in use, or lack thereof, of certain terms. For example, the second section of the introduction has the subheading “Concerning the sought-after sciences and arts” (al-ʿulūm wa-l-funūn al-maṭlūba). Its first sentence then announces it will describe the “sought-after trades” (al-ṣanāʾiʾ al-maṭlūba), so as to acquaint the reader with their importance. The next refers to “these arts” (hādhīh al-funūn), while the third separates the curriculum’s general subjects (arithmetic, geometry, geography, history, and drawing) and those specializations—each of which are identified as a science (al-ʿilm al-awwal, al-ʿilm al-thānī, etc.)—in which different students focused (10). Thus, from this section’s opening paragraph the same concepts are referred to first as “sciences and arts,” then “crafts,” then “arts,” then “sciences.”

This is different from how the Franks’ classify and differentiate knowledges. The first section of al-Ṭahṭāwī’s sixth essay, “On the division of sciences and arts, according to the Franks’ method,” opens with the following:

Know that the Franks have divided human knowledges into two divisions: sciences and arts. Science is the sound achievements mentioned above, [attained] through manifest proofs. As for art, this is knowledge of the craft of something, according to specialized rules. (176)

Al-Ṭahṭāwī relays the Franks’ view of the division of knowledges, qualified here as human. He describes their most basic subdivision, that between sciences and arts—ʿulūm and funūn—which he then defines through the singular ʿilm and fann (though his explanation of “science” switches

24 See Appendix 2b for the Arabic and my translation of this section, and of the section “On the division of sciences and arts, according to the Franks’ method,” discussed below.
to the plural). The Franks’ divide knowledges from arts, based on method and occupation.

“Science,” for them, is the positive knowledge acquired through a verifiable replicable methodology (barāhīn). “Art” refers to how one practices a craft. His fluctuation between the singular and the plural when defining “science” points to the disjuncture between the plurality of sciences which govern his own view (described below) and what he observes through his studies in Paris.

Within these two categories there are subdivisions. The arts are separated into the “intellectual” (ʿaqliyya) and the “practical” (ʿamaliyya), again distinguished based on method and occupation: “The intellectual arts are frequently close to sciences…because they require scientific foundations. As for the practical arts, they are trades (al-ḥiraf)” (177). Al-Ṭaḥṭāwī provides examples to illustrate what is meant by intellectual arts, naming several “sciences,” for example, “the science of purity and rhetoric [of language],” and “the science of grammar, logic, poetry, drawing, sculpture, and music” (177). That he calls these sciences and not arts, reflects a classification of knowledges, not based on the Franks’ method, but according to his own.

He provides greater elaboration of the Franks’ sciences, which are divided based on object, not practice, since unlike “arts,” these all share the same positive methodology mentioned above:
This chart shows how the Franks’ sciences, qualified as human, emanate out from a single point, with the potential for its branches to continually expand outward as new sciences are discovered and created. Every science classified by the Franks falls within what al-Ṭahţāwī groups as the ‘ulūm ḥikmiyya.

At the end of this section, al-Ṭahţāwī describes a difference between the Franks’ classification of knowledges and that which is present “among us” (‘īdanā):

This is the division among the Franks’ sages. However, among us the sciences and the arts are generally one thing, and the distinction is between whether the essence of an art is an independent science in itself, or a tool serving another. (177)
While the Franks divide arts from sciences based on method, and then within sciences based on
the object of investigation (for all sciences share the methodology of demonstrable proof),
among “us,” distinctions are drawn not based on method, but on use. Sciences and arts are, for
the most part, one unified thing (shai’ wāhid). When a distinction is drawn it appears between
those independent sciences, whose ultimate purpose is a goal unto itself, and those that are
auxiliary, and whose greatest use is to assist another science in achieving perfection.

This is one of the two ways that “we” distinguish sciences. The second is examined in the
next section, which considers al-Ṭaḥṭāwī’s strategy for situating and assimilating the Franks’
sciences into his own.

The Structure of Sciences, according to al-Taḥṭāwī:

The “positive sciences” are not the only grouping of sciences in this work. Elsewhere, al-
Ṭaḥṭāwī employs two categories which together comprise what he presents as the entirety of
sciences: the “transmitted sciences” (‘ulūm naqliyya), also referred to as the ‘ulūm sharʿiyya;
and the “intellectual sciences” (‘ulūm ʿaqliyya). These first appear in a narrative opening the
text’s introduction which describes the development of human societies from the earliest man to
the most advanced societies. This account can be seen to frame the entire Takhliṣ, justifying the
mission’s travels to “lands of unbelief and obstinacy,” and setting up certain comparative
dynamics which run throughout the work.25

The story opens with primitive man, who is guided by only instinct and emotions. Then,
“a number of knowledges” (ʿiddat maʿārif) appear to some people—by chance or be
revelation—and either the [human] intellect (al-ʿaql) or the [ordained] way (al-sharʿ) determine

25 Appendix 2a contains the Arabic and an English translation of this opening narrative.
them as useful and consequently preserve them (5). This introduction helps explain how it is that the two most expansive categories of sciences come to exist: When one’s intellect identifies knowledges as useful, one will develop the intellectual sciences; when the [ordained] way determines them valuable, one develops the transmitted sciences.

People, once they begin acquiring and developing knowledges and skills, come together to form societies. All societies progress forward, through three successive stages: The most primitive is that of “the savage nomads (al-hummal al-mutawahhishīn),” who know nothing about “matters which provide for this life or for the hereafter.” This second stage is of “crude berbers (al-barābira al-khashnīn),” who “know how [to distinguish] the permissible from the forbidden” but their degree of progress in “matters of subsistence, civilization, human crafts, and intellectual and transmitted sciences” is incomplete. Finally, the third and most advanced is “the stage of people of manners, elegance, sedentariness, civilization, and extreme urbanization (martabat ahl al-ādab wa-l-ẓarāfa wa-l-taḥaddīr wa-l-tamaddun wa-l-tamaṣṣur al-mutāṭarriqīn)” (6). Humans’ awareness of the transmitted and intellectual sciences begins in the second stage of development, though it is only in the third that they perfect these.

All “nations” (al-umam) in the most advanced stage are masters “of sciences and industries” and “of ways [of belief and practice]” (the term al-Ṭaḥtāwī uses is sharāʾi, the plural of shariʿa) (7). Nonetheless, the greatest variation exists in this stage, whose lands differ from each other in “their sciences and their arts,” as well as in the degree to which they “adopt a

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26 While al-Ṭaḥtāwī’s depiction of the stages of civilizational development shares much with that of Ibn Khaldūn (whom he read with Hasan al-ʿAtṭār at al-Azhar—see Gran, Islamic Roots, 185), he deviates from Ibn Khaldūn in seeing both the “transmitted” and the “intellectual” sciences as universal. Ibn Khaldūn finds only the latter in all societies because the intellect (al-ʿaql) is a human faculty, whereas the foundations of the transmitted sciences are the shariʿyi in the Qurʾan and the sunna, and these sciences, therefore, are particular to Islamic societies. —See Ibn Khaldūn, Muqaddima, 549 ff).
shari‘a from the shari‘a (taqlīd shari‘a min al-shari‘a)” (7). Through this variation al-Ṭahtāwī presents both Islamic lands, including Egypt, and Frankish lands, including France, as examples of the third most advanced stage, while accommodating the differences between them.

Al-Ṭahtāwī counterbalances the Islamic lands’ deficiency in the positive sciences (in which the Franks excel) with their superiority in other sciences (in which the Franks are deficient):

The Frankish lands have already reached the greatest degree of proficiency in mathematics, natural sciences, and metaphysics [i.e. the positive sciences], their foundations and their branches… On the other hand, the Islamic countries have excelled in the ‘alām shari‘iyya and their application, and in the intellectual sciences. They neglected the positive sciences completely and for that reason needed the Western lands to acquire what they do not know. (7)

This passage illustrates an inversion between Western and Islamic lands, while the developmental narrative preceding it also posits the two as equals. Thus, when al-Ṭahtāwī explains that the Islamic countries need the Western ones (al-bilād al-gharbiyya) because they are presently deficient in some portion of sciences the Franks are masters of (i.e., the “positive sciences”), he implies the corresponding weakness of the Franks’ lands’ in those sciences in which the Islamic lands excel. This passage brings to culmination the different roles the opening narrative fulfills. It justifies the mission’s pursuit of certain sciences in Paris, at the same

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27 This formulation emphasizes the singularity of the shari‘a (which no society adopts), by keeping the second definite noun in the singular. Al-Ṭahtāwī often uses this construction to refer to one of a plurality, for example “ayy ʿilm min al-ʿulām,” to mean “a/ny science” (lit. any science from the sciences) or “ayyat lugha min al-lughāt” to mean “a/ny language.” Here he emphasizes that there are many sharāʾi‘ (as followed by different societies), but only one shari‘a (adopted by none).

28 Abu-Lughod highlights that this instance of “bilād gharbiyya” is the first time in Arabic literature that the phrase is used to connotate “the West” in contrast to “the lands of Islam.” He read this as the first sign of the developing dichotomy between the spiritual East and the materialist West. Ibrahim Abu-Lughod, Arab Rediscovery of Europe (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1963), 153.

29 Al-Ṭahtāwī assures his Muslim reader that the Islamic lands are proficient in both categories of sciences, i.e., in the intellectual and the shar‘iyya sciences. It is perhaps not coincidental that he neglects to mention here that their advancements in the intellectual sciences are restricted to a number of sciences (as he clarifies elsewhere), nor is he explicit (as he is later on) that the “positive sciences” are examples of intellectual sciences.
time that it refuses inferiority. It explains the different, equally valid, ways in which humans may arrive at knowledge and shows the foundations for the two greatest groupings of sciences. Lastly by claiming inversion and equality at the same time, it lays out the foundation for al-Ṭahtāwī’s critique of the Franks’ conception of sciences—not for the absence of Islam within it, but for their ignorance of those sciences that form the Frankish counterpart to the Islamic lands’ ʿulūm sharʿīyya.

The intellectual and the transmitted sciences are well-established categories. Ibn Khaldūn discusses these in his Muqaddima, and subjects were arranged in these two groupings at al-Azhar in the eighteenth century. The Takhliṣ offers little elaboration on the sciences that comprise the transmitted (or the sharʿīyya) sciences, though it does provide several examples of intellectual sciences (e.g., mathematics, natural sciences, and metaphysics, in which the Franks excel, as well as the sciences of Arabic and logic (124), in which the Islamic lands excel). It is possible that al-Ṭahtāwī does not specify transmitted sciences because these were understood by his reader, or because their absence in France provided no opportunities for comparison, and hence elaboration. It is also possible that al-Ṭahtāwī may have chosen to avoid naming these, because it would have been either controversial or difficult, though not impossible nor entirely without precedent, to de-Islamize these.

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30 On the separation between the ʿulūm ʿaqliyya and naqliyya, and the sciences within them, see Newman, An Imam in Paris, 103n3; J. Heyworth-Dunne, An Introduction to the History of Education in Modern Egypt (London: Luzac and Co., 1939), 41-42.

31 Heyworth-Dunne lists the ʿulūm naqliyya as taught at al-Azhar at the start of the nineteenth-century as including: “taṣwīd (the art of Koranic recitation); qirāʿ (the knowledge of the accepted readings of the Quran); tafsīr (Quranic exegesis); ḥadīth (prophetic traditions); fiqh (jurisprudence of the four schools); usūl al-fiqh (doctrine of fundamental principles); fard ʿid (or mirāḥ) (the laws of inheritance); tauḥīd (or kalām) (theology); and taṣawwuf (mysticism).” An Introduction, 41.
The following figure represents al-Ṭahṭāwī’s incorporation of the Franks’ sciences into his worldview, allowing them mastery over a segment of the intellectual sciences, while showing their complete deficiency in the transmitted sciences:

![Diagram]

Figure 2: Situating the “positive sciences” within the structure of transmitted and intellectual sciences

In al-Ṭahṭāwī’s view there is not a single category at the apex of sciences, but two complementary and connected categories: the transmitted sciences and the intellectual sciences. The universality of the entire structure enables him to insert the ever-expanding positive sciences among the intellectual ones, incorporating the Franks’ advances without altering the system’s governing categories. That the entire structure is universalized enables al-Ṭahṭāwī to critique the Franks’ view as partial, while acknowledging their superiority in a portion of sciences. Although the Islamic lands presently excel in the transmitted sciences, these are not exclusive to them. Just as the lands of Islam can learn from the Franks regarding the positive sciences, al-Ṭahṭāwī implies that the Frankish lands should cease their neglect of the transmitted sciences and attend to investigating all aspects and dimensions of their (Christian) shari‘a.
This phrase—“the Christian sharīʿa”—appears in al-Ṭaḥṭāwī’s discussion of the French term “scholar.” Following his section “on the religion of the people of Paris,” al-Ṭaḥṭāwī devotes a chapter to their advancements in the arts and sciences. There, he emphasizes a distinction between his imagined reader’s understanding of the term “scholar” (al-ʿālim) and what the French intend by the term. He instructs:

Do not presume that the scholars of the French are priests, because the priests are scholars in religion only. Among the priests there may be someone who is also a scholar, but what the title “scholars” designates is one who has knowledge in the intelligible sciences. The knowledge of scholars in branches of the Christian sharīʿa is very insignificant. (124).

The Christian sharīʿa is the object the Franks’ transmitted sciences would investigate. Thus, their scholars’ ignorance of its branches amounts to their ignorance of these sciences. Unlike in Egypt where the ʿālim is versed in both intellectual sciences and those sciences that treat the (Islamic) sharīʿa, in France the scholar is split into two distinct personages: the “scholar” (al-ʿālim) whose expertise is limited to intellectual sciences, and the “priest” (al-qass), who knows about religion (and perhaps about the Christian sharīʿa).

Looking to recent translations of the Tahlīṣ one finds significantly divergent interpretations of the phrase “the Christian sharīʿa,” ranging from “Christian theology” to the “canonical law of the Christians” to the “Christian religion.” None of these capture the

32 See Appendix 2c for this Arabic passage and translation.

33 Clearly, al-Ṭaḥṭāwī does not intend sharīʿa in the problematic yet pervasive sense in which it has more recently come to be used, as referencing “Islamic law.” His usage is more akin to what Wael Hallaq identifies the sharīʿa to have meant in premodern societies where it “represented a complex set of social, economic, cultural, and moral relationships that permeated the epistemic structures of the social and political orders.” Wael B. Hallaq, “What is Shariʿa?” Yearbook of Islamic and Middle Eastern Law 151 (2005-2006): 155.


dimensions of al-Ṭahṭāwī’s critique, for the Franks’ scholars’ neglect of their *sharīʿa* equates to their neglect of the transmitted sciences. This move illustrates how al-Ṭahṭāwī acknowledges and incorporates differences across lands and peoples while situating this variation within a universal structure of knowledge. Both Christianity and Islam represent a *sharīʿa*. The transmitted sciences are universal though they take particular *sharāʾiʿ* as their object. This universality serves a two-fold purpose: It allows al-Ṭahṭāwī to advocate for the incorporation of universal intellectual sciences from the Franks, because these are isolated and distinct from the Islamic lands’ transmitted sciences and from the Franks’ Christianity; and it enables him to critique the Franks’ worldview as partial, for it neglects the transmitted sciences entirely.

**On Sciences and Language**

Al-Ṭahṭāwī’s discussion of the correspondence between “grammar” and the “Arabic sciences” illustrates how it can be more challenging in certain areas to forge conceptual equivalencies across Arabic and French.  

Al-Ṭahṭāwī first mentions the Arabic sciences (*al-ʿulūm al-ʿarabiyya*) in his introduction where he describes them as a specialty of the lands of Islam. There he offers little elaboration aside from noting that a few Franks have “gained access to their intricacies and their secrets,” although they “were not rightly guided to the straight path nor did they ever set foot on the path to salvation” (7). It is not until his third essay, when translating the French concept of grammar, that al-Ṭahṭāwī returns to these as a means to familiarize his reader with their French equivalent:

> The foundations of the French tongue and the art of arranging its words and their writing and reading is called *aghrammātiqa* ...and *aghrammir*...by the French. It means the art

35 See Appendix 2c for the Arabic and translation of passages discussed in this section.
of arranging the speech of any language. It is as if one were to use the art of nahw to encompass all that pertains to language. [It is] as we call the sciences of Arabic, by which we intend the twelve sciences gathered in the saying of our sheikh al-ʿAtṭār:

- syntax and morphology
- metrics after that data
- then etymology
- poetry
- verse
- composition
- likewise semantics
- figurative expression
- calligraphy
- rhyme
- history

—this enumerates the science of the Arabs.37

In this passage, al-Ṭaḥṭāwī works to translate and describe the French grammar so that his reader may understand what it represents. He offers two Arabic alternatives for the term: The first is al-nahw (i.e., syntax). Like grammar it is singular and is not exclusive to a particular language. However, to turn “syntax” into the equivalent of grammar requires making it into a substitute for the whole of which it is a part. His second suggestion—ʿulūm al-ʿarabiyya (the sciences of Arabic)—is a plurality and al-Ṭaḥṭāwī’ s preferred rendering in this particular passage. The collective “sciences of Arabic” (of which al-nahw is one component) is better suited to what grammar represents (i.e., “all that pertains to language”).

In attempting to elucidate a concept shared across French and Arabic, al-Ṭaḥṭāwī suggests each term is an imprecise rendition of what both represent. The strength of “grammar” is that the concept’s universality is presumably more apparent; the strength of “the sciences of Arabic” is that they together offer a more descriptive and comprehensive representation of the multifaceted nature of what is described. His preference here is for the translation that would be most descriptive and meaningful to his Arabic reader. This enables al-Ṭaḥṭāwī to suggest at a later point (177-78), (i.e., after having already explained what grammar is) that one can use “al-

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36 Al-Ṭaḥṭāwī includes vocalization instructions after each non-Arabic word, so that his reader may know how to pronounce them. He instructs that aghrammāṭiqā is read “with hamza [on the alef], sukūn on the ghain, fataḥ on the rāʾ, doubling on the mim, kasra on the tāʾ, and fataḥ on the qāf,” and aghrammīr “with doubling on the mīm.”

37 There is one significant point on which Al-Ṭaḥṭāwī and al-ʿAtṭār differ: al-Ṭaḥṭāwī names these the “sciences of Arabic,” whereas for al-ʿAtṭār they form the singular “science of the Arabs.” That al-Ṭaḥṭāwī makes no mention of a distinction between the sciences of a language and the science of a people would seem to be a polite emendation to the designation of his mentor, since nowhere else in the Takhliṣ does al-Ṭaḥṭāwī reference these as the science, or even sciences, of the Arabs.
“nahw” as the French use “grammar” to represent “all the rules of language.” These two explanations illustrates one of al-Ṭahtawi’s translational strategies: Before he can reconfigure al-nahw into the equivalent of the French “grammar,” he must explain grammar in an intelligible way to his readers so that they do not incorrectly read “grammar” to mean “al-nahw.”

In the Takhlis, al-Ṭahtawi twice (7, 56) refers to the Arabic sciences (al-‘ulum al-‘arabiyya) and twice (56, 124) to the sciences of Arabic (‘ulum al-‘arabiyya). Were one unsure whether these name the same grouping, his description before and after al-Ṭaṭār’s verse clarifies that they do. However, through the process of translating grammar, al-Ṭahtawi begins to differentiate the two names, showing a degree of discomfort regarding the designation “the Arabic sciences,” and the specificity implied by the adjective “Arabic.”

This becomes visible in the discussion following al-Ṭaṭār’s verse (56), where he addresses the concern that these “sciences” might be better called “fields of investigation of the [singular] science of Arabic.” He asks what is meant by including “history” among “the Arabic sciences,” even though, he notes, the first to write history were Greek scholars while “Arabs did not compose [history] until more recent times” (56). He raises this as a challenge to his reader whom he worries could mistakenly perceive these sciences as exclusive to Arabic. He highlights this tension to warn his reader not to misunderstand what “the Arabic sciences” represent. These sciences are not unique to Arabic but universal, and exist in every language:

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38 Tageldin argues that this passage reveals dimensions of a troubling (post)colonial psychology, showing how al-Ṭahtawi internalizes the French model as the universal, perceiving the Homeric epic as the purveyor of history, to which Arab history is epistemologically secondary. Her reading privileges the origin as the epistemological source and implies that because Homer wrote “history” before Arabs, al-Ṭahtawi must view “history” as “Greek” or as a “European” science and not an “Arabic” one, as he should. I read this passage differently. Al-Ṭahtawi uses this example, not “[to position] France as the new Athens from which modern Egypt must originate,” as Tageldin suggests, but to use “precedent” to show his Arabic readers that they should not understand the Arabic sciences as exclusive to Arabic. He does not say “history is Greek.” Rather, he explains that “history is not Arabic.” Shaden M. Tageldin, “One Comparative Literature? ‘Birth’ of a Discipline in French-Egyptian Translation, 1810-1834,” Comparative Literature Studies 47.4 (2010): 431-434.
Thus, the French language, like other Frankish languages, has a conventional use particular to it, upon which is built its syntax, morphology, metrics, verse, figurative expression, calligraphy, composition, semantics—this is what is called “grammar.” Thus all languages possessing rules have an art that gathers its rules, regardless of whether it is to repudiate mistakes in reading and writing, or to beautify it. This is not restricted to the Arabic language, but is found in every language. Truly, the Arabic language is the most eloquent of languages, and the greatest, and most extensive and sublime to the ear. (56-57)

Reiterating several sciences from al-ʾAṭṭār’s verse, al-Ṭaḥṭāwī again emphasizes that together these describe what “grammar” intends. Through this, he critiques the name “the Arabic sciences” because these sciences exist in all languages. Instead, al-Ṭaḥṭāwī implies that it would be better to conceive of “the sciences of language” which investigate Arabic (or French, etc.). Concerned that his reader might read his universalizing these sciences as suggesting universal or equalized languages, al-Ṭaḥṭāwī assures his reader that universal sciences of language do not threaten Arabic’s singularity. The distinction al-Ṭaḥṭāwī establishes between universal sciences and singular languages is a consequence of his processes of translation. Before translating the French “grammar,” the “sciences of Arabic” and the “Arabic sciences” were indistinguishable. After translating “grammar,” sciences are universalized and thus Arabic’s singularity must be asserted and also distinguished from sciences that had previously defined it.39

Al-Ṭaḥṭāwī again asserts Arabic’s greatness at the moment his description of translation might be seen to privilege universality over particularities:

One learned in the Latin language knows everything connected to it. He understands syntax in itself, and others, such as morphology. It is ignorant to say that he does not know anything on account of his ignorance of the Arabic language. If one delves deep into any language then he perforce becomes learned in another language, meaning that if something is translated for him in the other language, and is expressed to him, then he may acquire it and compare it to his language. Even if he may have known it already, he gets to know it better and researches into it and invalidates from it what reason does not approve. How [could he not], for knowledge (ʿilm) is the faculty [of all]. A person may

39 An example of the former is found in al-Taḥṭāwī’s description of the science of rhetoric (ʿilm al-balāgha). The greatest purpose for this science is unique to Arabic, namely to reveal the eloquence (al-balaghah) of the Qur’an and demonstrate its inimitability.
be unfamiliar with the large tomes in the Arabic language, but he can come to know [what is contained in them] through the French language, if it is translated for him. Whereas each language is served and [therefore] has its Muṭawwal, its Atwāl, and its Saʿd, truly, not every liquid is water, nor every roof a sky, nor every house the house of God, nor every Muhammad the prophet of God …There is no doubt that the tongue of the Arabs is the greatest and most splendid of languages. (57)

Al-Ṭaḥṭāwī instructs his readers in several ways through this passage. First he tells them not to dismiss what people know simply because they do not know Arabic. He explains that translation enables one who is learned in the sciences of language to benefit from the knowledge contained in translated texts. And he then advises his reader how to read a translation for knowledge: read and learn what is contained in a translation; compare it to what you may have known already on the topic from texts in your own language; deepen your knowledge in the process; and eliminate what the intellect (al-aql) does not accept. He counsels his readers to be open to learning through translations and tells them that reading a translation should be comparative, and that one can trust the intellect to be able to eliminate any conflicts that arise between the two. This is possible because knowledge (al-ʿilm) is the faculty (huwa al-malaka) of all humans.

He emphasizes again that knowledge is not the domain of Arabic. A Frenchman can learn what is contained in a great Arabic work through translation. This is because the “Arabic sciences” exist in all languages; all languages have their masterworks on rhetoric and grammar similar in kind to what exists in Arabic. And once more, al-Ṭaḥṭāwī underscores that even though these sciences are universal, languages are singular. This is then his final piece of advice to his readers in the above passage: what distinguishes you cannot be sciences, because these are not particular. It is possible to proudly proclaim that “Arabic is the greatest and most splendid of

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40 These are well-known medieval Arabic works on rhetoric and grammar: “Al-muṭawwal” refers to al-Taftāzānī’s (d. 1389) work on rhetoric Shahr al-takhliṣ al-muṭawwal, which was a commentary on al-Qazwīnī’s (1268-1337) abridgement of al-Sakkākī’s (1160-1229) Miṣfah al-ʿulūm. “Al-Atwal” is another commentary on al-Sakkākī’s Miṣfah, by al-Asfarāʾīnī (d. 1544). “Al-SAʿd” refers to a grammar treatise by al-Taftāzānī. See Newman, An Imam in Paris, 184n2, 185n3-4.
languages,” without making that assertion dependent on its sciences, which, al-Ṭahtāwī repeats are not really “its” but belong to all languages.

There is a second reason why what gives Arabic its singularity should not, and perhaps cannot, be its sciences. The entire Takhlīṣ confirms the superiority of the Franks, and the French in particular, in a great number of intellectual sciences. Al-Ṭahtāwī suggests this has something to do with the clarity of their language and style of writing, at least when it comes to works on sciences. He explains that prose (al-nathr) “is the tongue of the sciences” (179), even though many Arabic books on sciences are written in verse (al-nażm). He attributes this exceptionality to the vastness of the Arabic language, but also criticizes it for hindering the Islamic lands’ progress in non-linguistic sciences.

Unlike Arabic, French science books are in prose. Whereas someone who studies an Arabic book on science must use “all the tools of language” and work hard to decipher and understand its words since “expressions carry meanings far from their appearance” (122), a reader of a French science book can understand the language “at first sight.”

Thus, whenever a person commences studying a [French] book on a science he can devote himself to understanding the issues of that science and its rules without arguing about the words. He can direct all his attention to researching the subject of the science and to merely what is said and understood, and to all that may result from it. Anything else is a waste. For example, if a person wants to study arithmetic, then he understands what concerns numbers without looking at the inflection of terms, and the effect of whatever metaphors are included in it. He would not object if an expression was suited to paronomasia but devoid of it, nor if the author began in one way when something else should have been first, nor if he used the fāʾ in place of the wāw, when the opposite would have been better, and so on. (122-23)

Al-Ṭahtāwī suggests that an overdevelopment of the sciences of language has hindered the advancement of other sciences in the Islamic lands. Instead of writing and reading texts to communicate knowledge—which he implies should be the purpose of language in science books—Arabic writers and readers argue about rhetoric and grammar instead of furthering the
science at hand. The French on the other hand can devote all their energies to learning, acquiring, and producing knowledge. They are not quibbling about conjunctions and word choice, nor must a student have mastered the sciences of language to be able to make use of the knowledge contained in a science book.

Throughout the work al-Ṭahṭāwī extols and reveres Arabic for its eloquence, beauty, and grace. This passage is unusually critical and passes a “French” judgment on the language. Earlier in the text, al-Ṭahṭāwī describes how different languages each have their own use, and therefore not everything can be rendered across them (55, 56). While “knowledge” translates, style, taste, and aesthetics often do not. He explains, for example, how due to differences between the use of French and Arabic, it can be difficult, it not impossible, to translate style across the two. For example, because French is devoid of word plays and inflections and does not value oral rhetorical embellishments, “what is considered embellishment in Arabic is considered a weakness by the French.” Therefore, “the ornamental grace of Arabic is destroyed when it is translated” into French (55).

Some Remarks on al-Tahtawi’s Critique and Translation

Al-Ṭahṭāwī advocates for the Islamic lands to learn from the Franks’ sciences, which are universal sciences, and to import what will further their development. This closing section will return to consider the use and effects of two different translation strategies he employs in order to encourage his readers’ to favor the mission’s aims.

From the opening of the introduction al-Ṭahṭāwī presents a universal narrative of progress where all societies will eventually develop the same two overarching categories of sciences: the intellectual and the transmitted sciences. He presents the lands of Islam and those of
the Franks as equally advanced though inversely related. The inversion explains what the
mission stands to gain from its studies in Paris—namely those sciences the Franks have mastered
which al-Ṭaḥṭāwī translates and qualifies as ḥikmiyya—and what al-Ṭaḥṭāwī imagines it has to
teach the French, i.e. the sharʿiyya sciences.

Al-Ṭaḥṭāwī critiques the Franks’ concept of sciences in two ways: First, he translates
their total view of science as the “ʿulūm ḥikmiyya,” Islamizing their sciences as he subsumes the
entire concept within the intellectual sciences. He then critiques the Franks for their ignorance in
the (Christian) transmitted sciences. By distinguishing the French from Christians, or seeing
them as Christians “in-name only,” he eases the integration of their positive sciences both
literally into Egypt and conceptually within the category of the intellectual sciences, while at the
same time affirming the Islamic lands’ strength, even superiority, in at least a portion of sciences.
In this way, al-Ṭaḥṭāwī is able to imagine the Islamic lands as the Franks’ teacher, at the same
time that the Franks, in reality, are instructing.

Al-Ṭaḥṭāwī uses a second translational strategy when he twice introduces the French term
grammar. He first defines the French term, and suggests his reader think of it as “sciences of
Arabic” (or the “Arabic sciences”). He makes this choice based on intelligibility. He later
substitutes nahw for grammar, choosing an Arabic term that better fits the singular universal
contours of the French, whereas he earlier preferred the term that better fit the meaning of the
shared abstraction represented by both Arabic and French terms.

Through his initial efforts to explain “grammar” in Arabic terms, al-Ṭaḥṭāwī comes to
question the suitability of the “Arabic sciences” (or “sciences of Arabic”) as a designation for
what it represents. As a result he reconceptualizes the Arabic term, and divides the sciences of
language from Arabic. This division however, changes how Arabic is understood, which
explains why he asserts Arabic’s singularity and superiority precisely at those moments when he worries his dividing it from the Arabic sciences might be seen as undermining its unique position.
CONCLUDING REMARKS:

Engaging Sciences

Leopold Zunz’s *Etwas über die rabbinische Litteratur* and Rifāʿī a Rāfiʿ al-Ṭaḥṭāwī’s *Takhlīṣ al-Ibrīz ilā Talkhīṣ Bāriz* are two didactic works that have been made foundational for the *Wissenschaft des Judentums* and the *nahḍa*. The programs they advocate are a part of, and responses to, Western Europe’s modernity as it develops from the late eighteenth century into the nineteenth.

Edward Said explains how Orientalism “derives from secularizing elements in eighteenth-century European culture.” He uses “secularizing” to refer to developments that countered ecclesiastical politics, such as expansion, historical confrontation, sympathy, and classification, emphasizing, however, that these did not remove “old religious patterns of human history and destiny” but rather “reconstituted, redeployed, [and] redistributed” them into secular frameworks driving Orientalism.¹ These shifts and changes likewise enable and shape the program Zunz outlines, and the *Wissenschaft* it develops, as he uses philology to remove theological bias from the study of the Jews’ literature and elevate this field to a science. “Secularizing elements” also impact al-Ṭaḥṭāwī’s thought, especially as he works to translate concepts from French into Arabic.

Both texts are interventions, aiming to direct and impact their readers in particular ways. Each posits a critique of Europe as it seeks to learn from and emulate what it takes Europe to be.

Their proposals vary, based, in part, on how each writer presents Europe’s relation to Christianity and what he envisions or wants for his own relation to and within Europe.

**Zunz’s vision of universal Science and a secular Europe**

Zunz, unlike al-Taḥṭāwī, juxtaposes the scientific against the theological, though two aspects of this opposition need to be clarified: First, Zunz counters reading theologically to reading scientifically; he does not contrast religion to science. Second, it is clear that “science” itself, in the singular universal sense, and in its relation to “sciences,” is a “religious” concept. Zunz uses this scientific model of a universal “rational religion,” as a corrective to the divisiveness of religions in the plural, especially when one of the many governs over others. In Zunz’s imagery, the “literatures” of peoples function in place of “religions,” and each complete literature shares an equal relation to others and to the universal whole encompassing and outliving them all. The Church, the Enlightenment, and the Nation are all present and a part of the model he uses. This connects to his hope for German society, not where the religious is opposed to the secular, but where political and social rights are not granted or withheld based on whether a person is Protestant, Catholic or Jewish.

At the same time that Zunz defends the rabbinic, and works to elevate its historical use, he wants to separate Jews in the present from it. This reflects his acceptance that what the rabbinic has “degenerated” into is irrational, unlearned, and counter to the singular scientific spirit of the times. The present requires that Jews integrate with non-Jewish society and allow themselves to be impacted and shaped by German *Bildung*. It likewise demands that Christians stop treating Jews and their literature as Church material, and calls on them to value both. Science is what makes this vision possible.
In a world where science equalizes, or should equalize, peoples, Zunz makes the Jews into a historical and textual community, like other peoples. He encounters this model in his university studies. In this sense, one could read the “science” he proposes as transposing Boeckh’s and Wolf’s philology onto Jewish texts. However, this is not only what it is. While his teachers’ developed the discipline as the complete knowledge of classical antiquity, historically and philosophically, Zunz uses their philology quite differently. His is an Orientalist’s critique of Hebraism, through which he aims to expose Christian undercurrents of the tradition he has inherited, in the hopes that raising awareness of this lingering bias will eliminate it, and with it the inequalities Jews continue to face in German society.

This is how and why the *Wissenschaft des Judentums* began, though it is not what it becomes. Its battle against Christianity continues, but it is pressed and led through the effort from the university into the seminary. And with that relocation, a shift occurs too in who the Jews are and what Judaism is. What begins, in part and in places, as an effort to demonstrate to Jews and Christians that the Jews are a people like other peoples, possessing a history and a literature worthy of being taught in the German university, becomes, more often, directed towards modernizing and reforming the Jewish community, making Judaism “into “a modern religion in a Protestant sense” even as, and perhaps especially because, it engaged and sought to rebel against Christian abuses.  

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2 See Chapter 3 of the dissertation, 96n9.

On al-Tahtawi’s critique of the Franks and of the Arabic Sciences:

Unlike Zunz, who rests his program on a common universal that Jews and Christians need to work together towards actualizing, al-Tahtawi presents the Franks as having a completely different view of sciences than is found in Muslim countries. Yet, he also posits a universal structure for sciences, through which he assimilates the Franks’ sciences and critiques them for their partiality. In al-Tahtawi’s view there is no singular science. Foundationally there are two main categories of sciences determined by whether one is led to knowledge by the intellect or by revelation. Both lead to the development of sciences, either to the intellectual or the transmitted sciences, as humans seek to acquire knowledge and put it to its best uses. There is no distinction, let alone conflict, between religion and science.

Al-Tahtawi explains that the French divide religion and science and perceive an incompatibility between the two because their version of Christianity is irrational and anti-scientific. This is not the case with Islam, which is why Islamic societies have developed both the intellectual and transmitted sciences. It is worth pointing out a significant difference between al-Tahtawi’s view of “civilization,” and what appears more often in subsequent nahda writings. The Takhlis describes how all societies develop through the same stages as they become more advanced and civilized. This is markedly different, for example, from the pervasive East:West dichotomy seen in Jurji Zaydän’s Tārikh ādāb al-lugha al-‘arabiyya, discussed in chapter 2.

Al-Tahtawi’s view of societies’ common development facilitates his two-part critique of the Franks’ sciences, whereby he subsumes the whole of their sciences within the intellectual sciences and simultaneously critiques the Franks for their ignorance of Christian transmitted sciences. He presents Europe as fractured, cut off from its transmitted sciences, able to access only a portion of the totality of knowledges. This helps him advocate for Islamic countries to
import those sciences the Franks’ have mastered because these do not connect in any way to Christianity. Additionally, it allows him to imagine the Islamic lands as the Franks’ teacher, at the same time that the Franks, in reality, are instructing.

And yet, through the process of translating and communicating European concepts into Arabic in order to educate his readers about what his French teachers have taught him, al-Ṭaḥṭāwī reconfigures the structure of intellectual and transmitted sciences. This is most visible when he translates “grammar” into Arabic, explaining that the French term refers to what “the Arabic sciences” represent. He warns his reader against presuming that knowing Arabic is necessary for understanding these sciences, because they exist for every language. He divides Arabic from its sciences, making the language singular and exalted, but not through its sciences which are universal.

The Arabic sciences are intellectual sciences, and many are also auxiliary ones assisting transmitted sciences (e.g. fiqh, tafsir, ḥadith, etc.) to reach their highest goals, and connecting the two foundational categories of sciences to each other. However, through comparing “the Arabic sciences” to “grammar” al-Ṭaḥṭāwī comes to question first their designation, and eventually their use. He critiques Arabic for its overdevelopment of these sciences, which now, when he compares Arabic books to French ones, seem to hinder the perfection of many other intellectual sciences. Al-Ṭaḥṭāwī begins to draw a separation between the two unified categories of sciences. As a result, the Arabic sciences, which previously traversed the two categories, require redefinition and restriction.

This example illustrates the coercive potential of translation. By suggesting conceptual equivalence across languages, Arabic, as the language that seeks to learn from the French, is also pressed to accommodate itself into French categories. When al-Ṭaḥṭāwī warns his reader that one
needs to “have mastery over the Qurʾan and the sunna” before “plunging into the language of French” because their language itself “contains elements of philosophy” which are heretical, he perhaps realizes, to some degree, the unequal exchange between them.⁴

As foundational as they have been made to be for the Wissenschaft des Judentums and the nahda, Zunz’s *Etwas* and al-Ṭahṭāwī’s *Takhlīṣ* are texts which also tell part of Europe’s story, showing the impact and effectiveness of European transformation and instruction on its internal and external others. In these beginning works, Zunz and al-Ṭahṭāwī aim to shape and impact what they are taught in the University of Berlin, and in the École égyptienne, respectively. In this sense Europe does not simply impose modernity upon them. Both writers engage, embrace, critique, and direct what they are taught—but what they direct is limited both by the starting terms and by how Europeans respond to their efforts and productions.

⁴ Rifāʿa Rāfīʿ al-Ṭahṭāwī, *Takhlīṣ al-Ibrīz ilā Talkhīṣ Bāriz*, (Bulaq, 1834), 122.


———. “Jewish Studies at Universities: An Early Project.” Hebrew Union College Annual 46 (1975): 357-76.


———. “Ein Jahrhundert Wissenschaft des Judentums.” *Festschrift zum 50 jährigen Bestehen der Hochschule für die Wissenschaft des Judentums*. Berlin: Philo Verlag, 1922. 103-44.


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I.
Berlin 1818. In der Maurer'schen Buchhandlung.

Vorwort.

"Loben, sagt Nushirvan\(^1\), kann ein jeder; aber mit Gründen und mit Bescheidenheit tadeln ist ein gutes Theil schwerer." Da mir nun an meiner Schrift mehr als an meiner Eigenliebe, und an der Wissenschaft mehr als an beiden aufliegt; so bitte ich den ächten Kenner mir in seiner Recension zu sagen, was in der meinigen — denn dafür erkenne ich meine gegenwärtige Schrift — missungen ist.


\(^1\) Meissner's Skizzen Th. 3. S. 74.

[translation of Zunz's Gesammelte Schriften I, pp. 1-31]

I.
Some Remarks on Rabbinic Literature. Together with information about an old hitherto unprinted Hebrew work.
By Leopold Zunz.
(Berlin: Maurer's Bookshop, 1818).

Foreword

"Anyone can praise," says Nushirvan; "however, to criticize with grounds and modesty is a great deal more difficult." Since, for me, now, more rests on my writing than on my self-love, and more on science than on either, I request one who genuinely knows to tell me in his review what in mine—for so I perceive my present writing—is lacking.

That I speak of myself in the singular in the foreword and in the plural in the work itself is not to satisfy the fault-finders in both parties. Rather, I believe that the writer should personally step forward only in legal documents, travel and life descriptions, bills of exchange, prefaces, challenges, wash-bills, receipts, counter-critiques, inn-accounts, and the like. In humor writing one makes use of "I," and nevertheless steps outside of himself; in doctrinal writing he chooses the modest "we," through which he mixes with the entire battalion of representatives, who take to the field for mute science.

\(^1\) August Gottlieb Meissner's Skizzen, 3:74.
Finally, I must ask all readers of this work to forgive the many typographical errors. The author's haphazard removal has carried them out into the list attached to the text; at present, whoever is a good reader will correct them sooner and not fear this labor.¹
Bielefeld, May 1818.

Primum hoc statuo esse virtutis conciliare animos hominum.

Cicero

¹) In the present publication the typographical errors in the text were corrected, so the list became superfluous.
Apart from the interest that their antiquity and their contents afford, the awe-inspiring remains from the blossoming age of the ancient Hebrews owe their higher importance to chance. The revolutions, which developed amidst the Jewish people and greatly influenced this people no less than they influenced the rest of the earth, established those ruins under the name of the Hebrew canon, as it were, as the foundation of the Christian states. Then the ever progressing course of the sciences did its part; it expanded those few books into a circuit of spiritual industry more admirable than the Greek, because it knew how to develop its richness out of poorer material.

However, the later products of the Hebrew nation never matured to such appreciation. This [nation], which had sunk from its political and intellectual height, seemed to have lost the powers of reproduction for a long time, contenting itself with the sometimes more, sometimes less successful exegesis of scanty writings from a better time. As the shadows of barbarism gradually lost ground from the darkened earth, and light necessarily fell over everything, likewise over the Jews who were dispersed everywhere, a new foreign learning tied itself to the remains of the ancient Hebrews; minds and centuries worked both into that literature we call rabbinic.  

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1) One should understand by this term only those works whose authors or whose content is rabbinic; fundamentally “rabbi,” which courtesy imports to everyone, has less significance than “doctor.” Why not neo-Hebraic or Jewish literature?
With the Reformation, inevitably brought about through the flowering of classical learning, a lively study of the biblical books began, to which was joined a, may we say, curious zeal for rummaging through the Orient. As a result, for [the past] century one passionately attacked rabbinic wisdom, which—while the fatherland’s richer and more amiable products occupied and enlivened the minds—suddenly, and perhaps forever, has ceased. But also rabbinic literature declined to the extent that European [literature] flourished, and the Jews began connecting themselves to it. Even what still belongs to the former from the last fifty years, has borrowed only the language from [rabbinic literature] as an accessible learned garment for ideas that must prepare for a time when rabbinic literature will have ceased to live.

However, precisely because in our time we are seeing the Jews—limiting this to the German ones—with greater seriousness seizing upon the German language and German learning, thereby—perhaps often without wanting to or suspecting—carrying the neo-Hebraic literature to the grave, science steps forth and demands an account of that [literature] which has closed. Now—when no new vision of importance is likely to so easily disturb our survey; when a greater subsidized apparatus is at our disposal than what existed for scholars of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries; when a greater culture [Culture] permits anticipating a more illuminated treatment, and Hebrew books are not yet so hard to acquire as they may be in 1919—now, we believe, working on our science on a grand scale becomes an obligation, and an even weightier one, because the complicated question about the fate of the Jews, seems to be able to be answered, in some paragraphs, through it. For external constitutional and religious influences alone are insufficient for producing a satisfactory harmony, if the nature of the instrument is not also known, nor how to handle it. To know the present-day Jews theoretically, or even juridically, theoretically or economically, is to know them partially; only given ideas and the knowledge of customs...
des Willens. Jede rücksichtslose sogenannte Verbesserung rächt der schiefe Ausgang; überflüssige Neuerungen geben dem Alten, und — was das missliebeste ist — dem Veralteten einen höheren Werth. Um also das Alte brauchbare, das Veraltete schädliche, das Neue wünschenswerthe zu kennen und zu sondern, müssen wir besonnen zu dem Studium des Volkes und seiner Geschichte schreiten, der politischen wie der moralischen. Und das eben erzeugt den grössten Nachtheil, dass die Sache der Juden behandelt wird wie ihre Literatur. Eher beide ist man mit befangener Hütze herzefallen, und hat sie entweder zu niedrig oder zu hoch taxirt.

Nicht um einen Knäuel zu entwirren, an dem geschicktere Finger sich versuchen mögen, sind wir von der Literatur des Volkes in seine bürgerliche Existenz abgeschweift. Wir kehren vielmehr, nachdem wir beider Wechselwirkung aufeinander mit einem Paar Zügen gezeichnet, zu jener zurück, um uns über ihre Entscheidung, ihren Inhalt, ihr Verhältniss zu ältern und gleichzeitigen Schwestern, ihren gegenwärtigen Vorstand und ihre Eigenhändigkeit nach Aufklärung umzusehen. Aber wir treffen bierzü da und dort wohl Lämpchen an, jedoch nicht immer hinreichendes und gutes Öl darin; nach Sonnenlicht sucht unser Auge vergeblich. Wie geht es zu, könnte man fragen, dass zu einer Zeit, wo über alle Wissenschaften, über alles Thun der Menschen ein grossartiger Gesammelblick seine hellen Strahlen verbreitet, wo die entlegenen Erdteile bereist, die unbekannten Sprachen studirt, und kein Material verachtet wird, dem Ban der Weisheit zu dienen, — wie geht es zu, dass allem unsere Wissenschaft dann wieder liegt? was hindert uns den Inhalt der rabbinischen Literatur ganz zu kennen, gebrüllig zu verstehen, glücklich zu erklären, richtig zu bearbeiten) und bequem zu übersetzen?

Da nur mannigfaltige, zahlreiche und gute Vorarbeiten zu dieser Höhe uns führen können; so fällt die Frage auf den Mangel an solchen zurück, und daher liegt es uns in

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) Wir fürchten nicht, missverstanden zu werden. Hier wird die ganze Literatur der Juden, in ihrem grössten Umfange, als Gegenstand der Forschung aufgestellt, ohne uns darum zu kümmern, ob ihr sämtlicher Inhalt auch Norm für unser eigenes Urtheilen sein soll oder kann.

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and of the will can show one the spirit. The askewed outcome takes revenge on every inconsiderate so-called improvement; hasty innovations grant the old, and — what is most dubious—the antiquated, a higher value. In order to know and to classify the old as useful, the antiquated as harmful, and the new as desirable, we must thoughtfully and seriously commence with the study of the people and its history, of the political as of the moral. Precisely what produces the greatest harm is that the matter of the Jews is handled just like their literature. One pounces upon both with biased ardor, and has them appraised either too low or too high.

We strayed from the literature of the people to its civic existence, not to disentangle a ball of yarn on which more adept fingers might like to try. Rather, we turn to the former, after having sketched in a few strokes the interplay of both on each other, in order to shed light on its origin, its contents, its relation to more ancient and contemporary sisters, its present inventory, and its singularity. Though we may encounter here and there small lamps, there is not always sufficient and good oil in them; our eyes search in vain for the sunlight. How is it, one could ask, that at a time when a magnificent complete view spreads its clear rays over all sciences, over all human activity, when the furthest reaches of the earth are visited, the most unknown languages studied, and no material that serves to build wisdom is disdained—how is it that our science alone languishes? What prevents us from knowing entirely the contents of rabbinic literature, from properly understanding, successfully explaining, correctly judging1, and comfortably surveying it?

Since only diverse, numerous and good preparatory works can lead us to this height, the question returns to the lack of such [works]. It is thus upon us to discuss and prove in our answer whether
unserer Antwort zu erörtern, ob, was wir unter literarischen Vorarbeiten verstehen, und zu beweisen, dass es wirklich daran fehlt. Wenn wir diese Erscheinung zu erklären versucht haben, wird es sich endlich darthun, dass bei solcher gestalt begründetem Mangel, nie an Klarheit in unserm vorliegenden Gegenstande, geschweige denn an Vollendung zu denken sei.

Wir nennen solche literarische Werke Vorarbeiten, die sich entweder theilweise über eine ganze Wissenschaft, oder ganz über einen Theil derselben verbreiten. Von letzterer Art ist jede einzelne Materie, gehörig untersucht — jede wissenschaftliche Frage, wo nicht vollkommen beantwortet, wenigstens für einen kommenden Beantworter mit aller Schärfe auseinandergesetzt, — eine merkwürdige Entdeckung auf die Beförderung der Kenntnisse angewandt, — selbst eine schwierige Stelle kritisch beleuchtet. Die sogenannten editiones principes, sobald sie mehr leisten als Vervielfältigung des Manuskriptes, desgleichen gute Uebersetzungen, richtige Handbücher, Biographien und ähnliches mehr, können auf den Namen litterarischer Vorarbeiten mit Recht Anspruch machen.

Einen höheren Rang glauben wir aber denjenigen Werken ertheilen zu müssen, die eine ganze Wissenschaft umfassen, durch wichtige Entdeckungen bereichern, oder durch neue Ansichten umfassen, die die Litteratur ganzer Jahrhunderte oder Jahrtausende über sich nehmen, und ihres Enderganges Spuren hinterlassen, breit genug für hundert Andere ihnen zu folgen. Dahin gehören z. B. die Auseinandersetzungen philosophischer Systeme, Geschichten einzelner Doctrinen, Parallelen, Litteratur-Bibliotheken etc.

So rühmlich und nutzbar indessen alle diese Entbehrungen auch immer sind; sie werden als Einzelheiten immer der höheren Forderung genügen, wenn der Arbeiter das ungeheure Porphyregebirge über das Steinchen vergisst, das er sich daraus zu poliren geholt, und nach guther Arbeit selbstaufrichtig ausruht, um von der Verschönerung zu posaunen, die unter seinen Händen die Natur gewonnen. Wer die Litteratur einer Nation als den Eingang betrachtet zur Gesamtkenntniss ihres Culturganges durch alle Zeiten hindurch — wie in jedem Moment ihr Wesen aus dem Gegebenen und dem Hinzukom-
menden, d. i. aus dem Innern und dem Aeussern sich gestaltet, — wie Schicksal, Klima, Sitten, Religion und Zufall freundschäftlich oder feindlich in einander greifen, — und wie endlich die Gegenwart, als alle dagewesenen Erscheinungen nothwendiges Resultat dasteht: — wahrlich der tritt mit Ehrfurcht vor diesen Göttertempel, und lässt bescheiden sich in die Vorhalle einführen, die erhabene Aussicht vom Giebel herunter als ein Würdigerer einzust zu geniessen.

Zu solcher Würde hebt jedoch nur der sich empor, welcher sich die Mühe des Steigens nimmt, und auch er kann von dem grossen Ganzon nur dann befriedigende Rechenschaft geben, wenn er mit dem eingeweihten Ange der Kunst alle Theile betrachtet hat. Es verwandelit sich ihm nach dieser höhern Ansicht unsere Wissenschaft in ein ganzes Fach Wissenschaften, deren jede in ihren Theilen gepflegt sein will, soll nicht das Ganze durch wesentliche Fehler verunstaltet werden. Sehen wir nun diesen unermesslichen Stoff etwas aufmerksam an, um unter der Aegide der Kritik zu forschen, zu ordnen und zu schaffen; so erblicken wir dieselbe uns dreifach in unserer Arbeit helfen, dass wir nämlich den gegebenen Gedanken, — die Mittheilung, — und die Art und Weise unserer Kenntniss desselben zu erkennen und zu beurtheilen fähig werden. Dies berücksichtigt spalten demnach die Kritik theorethisch in drei Theile, in die doctrinale, welche die Ideen, — in die grammatische, welche die Sprache, — und in die historische, welche die Geschichte dieser Ideen vom Augenblicke der Mittheilung an bis sie gegenwärtig zu unserer Kenntniss gelangen, umfasst.

Gehen wir nunmehr zu den litterarischen Producten des jüdischen Volks über, so fragt es sich vor allem, was denn ihr Inhalt sei? Darum wollen wir das vorzüglichere dieses Inhalts-Verzeichnisses von Wissenschaften, zur Uebersicht der Leser ordnen, und ihm sogleich die Anmerkungen, die wir darüber zu machen Gelogenheit gehabt, beifügen; — Anmerkungen, die wir lieber von Besseren uns zugrunter gehörig haben würden, als sie hiermit der nur zu gewöhnlichen Sucht des oberflächlichen Tadels Preis zu geben.

Machen wir gleich mit Theologie den Anfang, so muss freilich eingestanden werden, dass die Juden ihr ganzes the data und the addenda (i.e., from the internal and the external); how fate, climate, customs, religion and chance take hold of one another amicably or hostilely; and how, ultimately the present stands here as the inevitable result of all existing phenomena—truly that person steps with awe before this temple of the gods, and may modestly lead himself into the entrance hall, and from the gable enjoy the exalted view below, once he is more worthy of it.

However, such an honor goes only to one who elevates himself up, who takes on the toil of the climb, but even he can only then give a satisfactory account of the great whole, once he has reflected upon all parts with the adept eye of art. According to this higher view our science turns into a complete compartment of sciences, where each part is to be tended, so that the whole should not become disfigured by substantial flaws. If we now look upon this immeasurable material somewhat more attentively, in order to research, to order, and to produce under the aegis of criticism, then we behold this [aegis] helping us triply in our work, which is to say that we will be able to perceive and to appraise the given thought, the communication [of it], and the modality of our knowledge [of it].

Regarding this we accordingly divide criticism theoretically into three parts: the doctrinal, encompassing the ideas; the grammatical, encompassing language; and the historical, encompassing the account of these ideas from the moment of communication until they reach our knowledge in the present.

If we now turn to the literary products of the Jewish people, then one must first ask, what may its content be? For that reason we want to set in order the more distinguished material from this directory of sciences for the reader’s review. Annotations, which we have had the opportunity to make about it, are forthwith appended—annotations, which we would have preferred to have heard calling out from those better than us, instead of only exposing the vulgar mania of superficial blame.

If we begin with theology, then it must certainly be admitted that the Jews have never built up their complete system of theology.

1) Der Mann ist überhaupt mehr als streng, z.B. si nobilitas in serviti et abjacto populo inesse possit (Bib. rab. I. 710). — impia Talmudica Doctrina (III. 696), — impii et perversi Rabbin (ibid. 321). Florus sagt noch (lib. 3. c. 5): impia gena. Von Wagensel (tel. ign. p. 50) erklärt man dagegen was piae sei: Eius vero, credibilissime piam Antiquitatem, hanc curem ad se pertinere, ut Judaeorum dogmata et versus superstitiosos exuere, ac publice meritis probis diffamare.

2) Einiges ähnliches aber viel schonender sagt Bessar (hist. des Juifs tom. III. p. 9).


4) Wir versteeken, wie der Lateiner, unter diesen Worte mehr als die äußere, Tactius der Heide nannte sie schön superstition (Annot. 15,44; Hist. 2. 1. lib. 5. 8); es hat aber auch an Neunen nicht geschehen, die sie mit den Titeln Wahnsinns und Irrtümer behaupnten. — Act. Apost. 25. 19 (Porcius Festus): superstitione.


6) Folgendes glauben wir, sei darin zu betrachten und zu unterscheiden: 1) Geist des Gottesdienstes; seine Stellung im Ceremonialgesetz; clearly and perfectly; however, venerable fragments speak loudly enough, louder than Bartolocci, who has knitted together a "confutation of rabbinical blasphemies" (1) from myths and legends. Regarding the mythology of the Jews, excluding a few valuable writings on ancient [mythology], we are still very backwards. This is rather surprising, since it is connected similarly with Christian dogmatology, if one listens to Röder. In the sphere of religious sins were committed completely willingly and systematically! In the world nothing more harmful, unjust, and biased has likely been written, than about the Jewish religion; the art of inciting hate is here brought to its peak. One does not distinguish customs from liturgy, nor these from religious principles. Thus with one condemnable [thing] ten innocent things were decried. A history of the synagogue rite

(1) The man (Giulio Bartolocci, Bibliotheca Magna Rabbinica, 4 vols., 1675-1693) is generally more than severe, for example: "si nobilitas in serviti et abjacto populo inesse possit" (1:710); "impia Talmudica Doctrina" (3:696); "impii et perversi Rabbinii" (3:321). Florus [by Lyon] already says (lib. 3, chap. 5): "impia gens." By contrast we learn what "pius" is from [Johann Christoph] Wagensel (Tela ignea Satanae: hoc est arcani et horribiles Judaeorum adversum Christianum Deum, et Christianum religionem libri Anselmi, 1681, 50): "Eius vero, credibilissime piam Antiquitatem, hanc curam ad se pertinere, ut Judaeorum dogmata et versus superstitiosos exuere, ac publice meritis probis diffamare."

(2) [Jacques] Bessar (1653-1725) says something similar but much more reserved (Histoire des Juifs, 3-9).

(3) Archäologie der Kirchengeschichte (1812) by Johann Ulrich Roeder contains a wealth of materials which should at least be investigated. Compare with [Giulio] Pico della Mirandola’s Apologia [1487], 123.

(4) By this word we understand, as do the Latin scholars, primarily the outside appearance. Tacitus the heathen already called it "superstition" (Annales 15:44; Historiae 2:4, ibid., 5:8). There has been no shortage as well in newer works, which honor it with the titles "false belief" and "errors." Acts of the Apostles 25:19 (Porcius Festus): superstition.

(5) Whoever has spare-time can leaf through, for example, the copious chapter "Scriptores Antiquitatis" in [Johann Christoph] Wolf’s Bibliotheca Hebraea, [4 vols., Hamburg, 1715-1733], 4:456-483, taken largely from Imbonati, as well as ibid., 2:994-1048, 1110-1135.

(6) We believe the following should be considered and distinguished in it: 1) The spirit of worship, its position in the ceremonial law, its influence on sentiment and character. 2) The manner and content of prayer formation (for example, the custom of [practice])

sein Einfluss auf Gesinnung und Charakter. 2) Gestalt und Gehalt der Gobeleformen (so reicht a. B. die Fläche des 2) 2) Rabbiner schon aus zweite Jahrhundert hinauf, siehe Alfasi (Frankfurt 1699 in 24) tom. I. fol. 108. a); Aussprüche jüdischer Schriftsteller darüber. 3) Art des Gottesdienstes; Meinungen nichtjüdischer Schriftsteller. Wenn die Behandlung dieses Gegenstandes, der nach Ländern und Zeitaltern verschiedenen bearbeitet sein will, in rechte Linde läuft, so würde eine praktische 

Zugabe in Betrachtung gemachter Fehler, vereitelnder Verbesserungen, und der Tendenz wirklich begonnener Änderungen, eine ernüchternde Erscheinung sein. —

5) entscheiden; von 2) sec. decideo.

6) Auch im Talmud; das bekannte 2) muss auf historischem Boden fassen. —

7) Im Talmud hat thiel die Hillelesche Familie, thiel der jedesmalige Lehrer, der sie folgt (a. B. 2) und 2) es Überge wicht. Die Träger der Differenzen· zwischen der Schamäischen und Hillelesche Schule, und die Mitglieder derselben, verdienen zusammenzustellen zu werden.

8) Solche vergleichende Werke, wie sie für das Mosaicsche Recht existiren (s. die Collatio aus dem 2ten Sec., Michaelis Mosaicsches Recht, und Bude introd. ad hist. phil. bebr. p. 480), werden bei den späteren vermisst, und wir haben hier nur zum Anfange das erste beste Beispiel aufzgreifen. Auch für das zum Grunde liegenden Rechtsein 2) es interessante Parallelien s. B. über die Enttortung Instit. II. tit. 18, init. mit Chosch hamm. § 281. 1; über ein Gebäude worin einem andern genanntes Material (ibid. tit. I. § 29 mit Chosch. hamm. § 360. I und Baba Kamma fol. 94, b und 95, a. — cf. Taanith f. 16. —

prepared from the sources would be a desirable, albeit difficult, undertaking in the present period.

If we leave what is subject to the church and stop at that of the state, then we find ourselves moved into the field of legislation and jurisprudence, wherein many excellent works written by Jews lay there for our scientific treatment. Surely the circumstance that they were written under oppression can increase interest about writings on state constitution. Thus it would be no unrewarding investigation to know how the character of the poskim2) was shaped, and why authority in the responsa Rabbinorum3) is dependent upon certain names.4) Even more interesting is the task of systematically comparing the entire teaching of culpa, which is arranged so sagaciously in the three Talmudic Babot, with the Roman law.5) Indeed, a [comparison of]

Alfsof Isaac ben Jacob) Alfasi (Frankfurt 1699). 1:108a). The judgements of Jewish writers on the topic; 3) The nature of worship; opinions of non-Jewish writers. It would be a delightful vision, were the treatment of this subject—which should be judged differently according to time and place—to fall into the right hands. Further, it would add a practical means for assessing past mistakes, thwarted improvements, and the tendency towards modifications, which had actually begun.

1) To decide; from 2) sec. decideo.

2) Also in the Talmud; the well-known 2) must be based on historical ground.

3) Partly the Hillel family has predominance in the Talmud, partly the teacher who follows it (e.g. R. Akiba and R. Meir). The remains of the differences between the schools of Shamai and Hillel, and the members of each, deserve to be compiled.

4) Such comparative works as exist for Mosaic law (see: the collation from the 5th sec.; [Johann David] Michaeis' Mosaic Law [1770-71]; and [Johann Franz] Bude's Introductio ad historiam philosophiae Ebraeorum [1702], 485) are missing for the later periods. Here, at the outset, we have taken up only the first best example. Likewise, there would be interesting parallels regarding the underlying sense of justice, for example, in laws on disinheritance (the opening of the [Roman] Institutions vol. 2, tit. 13, with the [halakhic] Bohnen Hamishaqat § 281.1); and on a building in which material stolen from another is used, (ibid., tit. 1, § 29 with Bohnen Hamishaqat § 360.1 and Baba Kamma fol. 94b and 95a). Cf., Taanith fol. 16.
juristische Terminologie mit der entsprechenden römischen und hellenischen. Die allmähliche Veränderung des Jüdischen Rechts und seinen endlichen Untergang in das europäische darzustellen, kann erst in einzelnen vorschreitenden müh- samen Untersuchungen nachfolgen.

Größtenheils als Quelle sowohl des religiösen als des juristischen Prinzips kann die Ethik angesehen werden, und es ist wohl Zelt das Herrliche, was im Talmud und späteren Weisen darüber geschrieben ist, sachlich aufräumend 9; aber auch alles was diesem widerspricht oder zu widersprechen scheint, wenn es von anerkannten Schriftstellern 8) herrührt, zu beleuchten: Entdeckungen, die dem Eisenmenger die eigentlichen herauszugeben, ersparen haben würden. Von nicht minderem Gewicht scheint uns die Wissenschaft oder vielmehr die Fertigkeit zu sein, die theils aus moralischen Grundsätzen, theils aus conventionellen der menschlichen Vereine, theils aus Regeln der sogenannten Lebensweisheit bestehend unter Humanität begriffen, und von vielen jüdischen Weisen gelehrt, aber nur durch Erziehung in Verbindung mit den Wissenschaften da erworben wird, wo glückliche Anlagen der bildenden Hand schon zuvorgekommen sind. In tract. Sota — Soferim — Sabbath — Abot — Derech-


2) Das moralische Gefühl lebt in jedem Menschen und mit allen Variationen bleibt der Mensch — Mensch. Also knüpft auch das neueste in der städtischen Litteratur sich wieder an das alte rein Mosesische an, und die Wendungen des alten Testamentes nach Cardinalstunden zu ordnen, dürfte uns eine brauchbare, schon einen Anfänger mögliche Beschäftigung. —

3) Nicht nur Leben und Zustand des Volkes will bekannt sein; auch die Autorität, die die Schriftsteller ans seiner Mitte über dasselbe gehabt, will es. Wo hat es nicht solche Autoren, und wo nicht Er- scheinungen gegeben, die wunderblos vorbereitet? Darum ist eine innige Bekanntheit mit jüdischer Litteratur und Sitte erforderlich, um eine Jüdische Moral zu schreiben. —

Hebrew juridical terminology with the analogous Roman and Hellenic would be meritorious. Exposing the gradual alteration of Jewish law and its final submersion in the European, can only come about after many individual laborious investigations are carried out.

For the most part, ethics can be considered as source of both the religious and the juridical principle. It is indeed time for the glorious, which is written about in the Talmud and [in writings of] later sages, 1) to be arranged factually. 2) But also all that contradicts, or seems to contradict this should be illuminated, when it comes from recognized authors — such discoveries would have spared Eisenmenger and his Science, or rather capability — which consists partly of moral principles; partly of conventional ones of human confederations; partly of rules of so-called worldly wisdom, apprehended by humanity and taught by many Jewish sages — seems to us to be of no less importance. However, it is acquired through upbringing in combination with the sciences only there, where propitious dispositions have already anticipated the cultivating hand. It is very beautiful to read about it in the [Talmudic] tractates of Sotah — Soferim — Sabbath — Avot — Derech Eretz, etc., just as in

1) Maimonides [c.1135-1204]; Bechah the Elder [c. 1040]; Nachmanides [1194-1270]; Jacob ben Meir, known as Tam [1100-1171]; Joseph Albo [c. 1380-1444]; Shem-Tob; Joseph ben Shem-Tob, d. 1488]; commentator and translator of the Aristotelian Ethic, Elia Vedas; Menasseh ben Israel [1604-1657]; Mendelsohn [1729-1786]; and others—not to leave out many a grain of gold in the little-read book of the Zohar.

2) The moral sense lives in every man, and amid all variations man remains man. In this manner the most recent ethical literature connects back to the ancient pure Mosaic. It seems to us that arranging the sentences of the Old Testament according to cardinal virtues, would be a useful occupation, one that even a beginner could undertake.

3) Not only must the life and condition of the people be made known, but also the authority that the writer had amidst the people. Where have there not been bad authors and phenomena, which rushed past ineffectually? For that reason an inner familiarity with Jewish literature and custom is necessary in order to write a Jewish moral.
the [books] Chovot Halevavot, Mibbeh Hapenninim and others.¹
After we have inspected man, we want also to investigate him as denizen of the earth, how he reflects upon his planet, as a researcher of nature, as an astronomer measuring the heavens, as a geographer navigating the seas. If we stop at the element of all three, namely mathematics, it seems to us that an explanatory dictionary is needed for the considerable number of Jewish writings, particularly as each one often has its own expressions.² Just as welcome would be an exposition of the more ancient traces of the same in the Talmud³ and its history in the most recent time.⁴ The treatment of astronomy among the Jews would yield an even greater profit; this should be preceded by an etymological investigation of the most ancient concepts, and a compilation of the fragments from some 80 works,⁵ before one commences with the real literature, which begins around 1100. Even if one would like to discount astrology, it seems to us that chronology⁶ must be connected with it. One remarkable example

¹) In Oxford there is, among others, an Arabic book on manners, which Gabriol composed in 1116 in Saragossa: see vol. 1, p. 166, cod. 358 of the catalogue of Oriental manuscripts at the Bodleian Library, Bibliotheca Bodleiana codicum manuscriptorum orientalium, compiled by James Utris. A second volume in 2 parts (1821, 1835) was compiled by Alexander Nicoll.

²) Wherein there are many interesting parallels, e.g., "cylinder" -- [a noun]  etc. What of Johannes Pastritus' Dictionarium Hebraicum Mathematicum et Philosophicum, which Imbonati [in his Bibliotheca Latino Hebraica, 1694], lists (p. 127) among his 70 works—is it extant?

³) E.g., [Tractates] Erusin, fol. 13b, 56b, 57a, and Kilaim 5:5, etc.

⁴) For example, it is of historical interest that in 1794 Elyakim [Auberon] in London, himself relying upon Green, ventures to refute Newton (in hebrew [the first essay in Elyakim's collection 'Asarah ma'amurot'], fol. 14b ff.)

⁵) Even the Chaldean Paraphrase contains remains, as does the Malzor and other anonymous [works], such as the: ויהי בהם -- [verse 2] etc.

⁶) From among many is the following [example]: One copy of Abraham ben Chia's astronomical works (Rivantilla, 1:24, cod. 66) see Rivantilla's catalogue of Hebrew and Greek manuscripts in the Turin Athenaeum, Codices Manuscripti Bibliothecae Regni Turinensis Athenaei, vol. 1, 1749) contains the declaration that they were completed in the year 896, on the 22nd day of theomer, on Friday midday, which was the 16th of April. However, compare with the Bibliotheca de Rossiana vol. 3, cod. 1165, where the 4th of Sivan is stated.

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1) Unter anderem steckt noch ein arabisches Werk über die Sitten, das Gabriel anno 1116 in Saragossa verfertigt, in Oxford (Utr. I. p. 66, cod. 358 in 2 chartae).


3) x. B. Eruvin f. 13 b; f. 56 b; f. 57 a -- Kilaim 5:5 etc.

4) Es hat x. B. schon historisches Interesse dass x. J. 1794 Elyakim in London, sich auf Green stützend, Newton zu widersprechen wagte (in hebrew [the first essay in Elyakim's collection 'Asarah ma'amurot'], fol. 14b ff.)

5) Selbst die chaldeischen Paraphrasen haben Trümmer; desgleichen das Malzor und andere namenlose als: ויהי בהם -- [verse 2] etc.

among many is Azaria dei Rossi, who already noted the situation from the book of Zohar, dealt with completely in our note. 

1) Already [in El-Consolidador [1632] 1:34] Menasseh ben Israel did not call him by his Hebrew name, nain ha-adumim; he only errs in the title of Dei Rossi's work [1573-76], which he calls Melurit or enamis instead of Me'or enayim.

2) This situation (noted by Dei Rossi, [Me'or enayim], 57b) is found in the Zohar (Amsterdam, 1728, 3 vols. in 8 parts) 3:10a, verbisim as: 'the Book of the Sages (i.e. of Rabbi Yishmael) contains the following story: a certain man (with the name of Achar) was among a large number of people, who were agents of the king. He was of a great stature and was called by the name of Adam. He was asked by the king: 'What do you wish?'. Adam said: 'I wish that I should be the head of the kingdom' and the king gave him his wish. Adam then proceeded to govern the kingdom and became a great and powerful king.' The story is then rendered into German: 'The above is more clearly explained in the book of Hamauna the Elder, namely that the entire earth rotates on itself like a ball; some are up, while others are down. Thence, the external appearances of all people are shaped differently according to different climates, and remain, like all else, in this localized form. Thus there are places where it is day and light, while in others it is night and dark; indeed there are some where it is continuously day with only a moment of night.'
Buche Sohar angenormt. Reisebeschreibungen und geografische Werke sind von minderer Anzahl zwar und geringer...
rem Interesse; aber noch manche topographische Notiz\textsuperscript{1)}, selbst Sprachbereicherung\textsuperscript{2}) ist aus diesen Werken zu holen.

Ganz unbenutzt liegt der naturkundliche Vorrath, der im Talmud\textsuperscript{3}) versteckt und bei Späteren\textsuperscript{4}), die ausschließlich dieses Fach behandeln, anzutreffen ist. Die unheilige rabbinische Literatur hat keine herbotanika, hierozoica, physica und medicina sacra aufzuweisen, obgleich es billig gewesen wäre, nicht stets vom Aberglauben zu schreien, ohne seinen Gegner, die Physik, angehört zu haben. Ihr zur Zeit geht die Medicin, gestützt auf die Kenntniss der Natur, des Menschen (d. h. Physico-nebst Anthropo- und Physiologie) und die geschickte Anwendung dieser Kenntnisse. Aber noch wissen wir kein Beispiel, dass ein gelehrt Arzt sich die Mühe gegeben hätte, uns die Schulen, die Entdeckungen, die Biographien und die Schriften der vielen älteren\textsuperscript{5}) jüdischen Aerzte auseinanderzusetzen, und Imbonati\textsuperscript{6}) Verzeichnis der Ubersetzter weist kaum drei medicinische Werke auf.

Von der Kenntniss haben wir zur Benutzung der


\textsuperscript{7}) Moses Tibbon (s. Rivuelttra p. 3) nennt seine Vaterstadt Granada סennent, vergl. Koecher II. p. 260. zu Ende.


\textsuperscript{10}) Vergleiche z. B. Hayden’s erklärndes Vocabularium vor seiner Ausgabe des סנט תגרית Rödheim 1801 in B. — Von antediluvianischen Knechen Sohar I. 68, s. —

\textsuperscript{11}) Auf Befehl des Kaisers Mervan, hat schon im siebenten Jahrhundert ein Jude, Namens Masseriahwaih, Aaron medicinische Werke übersetzt (Wolf. Bibl. IV. p. 903.)

\textsuperscript{12}) C. I. Imbonati (Biblot. latin. hebrae Rom 1694, fol. 512–516) gibt ein Register von 130 christ. Ubersetzern; darunter sind aber nur 70, die talmudische oder rabbinische Werke übersetzt haben, und die Zahl der übersetzten Schriften vermindert sich, so wie die Jahrzahl nach Chr. sich vermerkt.

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less interest; still, however, many topographical notes,\textsuperscript{1}) even language enriching ones,\textsuperscript{2}) could be retrieved out of these works.

The natural-philosophy stockpile, which hides in the Talmud\textsuperscript{3}) and can be found in later writings,\textsuperscript{4}) dealing exclusively with this subject, lies entirely unused. Profane rabbinic literature has no herbotanika, hierozoica, nor sacred physics or medicine to show for itself; although it would have been reasonable, not to continually cry out about superstition, without having listened to its adversary: physics. Alongside that is medicine, reliant upon the knowledge of nature, of man (i.e. psychology, together with anthropology and physiology), and the skillful application of this knowledge. However we still know of no example, in which a learned doctor would have gone down to explain to us the schools, the discoveries, the biographies and the writings of the many more ancient\textsuperscript{5}) Jewish doctors, Imbonati’s\textsuperscript{6}) catalog of translators presents scarcely three medical works.

It is only one step from the knowledge of nature to its use.

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\textsuperscript{1}) Moses Tibbon [1240-1283] (see Rivuelttra I.3) calls his fatherland Granada מֵרְנָה, cf. Koecher 2:269-end.

\textsuperscript{2}) According to [Giuseppe Simone] Assemani (Bibliothea orientalis Clementino-Vaticana, 1:174) one can call the city Tagrit by the Syrian סנט תגרית. In the Syrian translation of Matthew 5:25, the Decapolis is called סנט תגרית.

\textsuperscript{3}) For example, tractate Kitajim names 53 plant species, Alfaj 1.117a distinguishes between garment- and fruit-eating insects; סנט (for those that eat) books; סנט (for felines) books; סנט (for bunches of grapes); סנט (for figs) books; סנט (for pomegranates), (Buxtorf reads סנט); (Beau Coq). In tractate Chullin: Zootomie.

\textsuperscript{4}) Compare, for example, [Wolf] Heidenheim’s glossary preceding his edition of סנט תגרית by Gereshen ben Solomon, Rödheim, 1801). From antediluvian bones of the Zohar 1.62a.

\textsuperscript{5}) Already in the seventh century, a Jew named Masseriaiwaith translated the medical works of Aaron [of Alexandria] on the order of caliph Marwan (λ). Bibliotheca, 4:903).

\textsuperscript{6}) Carlo Giuseppe] Imbonati (Bibliothea Latino-Hebraica, Roma, 1694, fol. 512-516) gives a register of 130 Christian translators, among whom only about 70 have translated Talmudic or rabbinic works. The number of translations decreases as the number of years after Christ increases.
Natur nur einen Schritt. Aber selten haben Gelehrte es der Mühe wert gehalten, in die Technologie und Gewerbs-
kunst sich hineinzuarbeiten, — oder Fürsten, in Syrien und 
Babylon Nachgrabungen zu veranstalten. Darum sind viele 
Stellen der Mishna, besonders der sechsten Section, immer 
noch nicht erläutert genug. Industrie und Handel gehört 
hierher, dessen älteste Geschichte, verglichen mit den Meinungen 
der geachtetsten Schriftsteller, eine bedeutende Arbeit sein 
möchte an Licht zu bringen, und noch bedeutendere Folgen 
mit sich führen dürfte. Iren wir in dieser uns fremden Mat-
terei nicht, so lässt sich in dem System des Papiergeschäfts noch 
manches auffinden, dessen Aushöhlung den Juden angehört. 
Aber nicht bloß über die Benutzung, auch über die Verschö-
nung der Stoffe, über die Kunst, besitzen wir einige Schrif-
ten, zu viel, wie es scheint, für die Kritik, die sich daran 
gibt, — zu wenig, als dass wir nicht selbst noch mithelfen 
müssten, ihr Inneres und Außeres zu beschreiben. Nehmen 
uns die Dichtkunst aus, von der weiterhin die Rede sein wird, 
so ist vielleicht die Baukunst die einzige noch, die einiger 
Aufmerksamkeit sich rühmen dürfte. Aber wir erinnern 
uns nicht, über die Buchdrucker kunst unter den Juden 
eine hebräische Schrift erwähnt gefunden zu haben. Warum 
sind nirgend Kaligraphische Meisterstücke gesammelt 
worden? Die Werke über Musik sind grösstenheils noch 
ungenutzt. Das Kapitel der Erfindungen ist bis jetzt 
noch ein dürftiges, mag das liberalere Zeitalter und die 
freiere Tätigkeit, deren wir uns freuen, es bereichern 
helfen.

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2) Sogar über Mahrierei und Stiekerei, wenigstens aus neuerer Zeit, könnte ein Liebhaber etwas zusammenbringen.
3) Wie so haben die Melodien in der Jüdischen Liturgie sich so allgemein verbreitet? — Abraham ben Chia (100); יאָבָּה רַבְיָה (Venet. 1588, 4); יאָבָּה רַבְיָה (Mastus 1612 fol.) und andere reden über Musik. Unsere ältesten Werke nur von der Ältern, — wie Sennert, Joel-Döwe, Forkel, Bartolocci (tom IV., p. 127) und die Einleitungen ins alte Testament.
4) Die Spuren Jomas c. 3, § 11. Ueber ein von Juda aber Verga 
erfundenes astronomisches Instrument ist eine Handschrift im Vatican; in

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But rarely have scholars considered it worth the effort to delve into 
technology and the knowledge of industry, nor have sovereigns 
in Syria and Babylon bothered to organize excavations. Therefore 
many parts of the Mishna, especially of the sixth order, are still not 
elucidated sufficiently. Industry, and trade—whose oldest history 
compared to the opinions of the most esteemed writers would be a 
meaningful work to bring to light, and even more meaningful results 
could come from it—belong here. If we are not mistaken in this 
unfamiliar matter, then it is probable that there is still much to 
discover regarding the system of paper money, whose improvement 
belonged to Jews. We possess some writings not only about the use of 
materials, but also about their embellishment, about art—too many, so 
it seems, for criticism to be well-versed at it; too few to be of 
assistance, so that we must not yet describe its inner and outer 
appearance. If we exclude poetry, on which this discourse will 
continue, then architecture is perhaps the only art, that could claim 
to have received some attention. We do not remember having found a 
Hebrew writing mentioning typography among the Jews. Why are 
calligraphic masterpieces being collected nowhere? Works on music 
are still, for the most part, unpublished. The chapter on inventions is 
as of yet still a paltry one—may the more liberal age and more free 
activity in which we rejoice, help to enrich it.

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(1) E.g., tractate Middoth of Eliezer ben Jacob; latin translation by 
Constantino L'Empeur [1591-1648].
(2) Even an enthusiast could put something together on painting and 
embroidery, at least from more recent times.
(3) How have the melodies in Jewish liturgy spread so widely? Abraham 
ben Chia (100); יאָבָּה רַבְיָה (Venet. 1588, 4); יאָבָּה רַבְיָה (Mastus 1612 fol.) and others reden über Musik.
(4) See traces [in tractate] Joma, chapter 3, §11. In the Vatican there is a 
manuscript about an astronomical instrument invented by Judah ibn Verga; in Oxford 
there is a treatise on the quadrant by Jacob [ben Machir ibn] Tibbon (Un 1:86, cod. 
440).

Solchen wir uns jetzt nach dem Hebel um, für die Handhabung und Aufstellung dieser Riesenmassen, so begegnen wir der Sprache, welche der geringen Aufmerksamkeit

Oxford eine Abhandlung des Jakob Tibbonides über den Quadranten (Uri. f. p. 86 cad. 440).

(1) Allein über die Kleidung der alten Hebräer haben Schröder, Salmasius (vgl. de Wette’s Archriologie 190), Bünau, A. de Rossi (p. 148—158), Bartholini, Braun und vorzüglich Hartmann meisterhafte Untersuchungen angestellt.

(2) So vergleiche man nur die Chinesischen, Abyssinischen, Deutschen, Bucharischen, Polnischen etc. Juden, von welchen vieles ganz im Dunkeln ist.

(3) Exilvorsieht, Gesinnung, Rabbinen, Consistorien haben in der Kirche, die Regierungen in der Verfassung, Schriftsteller in der Denkungsart, Beispiele in den Sitten Änderungen hervorgerufen.

Finally we engage with the universal life of the nation, where the transient will have to be distinguished from the enduring, that is to say history from knowledge of antiquity. But from where should we lead the impartial Paul Sarpi to Jewish history? The (for the most part already exhausted) Hebrew writings are insufficient for a complete narrative of Jewish fates in all countries of their residence, as are the most commendable works of more recent scholars, like Binnage, Holberg, Prideaux, and others. Notes should be fetched from the most remote works, for just as the people is dispersed, so too is its history. We have advanced in knowledges and years for about a century; the material accumulates and the hands become less. Annals, like the Gansian or the Prussian, were formed in every country, and well-managed community-books would surely ease the future compiler’s work. Something similar can even be recovered regarding antiquities, for which, apart from isolated treaties, there is in general nothing that can compare with the study of the biblical Hebrew\(^1\) [alhebräische] time. One has to have climbed slowly and arduously from the most recent time into the more ancient, and penetrated also into various countries.\(^2\) In each important moment, the reason for the changes, which the inner life of the people underwent, must be shown.\(^3\)

If we now look for the lever for handling and assembling this great mass, then we encounter language, crossly withholding all its

\(^1\) Schröder, Salmasius (cf., Wilhelm Martin Loberecht de Wette’s *Lehrbuch der hebräisch-jüdischen Archäologie*, 160), Bünau, Azariah de Rossi (148-158), Bartholini, Braun, and especially Hartmann, have made masterly investigations only on the clothing of the ancient Hebrews.

\(^2\) One should compare Chinese, Abyssinian, German, Bukhari, Polish, etc., Jews, of whom much is completely unknown.

\(^3\) Leaders in exile, Geonim, rabbis, and consistories have produced changes in the church, governments in their constitutions, writers in the mind, and precedents in what is customary.
higher treasures from us due to insufficient attentiveness. It scoffs at
the efforts through which we claim to wrest theorems of Pythian
oracles out of thin air, regarding the peculiarities of a widely
dispersed people pushed aside everywhere. For language is the first
friend, who descending, leads us onto the bridges to science, and
the last, to whom we longingly return—it alone can tear down the
veil of the past—it alone can prepare minds for the future. For that reason
one researching must bear its obstinacy, since what centuries begot
can only be made more perfect by centuries.

We start with the beginning of all language formation,
only, with poetry. While the more ancient has [been the subject of]
many an elucidation, the later is deprived of any. Many a necessary
question has barely yet been posed, for example: Did the Jews in
earlier times write any drama? What did the first millennia of
Christian chronology generate in terms of poets’ productions? When
were our προφυτία composed? What is the story behind Chaldean
poetry?, etc. We are even worse with rhetoric, that is, the art of style.

1) [Though,] not so much its internal quality as its exteriority. Cf., Azariah
del Rossi, chapter 60.

2) There is so much that is exquisite in it (e.g., Ephraim Luzzatto
[1729-1792], Moshe Hayyim Luzzatto [1707-1747], Hartwig Wessely [1725-1805],
Alcharisi [1165-1225], [Moses] Ibn Ezra [c.1055-c.1138], Penini [c.1270-c.1340];
[Solomon Ibn] Gaibal [c.1021-c.1088], [Shalom ben Jacob] Cohen [1772-1845]; and
others) that a metric of the later age deserves investigation. Jacob Romano wrote
a Hebrew prosody, in which he arranged 1248 types of poems (Jochum Buxtorf,
Bibliotheca Rabbinica (Herbornae Nassaviae, 1708), 109) — where is this work? E.
Luzzato has, aside from many sonnets, translations of Metastasio, which are
unrivaled in their loveliness. Why are Wessely’s poems scattered about and not
collected? It should not be difficult to arrum an anthology like the Vetterlein, but
without foreign classification of Hebrew poetry, or a chronological-historical one,
like the Idlerian; or one arranged by material like Tantoni, which would distinguish
translations or imitations from original poetry.

3) We know of nothing other than a dozen pieces from the last century, in
which M. H. Luzzatto’s προφυτία (Amsterdam, 1743; Berlin, 1780; idem, 1799)
shines forth as a star of the first magnitude.
Rhetorik oder vielmehr der Kunst des Stiles daran. Je
seltener die hebräischen Schriften über diesen Gegenstand
ist, desto fleissiger sollten die Regeln abgestraft werden,
zumal da der hebräische Stil, seit einem Jahrhundert etwa,
allgemeiner eine reinere und schöne Form gewonnen.
Viele einzelne Untersuchungen sind in diesem unangenehmen
Felde noch anzustellen, z. B. über die oft missverständliche
Natur der Hyperbel, über das talmudische ימי, über
den späteren philosophischen Stil, über den Unterschied

(3) Vgl. Judah Messer Leon über die Beredsamkeit

Mantua. In Oxford liegt das Ab Harun Moses (d. i. Moses b. Ezra)
aus Granada (15. J. 1589 geschrieben), welches Beispiele verschiedener Ver-
masse, und Abhandlungen über die arabische und hebräische Dicht-
und Verkunst enthält (Uri 1. p. 97 cod. 499). Auch von Alcharesi, dem
berühmten Ubersetzter des Hariri, gibt es theoretische Aufsätze über
die hebräische Poesie.

(4) Um hier nur einige verzeihliche Prosäiker zu nennen: Mendel-
sohn (z. B. seine Vorreden zur Bibelübersetzung, zum Kommentar des
Predigers, zur Erklärung des Ps 1., Lament., Jisraeli (hebräische Ube-
rssetzung des Ps. 1798), S. Issak Euchel (z. B. משלי משל

H. Wessely, H. Hornberg (Verfasser der ימי), Sam. Romani-
elli (בְּּנֵי יִשָּׁרַיִת), L. M. Böschenthal u. a. Mit Auswahl auch
J. Satnaw und mehrere Mitarbeiter an dem älteren הַזָּרְכָּן.
Noch ist B. Lindau hier zu erwähnen, besonders wegen vieler glücklicher Übe-
rssetzungen schwerer physischer Ausdrücke im ימי ימי.
— M. J. Luzzatto schrieb ein Werk über den ימי ימי

Mantua. 1792.

(5) Die ist nicht immer Ubersetzung, sondern hat ganz verschiedene
Quellen, vielleicht auch stärkere Gluth der Einbildungskraft, dann, sagt
Simons (Arcanum formarum nominum hebraeorum linguae, 1735), 638 sqq.:
„Hebräis natura alia gentibus sunt ferventiores.“ Für Beispiele von hyperbole
(בַּשָּׁלֶלֶת) geben Jacob J. L. jth, col. b med. zu

in anekdoten, see Tr. Pesch, fol. 118; in superlatives, see [Jacob Ibn Habb’s

en Jacob I: fol. 77, col. b med. ימי רצון etc., in ecstatic description, see
Zohar 3.2.1, Z. 12, and Tikunim, fol. 100, 134 ימי רצון etc., die Schlüsse wurden oft damit geweckt wie in Midrash Rabbah zu
Cant. 1, 16 zu lesen ist. Auch vergeblich man Salomo ben Aderech zu
Tract. Berach, fol. 54 a ימי רצון etc., welches auch
doch ב hors. (I. 171, b) citir.

(6) In umgekehrter Reihenfolge, daselbst mit ימי רצון, die Unbekannt-
schaft damit hat auch Fehler erzeugt, z. B. in den Alterthümern der
Juden (1817, Berlin bei A. Eichler) p. 80 Z. 12 ist zwar nicht die Schloß
(vgl. Tract. Sanhedr. fol. 43, 4a) aber die Nachweisung (Fr. 3. 6 ימי

unrichtig und unverständlich.

(7) Diesen haben verzeihlich die Tibboniden gebildet. Man verglei-
che Ibn Ezra’s philosophische Schriften mit später. Manches liese

The more scarce the Hebrew writings on this subject-matter are, the
more carefully the rules should be followed, since, for
about the last century, Hebrew style has more generally attained a
purer and more beautiful form. Many individual investigations
should be prepared in this undeveloped field, for example: on the
often misunderstood nature of the hyperbole; on the Talmudic
remez, on the later philosophic style; on the difference between

(1) Cf. Judah Messer Leon on rhetoric ימי רצון (Mantua. 1792). The work

of Abu Harun Moses (i.e., Moses b. Ezra) from Granada (written in 1239), which
contains examples of different metres and treatises on Arabic and Hebrew poetry and
verse, is located in Oxford (Uni 1.97, cod. 499). There are also theoretical writings
about Hebrew poetry from Alhazari (d.1225), the famous translator of al-Hariri.

(2) To mention here only a few excellent prosaists: Mendelssohn (e.g., his
prefaces to his Bible translation, to his commentary on Ecclesiastes, and to his
explication of [Maimonides’] ימי רצון, [Joshua Ben Hirschland]; Issak Beers (Hebrew translation of Phaidon,
Brno. 1798); Issak Euchel (e.g., ימי רצון, H. Wessely, H. Hornberg
(author of [1808] ימי רצון), Samuel Romaneli (1.1792 ימי רצון), L. M.
Böschenthal, etc. We should also add I. Satanow and several contributors to the older
[Biblical] ימי רצון. Even B. Lindau should be mentioned here, especially because of
many successful translations of difficult physical expressions in his ימי רצון
(Brno. 1799). M. J. Luzzatto wrote ימי רצון (Mantua, 1726), a work on style.

(3) It is not always excess, but rather has entirely different sources, and is
perhaps an even stronger flame of the imagination, as [Johannes] Simonis says with
Schützler (Arcanum formarum nominum hebraeorum linguae, 1735), 638 sqq.:
“[The] Hebraic natura alia gentibus sunt ferventiores.” For examples of hyperbole ימי רצון in anekdoten, see Tr. Pesch, fol. 118; in superlatives, see [Jacob Ibn Habb’s
Aguadr] en Jacob I: fol. 77, col. b med. ימי רצון etc.; in ecstatic description, see
Zohar 3.2.1, Z. 12, and Tikunim, fol. 100, 134 ימי רצון etc. The sleepers were
often awakened by [hyperbole], as can be read about from Midrash Rabbot to
Canticles 1.15. Compare also Shilomo ben Aderech on Tr. Berachot, fol. 54a ימי רצון etc., whose legends the Zohar cites as well (I.171b).

(4) Remes: a type of allegorical exegesis is in an inverse relationship with
[written proof]. The ignorance of it has also made errors, for example, in August Rucker’s Die Alterthümer des israelitischen Volks (Berlin, 1817), 80 Z. 12, where the matter (cf., Tr. Sanhedr., fol. 43a) certainly is not incorrect and
uncomprehensible, but the reference (Fr. 3. 6 ימי רצון) is

(5) The Tibbon family primarily built these. Compare Ibn Ezra’s philosophic
writings with later [writings]. There is still much in the axioms of the
translators and their histories that could be commented upon. Cf. Judah Ibn Saha’s
prefaces to their translations, as well as that of [Samuel Ibn Sene}]
prosaic poetry and poetic prose; on comedic literature, etc. In terms of grammar, the task is yet a twofold one: the neglected history of the Jewish grammarians from more recent times must be retrieved; and a system for the structure of the neo-Hebraic language should be set up. This work needs to be preceded by a learned Chaldean language model, and then we might be able to claim to have a well-grounded history of the Hebrew language and consequently become able to

Zara’s שמות, m.141b. None of our Hebrew libraries note that Joseph Kimhi translated the book הים ת刍א, though this is nonetheless founded.

(1) e.g., [Eliezer] Levi’s בד SOURCE: and much rhymed diction of later works. One sometimes loses the feeling for poetry entirely in the presence of such exercises, which damage taste; the Psalms were more often commented upon than understood. Would that here were the place to be able to add something about the elaborations of language, word games, acrostics, lipograms and other playthings, which incidentally would be useful for deciphering names and dates, for the knowledge of pronunciation, etc. See Kimhi’s opinion (radd., Venice, 1529 fol. col. 399 v. כה) for the general view on the authors of the piousness.

(2) Genuine comedy exists in Isaac Satanow’s הוסיף ו/favicon, which according to fol. 31a, was written in 1775. It was published in Berlin, in 8 parts, and concludes with a poem of Wessely’s [Amdur Lips] Ben Ze’eb’s בידור which the Festival of Purim [together with Kalonymus ben Kalonymus’ יקנומוס בן יקנומוס].published first in Venice, 1552, are parodies. [Wolf 2:1270 locates four handwritten copies under the name [בינויים]. These are [בנויים] תוספות in line 1:25. In particular, one should consider Isaac [ben Solomon] Solomon’s תוספות as satirical, as well as a multitude of older and newer epigrams, which would merit a compilation. The [Hebrew] language is disincarnated only to the burlesque.

(3) Why was the eminent [Wilhelm] Gesenius so completely silent about the Jews’ philological endeavors from the last centuries in his [GESCHICHTE Der hebräischen Sprache und Schriften: eine philologisch-historische] Einleitung (1815)? Here we mention only: Solomon Hanau, the restorer of grammatical study among the Jews; and again Wessely and Satanow, Joel Löwe, [Solomon] Pappenheim, Solomon dubno, [Wolf] Heidenheim, Cohen, ben Ze’eb.

(4) Some few works by [Johann Andreas] Danz and Buxtorf cannot suffice. A Schickard or a Tychothen would have to work on it! Cf. Gesenius’ Einleitung, 117, 123.

(5) There is still nowhere sufficient explanation about the periods of time in the Chaldean language.

(6) The sources go back to the Mishna, where we first see the new separated from the old. Gesenius has already adopted two periods for the ancient language.
assert philosophical parallels between the old and the new [Hebrew language]. Added to that, the resources are too few; a Forcellian Lexicon is missing. Such can arise only from the combined work of many, who make catalogues, or more so concordances, concerning individual works. That old Hebrew dictionaries of lexicography

(1) As far as pronunciation and orthography: Tr. Baba Mezra chap. 5, §1; Tr. Sabbath, fol. 53b in the Talmud, i.e., before any vowels were set.
(2) Since our claim is that the Chaldean should be left out completely and treated for its sake, when is has not been absorbed by the neo-Hebraic language, then nobody seems able to help us—not Levita (whose works are too small), not Aquinas nor Nathan the Arab (d. 1106) whose works contain nearly only Chaldean, nor even Buxtorf. The latter was not knowledgeable enough in the dialects, and often fails. For example, the obscure הושיע (Tr. Beraqoth 62, the parallel point in Tr. Hagigah 5b) can be explained in three ways [םלוע סחייתו by the Babli].
(3) [William] Stukenhats has already done this for the Mishna; it would be even more necessary to do so for the Talmud; Neither [Heinrich Jacob van Baarsouny's Clavis Talmudica Maxima as well as his Gloss to it, nor Constantine L. Empereur's version of the same, render a complete register of the language's rich vocabulary. J. Renouf's Index is an anachronistic Talmudic-Lexicon, see Immanuel, 418a.]
(4) Three copies (Uni. i. cod. 460, 468, 470) of Tanchum's Talmudic Arabic lexicon (an example of Saadia's written in 1388) are located in the Oxford library! Copies of Samuel Tibbon's lexicon of difficult philosophical words, composed in 1205, are in Oxford (Uni. 1 cod. 464) and in Turin (Rivatella 1 cod. 136, 139). A codex written in 1295, [אברב and וברב], which attempts to decipher the difficult narratives in the Talmud and the Midrash, is in the Vatican (Bartolocci 4:310). Salome Parcham's (1161)Lexicon is in Vicenza (Nessel 6:189, cod. 17) [see Catalogi Bibliothecarum Cesararum, compiled by Daniel de Nessel (1693)] and in de Rossi's library, as well as in Oppenheimer's (Wolf 1:1037). Still, it is not every element of the foreign language separated into its component parts of woorden (Tr. Sanhedrin 4) or וברב (Tr. Joma 35)? The reader will find this contains much more Greek does than the Babylonian Talmud.

An excellent contribution for both etymology and lexicology is Or Ester by
der Lexikologie nichts nützen, so lange sie in ihrem Ein- 
seidlerleben verharren, bedarf wohl keines Bowssees. Mä-
licher noch steht es mit der Synonymik, worin kaum Ein-
zelnes, das bei jüdischen Autoren vorkommt, gesammelt 
worden, und noch weniger als für die allerb. Sprache 
gethan ist; und die Etymologie klagt vollends, dass unsere 
meisten Rabbinisten das Orientalische und die Orientalisten 
das Hebräische liegen lassen.

Und so erhalten wir denn endlich einen Überblick über 
den zahlreichen geschriebenen Vorrath, zu dessen 
Kenntniss viel Nützliches, Treffliches, selbst Grosses in den Ar-
beiten der Gelehrten niedergelegt ist, aber auch noch viel, 
sehr viel hinzugehend werden kann. So könnte man die 
Diplomatik vervollständigen, und nach bewährten Unter-
schriften eine chronologische Reihe von Facsimiles verfe-

schen (S. 48, oben). [Jona 35]
Der inhalt: mehr griecheisch als der Talm. Babyl.
Ein trefflicher Beitrag ist Or Ester der Gelehrte Bondi (Dessau 
1812 s. XXIV. und 274 f.) sowohl für Etymo- als Lexikologie; vergl. 
die Vorrede.

S. J. Fränkel in Hamburg arbeitet schon seit mehreren Jahren an einem 
rabb. chald. deutschen Wörterbuch; möge der Erfolg seine Mühe krönen!

1) Als Maimonides, Maimon, Samuel Tibbonides, Samuel Saraz, 
Mendelssohn u. a. Abr. de Balmes beabsichtigte ein Lexikon der Synonyme.

2) Sehr heisig aber zufrieden sind die Sammlungen von Plantu-
vitus (der auch das chald. die chald. einschliesst) und Satauw (Anhang zu 
Maimonides's Berlin 1787 and Frag 1804, f). Blos für das allerb. Sprache 
is S. Pappenheim's (Amsterd. 1765 und 66, in 8) von Wessely. Unbekannt ist uns 
seinches der Abraham Boders, welches in Leyden liegt; dasselbe der Brief 218 (Amsterd.) 
Salomo ben Meschullam Aphiara, das sich über Synonyme verbreitet und 
ein Reimlexikon enthält, Mannus in Oxford (Uti L. I. p. 94, c. 481) und 
der Oppenh. Bibliothek (Wel. L. 1079).

3) Dass dies nicht unmittel, beweist unter anderem Uri, wenn er vom 
cod. 141 sagt: tan impedis implicite scriptus ut nisi repellere ad 
noceandam elementa vir ibi quinquim leges. Die Kurzschreibart, die 
sich in Deutschland ausgebildet, ist den meisten Rabbiisten, jetzt sogar 
viele Juden schon unbekannt, ob wir gleich nicht verlangen, dass, den 
Rabbiesten, unsere Frauen sollen codices schreiben.

Jona Estellina, die in der Turnier Bibliothek (cf. Rossi 

hidden away in libraries are of no use, so long as they continue their 
reclusive life, requires no proof. Even more perilous is the case with 
synonymy, where hardly anything that has been done by Jewish 
authors' has been collected, even less than what exists for the ancient 
Hebrew language. Etyymology completely laments that most of our 
rabbis leave the Orient behind just as the Orientalists do Hebrew.

And so at last we obtain an overview of the numerous written 
stock, for whose knowledge much that is useful, excellent, even great, 
has been recorded in the works of the learned, but there is still much, 
still very much, which can be added. One could complete the 
diplomacies and compose a chronological series of facsimiles 
according to verified signatures, which could be used to determine

the brothers [Mordechai and Simon] Bondi (Dessau, 1812); Cf., the preface.

S. J. Fränkel in Hamburg is working already for many years on a rabbinc 
Chaldean-German dictionary—may success crown his labors!

1) Abraham de Balmes intended a lexicon of synonyms, as did 
Maimonides, Maimon, Samuel Tibbonides, Samuel Saraz, Mendelssohn, and others.

2) The collections of Plantavitus (who also includes Chaldaean) and 
Satauw (appendix to Pisan. 866 Berlin, 1787 and Prague, 1804) are very assiduous, 
but unfruitful. For ancient Hebrew there is merely Solomon Pappenheim's 
Pisan. 866 (Prague, 1804) and the excellent, though not comprehensive and incompletely 
published, Pisan. 866 (Amsterdam: 1765-66, in 8) by Wessely. Abraham Bodens 
Pisan. 866, which is in Leiden, is unfamiliar to us, the same goes for Solomon ben 
Meschullam Dapian's book Pisan. 866, manuscript in Oxford (Uti L. I. 94, cod. 481) 
and in the Oppenheimer Library (Wel. L. 1079), which expatiates on synonyms 
and contains a rhymed lexicon.

3) Among others, Uri demonstrates that this is not useless, when he writes 
of codex 141: tan impediit implicitum scripta ut nisi repellere ad 
noceandam elementa vir ibi quinquim leges. The cursive style of writing that developed in 
Germany has become unknown to most rabbis and nowadays even to many Jews, 
even if we do not desire that our women should copy codices similar to the nun's 
of the middle ages. That Estellina [Conari Mantu], who wrote [i.e. printed] Pisan. 866 
Bound in the Turnier library (cf. Giovanni Bernardo) de Rossi, Annales Hebrew- 
Typographia, Rivatella 1:21, cod. LIX), should shame only the men.
tigen, um so nach ihnen auch die undatierten Handschriften zu bestimmen. Verbindet man damit eine Geschichte der Handschriften\(^1\) und die ebenfalls noch zu erwartenden Annalen der hebr. Typography\(^2\), so fehlen nur noch tüchtige, nach Art des Didotischen von der Spencerischen Bibliothek eingerichtete Cataloge von Privat- und Staatsbüchereinlungen, um die nachlebe vollständige Ordnung in der hebräischen Litteratur\(^3\) zu gewinnen, und mit größerer Lust zu der kritischen Bearbeitung\(^4\) des Vorhandenen, zumal des früheren Vorhandenen, zu schreiben.

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\(^3\) Wolf, der sich in dritten und vierten Bände seiner Bibliothek selbst supplementirt, sollte mit Köhlers Zusätzen, und denen des Lemberg’s Ue. Zebi Rubinstein in seiner dritten Auflage (1808, Zolkiew, 4) und des וּש, insinuand verzeichnet worden. Das kürzlich zu Livorno erschienene von dem berühmten C. J. D. Asulai über die hebr. Litteratur vervielfältigte Werk ist uns nicht zu Gesicht gekommen. Ausser neuen Werken (de Rossi, Oxfort, Asulai etc.) und nennens Ausgaben älterer, sind auch ältere Schriften und viele übergangs Litterarotationen nach zuholen; manches Kapitel ist ganz aus den Bibliotheken hinauszuwerfen, ein anderes wieder unschicklich, und sollten es auch nur die Grabsteine sein, die der unemächtige Wolf schon benutzt (IV. 1167—1219); aber Montfauccon (Diario Ital. p. 37) des Ansehens nicht wirkt geahnt hat, und dafür lieber Jes. 33, 8 (die Eingangs-Inschrift) abschließ.

\(^4\) Es weiss z. B. Jodermann, dass die neueren Ausgaben des Talmuds castigirt, d. h. verstümmelt sind. Man bezeuge das Turin Manuskript (Rivatoletta I. 21). Vergl. Koecher II. p. 41. Dass historische Daten zu Varianten sind, erhellt aus וּש נָעַבֶּד תֵּל עַל (Tr. Sab. 119) und מַלֶּכֶת תּוֹר וּש (Tr. Sab. fol. 119)

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Even the undated manuscripts. If one adds to that a history of manuscripts\(^1\) as well as the as yet anticipated annals of Hebrew typography\(^2\), then we would only still be missing a solid catalogue of private and state book collections, arranged like that of Dibdin’s catalog of the Spencer Library. Then it would be possible to obtain the necessary complete order in Hebrew literature\(^3\) and to seriously commence with greater pleasure towards the critical treatment\(^4\) of

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\(^1\) It does not seem to go back further than the 12th century, compare, however, Wolf 3:137 and de Rossi, Variae lectiones Veteris Testamenti librum, vol. I. Autographs are very rare, e.g. the work of Jehuda ben Shabbai Haggisi, which was set in writing by himself in 1449, is in Oxford (Uri I. 72, cod. 385). We desire a list of known copyists, revisers and vowel-composers, towards which Levita (in ד"ה ג"ש) and Wolf (he has 47 names in 2.537—542 and 27 in 4.227—229) have made a small beginning. We must know the hand of those who have left some written thing behind for us. To know the fate of a codex is not an indifferent matter; if only every librarian or other scholar were to register exactly when, where, from whom, and in what condition the manuscript he has obtained was procured.

\(^2\) See Wolf I. 1., which mentions one of Jablonsky’s handwritten catalogues going up to the year 1697; and Wolf 2:91 ff., for some information on Jewish typography.

\(^3\) Wolf, who supplements himself [with Imononi] in the third and fourth volumes of his Bibliothek, should be integrated with [Hermann Fried] Koch’s supplement [Novo bibilotheca Hebraica, 1783—84] and that of Uri Zebi Rubinstein from Lemberg, in his second edition (Zolkiew: 1806) of the וּש [Safar Sife Yeshamim]. The work composed by the famous H. Hayyim J. Ezrih [David] Azulai on Hebrew literature recently published in Livorno has yet not appeared to us. Aside from newer works (de Rossi, [David] Comforte, Azulai etc.) and newer editions of older works, there are also older writings and a lot of overlooked literary notes that should be retrieved; many a chapter can be thrown out entirely from the libraries, and another reinscribed. It is said that the indefatigable Wolf used only gravestones (4.1167—1219); however, [Bernard] de Montfauccon did not value their authority (Diarium Italicum, 37) and thus preferred to copy Isaiah 25:8 (the entrance-inscription) to a Jewish burial place).

\(^4\) Everyone knows that the newer editions of the Talmud have been castigated, i.e. are mutilated. One should make use of the Turin Manuscript (Rivatoletta 1.21). Cf. Köcher 2:41. It is clarified from וּש נָעַבֶּד תֵּל עַל (in his exegesis of Tr. Sabbath fol. 119a), that historical dates vary, where he cites two readings according to וּש מָזַיֶה (Yitzhak b. Yehuda) and וּש (Leivy), while Afsari cites another version of וּש (Afsari 1. fol. 3a). The increasingly rare וּשַׁנָּהַנָּה הֵם וּשַׁנָּה [by David Kimri 1169—1235] should soon be published according to the Florentine manuscript written in 1446 (Bandini 2:262, cod. 34), which is 43 years
Im Begriffe, die Gründe für diese negative Litteratur aufzusuchen, müssen wir noch denjenigen entgegen kommen, die uns etwa einer Herabsetzung dessen, was um Schickard zu reden, in der rabbinischen Finsterniss geschehen ist, beschuldigen möchten. Wir selbst erklären ein solches Herfallen und Kopfschütteln über die höchst ruhmvollen und brauchbaren Arbeiten von Vorfahren und Zeitgenossen für das Merkmal einer vornehmen Ignoranz, und gelinde genommen für Unverständ. Nur Lücken anzumerken sind wir gekommen, ein Studium wieder zu erwecken, das, obwohl mit ziemlich verfehlter Richtung, ehemals mehr als jetzt geblüht, wo es von Jedermann sich selber überlassen wird. Es lasset auf unserer Wissenschaft das allen übrigen gemeinschaftliche Unglück der menschlichen Unvollkommenheit nicht allein; ganz eigenthümliche Schäden sind hier zu enthalten, die theils jene Mängel, theils diesen Verfall herbeigeführt und erklärt.

Die Gleichgültigkeit gegen die rabbinische Litteratur ist von doppelter Art. Entweder herrscht sie gegen die Gelehrsamkeit überhaupt, und dann ist ihr nicht zu helfen, oder gegen die rabbinische allein; ohne aus der Meinung, dass sie nichts nütze, dass nichts Gescheutes darin wäre, dass man sich den Geschmack damit verdürbe, dass man es nicht weit darin bringen könne, dass sie gotzlos sei; oder gar dass sie nirgends gute Aufnahme finde. Gewöhnlich artet solche neutrale Gleichgültigkeit in Verachtung aus, und es ist keine fremde Erscheinung, dass Gelehrte völlig Partei

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existant material, particularly of early material.

When seeking the foundation for this negative literature, we will have to come against those who would like to accuse us of denigrating what happened in “rabbinic darkness,” to cite [Wilhelm] Schickard’s expression [from his *Jus Regium*, (1625)]. We would declare such an attack [as Schickard’s] on, and head-shaking over, the most glorious and useful works of predecessors and contemporaries as the sign of a genteel ignorance, and, to put it mildly, as lack of judgement. Only noting defects, we came aiming to reawaken a study, which, although with quite a misguided direction, formerly blossomed more than now, when it is abandoned by everyone. The misfortune of human imperfection common to all sciences is not all that oppresses our science; completely peculiar prejudices can be revealed here, which explain, in part, this decline, and which caused, in part, those defects.

The indifference towards rabbinic literature is of two kinds. Either it prevails against scholarship in general, and then it cannot be helped, or it opposes only the rabbinic. When the latter, it derives from opinions that such study would have no use; that nothing prudent would be found in it; that it damages good taste; that it could not amount to much; that it is Godless; or even that it would find no good reception anywhere. Generally such neutral indifference degenerates into contempt, and it is not an unusual occurrence for

older than the oldest copy in the Oppenheim library from 1:92 (Wolf 3:194).  

(a) Similar objections have been made against Hebrew literature in general. Cf. [Johann Friedrich] Hirt’s *Orientalische und exegetische Bibliothek* (1772-1776, 8 vols.), 2:358ff., where de Rossi defends it against the old [Johann] Forster (d. 1556). In the same [work] (1:221) a critic (in 1772) is already complaining about the ever decreasing number of professors acquainted with rabbinics.
scholars to side entirely against our science. Yet, would that they were only ever against this [science] and not also against its authors! But more objectionable than the former indifference, more revolting than the latter contempt, is the partisanship with which one often approached this study, not out of love, but rather out of hate. Everything that even only superficially\(^1\) looked like evidence against the Jews and Judaism was a welcome find; scholars culled together half-understood scraps from the corners, in order to publically shame their eternal adversary. For about a hundred years there is no example of a doctor having gathered the good and beautiful from the Hebræus’ writings so as to represent the Jews also from an amiable angle.\(^2\)

Thanks to God of eternity,\(^3\) such times are past! At present, pens, as bold as they are righteous, spread true popular enlightenment while even greater regents lend their honor and their might to the pens.

A domestic fanaticism goes alongside this foreign one. A carelessness, explicable by familiarity with the matter, not infrequently prepared the destruction of the most excellent works\(^4\) and

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\(^1\) The index to Schickard’s [Misquot ha-melekh—Yis Regium [Hebraecrum & tenebris rabbinicos eruditi & luci donatum], reissued by Cargovius [1674], contains: “Chronologia Judæis odio..477.” However, the account in the text is only on the Messiah calculation. Claudius Capellanus published "Mare rabbinicum infidum" (Paris, 1667), on the different interpretations and divergent quotations!

\(^2\) Even Fr. Becker avoided it. What he calls noble patriotism and valor in relation to Samnites, Spartans, Carthaginians, Persians and Germans, turns into abject defiance and despair when it comes to the Jews.

\(^3\) "Dui ultro nobis viam salutis ostendit, nostrae nobis sunt inter nos irae discordiaeque placandae," Cicero, de Haruspicam Responsa.

\(^4\) Thus a senseless rabbi once permitted the only extant manuscript of M.C. Luzzato’s excellent Psalms to be consumed by fire, out of zeal for the Davidian ones. Moreover, baptized Jews often sought to ingratiate themselves through fanatic persecution—for example, one can read the piece published in 1614 in Oettingen by Friedrich Brentz (formerly Samuel), which has the horrible title: Jewish Staub’s Skinned.

Where is Menasse bar Israel’s Tractatus de Scientia Talmuditarum and Defensio Tabnudus? As is known, J. H. Hottinger [1620–1667] made use of the apparatus left behind. Where is Shabbethai Abarbanel’s Psammechosphaeus (c.1710) and his inchoate rabbinic library? What about the work of Aristobulus, which according
fehlte oft die klassische Bildung, so wie umgekehrt viele Gelehrte stündigen, weil sie sich nicht in den hebräischen Geist nicht heimisch zu machen, und mit dem Autor zu lernen wussten.

Wenn aber in unseren Tagen viele Juden für das Studium der rabbin. Literatur vorbereitet sind, so ist es ganz schlichte Unwissenheit, erzeugt aus dem immer verringergenden Unterricht in der hebräischen Sprache. Theils bewirkt dies die schlechte Ausrichtung auf einstige Beförderung, der erleichterte Weg zu anderartigen Wissenschaften, und die sehr lebenswürdige Ergreifung der Künste und Handwerke, des Ackerbaues und des Militärdienstes; theils aber auch Kälte gegen Religion überhaupt und gegen der Vorfahren Literatur insbesondere, der Wahn sich mit der Beschäftigung derselben zu entbehren, und eine lebenswürdige moderne Un
ggründe, von der wir noch Einiges sagen wollen. 

Es ist allerdings gegründet, dass in der Sache selber Verhinderungen liegen, die selbst den eingeweihten Hebraisten zu gefälligeren Beschäftigungen zurückzuschieben, als z. B. die Selbtsheits des Codices, die nicht immer grosse Hoffnung auf Fortschritte und Brod, der erschwerende jüdische Buchhandel, das allgemeine Beispiel, und die Häufung des Studiums, da mit dem Hebräischen allein selten jemand ankommen darf; aber umgekehrt ist auch der Irrthum nicht unwahrscheinlich, dass ein Paar Blicke in deutsch 


2) Ums nur erst mit den rechten Augen zu sehen ist es nützlich, in der Sprache ganz zu Hause zu sein, und Verstösse dagegen können selbst zu einem theoretisch grossen Gelehrten kein Zutrauen einflüssen, z. B. wenn Montfaucon (Dirar. Ital. p. 408) sagt: de Essau liber Rabbinicus eius exordium "הנה" Nig Ego Seir. — Auch Mendelssohn ist falsch bear

robbed otherwise good minds of their impartiality, so that they could not see their material with just eyes. Even where good will existed there often lacked classical learning, just as conversely many learned persons sinned because they did not know how to be made native in the Hebrew spirit; nor how to learn to feel with the author.

If however, in our days, many Jews are lost to the study of rabbinic literature, then it is just plain ignorance, generated by the ever diminishing instruction in the Hebrew language. This is caused, in part, by the poor outlook for future promotion, the eased path to different sciences, and the very praiseworthy taking up of arts and crafts, agriculture and military service; but also, in part, by the chill against religion generally and especially against the forebears’ literature, the illusion that one is dishonoured by occupation with such an interest, and an ingratiating modern superficiality, about which we want to say something more.

It is quite established that in this matter itself there are many obstacles which drive even the adept Hebraist to more agreeable occupations, such as the rarity of codices, the not always great hope for advances and bread, the hindered Jewish book trade, the common example, and the accumulation of study, since seldom can one advance with Hebrew alone. Yet inversely, the error that a few glances in German writings makes one learned, is also not unusual.

to Azariah dei Rossi (52a) is in Florence and in the Benedictine monastery in Mantua, though he never succeeded in obtaining it (ibid., 194b). Cf. Wolf I. 215.
a) Here and in the preface [Dei Rossi] lamented his ignorance of the Greek; Buxtorf (Bibliotheca Rabbinica 108) is mistaken.
(1) To see with just eyes, it is first necessary to be completely at home in the language; offenses against this cannot instill any confidence, even for a theoretically great scholar, e.g. when Montfaucon (Diarium Italico 408) says: de Essau liber Rabbinicus eius exordium "הנה" Nig Ego Seir. Mendelssohn is also wrongly judged in Hirt’s Orientatische Bibliothek 1:71ff.
This combines with the present-day writing-fury to cultivate a kind of men who remain standing in the middle, dawdling, taking up their studies without enthusiasm, or who appear insufficiently prepared in Hebrew writings, all of which harms science and increases material fruitlessly. One sins against interpretation, criticism and chiefly against method. Another passes over his subject cursorily, without proper dignity; respect for science and for the reader is seldom taken into consideration just as little as are truth and completeness. A third makes it even more convenient—he gets to work already knowing what he seeks and then delights in having found what was sought. A fourth ultimately avoids the trouble of putting his hands to work, because his predecessors did not prepare it for him. Thus one of the sayings of the fathers proves itself: “An error always generates another!”

With such phenomena it is self-evident why we, until now, do not possess any satisfying Hebrew literature, and also will not soon have any; because even equipped with all requisite foundations, knowledges and aids, we always generate new ideas and new material when treating ideas; bibliography, criticism of treatment, and history,

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1) The same sins are not foreign even to better scholars; otherwise how could Carpzov in his ins Regium den ganzen jüdischen Schiedsbrief aus die Hände hineinbringen können? Hierher gehören auch die unwürdigen Mühen, als der Codex bei dir I. pag. 90,440 וַיֵּעָנֵן הַשִּׁבָּה הָאָדָם וַיִּבְנֶה יִשְׂרָאֵל וַיַּעֲשֵׂה ה MANUAL in der Berarbeitung der Ideen stellt neue Ideen und neuen Stoff; es erzeugt sich die Bibliographie, die Kritik der Behandlung und die Geschichte nicht block von der Wissenschaft, sondern auch von der Geschichte wiederum selber. Und so wie schon vorgefundene

2) Using all ancient Hebrew writings it is possible to allege more and weightier evidences for, [rather] than against, the assertion that a woman’s place is respected among the Jews. Certainly also finds nonsensical positions; however, credibility depends upon what has become established and obtained authority and corresponds to the whole.

3) There is still not yet anywhere an example which properly elucidates and historically investigates the widely discussed Mossora, or oldest critical treatment of the text of scripture. Here are only a few examples: Tr. Sabbath 103b: כֵּן נַעֲשֵׁה יִשְׂרָאֵל (Isaiah 46:5). Tr. Ned. 38a: "In Palestine, Exodus 19:9 consists of three verses." Ibid., 37b mentions מִלְתָּיָה יִשְׂרָאֵל as evidence of itur Sopherim [omission of the scribes], which is explained by R. Ascher, Nissim and Rashbi in three different ways. The defective מִלְתָּיָה (Ps. 69:32) is allegorized in Tr. Avodah Zarah 9 and Tr. Sabbath 28b, as is the kenah [i.e., the written word, when different from what is read, i.e., the qere] מִלְתָּיָה in Zohar 3:52b. Z. 3. Zohar 1:35a discusses how no [letter] samech appears in the entire first chapter of Genesis [the first appearance is in the word 2:11 ובְּרָא וַיִּכֵּן].
Materien, die wir als objektiv Aufsässigendes in die Wissenschaft verleuchten, ursprünglich die subjektive Behandlung einer älteren Idee sind; so verwandelt sich auch die eigene Kunst, womit wir uns der Wissenschaft aneignen, für uns und die Nachwelt in neuen zu verarbeitenden Stoff.

Und über alle diese Räume der Wissenschaft, über den ganzen Tummelplatz menschlicher Tätigkeit herrschet mit anschließender Majestät die Philosophie, überall unsichtbar, sich aller menschlichen Erkenntnis mit unverletzter Selbstständigkeit hingezogen. Und darum haben wir sie nicht als spezielle Wissenschaft, als den Inbegriff jüdischer Weisheit allein ansehen wollen); denn sie ist auch die höhere geschichtliche Erkenntnis, wie diese Weisheit durch Jahrhunderte fortgegangen, und in Schriften niedergelegt von Juden und Nichtjuden behalten und gemischt worden ist; ja sie ist die höchste Führerin, wenn wir selber es übernehmen, die intellektuelle Größe des Volkes zu erkennen und das Erkannte wieder zu geben. Solchgestaltet wird jedes historische Datum, das der Fleiß gefunden, der Scharfsinn entziffert, die Philosophie benutzt, und der Geschmack an die angemessene Stelle gebracht, ein Beitrag zur Kenntnis des Menschen, welche allein der würdigste Endzweck aller Forschung ist. Aber auch nur diese höhere Ansicht gezemt der Wissenschaft, die, erhaben über alle Erden-Kleinhlichkeit, Länder und Nationen überlebt; nur sie kann uns einst zu

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[PAGE 27]

are produced, not merely by science but also again by history itself. And just as already found matter [pl.], which we weave into science as something that can be perceived objectively, are originally the subjective treatment of an older idea, so too is the particular art, through which we appropriate science, turned into new material to be processed by us and by posterity.

And over all these regions of science, over the entire staking ground of human activity, philosophy reigns with exclusive majesty, everywhere invisibly, devoting itself to all human cognition with intact independence. And for that reason we have not claimed to regard it as a particular science, as the essence of Jewish wisdom alone. It is also the higher historical knowledge of how this wisdom proceeded through centuries and was handled and mishandled in writings laid down by Jews and non-Jews. [Philosophy] is the highest guide, whenever we take it upon ourselves to apprehend the intellectual magnitude of the people and to render what is discerned. In this way every historical datum, which diligence has found, sagacity deciphered, philosophy made use of, and taste brought to the suitable position, becomes a contribution to the knowledge of man, which alone is the most worthy aim of all research. But also only this higher view is suited to science, which survives exalted above all earthly pettiness, lands and nations; only it can one day lead us to a

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(1) Among the Jews philosophy never grow into a firm discipline. Traditional wisdom was amalgamated with what was learned, and brighter minds soon discerned that the Talmud could not have any authority in scientific things—as little as Joshua’s miracle [could] against astronomy, as Maimonides (Moseh Nesokhim 3:14) expressly says. Moreover the older philosophical works contain many an ethical and religious element; they are also mostly composed in Arabic—such originals should be used. One part of the Arabic text of Moseh Nesokhim (2:25 to 3:end) is in the Parisian library (catal. 1:23, cod. 237); Wolf counts 5 complete copies (1:859); Maimonides’ explications on the Mishnah are also still extant in Arabic (see the preface to Willem Surenhus’s latin translation of the Mishna, Amsterdam, 1678-1703). The Latin translation by Edward Fococks [1604-1691] of the ספר ו下一篇 is made from the Arabic, etc.
einer wahren Geschichte der jüdischen Philosophie 1) führen, worin der Ideenang der Köpfe ausgemittelt und verstanden 2) und mit der parallelen umfassenden Ausbildung der Erde 3) nach den strengen Vorschriften der Geschichte verfolgt werden muss.

Diese angenehmen Flüge in das Reich der Hoffnung soll uns kein Subaltern-Philosoph mit seiner Frage nach dem Nutzen verleiden. Wem nicht in ihren höchsten Beziehungen die Wissenschaft in einer ehrwürdigen Größe 4) — jede einzelne nicht als integrerendes Teil der geistigen Schöpfung erscheint, dem haben wir nichts zu sagen. Lassen wenden wir uns zu den seelischer Erkenntnissen, zu den Edlen der Völker hin, die es wissen, dass nimmer der Mensch ausruhen darf in seinem Gange aufwärts, — die weniger nach dem sich umsehen was gethan, als nach dem was noch zu thun ist.

I. p. 23 cod. 237); 5 vollständige Exemplare schätzet Wolf (I. p. 859); die Maimonidesischen Erklärungen zur Mischna sind auch noch arabisch vorhanden (v. Shematrix Mischna praef.). Die latinsch-Übersetzungen Ed. Poccio's der היסטוריה is aus dem arabischen verschollen u. s. w.


2) Doch nicht erläutert die Seite der היסטוריה (s. den Rosia 32b, b; 33b, 4a); also ist der Büchlein Jedras ist weder so kling noch so albern, als die Partien es machen wollen. — Die Meistern, die über die Kabbala hergeben sind, stolzeren daran; am besten geht es noch dem alten redlichen Reschlin. Sehr treffend sagt Andreas Sennert (exercitatio phil. sept. s. p. 139): Cabbala nobis alta est verior, inebiata atque divina; alia seutor lac, media et humana, quae et Judicia dictur vulgo; alia denique falsa, superstitionis, impro daemoniacae. — Der Messias, der in den neueren Religionsbüchern der Juden vorkommt, und der ganzen Welt Heil und Glückeswillen bringen soll, ist das verkürzte Dogma der Wünsche jedes redlichen Menschen; und hat den ehemaligen Judischen Messias verdrießt, der nur noch als eine Form sich herumbewegt.

3) Z. B. Bem Einfluss der arabischen Philosophie, des grammatischen und astronomischen Studiums, der Scholastik, der Toleranzideen etc.

4) Die Wissenshaften, sagt Home (Grundzüge der Kritik, übersetzt von Meinhard 1790 Th. 2. S. 113), sind unbeschränkt, und unser Trieb nach Erkenntniss hat ein weites Feld von Befriedigungen, wo unsere Entdeckungen bald durch das Neue, bald durch Manigfaltigkeit, bald durch Nützlichkeit, bald durch alles diesem zugleich uns reizen.
Noch manches Feld ist zu behauen, das jetzt mit Unkraut bedeckt, der bessern Flüge gedeihliche Ernte verspricht; — noch manches sündliche Korn wird eingesäet, und nimmt dem tungsichern Nachbar Wachtum und Gesundheit; — noch manche refe Ernte wird vom Hagel der Leidenschaftlichkeit, der Bosheit, der Afterweisheit niedergeschmettert; — und manche selbst gedeihene Frucht liegt verschüttet am Boden, oder vom Hochmut kalt zertreten.


Da es uns aber, manches Nachforschungen ungeachtet,


Yet, many a field, currently covered in weeds, could be built upon, promising a prosperous crop following better treatment. Yet, many a noxious seed is sowed and takes the health and growth from the more fit neighbor. Yet, many a ripe crop is crushed by the hale of fervor, of malice, of disingenuous wisdom. And even many a thriving fruit lies spilled on the ground, or coldly crushed underground by pride.

We conclude our survey of the universe, with news of a single unpublished and hitherto nearly unknown Hebrew work, which we, with the assistance of Dr. Karl Siegfried Günzburg, are now working on and are inclined to publish very soon. This is namely the <em>Sepher Hamakolot</em> (liber graduum) by R. Schemtob b. Joseph b. Phalkera, a famous Spanish rabbi from the 13th century. Partially resulting from solid meditations of the author, it develops the different levels of men concerning the cultivation of their intellect, using a clear, concise, yet flowing style. The type of treatment already reveals a fine thinker, educated through reading, reserved, though now and then having more daring opinions. Further information yet exists about Schemtob's preeminence, a greater amount of which will be brought out in our prolegomena to this book.

Notwithstanding many inquiries, we have not yet been able...
bis jetzt nicht hat gelingen wollen, ausser dem in unsern
Händen befindlichen Codex des genannten Sefer ha-
manhloth, irgend eine andere Schrift unseres Autors oder auch nur ein
anderes Manuskript des vorliegenden Buches zu erhalten: so
werden wir eine zweifache Ausgabe veranstalten. Eine
lateinische Edition enthält den Text unseres Codex auf
das genaueste abgedruckt, und ist mit Prolegomenen, Anmer-
kungen und dem Facsimile der Handschrift versehen; in einer
kleineren hebräischen hingegen wird nur ein zum bequemen
Verständnisse nach je einem eingetrichteren Text enthalten sein,
wobei wir gern das vermeiden mögen, was einer der größten
Männer levius et quasi desultorium emendationis genus nennt\footnote{5).}
Indess sind vielleicht einem künftigen Herausgeber die Um-
stände günstiger.

Nach der Streng, die wir der Behandlung der Wissen-
schaft im Grossen anzupföhnen, haben wir in unserm be-
sonders Falle nicht minder zwar uns die Aufgabe zu ver-
genwärtigen gesucht, die ein solches Werk zu lösen hat,
und von der Kritik nicht nur die theoretischen Knochen, son-
dern vielmehr die schöne vollendete Form aufzustellen, an
der nichts vermisst wurde, sollte es auch umhüllt sein. Aber
von solcher Vollendung weit entfernt, wünschen wir nur, dass
dieser unser Versuch Nachfolger hervorrufe, des Gegenstandes
würdiger, und näher dem Ziele. Denn es ist uns nicht mehr
darum zu thun gewesen, ein wissenschaftliches, durch Alter
obwürdiges, durch seinen Verfasser ausgezeichnetes, durch
Inhalt einladendes, durch seine Seltenheit dem Unterange
leichter unterworfenes Produkt der Vergessenheit zu ent-
reimen; schönen Hoffnungen halten uns unser distantes
Geschäft versüßen! Die Hoffnung, dass die Lust zu gründ-
licher, fruchtbärer, mit dem steten Blicke auf's Ganze verbundener Bearbeitung der vorzüglichsten Werke jüdischer
Nation, in dieser stärker geweckt werden möge, — die Hoff-

\footnote{5) Unsere Gründe für diese Sprache werden in dem Werke selbst
näher auszumündern gesetzt werden. Man les die theorensnetzwerche Frage
im Allg. Anz. d. Deutsch. 1817 No. 302 p. 3410.}

\footnote{5) Fr. Ang. Wolf prolegg. ad Hom. p. IV; weil namentlich nur ein
Codex Dienste leistet.}

to succeed at obtaining anywhere another writing by our author or
even only another manuscript of the book in question, apart from the
above-named codex of the Sefer Ha-Ma'aleh, found in our hands. We
will thus prepare a dual version: a Latin edition containing the text of
our codex printed with the utmost precision, and furnished with a
prolegomena, annotations, and the facsimile of the manuscript; on the
other hand, it will contain only a smaller Hebrew edition, for easy
comprehension after that furnished text, whereby we would like to
avoid what one of the greatest men calls "levius et quasi desultorium
emendationis genus."\footnote{2) Friedrich August Wolf, Prolegomena ad Homerum, iv; because only a
codex renders services.} In the meantime, circumstances may be more
favorable to a future publisher.

According to the rigor we have recommended for the
treatment of science in general, we have sought to use this particular
case to represent the task that such a work has to solve in order to lay
out not only the theoretical bones of criticism, but even more so the
beautiful perfect form, so that nothing is missed, not even what is
veiled. However distantly removed from such perfection, we only
wish that this, our attempt, elicits followers who may be more worthy
of the subject and come nearer to the mark. For that reason, it was not
merely in order to rescue a scientific production from oblivion,
which is through age venerable, through its author excellent,
through contents inviting, through its rarity subjected more easily to
destruction; more beautiful hopes helped sweeten our laborious
enterprise! —The hope that the desire for well-grounded, fruitful
treatment of the more exquisite works of the Jewish nation, with the
eye ever fixed on the whole, may become more strongly awakened in
this [nation]. —The hope that an illumination of the better parts that
rabbinc literature created, would help dispel the bias generally set against it.1 Surely, our talents cannot justify our entering so brazenly into the author’s world, but only our passionate will to obtain the good and the beautiful, in the judicious and indulgent reader’s eyes. For that reason, an intelligent criticism of this treatise of ours would be very welcome, lest we would have to deem it not worth remarking upon, because it remained unnoticed.2

1) Insulting and swearing may suit the Roman statesman against the hostile people (see Cicero pro L. Flacco, in Orationes 2 (München, 1699), 339), but not the Christian preacher against tolerated fellow-citizens (Johann Friedrich Röhr, Historisch-geographische Beschreibung des jüdischen Landes (Zeitz, 1816), 180). Also the sound Friedrich Raths condemns it too generally and too strongly (Handbuch der Geschichte des Mittelalters (Berlin, 1816), 150).

2) Jenisch.
First Chapter: On what seems to me the reason for our traveling to these lands of unbelief and obstinacy, which are extremely far from us, and where there are great expenses due to the excessively high prices there.

I say that this requires an introduction: Originally man is a simple creature, free from adornment, and existing by the root of instinct. He knows nothing except emotional matters. Then a number of knowledges occurred to some people, which they had not encountered previously. They were revealed to man by chance and coincidence, or by inspiration and revelation. Either the way or man's intellect judged them as useful, and thus they were followed and preserved. For example, in the earliest time some people were ignorant of how to cook food with flames, because fire was entirely unknown to them. For nourishment, they were restricted to fruit or things ripened in the sun or to eating things raw, as is still the case in some countries. Then it happened, by chance, that from among them someone saw a spark of fire when the flint was struck by iron, or something similar, and so he did the same thing. He produced and extracted the fire and got to know its character. It was also like this among people who were ignorant of how to dye and color fabric purple, for example, until some of them saw a dog who took a shell from the
sea and opened it, and ate what was in it. Then his palate turned red, colored by what was inside. So they took [the shell] and came to know from it the craft of staining with this color. As it is told about the people of Tyre in Syria, where they were initially ignorant of how to travel by sea. Then, through divine inspiration or human coincidence they came to know that one of the characteristics of wood is that it floats on the water’s surface. So they manufactured boats and then took to the sea in ships. They constructed them and diversified them. At first they were small [ships], for trade. Then they went beyond those, until [their ships] were fit for war and plundering. This is similar to battles, first waged with arrows and spears, then after that with arms, then with cannons and mortars. And, in the earliest times, people were already worshipping the sun and moon and stars, etc. Then, through the inspiration of God the Exalted, and through the messengers he sent, they began worshipping one God. So, the farther back in time you go, you would see the people’s greater backwardness in human crafts and civil sciences; and the more you descend back to look at more recent time, you would see, in most cases, their advancement and progress in those [crafts and sciences]. By measuring the degrees of this advancement, and calculating the distance from, or nearness to, the original condition, all of creation can be divided into a number of stages: The first stage is that of savage nomads; the second of crude Berbers; and the third of people of manners, elegance, sedentariness, civilization, and extreme urbanization. An example of the first stage are the nomads of Sudan, who are always like roaming animals, not distinguishing the permissible from the forbidden. They do not read and they do not write nor do they know a thing about matters that provide for this life or for the hereafter. On the contrary, an emotionality incites them to gratify their desires like animals. They sow a few things or hunt a little in order to obtain their strength. They set aside some hovels or tents for protection from the sun’s heat, and the like. An example of the second stage are the Arabs of the desert. They have a type of human society, sociability, and harmony, for they have knowledge of how [to distinguish] the permissible from the forbidden, of reading and writing, and the like, and of matters of religion, etc. Nonetheless, among them the degree of progress in matters of subsistence, civilization, human crafts, and intellectual and transmitted sciences has not been perfected, even though they knew how to build, farm, and raise animals, etc. Examples of the third stage are the lands of Egypt, [Greater] Syria, Yemen, of the Kām, Persia, those of the Franks, the
Maghribi, Senār, most of the lands of America, and most of the islands of the
Encircling Sea, because all these nations are masters of: civilization and
politics; sciences and industries; [ordained] paths (shari‘a) and commerce.
They have complete cognizance of industrial tools and strategies for carrying
heavy things in the easiest manner and they know how to travel by sea, and so
on. These [countries in the] third stage differ from each other in terms of their
sciences and their arts, their standard of living, their adherence to a prescribed
system of norms and regulations (taqlid shari‘a min al-shari‘a) and their
advance in nobility.¹ For example, the Frankish lands have already reached
the greatest degree of proficiency in mathematics, natural sciences, and
metaphysics, their foundations and their branches. Some of them have a manner
of participating in a portion of Arabic sciences, and gained access to their
intricacies and their secrets, as we will mention. Nonetheless they were not
rightly guided to the straight path nor did they ever set foot on the road to
salvation. On the other hand, the Islamic countries have excelled in the
shari‘yya sciences and their application, and in the intellectual sciences. They
neglected the positive sciences (al-‘ulam al-šikhyā) completely and for that
reason needed the Western lands to acquire what they do not know. That is why
the Franks judged that the scholars of Islam know nothing but their shari‘a and
their tongue, meaning what is related to the Arabic language. But they admit to
us that we were [once] their teachers in all sciences and were more advanced
than them. It is established by understanding and by observation, that credit
goes to the one who came before. Is it not so that one who comes later takes
from what [his predecessor] left behind and is shown the way by his guidance?
Concerning the sought-after sciences and arts: Let us mention to you here the sought-after crafts, so that you know their importance and their necessity to any country. These arts are weak in Egypt or absent entirely. They are split into two categories: the general category for all students, comprised of arithmetic, geometry, geography, history, and drawing; and the specialized category, which is distributed among them. The latter consists of a number of sciences: The first science is that of civil organization, subdivided into several branches. The three types of laws that the Franks esteem are natural law, human law, and positive law. There is also the science of countries’ affairs, their interests and what befits them; the science of economizing expenditures; the science of organizing fiscal transactions, accounting, treasury affairs, and the conservation of the treasury. The second science is that of military organization. The third science
is that of navigation and maritime affairs. The fourth science is the art of knowing how to proceed in the state’s interests, meaning the science of diplomacy, which includes envoys, i.e., the mission of countries. Its branches are the knowledge of languages, laws, and technical terminology. The fifth science is hydrology (“the art of waters”), i.e., the manufacture of aqueducts, bridges, quays, wells, etc. The sixth science is mechanics, i.e., engineering tools and weight traction. The seventh science is military engineering. The eighth science is the art of shooting guns and its organization, i.e., the art of artillery. The ninth science is the art of casting metal for manufacturing guns and weapons. The tenth science is that of chemistry and manufacturing of paper.

“Chemistry” means the knowledge of how to analyze the parts and their arrangement. Many matters fall under it, such as manufacturing gunpowder and sugar. Chemistry does not refer to the philosopher’s stone, as some people think it does, and the Franks do not know of this nor believe it at all. The eleventh science is the art of medicine. Its branches are the art of anatomy and surgery; hygiene (“the organization of health”); the knowledge of the conditions of disease; and the veterinary art, i.e., how to treat horses and other animals. The twelfth science is that of agriculture. Its branches are: the knowledge of crop species and how to organize open space for appropriate building, etc.; and the knowledge of which farming tools are especially economical. The thirteenth science is that of natural history, divided into the plant and animal classes. The fourteenth science is the craft of lithography and its branches are the arts of printing and of engraving stones, etc. The fifteenth science is the art of translation, meaning the translation of books. It is one of the difficult arts, especially translating scientific books, which requires knowledge of the technical terminology of the fundamentals of those sciences to be translated. If you were to view this truthfully, you would see that the Franks possess complete knowledge of all these sciences, which are deficient or completely unknown among us. Whoever is completely ignorant of a thing, is beneath one who has mastered that thing. Whenever a person disdains learning something, he will die regretting it. Praise be to God, who sent our Benefactor to save us from the darkness of ignorance of these things, which exist among [lands] other than ours. I think that anyone with good taste and a sound character would agree with me. I will briefly speak about some of this at the end of the book, if it is the will of God the Exalted, whom we ask for help.
Sixth Essay: Containing sections on the sciences and arts enumerated in the second chapter of the introduction, comprising several books.

Section One: On the division of sciences and arts as such, as well as the arts and sciences, common to all students.

Section One: On the division of sciences and arts, according to the Franks' method

Know that the Franks have divided human knowledges into two divisions: sciences and arts. Science is the sound achievements mentioned above, [attained] through manifest proofs. As for art, this is knowledge of the craft of something, according to specialized rules. Sciences are divided into the mathematical and the non-mathematical. The non-mathematical are divided into natural and theological. The mathematical sciences are arithmetic,
The natural sciences are natural history, physics, and chemistry. The components of natural history are botany ("the science of herbs and plants"), mineralogy ("the science of minerals and stones"), and zoology ("the science of animals"). These three branches are called the classes of production: the class of plants, the class of minerals, and the class of animals.

As for the theological, it is also called metaphysics ("what is behind or above the natural things"). As for the arts, they are divided into intellectual and practical arts. The intellectual arts are closely related to sciences, such as the science of purity and rhetoric (of language), and the science of grammar, logic, poetry, drawing, sculpture, and music. These are intellectual arts because they require scientific foundations. As for the practical arts, they are trades. This is the division among the Franks’ sages. However, among us the sciences and the arts are generally one thing, and the distinction is between whether the essence of an art is an independent science in itself, or a tool serving another. The sciences required of all students (to learn) are arithmetic, geometry, geography, history, and drawing. Knowledge of each of these comes after knowledge of the French language and what is related to it. Thus, it is our duty to mention a bit about it here.
The foundations of the French tongue and the art of arranging its words and their writing and reading is called aghnna matiq (with hamza on the alef), sukun on the ghain, fatah on the ra', doubling on the mim, kasra on the ta', and fatah on the qa'). and aghnna matiq (with doubling on the mim) by the French. It means the art of arranging the speech of any language. It is as if one were to use the art of ta'aww to encompass all that pertains to language. [It is] as we call the sciences of Arabic, by which we intend the twelve sciences gathered in the saying of our sheikh al-Ati'ar:

syntax and morphology metrics after that data
then etymology poetry verse composition
likewise semantics figurative expression calligraphy rhyme
history--this enumerates the sciences of the Arabs

Some have added the ornamentation and embellishment of speech, and others sanction adding Qur'anic recitation. In general, one may add to and take away from these; limiting and partitioning them in this way is my doing, not my restriction. It would seem that these sciences are deserving of only being called research fields of the science of Arabic, for how can verse, poetry, and rhyme each be a distinct science unto itself, and syntax, morphology, and etymology each be its own science? Look at what is meant by history, and by its being among the Arabic sciences, although the first to write it were Greek scholars. The books of Homer on the battle of Troy are the earliest [examples] of this art. The Arabs did not compose [history] until more recent times. Calligraphy is also ancient. The Franks include these research fields in “the science of the arrangement of speech,” but also consider logic, composition, and disputations among it. Thus, the French language, like other Frankish languages, has a
conventional use particular to it, upon which is built its syntax, morphology, metrics, verse, figurative expression, calligraphy, composition, semantics—this is what is called “grammar.” Thus all languages possessing rules have an art that gathers its rules, regardless of whether it is to repudiate mistakes in reading and writing, or to beautify it. This is not restricted to the Arabic language, but is found in every language. Truly, the Arabic language is the most eloquent of languages, and the greatest, and most extensive and sublime to the ear. One learned in the Latin language knows everything connected to it. He understands syntax in itself, and others, such as morphology. It is ignorant to say that he does not know anything on account of his ignorance of the Arabic language. If one delves deep into any language then he perforce becomes learned in another language, meaning that if something is translated for him in the other language, and is expressed to him, then he may acquire it and compare it to his language. Even if he may have known it already, he gets to know it better and researches into it and invalidates from it what reason does not approve. How [could he not], for knowledge is the faculty [of all]. A person may be unfamiliar with the large names in the Arabic language, but he can come to know [what is contained in them] through the French language, if it is translated for him. Whereas each language is served and [therefore] has its Mutawwali, its A‘wal, and its Sa‘d, truly, not every liquid is water, nor every roof a sky, nor every house the house of God, nor every Muhammad the prophet of God.
Thirteenth Section: Concerning the progress of the people of Paris in sciences, arts, and crafts; their organization [of them]; as well as explaining what connects to that.

What strikes anyone who has reflected on present-day conditions of the sciences, literary arts, and crafts in the city of Paris, is that human knowledges have already spread across and reached their greatest distinction in this city. Among the Franks' sages there are none who compare to the sages of Paris, not even among the ancient ones. It is also apparent to anyone who possesses correct criticism that one could say that the knowledge of these sages in all the scientific arts, made evident through experiments, is established, and their perfection of them is undisputed. This is confirmed by the saying of one eminent sage, "matters [are judged] by their perfection, activities by their termination, crafts by their durability. Though they have knowledge of the majority of sciences and theoretical arts to the utmost degree, some of their philosophical beliefs are outside of the laws of reason, in comparison to that of
other nations. However, they misrepresent these and strengthen them so that they seem true and sound to people, as they do in astronomy, for example. They investigate it and know more than anyone because of their knowledge of the secrets of instruments, which were known and invented in ancient times, for it is known that the most powerful source for industries is knowing the secrets of instruments. However, in the positive sciences they have misleading filler, that clashes with all the holy books, and upon which they erect proofs, difficult for anyone to refute. Many of their heresies will be shown to us, and we will point these out in our articles, God willing. Let us state here that the books of philosophy are completely filled with many of these heresies. ‘The third rule of refutation,’ which the author of al-Sulam mentions in his work on the science of logic, should be carried out on all their books of philosophy. Thus, if one wants to plunge into the language of French, which itself contains elements of philosophy, then he must have mastery over the Qur’an and the sunna so that he is not misled by this and does not become remiss in his belief and lose his certainty. I have already said [the following] praising and rebuking this city, together:

Is there another land like Paris, where the sans of science do not set where the night of unbelief has no morning—by your truth this is strange!

Among what singles out the French for progress in the sciences and arts is the ease of their language and everything that perfects it. It does not require much hard work to learn their language. Any person who has a sound aptitude and disposition, once he has learned it, can study any book, since there is no obscurity in it at all, for it is unambiguous. If an instructor wants to teach a book, there is never any need to decipher its words because these are clear in and of themselves. In general, a reader of a [French] book does not need to subject its words to other extraneous rules from a different science. This is unlike the Arabic language, for example, where a person who studies one of its books on a science needs to apply all the tools of language in order to scrutinize the words in so far as possible, for expressive carry meanings far from their appearance. As for the books of the French, there is none of this in them. Their books only rarely have commentaries or marginal notes. They might give a few brief notes for the sake of completeness, in order to limit an expression, etc. The texts alone are sufficient for being able to understand their meaning at first sight. Thus, whenever a person commences studying a book on a science he can devote himself to understanding the issues of that science and its rules without
لا يمكنني قراءة النص العربي في الصورة.
...As for [the Franks’] scholars, they have a different method for their education: they study a number of things completely, and moreover, devote themselves to a special branch; they investigate many things and make unprecedented gains in them. These are the characteristics of the scholar among them. They do not consider every teacher a scholar, nor every author very learned. Rather, he must have these [aforementioned] characteristics, and have some established degrees, for one does not obtain that appellation except after fulfilling these [requirements] and advancing. Do not presume that the scholars of the French are priests, because the priests are scholars in religion only. Among the priests there may be someone who is also a scholar, but what the title “scholars” designates is one who has knowledge in the intellectual sciences. The knowledge of scholars in branches of the Christian shari’a is very insignificant. If it is said in France that this person is a scholar, one does not understand by this that he is knowledgeable about his religion, but rather that he knows one of the other sciences. It will appear to you that these Christians have surpassed all others in the sciences, and with that you will come to know the vacuity of our lands in many of these [sciences], even though the prosperous Azhar mosque in Egypt the victorious (al-qāhirah), the Ummayad mosque in Syria, the Zayuna mosque in Tunis, the Qarawiyin mosque in Fez, and the madrasas in Bukhara, etc., all shine forth with transmitted sciences and some intellectual [sciences], such as the sciences of Arabic, logic, and other auxiliary sciences. The sciences in the city of Paris progress every day, for they are always increasing. Not a year passes without them discovering a new thing. Sometimes they discover a number of new arts or industries, media or perfections in a single year. You will come to know of some of these, God-willing...
Notes:

¹ In the second edition (Bulaq, 1849) al-Tahtawi corrects and adds to this (7): "wa-taqaddumihā fī najāba [not "fī nasjāma"] wa-l-barā‘a fī al-ṣinā‘ī al-maṣūshiyā,“ adding “proficiency in the subsistence industries” as an additional point of variation among this stage.

² In the second edition, al-Tahtawi inserts “animals” as the first of its branches (11): “wa-furū‘uḫu al-ḥayawānāt wa-martabat al-nabātāt wa-martabat al-ma‘ādīn.”

³ The second edition (11) inserts here: “It is an expression of knowledge of the language translated from and into, and of the translational art” (fa-ḥuwa “ibara an ma‘rifat al-lisan al-mutajjam anhu wa-ilaihi wa-l-fann al-mutarjim fili).

⁴ In the second edition al-Tahtawi alters the second half of this statement to read (12): “If one is ignorant of something, then he requires someone who has perfected that thing” (wa-man ḥalila shai‘an fa-ḥuwa muftaqir la-man atqana dhaliqa shai‘).

⁵ In the second edition al-Tahtawi inserts the following here (61): “unless one intends by ‘history’ the method of composing annals of the years’ events in the style of ḥisāb al-jumāl, but to designate this a science would also expand upon the definition of science” (…illa an yakūn al-murād bi-l-tārikh tariqat inshā’ tawārikh al-ḥawādith al-sanā‘iyya ‘alā usūb hisāb al-jumāl fa-yakūn aḏān taṣmiyatulu ‘ilmān min qābil al-tawassu‘ fī ta‘rif al-‘ilm).