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Lars Fischer^a

^a Departments of History and Hebrew and Jewish Studies, UCL

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DISCUSSION

Is the study of Jewish–Christian relations in Europe still important?

Lars Fischer*

Departments of History and Hebrew and Jewish Studies, UCL

Neither of the two most common objections to the continued importance of the study of Jewish–Christian relations – the “changed circumstances thesis” and the “job done thesis” – is compelling. The pioneering work of individual scholars notwithstanding, as a serious academic discipline or sub-discipline, the study of Jewish–Christians relations is still in its infancy and its protagonists would be well advised to take into account the critical comments Gershom Scholem formulated in 1944 with regards to Jewish studies as an evolving discipline.

Keywords: Jewish–Christian relations; antisemitism; Islamophobia; Gershom Scholem

I have slightly revised the following version of a talk given as part of the Cambridge Festival of Ideas on 25 October 2012 and added references as appropriate but wherever possible preserved its character as a spoken contribution.

I should begin by clarifying that I am speaking to you today in a purely personal capacity. Given that I have just begun my fourth year as the Academic Director of the Centre for the Study of Jewish–Christian Relations (CJCR) and Course Director of the Cambridge University’s MSt in The Study of Jewish–Christian Relations, this may seem an odd statement. Alas, events for the Festival of Ideas are scheduled well in advance and when I agreed this talk, almost to the day six months ago, I neither knew for sure that the university would go ahead with its plan to close down the MSt nor realised that this talk would become not so much a stock-taking exercise along the way as, effectively, my valedictory lecture.

What I will do today, if nothing else, is contradict totally what I am forever trying to hammer into my students. Rather than my honing in on one or two aspects of the topic at hand and discussing those in some detail, this will be a broad-sweep think piece trying to address a range of questions that the title of the talk, to my mind, raises.

The question, then, is: Is the study of Jewish–Christian relations in Europe still important? Why, we might ask, should this even be in question? It seems to me that the question can be understood in two fundamentally different ways. Firstly, the suggestion might be that the study of Jewish–Christian relations, whatever its achievements and limitations, has indubitably been important in the past but is no longer important because Europe has changed. In other words, it is because the circumstances have changed that the significance of the study of Jewish–Christian relations may also

*Email: uclhifi@ucl.ac.uk

have changed or diminished. For brevity's sake, I will refer to this as the "changed circumstances thesis."

Alternatively, the suggestion might be that the study of Jewish–Christian relations has been so successful and comprehensive that the conclusions generated by it remain important but all the relevant questions have now effectively been answered. It may well be important that we do not forget those answers but the questions that originally rendered Jewish–Christian relations an important object of study have essentially been resolved. For brevity's sake, I will refer to this as the "job done thesis."¹

Needless to say, one could explore both these suggestions from a variety of perspectives. In what follows, I want to begin by focusing on the following presuppositions of the "changed circumstances thesis": firstly, the notion that commitment to the study of Jewish–Christian relations is essentially a consequence of the Shoah and that, as the Shoah becomes increasingly more remote, both chronologically and, in the eyes of many, as a live challenge, so too the study of Jewish–Christian relations becomes increasingly less relevant; secondly, and closely related, the notion that most of the churches implicated, directly or indirectly, in the Shoah have come a long way in acknowledging their complicity and distancing themselves from it; and, thirdly, the notion that in contemporary Europe, especially after 9/11, the phenomenon frequently described as Islamophobia has become inordinately more important than antisemitism, and that insistence on the alleged continued significance of Jewish–Christian relations effectively detracts from, or blinds people to, the actual threat of Islamophobia and subverts the much more important focus on Christian–Muslim relations.

Let me comment on each of these presuppositions before turning to the "job done thesis," beginning with the first two assumptions regarding the Shoah. The problem here is twofold: Firstly, to the extent that the Shoah is receding as a widely perceived live challenge I would argue that this can be part only of the problem but not of the solution. Secondly, the study of Jewish–Christian relations is not, nor has it ever been, simply a response to the Shoah.

The late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century German Jewish publicist Moritz Heimann suggested that "only what a Jew stranded on the loneliest, most remote island still acknowledges as such is a 'Jewish Question'," a suggestion that Paul Celan polemically reiterated after the Shoah.² What all too frequently, even to this day, is referred to as the "Jewish Question," in short, is fundamentally a non-Jewish question.

When it comes to reflection upon the Shoah, too, we need to ask: Whose "question" is this? I mean this in two senses of the word. Firstly, who is entitled to decide whether the questions raised by the Shoah are still live, resolved, or defunct? It seems self-evident to me that it is only the survivors and their descendants – those, in other words, who have lived – and in many cases continue to live – with the consequences of the destruction wrought by the Shoah even on those who survived – who can ultimately make this judgement. In short, to appropriate and invert Heimann's dictum, I would argue that only when the last descendant of a survivor agrees can the Shoah truly be historicised.

Yet at the same time, and in some ways paradoxically, insistence on the significance of the Shoah is of course by no means a preserve of the survivors and their descendants; or for that matter, of their counterparts, the perpetrators and their descendants. The Shoah, to cite Adorno's famous remark, "has foisted a new categorical imperative on mankind ... to arrange their thoughts and actions so that Auschwitz will not repeat itself."³ "The bureaucratic murder of millions," he argued, "has turned death into

something that never before had to be feared in this way ... Since Auschwitz, fearing death means fearing worse than death.”⁴ Consequently, “thought that does not measure itself against this utmost extreme that refuses conceptualisation is *a priori* akin to the music with which the SS liked to crowd out the screams of its victims.”⁵

As he put it elsewhere, “the premier demand upon all education is that Auschwitz not happen again. Its priority before any other requirement is such that I believe I need not and should not justify it ... To justify it would be monstrous in the face of the monstrosity that took place ... If barbarism itself,” he continued, drawing explicitly on Freud, “is inscribed within the principle of civilization, then there is something desperate in the attempt to rise up against it. Any reflection on the means to prevent the recurrence of Auschwitz is darkened by the thought that this desperation must be made conscious to people lest they give way to idealistic platitudes.”⁶

Those who would have us live in a brave new world not governed by this categorical imperative are, in a sense, continuing, albeit in an inverted form, a proud European tradition. To put it very bluntly indeed, it would seem that modern Europeans, having previously spent the best part of two centuries convincing themselves that there is such a thing as an immutable and insurmountable “Jewish Question” when in fact there was none, are now increasingly convincing themselves that the very real challenge created by Auschwitz is in fact a transient and surmountable one.

On a very basic level, then, the study of Jewish–Christian relations, like any other intellectual endeavour, must measure itself against this new categorical imperative. Yet various churches and theological traditions also have cause to ask themselves probing questions about their own direct and indirect implication in the perpetration of the Shoah. Arguably, much of the work undertaken in this respect has focused on individual and collective actions (or the lack thereof). I would note in passing that much of this work has effectively taken place at the upper end of the ecclesiastical hierarchies and the extent to which it has impacted upon ordinary believers is a moot point. In any case, the arguably rather more important issue of how Christian theologies and cultures may have helped to create a climate in which the physical annihilation of European Jewry became a conceivable and practical option is an issue that is only gradually receiving more attention.

This is a profoundly important line of enquiry and much remains to be done in this respect. Even so, it is hardly the be all and end all of the study of Jewish–Christian relations. Not only does the history of these relations encompass infinitely more than this one question, but, to be sure, Christians have every reason to feel bad about their tradition’s track record in dealing with Judaism and Jews, real or imagined, and it is no good telling them otherwise just to make them feel better.

To my mind this is in any case a rather odd strategy: to try to persuade people they and their forebears have in fact been better than they actually were in the hope that it will motivate them to be better in future. I see two problems here: Firstly, where would the motivation to be better in future come from if, supposedly, nothing ever went wrong in the first place? Secondly, what this strategy invariably does is accept and underscore the notion that what should be done in future can or indeed ought to be legitimised by what was done in the past. To do so when I know that what was done in the past was in fact rather murky, to say the least, seems to me to be a high-risk strategy.

Ultimately, though, the real biggie here is not whether Christians are willing and able to face up to their tradition’s responsibility; the real question is whether they want to inhabit a world in which Adorno’s categorical imperative counts for something

and, more specifically, whether they want to reshape their tradition in a manner that genuinely reflects its Jewish roots and conceives of these as an asset rather than a burden – and whether they are willing and able to do so in a manner that does not negate Jewish difference, in other words, without first transforming Judaism and Jewishness into something that is “really” the same as Christianity anyway and thus engaging in yet another form of supersessionism.

This point deserves some additional emphasis. There can be few statements I have heard quite as frequently since taking up my position at the CJCR as the claim that all would be well if only Jews and Christians recognised and acknowledged that they are ultimately all the same. Given the profound unease European Christians have displayed since the medieval period in accepting Jewish difference, often with lethal consequences, continuing to deny the right of that difference in the name of our all being the same must surely be part of the problem and not the solution.

So, to conclude this section, not unlike the defendant who first claims not to have stolen the item in question but then adds that, if he did, he was justified in doing so anyway, I am suggesting that even if one did accept the notion that there could be a meaningful study of Jewish–Christian relations without reference to the Shoah, there would still be plenty to be getting on with.

What then of the suggestion that in contemporary Europe the relevance of all this pales into insignificance compared with the problem of Islamophobia? This argument exists in two basic variants. The more widespread claim is that the Muslims are the new Jews. The second, more sophisticated argument, formulated most succinctly by Matti Bunzl,⁷ suggests that antisemitism and Islamophobia are indeed two distinct phenomena and that whereas Islamophobia is very much a live problem, antisemitism no longer has any real function in contemporary Europe.

The suggestion that Muslims are the new Jews is certainly not a helpful one. To be sure, if one limits one’s analysis to the observation that both are exclusionary phenomena, antisemitism and Islamophobia are essentially the same thing. Yet by these standards so are a host of other phenomena. All processes of othering, in other words, those processes by which in-groups create, consolidate, articulate, and defend their sense of identity by contrasting themselves to a range of out-groups, obviously have in common that they are all processes of othering. And yet there are discernible differences between many of these processes. Indeed, at the most basic level we could ask what the point would be of othering more than one other group if all othering processes really did fulfil the same functions for, and met the same needs of, the in-group.

The notion that antisemitism and Islamophobia, apart from both being forms of othering, are distinct phenomena is altogether more helpful. But what of the notion that antisemitism’s distinctiveness renders it a thing of the past no longer worthy of much attention while Islamophobia is the priority of the hour? Matti Bunzl argues that antisemitism was essentially a defence mechanism deployed by the Europe of nation states that identified the Jews as a threat to the national order while Islamophobia is essentially a defence mechanism deployed by post-national Europe that identifies Muslims as a threat to the post-national order. I am not entirely sure this is a plausible suggestion, even on its own terms. While many would doubtless associate Muslims with the particular rather than the universal, the notion of a worldwide conspiracy and a quest for world domination is surely never far away when it comes to negative perceptions of Muslims.

Perhaps more importantly, though, I remain unconvinced of the suggestion that the post-national Europe supposedly being defended by Islamophobia actually exists. My

colleague Robert Fine, from the University of Warwick, has just given a lecture to our students in which he discussed Habermas's vision of a post-national Europe. Fine is entirely right, I think, when he suggests that social theorists like Bunzl have effectively taken Habermas's vision of how Europe, to his mind, should function in future as an actual description of the status quo. This scenario is utterly implausible – and, for that matter, utterly undialectical. Modern European societies have surely been grappling with the tensions between national and transnational phenomena and drives for as long as modern nationalism has been around. To suggest that post-national Europe has somehow superseded national Europe amounts, at best, to declaring one particular snapshot to be the whole picture. In fact, it is not unlike suggesting that Judaism is all about law and Christianity all about grace ...

In short, the question is not: Antisemitism *or* Islamophobia? – or – study of Jewish–Christian *or* Christian–Muslim relations? The European majority's treatment of, respectively, its Jewish and Muslim minorities both have a great deal to tell us, some of which will overlap and much of which will be distinct. At the very least, if we abandon the study of one we will lose the ability to comprehend the specificity of the other.

Let me turn to the “job done thesis,” then. There is no doubt that a number of scholars have made invaluable contributions to the study of Jewish–Christian relations. Yet where do we stand if we think of the study of Jewish–Christian relations not so much as the achievement of individual scholars but rather as a field of study, a discipline or sub-discipline in its own right? Looked at from this perspective, quite frankly, far from the job being essentially done, it seems to me we have hardly even started. Some of the rubble and shrubbery has been cleared away, some groundwork done, but the study of Jewish–Christian relations has barely moved beyond the preparatory groundwork.

The establishment and consolidation of academic disciplines or sub-disciplines requires institutional frameworks within which a critical mass of scholars can pursue and share their research. I happen to know the situation of Jewish studies in the UK rather well. The overwhelming majority of Jewish studies scholars in this country work not in clusters of Jewish studies scholars, let alone in dedicated departments of Jewish studies. Many of them are literally individuals in a variety of departments and the only person in their environment working, usually among other areas of research, on Jewish studies. In many ways this very state of affairs contributes to the strength, diversity, and versatility of Jewish studies in the UK yet at the same time the standing of Jewish studies as a discipline would be much weaker if it were not for the few clusters of Jewish studies scholars that do exist at first-rate institutions in London, Southampton, and Manchester. Not least, the fact that one can take dedicated degrees in Jewish studies at these institutions makes Jewish studies a more credible junior contributor to other degrees in the majority of contexts where such dedicated degrees are not offered. In some ways one is reminded of Ahad Ha-am's vision of cultural Zionism: his notion that a vibrant centre of Jewish culture in Palestine would radiate outwards and rejuvenate Jewish culture the world over. To my mind, the CJCR should hold a similar function for the study of Jewish–Christian relations.

Let me identify some of the key areas where, thinking not in terms of individual scholars but of the study of Jewish–Christian relations more generally, I think we have barely begun to make progress. In recent years, scholarship in Jewish/non-Jewish relations more generally has moved increasingly from the explicit to the implicit and away from what I like to call in/felicitous phrase hunting, i.e., an assessment of attitudes towards Jews based more or less exclusively on people's occasional explicit

remarks about Jews. Instead, the focus is shifting increasingly to the question of how people's attitudes towards Jews map on to the way they see the world more generally, or, to put it differently, of how people's attitudes towards Jews are reflected in the deep structure of their thought more generally. One pioneering example for this was a conference organised by one of my colleagues, and a former visiting fellow of the CJCR, Marcel Stoetzler, on Antisemitism and the Emergence of Sociological Theory.⁸ Modern antisemitism and the discipline of sociology were born roughly at the same time and the discourses on which they drew and into which they sought to intervene were partly co-extensive. The question, then, was not so much "What did sociologists think about Jews?" but rather "Are there any interesting connections between their portrayal of society at large and the way in which they and/or their contemporaries perceived of Jews?"

To return to the study of Jewish-Christian relations, then, while the scholarship addressing what various theologians thought about the Jews continues to grow at some pace, scholarship that genuinely combines this approach with a careful exploration of the deep structure of the theologies in question is still relatively thin on the ground. To put it bluntly, the really interesting question is not so much "What do Mr or Mrs X's comments about Judaism and Jews tell us about their attitudes towards Judaism and Jews?" but rather "What do Mr or Mrs X's remarks about Judaism and Jews tell us about their theology as a whole and vice versa?"

A second crucial shift in the study of Jewish-non-Jewish relations more generally that is only beginning to impact on the study of Jewish-Christian relations can be denoted with the word "messiness." Much recent research has made it very clear how ambivalent and conflicted, often self-contradictory, many people's attitudes towards Judaism and Jews have been – and probably still are. The closer we look, the clearer it becomes that one and the same person could frequently harbour both positive and negative attitudes towards Jews. Indeed, to introduce a particularly troubling example, there can be little doubt that the majority of people who saved Jews in Nazi-occupied Europe were, in terms of what they thought about Jews, at least by standards widely accepted today, antisemites. Much of what goes on between Jews and non-Jews, between Jews and Christians, it turns out, was altogether more complicated than meets the eye and than has often been assumed.

Yet to acknowledge this is the easy bit. If you'll pardon my being slightly flippant for a moment, pretty much everything, on closer inspection turns out to be more complicated and messy than one assumed before taking a closer look. The tricky question is that of how to interpret messiness. Do we conclude from this messiness that we can no longer say anything reliable about anything? How do we manage to interpret our research findings in a manner that is conclusive without neglecting the messiness? This is obviously a big question that goes far beyond the remit of the study of Jewish-Christian relations and that I am hardly going to be able to answer here in passing.

What does seem clear to me, though, is that only thick accounts will help us tackle this question, in other words, accounts that carefully examine the meanings of utterances and actions in their specific context. Not everything that sounds, looks, or smells the same at first contact necessarily is the same or has the same meaning. The same action undertaken by different people and/or in different contexts rarely actually amounts to the same action. The same attitude displayed under changing circumstances does not amount to the same attitude.

Applying this to the study of Jewish–Christian relations, I would insist, for instance, that the offensive exclusionism of a dominant majority group and the defensive exclusionism of an oppressed minority group simply are not the same although they obviously do have in common that they are both forms of exclusionism. Let me be slightly flippant again: Purim may not be the best day of the year to try to prove that Jews feel nothing but love for non-Jews. Then again, compared with the complicity of an entire society, the overwhelming majority of whose members considered themselves Christians, in the Shoah, the question of how Jews celebrate Purim seems rather irrelevant. On the whole, we still have some way to go when it comes to finding appropriate ways of telling these stories in a manner that both genuinely does justice to both and does not end up being mutually attenuating.

Let me raise one more specific issue before concluding with some more general remarks. Whose is the study of Jewish–Christian relations or, to put it slightly differently, where does it belong? I am obviously not suggesting there is necessarily a right or wrong answer to this question. Where the study of Jewish–Christian relations could best be situated as a discipline or sub-discipline will depend in large part on the sorts of questions you associate with it. Should you be inclined to identify as the principal focus and purpose of the study of Jewish–Christian relations the development of a Christian self-understanding that genuinely validates Christianity’s Jewish roots then departments of theology and/or religious studies would seem an obvious home for the study of Jewish–Christian relations.

It also depends on how you would define the nature of Jewish–Christian relations in the first place. Is the suggestion that only relations between religious Jews and religious Christians fall within this remit? This approach obviously works much better for the period prior to 1800 than it does for the period since. What do we do with the substantial proportion of “Jews” who are no longer religiously Jewish? How do we deal with the fact that Western culture as a whole is so profoundly shaped by Christianity? Not least, what are the implications of the specifically religious approach if we try to think beyond the study of Jewish–Christian relations towards the examination of Jewish–Christian–Muslim relations? Does it not skew our perspective in unnecessary and unhelpful ways towards a conservative notion of tradition? There is little doubt in my mind, that the study of Jewish–Christian relations is most productive when it is undertaken in a broadly contextualised manner and best served by a diverse and multi-disciplinary setting not beholden to theology or religious studies.

Let me introduce as a foil for my concluding remarks some comments by Gershom Scholem on the development of Jewish studies, formulated in the *Yishuv* in 1944. As always, analogies of this kind obviously only go so far yet the parallels do seem striking enough. In both cases, in Jewish studies and in the study of Jewish–Christian relations, expectations pertaining to issues of identity, community formation, and social activism loom large – though in our age of the impact agenda this is obviously becoming more of an issue for all arts and humanities and social science disciplines.

“It is precisely the most knowledgeable among our readers,” Scholem noted in 1944, “who are declaring publicly” that in existing scholarship they have “not found what they wished for.” They criticise that “we have provided neither the tools nor the aides they need for their work,” that “we have denied the grand vision of the true and solid edifice, of securing the inheritance and of visualising its values. Instead we remain isolated from our true purpose and real task. Some fear that we have sunk our pegs into unreliable ground, that we have devoted ourselves to fruitless

research that is of no use, in short that we have allowed the gold of the great commentaries and central problems to crumble into the small coinage of petty research.”⁹

Against these claims, Scholem mounted a spirited defence of old-fashioned philology.¹⁰ Before you start wondering whether I am about to out myself as a closet positivist, I am citing Scholem in this context precisely because this is obviously the last thing of which one could accuse him. However one might judge the merits of the epistemological assumptions underlying his brand of historical-critical philology by today’s standards, for Scholem there was never any doubt that his scholarship served a specific political agenda; his commitment to the nascent Hebrew University alone bears eloquent testimony to the fact that his insistence that scholarship had to stand on its dignity to fulfil its purpose drew not on delusions of objectivity but on the insight that scholarship could only be truly committed to an agenda if it stood on its dignity. His comments therefore deserve to be cited at some length.

As he explained, he and his peers had “yearned for this strictness of the laws of scholarship. For we had looked around and seen only a very small number of scholars with a live and developed scholarly conscience who acted according to strict justice [*middat ha-din*]. Yet alongside them a large faction of dilettantes was romping about in the fields of research with good intentions and confused methods, muddle-headed, only one half or one third of them trained for the activity in which they were engaged. Consequently, we yearned for the form of scholarship that treats its representatives cruelly, in which there is no room for the leniency of giving the benefit of the doubt, a leniency so commonly applied amongst us in order to gloss over all the deficiencies, the lack of ability and talent, of depth and precision.”¹¹

To be sure, he and his peers had “sought the great idea of scholarship that shines upon the details like rays of the sun dancing upon the surface of the water, yet we also knew – and can there be any serious scholar without this eternal struggle within him? – that this idea dwells only in the details themselves.”¹² Scholem reiterated that “we may not have struggled with God, blessed be He, as in the words of the aggadah, but we struggled with the Satan who dances among us, the Satan of irresponsible dilettantism, who does not know the secret of construction because he does not know the secret of destruction.”¹³

Scholem raised a number of probing questions. “We have fought but have we won?”¹⁴ ... Have we really destroyed sentimentalism?” In fact, he contended, “it is still amongst us, in new guises, in a new style, no less annoying than its earlier forms.”¹⁵ “Have we destroyed dilettantism and its wild historical, philological and philosophical fantasies?” Scholem went on to ask. “Has it not infiltrated us in ten new guises?”¹⁶ “We began the work, we were determined to undertake it conscientiously,” he continued, but “our eyes were opened and we sobered up.”¹⁷ In short, “*we set out as rebels and now find ourselves as heirs.*”¹⁸

“Woe betide scholarship,” he concluded, “that refrains from formulating its conclusions but woe betide sevenfold scholarship that allows its conclusions to precede its analysis.”¹⁹ After the best part of four years consumed by the dedicated, institutionalised study of Jewish–Christian relations, I could not agree more and cannot commend Scholem’s comments to my (soon to be former) colleagues emphatically enough. To reiterate – the question is not whether scholarship (in this or any other field) can or should be divorced from pressing social and political concerns. The problem is that there are no short cuts; any attempt to short-circuit scholarship can only prevent it from fulfilling its very commitment to the resolution of those pressing social and political concerns.

Notes on contributor

Lars Fischer is a Teaching Fellow in the Department of History and an Honorary Research Associate in the Department of Hebrew and Jewish Studies at UCL. Before returning to UCL, he was the Academic Director of the Centre for the Study of Jewish-Christian Relations in Cambridge from 2009–2013. He previously held lectureships in German History at UCL and Modern European History at King's College London. He is a Fellow, and serves on the Council, of the Royal Historical Society. He was this journal's review section editor from 2002–2004 and 2008–2012.

Notes

1. Many readers of this journal will be only too aware of the fact that this contention could not by any stretch of the imagination be applied to the Eastern Orthodox churches. To be sure, there have been some relevant initiatives (such as "To Recognize Christ in His People: Declaration by a Round Table of Eastern Orthodox Priests and Cultural Representatives," 2007, <http://www.jcrelations.net/To+Recognize+Christ+in+His+People%3A+Declaration+by+a+Round+Table+of+Eastern+Orthodox+Priests+and+Cultural+Representatives.3156.0.html?L=3>) but these are few and far between and often to varying degrees problematic in themselves. All in all, very little has changed to transcend the state of affairs outlined in the contributions by Irina Levinskaya and Nicholas de Lange in James K. Aitken and Ed Kessler (eds), *Challenges in Jewish-Christian Relations* (New York: Paulist Press, 2006).
2. See Adam, "Bibliothek als Organismus," 60; Celan and Szondi, *Briefwechsel*, 142 n. 3.
3. Adorno, "Negative Dialektik", 358.
4. *Ibid.*, 355, 361.
5. *Ibid.*, 358
6. Adorno, "Erziehung nach Auschwitz," 674.
7. Matti Bunzl, See, e.g., "Anti-semitism and Islamophobia."
8. For some of the papers from this conference, see *Patterns of Prejudice* 44, no. 2 (2010). Marcel Stoetzler is currently preparing a fuller volume of proceedings for publication.
9. Scholem, "Überlegungen zur Wissenschaft vom Judentum," 11–12.
10. One of the most affecting praises of philology was sung by Friedrich Nietzsche in *Daybreak* (5): "For philology is that venerable art which demands of its votaries one thing above all: to go aside, to take time, to become still, to become slow – it is a goldsmith's art and connoisseurship of the *word* which has nothing but delicate, cautious work to do and achieves nothing if it does not achieve it *lento*. But for precisely this reason it is more necessary than ever today, by precisely this means does it entice and enchant us the most, in the midst of an age of 'work,' that is to say, of hurry, of indecent and perspiring haste, which wants to 'get everything done' at once, including every old or new book: – this art does not so easily get anything done, it teaches to read *well*, that is to say, to read slowly, deeply, looking cautiously before and aft, with reservations, with doors left open, with delicate eyes and fingers." I thank Jay Geller for alerting me to this passage by citing it at the CJCR Colloquium we held in Cambridge in 2011 on the occasion of the publication of his *The Other Jewish Question*.
11. Scholem, "Überlegungen zur Wissenschaft vom Judentum," 46–7.
12. *Ibid.*, 47.
13. *Ibid.*, 48.
14. *Ibid.*
15. *Ibid.*, 49.
16. *Ibid.*, 50.
17. *Ibid.*, 50–1.
18. *Ibid.*, 49.
19. *Ibid.*, 51.

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