

Manual No. 8

Clegg & Guttmann

120 Jahre nach dem Ersten Zionistenkongress in Basel

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Sponsor:

Fonds für künstlerische Aktivitäten im Museum für Gegenwartskunst
der Emanuel Hoffmann-Stiftung und der Christoph Merian Stiftung

kunstmuseum basel

Dear exhibition visitor,

Michael Clegg (born 1957 in Dublin) and Yair Martin Guttman (born 1957 in Jerusalem) moved to New York together to study in 1978 and have been appearing as an artist duo since 1980. Their works have drawn international attention and been shown, among others, at the Venice Biennial (1995) and at documenta 8 in Kassel (1987). Both now teach at art academies, in Karlsruhe and Vienna.

Their conceptual approach includes large-scale photographic and film works, as well as projects engaging with the tradition of the portrait or the institution of the library. The latter resulted in the participatory installation Open Library (1991–1994) that created a social sculpture in public space, accessible to all. With this work, Clegg & Guttman explored a Duchampian question: can an object whose value is practical and whose identity is non-artistic be transformed into an artwork without integrating it into an existing art institution?

In 1997, on the centenary of the First Zionist Congress that took place in 1897 in Basel, Clegg & Guttman presented an installation in the central hall at Kunsthalle Basel. For the Congress, at Basel's municipal casino, Theodor Herzl invited young men from Jewish backgrounds to discuss his vision of a Jewish state. Working with a group of historians from Basel University, the artists retraced the spatial conditions and content of the Congress and found themselves in a new role: converting historical material into something that can be experienced visually. This was interwoven with their own artistic interpretations, including a reading room with newspapers, books, and pamphlets from the period. The result was a synthesis of scientific and artistic presentation, allowing the topic to be dealt with on a historical level while also encouraging a change of perspective by linking it to the art context, raising questions concerning the construction of history and knowledge production.

Now Kunstmuseum Basel | Gegenwart is showing the installation in a new interpretation scheduled to open 100 years after the Balfour Declaration, with which Britain expressed its

support for the creation of a “national home for the Jewish people” in Palestine. The installation has been expanded to include many new documents and recordings that contribute to a dialectical engagement with the history of Israel's founding—including in the context of the current escalation of the conflict, which became the focus of renewed media attention during the exhibition following the decision of the United States to fully recognize Jerusalem as Israel's capital.

Eva Falge & Søren Grammel

*Liebe Besucherin,
lieber Besucher,*

Michael Clegg (* 1957 Dublin) und Yair Martin Guttman (* 1957 Jerusalem) sind 1978 gemeinsam für ihr Studium nach New York gegangen und treten seit 1980 als Künstlerduo auf. Ihre Arbeiten fanden international Beachtung und wurden unter anderem auf der Biennale di Venezia (1995) und der documenta 8 in Kassel (1987) gezeigt. Beide lehren heute an Kunsthochschulen in Karlsruhe und Wien.

Die konzeptuelle Arbeitsweise der beiden Künstler umfasst fotografische und filmische Inszenierungen sowie Auseinandersetzungen mit der Tradition des Porträts oder der Institution der Bibliothek. Letzteres mündete in die partizipative Objektinstallation Offene Bibliothek (1991–1994), die im Sinne einer sozialen Plastik im öffentlichen Raum für jedermann zugänglich und auf Partizipation angelegt war. Mit dieser Arbeit untersuchte das Künstlerduo eine Fragestellung à la Duchamp: Kann ein Objekt mit Gebrauchswert und einer nicht künstlerischen Identität in ein Kunstobjekt verwandelt werden, ohne es in eine bestehende Kunsteinrichtung zu integrieren?

1997 zeigten Clegg & Guttman anlässlich des 100. Jahrestages des ersten Zionistenkongresses, der 1897 in Basel stattgefunden hatte, eine Rauminstallation im Oberlichtsaal der Kunsthalle Basel. Zu dem Kongress hatten sich auf Einladung des Hauptorganisations Theodor Herzl junge Männer jüdischer Herkunft im Stadtcasino Basel versammelt, um seine Vision eines eigenen jüdischen Staates zu diskutieren. Gemeinsam mit einer Gruppe von Historikerinnen und Historikern der Universität Basel spürte das Künstlerduo den damals vorherrschenden räumlichen und inhaltlichen Begebenheiten nach und fand sich in einer neuen Rolle wieder: als Umsetzer von historischem Material in visuell Erfahrbares. Verwoben wurde dieses mit eigenen künstlerischen Interpretationen wie beispielsweise einem Leseraum, in dem Zeitungen, Bücher und Broschüren aus dieser Zeit auslagen. Es entstand eine Synthese aus wissenschaftlicher und künstlerischer Darstellung, die sowohl auf historischer Ebene eine Aufarbeitung des Themas ermöglichte als auch durch die Verbindung mit dem Kunstkontext zu einem

Perspektivenwechsel einlud und Fragen nach der Konstruktion von Geschichte und Wissensbildung aufwarf.

Jetzt zeigt das Kunstmuseum Basel | Gegenwart die Rauminstallation in einer Neuinterpretation, die bewusst hundert Jahre nach der Balfour-Deklaration eröffnet, mit der Grossbritannien deutlich seine Unterstützung für die Einrichtung einer »nationalen Heimstätte« für Jüdinnen und Juden in Palästina formulierte. Die Installation wurde um zahlreiche Dokumente und Tonquellen erweitert, die zu einer dialektischen Auseinandersetzung mit der Gründungsgeschichte Israels beitragen – dies auch im Kontext der aktuellen Zuspitzung des Konfliktes, der noch während der Ausstellung aufgrund der Entscheidung der USA, Jerusalem uneingeschränkt als Hauptstadt Israels anzuerkennen, erneut in den medialen Fokus rückte.

Eva Falge & Søren Grammel

“This installation by Clegg & Guttman commemorates the First Zionist Congress that took place in Basel 120 years ago in 1897. The artists consider the project as an art-essay on a historical topic where the aesthetic and the intellectual experience go hand in hand—the spatial, sculptural and material qualities of the objects are meant to augment and enrich the historical material. On the other hand, the placement in the exhibition space of audio sources to present the relevant historical material lends the show a musical logic, transforming it into an operatic environment.

The artists—Michael Clegg and Martin Guttman—are Israeli citizens who grew up in Jerusalem and are native speakers of Hebrew; the exhibition thus inevitably also assumes the character of a personal reflection. Both artists descend from Zionist families who immigrated to Palestine hoping to avoid being affected by anti-Semitism.

[...] In 1997 the exhibition space was divided into several subenvironments that represented various aspects of Jewish existence during the period when Theodor Herzl formed the idea of Zionism: **The bourgeois salon; the Cheder—the traditional, religious Jewish school; the synagogue; the Zionist congress hall in Basel; the Viennese café; the Kibbutz dining-room.** The earlier version included the large portraits presented in the present show—photographic prints from black and white negatives that the artists ‘reanimated’ by coloring.

[...] The present exhibition also includes a new selection of primary sources—the speeches in the Congress, religious texts like the Bible and the Talmud, later essays by Gershom Scholem and Hannah Arendt, texts by the Baal Shem Tov, and Stefan Zweig. This body of texts that the viewers may listen to as they move around in the exhibition space forms the ‘intellectual skeleton’ of the present installation.

It should be mentioned that each environment has two different audio files. One of them represents the dominant or official point of view and the other one, a perspective of the opposition. Theodor Herzl’s dominant point of view, for example, is contrasted with the criticism of Asher Ginsberg (Ahad Ha’am); orthodox Judaism is

supplemented with a text about Jewish mysticism; the standard legal text of the Talmud is set next to a supernatural story by the father of the Hassidic movement. Any attempt to understand the discourse surrounding Zionism must emphasize the multiple viewpoints, competing interests and the general culture of argumentation and debate that the protagonists all shared.

[...] The present exhibition is a mosaic of all these points of view. You hear the standard Jewish learning and the supernatural stories of a young religious student; a Bible reading and the voice of Messianic mysticism; a story of a bourgeois salon; the call of the Old-New Land and the response of the Diaspora. These ghostly voices tell the story of the First Zionist Congress that took place in this city hundred and twenty years ago.”

Artist statement Clegg & Guttman, 2017

»Die Rauminstallation von Clegg & Guttman erinnert an den Ersten Zionistenkongress in Basel, der 1897 – vor genau 120 Jahren – stattfand. Die Künstler betrachten das Projekt als einen künstlerischen Essay über ein historisches Thema, in dem sich ästhetische und intellektuelle Erfahrungen miteinander vermengen. Dabei soll die räumliche, skulpturale und materielle Qualität der Objekte das historische Material verstärken und bereichern. Stets präsent ist dieses Material durch zahlreiche Audioquellen im Ausstellungsraum; diese verleihen der Schau eine musikalische Logik, die an ein Opern-Szenario erinnert.

Die Künstler – Michael Clegg und Martin Guttman – sind israelische Staatsbürger, aufgewachsen in Jerusalem, deren Muttersprache Hebräisch ist; dadurch nimmt die Rauminstallation unvermeidlich einen persönlich-reflektierten Charakter an. Zudem sind beide in zionistischen Familien aufgewachsen, die nach Palästina emigrierten – in der Hoffnung, dem Antisemitismus zu entfliehen.

[...] Die ursprüngliche Installation von 1997 war in verschiedene Bereiche unterteilt, die jeweils bestimmte Aspekte der jüdischen Gemeinschaft um 1900 – zu Zeiten, als Theodor Herzl den Zionismus begründete – thematisierten: **der bürgerliche Salon; der Cheder – die traditionelle, religiöse jüdische Schule; die Synagoge; die Kongresshalle des Zionistenkongresses in Basel; das Wiener Kaffeehaus; das Esszimmer im Kibbutz.** Die grossformatigen Porträts, die in der aktuellen Schau zu sehen sind, schmückten auch damals den Ausstellungsraum – Fotodrucke von Schwarzweissnegativen, welche die Künstler mittels Kolorieren »wiederbelebt« hatten.

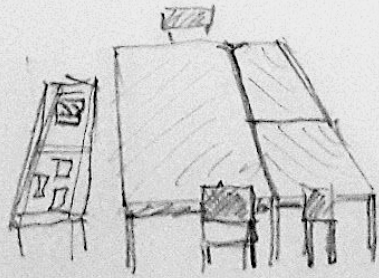
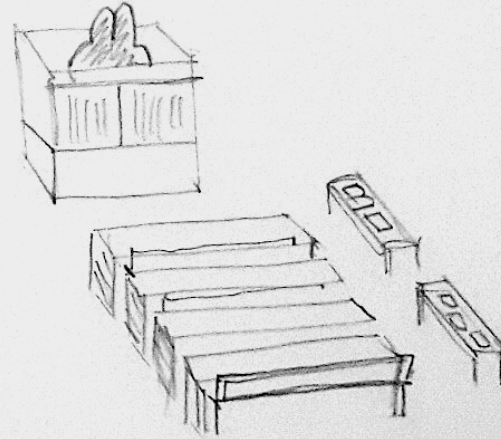
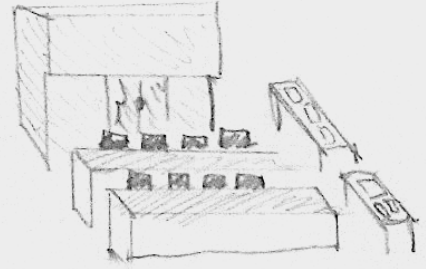
[...] In der aktuellen Ausstellung sind ausserdem eine Reihe weiterer Primärquellen integriert: Kongressreden, religiöse Texte aus der Bibel und dem Talmud, jüngere Essays von Gershom Scholem und Hannah Arendt, Schriften des Baal Shem Tov sowie Texte von Stefan Zweig. Diese Audiodokumente, denen die Zuschauer auf ihrem Weg durch den Ausstellungsraum lauschen können, bilden das »intellektuelle Gerüst« der Rauminstallation.

Jeder Abschnitt der Ausstellung enthält zwei Audioquellen: Die erste Quelle repräsentiert die dominante oder offizielle Sichtweise auf die jeweilige Thematik, die zweite zeigt eine Gegenmeinung. So wird beispielsweise die von Theodor Herzl vehement vertretene Auffassung der Kritik Asher Ginsbergs (Ahad Ha’am) gegenübergestellt. Quellen des orthodoxen Judentums werden durch Texte über den jüdischen Mystizismus ergänzt und gesetzliche Vorschriften aus dem Talmud werden Seite an Seite mit einer spirituellen Erzählung des Begründers der chassidischen Strömung präsentiert. Will man den Diskurs um den Zionismus begreifen und fassbar machen, so müssen stets die zahlreichen verschiedenen Meinungen und konkurrierenden Interessen zugleich in den Blick genommen werden, ebenso wie die Argumentations- und Diskussionskultur, die alle wichtigen Akteure miteinander teilten.

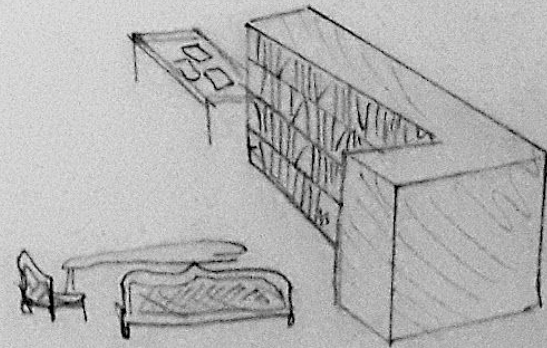
[...] Die Ausstellung ist ein Mosaik dieser verschiedenen Sichtweisen: Der Besucher lernt die jüdischen Lehren und die übernatürlichen Geschichten junger gläubiger Studenten kennen, kann Bibel-Passagen und Schriften des messianischen Mystizismus lauschen, hört die Geschichte eines bürgerlichen Salons und kann die utopische Vorstellung vom Altneuland ebenso nachspüren wie die Reaktionen der Diaspora. All diese geisthaften Stimmen erzählen gemeinsam die Geschichte des Ersten Zionistenkongresses, der vor 120 Jahren in Basel stattfand.«

Künstler-Statement Clegg & Guttman, 2017

4.)



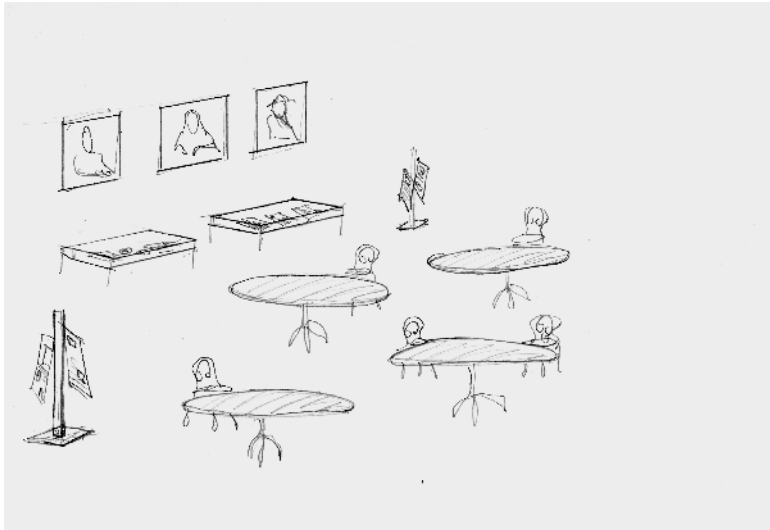
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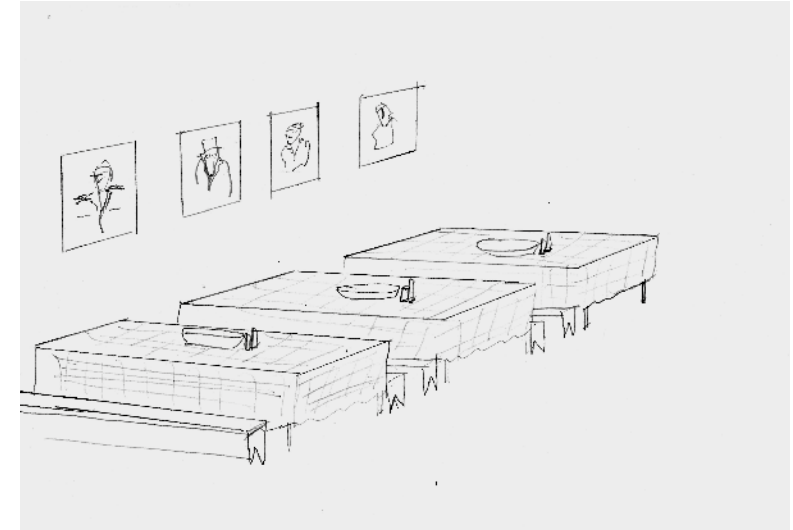
3.)

2.)

5.)



6.)



1



The Book of Mysteries

Baal Schem Tov (in: The Golden Mountain, Meyer Levin, 1932)

“When the children of Horodenka ceased to sing, Israel was no longer content to remain in that place. He wandered again, and returned to the town of Okup, where he had been born. There he became the watcher of the synagogue. [...] The innermost secrets of the Cabbala were for him, and they were only as stars of night against the sun. For to him would be revealed the Secret of Secrets. [...] In another city the Tsadik, Rabbi Adam, master of all mysteries, waited the coming of his last day. [...] For in the possession of Rabbi Adam was the Book that contains the Word of eternal might. [...] And the seventh to whom it was given was the Tsadik, Rabbi Adam. [...] One night Rabbi Adam arose from his sleep. He walked into a wilderness. Before him stood a mountain, and in the side of the mountain was a cave. [...] It was the cave of the Machpelah, where Abraham lies buried. Rabbi Adam went deep into the cave, and there he found the Book. [...] And one night the word came to him, saying, ‘Give the Book into the hands of Rabbi Israel, son of Eleazer, who lives in Okup.’

Rabbi Adam was thankful, for now he might give over his burden, and die. He said to his son, ‘Here is one book in which I have not read with you.’ His son asked, ‘Was I not worthy?’ [...] Then he said to his son, ‘Seek out Rabbi Israel, in the city of Okup, for these leaves belong to him. [...] Rabbi Adam’s son went to the elders of the house of prayer and said to them, ‘Let me have a separate room in which to study. Perhaps I shall want to sleep there sometimes when I study late into the night. Then give me the boy Israel as a servant.’ [...] The master watched the boy, and soon came to feel certain that this was indeed the Rabbi Israel whom he sought. [...] All night long the boy studied. And when the sunrise embraced his candle flame, he slipped down upon the bench, and slept. [...] He bent over the page of mysteries, and studied it, and his whole face was aflame, his eyes glowed as if they had pierced into the heart of the earth, and his hands burned as if they lay against the heart of the earth. [...] ‘Know, that I place in your hands the infinite wisdom that God gave forth on Mount Sinai. [...] My father was the last of the great souls to whom it was entrusted. I was not found worthy of retaining it, and

through my hands my father transmits this Book to your hands. I beg of you, Rabbi Israel, allow me to be your servant, let me be as the air about you, absorbing your holy words, that otherwise would be lost in nothingness.’ Israel answered, ‘Let it be so. We will go out of the city, and give ourselves over to the study of this Book.’

[...] But the son of Rabbi Adam was eaten by that upon which he fed, and yet his hunger grew ever more insatiable. [...] ‘What is the one thing that you desire?’ ‘Reveal the Word to me!’ ‘The Word is inviolate!’ cried Rabbi Israel. [...] Then Rabbi Israel raised his hands into the darkness, and cried out the terrible Name. [...] ‘I am lost,’ said the son of Rabbi Adam, ‘for I am not pure.’ ‘Only one way is left to us,’ cried Rabbi Israel. ‘We must watch until day comes. If one of us closes an eyelid, the evil one will seize him, he is lost.’ [...] But as dawn came, the son of Rabbi Adam, enfeebled by his week of purification, and by the long struggle against the darkness of night, wavered, his head nodded, and sank upon the table. Rabbi Israel reached out his arm to raise him. But in that moment an unseen thing sped from the mouth of Rabbi Adam’s son, and a flame devoured his heart, and his body sank to the ground.”

*Verschriftlichter Auszug des vorgelesenen
Textes der Audioquelle im Ausstellungsraum.*

CHEDER

Objekte

1 MDF-Tisch, 2 Holztische, 5 Holzstühle, 5 jüdische Lehr- und Gebetsbücher

Text der Audioquelle

Baal Schem Tov: The Book of Mysteries (in: The Golden Mountain, Meyer Levin, 1932)

Fotos

Jeschiwe-Bocher aus Polen, 1997/2017

Member of the Zionist Worker’s Association, 1997/2017

An old time Warsawer, 1997/2017

3 C-Prints aufgezogen auf MDF

Leihgaben der Künstler

Vitrine

Juden aus dem Dorf Maswar im Nordwesten des Jemen, 1902

Synagoge aus Holz in Przedbórz bei Lodz, 1928

Aschkenasische Juden, 1876

Menachem Kipnis in Krakau, ohne Datum (Zwischenkriegszeit)

Studierende Knaben im Cheder in Kamionka Strumilowa, ca. 1925

5 C-Prints (Reproduktionen)

Bücher: Genesis auf Hebräisch, Talmud, kleines Gebetsbuch mit Morgengebeten

2



Berlin Salon, Essay, 1932

Hannah Arendt

“Mademoiselle Levi is Rahel Lewin, known in her time as ‘Little Levi,’ later as Rahel Varnhagen or simply Rahel. And Louis is Prussian Prince Louis Ferdinand. The social circle that made this intimate note and many letters possible is known by the name ‘Berlin Salon.’

This Berlin social life had a brief genesis and a short duration. It arose from the ‘scholarly Berlin’ of the Enlightenment, which accounts for its social neutrality. In its effective and representative form, it lasted only from the French Revolution until the outbreak of the unfortunate war of 1806. [...] It encompasses the two classes that have a certain public aspect in daily life: actors and nobility. [...] But now an ever more powerful bourgeoisie would begin appropriating those classes to itself.

[...] Because the Salon was socially neutral ground, it was accessible to Berlin’s Jews, whose social status was indeterminate but who were adapting to the current social situation with amazing rapidity. The Jews did not have to free themselves from all manner of social ties: they stood outside society to begin with. And though Jewish men were to some degree limited by their professions, Jewish women—once they were emancipated—were free from all convention to an extent difficult to imagine today. These Jewish houses became the meeting places of the intellectual world and their owners did not have the feeling they were either compromised or honored by that fact.

The Tugendbund (League of Virtue) founded by Henriette Herz in the 1780’s, was still completely a product of the Enlightenment. [...] The League was based on the pursuit of virtue and on the premise of the equality of all ‘good’ human beings. It is important to note that this idea of the equal rights of all good human beings first gave rise to the kind of indiscretion we have come to regard as typically Romantic. All the members of the League are obliged, for example, to show each other important letters, even ones from individuals not known to the rest of the group. [...] Wilhelm von Humboldt’s fiancée, Caroline, voiced strong objection to this reduction of the individual generated by

a superficial understanding of Lessing, and she would soon convince Wilhelm to leave this circle of virtue worshipers. The circle fell apart rapidly. [...] About four or five years after the founding of the League of Virtue, Rahel Lewin’s reputation began to grow. Her circle was the first to separate itself from the Enlightenment and to reveal the emerging consciousness of the new generation that was finding its own mode of expression in its reverence for Goethe. Rahel established the Goethe cult in Berlin, which was fundamentally different from that of the Romantics. [...] For the Berlin circle, though, Goethe’s importance was only that he expressed what everyone else felt: He was their spokesman.

[...] After Rahel’s death, the condition of acceptance became ‘a cultivated personality.’ [...] Self-education was essential for those whose social traditions had been shaken. Caught up in this process of detachment were not only the young nobility who had been enlightened by bourgeois tutors and alienated from the ideas of their own class, yet at the same time could not identify with the middle class, but also the recently emancipated Jews who had still not had time enough to form a new tradition. [...] The veneration and esteem of women that is documented in this salon is the result of taking private life seriously, a realm that appears more congenial to woman by nature than to man. [...] Initially, this indiscretion was guided in Henriette Herz’s Tugendbund by an apparent ideal, namely, virtue. Now, in the 1790s, this interest became general. Everything intimate thus acquired a public character; everything public an intimate one.”

*Verschriftlichter Auszug des vorgelesenen
Textes der Audioquelle im Ausstellungsraum.*

SALON

Objekte

1 MDF-Büchergestell, Büchersammlung, 1 Biedermeier-Sofa & 6 Sessel, 1 Salontisch,
1 Teppich

Text der Audioquelle

Hannah Arendt: Berlin Salon, Essay, 1932

Fotos

Portrait of Father and Son in Berlin, 1997/2017

C-Print aufgezogen auf MDF

Leihgabe der Künstler

The Genius of Vilnius, 2017

Lambda Print, kaschiert auf Plexiglas, aufgezogen auf Aluminium, MDF

Leihgabe der Künstler

Jeanette Herzl, 1997

Fotografie auf Cibachrom, kaschiert auf Plexiglas, aufgezogen auf MDF

Leihgabe von Nadia Guth Biasini

Vitrine

Moses Mendelssohn, 1771

Henriette Herz, 1778

Rahel Varnhagen von Ense, ca. 1800

Wiener Salon, 1843

Bürgerlicher Salon in Berlin, 1910

»Über die Lehre des Spinoza in Briefen an den Herrn Moses Mendelssohn« von

Friedrich Heinrich Jacobi, 1789

6 C-Prints (Reproduktionen)

Buch: Arthur Schnitzler: Jugend in Wien. Eine Autobiographie, 1985

3



Major Trends in Jewish Mysticism, 2011
Gershom Scholem

“It is the purpose of these lectures to describe and to analyze some of the major trends of Jewish mysticism. [...] At once strange and repellent, it epitomized everything that was opposed to their own ideas and to the outlook which they hoped to make predominant in modern Judaism. [...] The Kabbalists, however, are no friends of mystical autobiography. [...] For after all, mysticism, while beginning with the religion of the individual, proceeds to merge the self into a higher union. [...] Mystical tendencies, in spite of their strictly personal character, have therefore frequently led to the formation of new social groupings and communities. [...] What is Jewish mysticism? [...] Kabbalah, it must be remembered, is not the name of a certain dogma or system, but rather the general term applied to a whole religious movement. [...] But may it not also be that such a denominator is to be found in the attitude of the Jewish mystic towards those dominant spiritual forces which have conditioned and shaped the intellectual life of Jewry during the past two thousand years: the Halakhah, the Aggadah, the prayers and the philosophy of Judaism, to name the most important? [...] The cosmogonic and the eschatological trend of Kabbalistic speculation which we have tried to define, are in the last resort ways of escaping from history rather than instruments of historical understanding. [...] Kabbalah means literally ‘tradition’, in itself an excellent example of the paradoxical nature of mysticism. [...] It is a secret doctrine because it treats of the most deeply hidden and fundamental matters of human life; but it is secret also because it is confined to a small elite of the chosen who impart the knowledge to their disciples. [...] The mystical sphere is the meeting-place of two worlds or stages in the development of the human consciousness: one primitive and one developed, the world of mythology and that of revelation. [...] This is particularly true of the Zohar and the Lurianic Kabbalah, that is to say, of those forms of Jewish mysticism which have exerted by far the greatest influence in Jewish history and which for centuries stood out in the popular mind as bearers of the final and deepest truth in Jewish thought. [...] Perhaps, after all, there is something wrong with the popular conception of

Monotheism as being opposed to the mythical; perhaps Monotheism contains room after all, on a deeper plane, for the development of mythical lore. [...] What is the secret of this tremendous success of the Kabbalah among our people? Why did it succeed in becoming a decisive factor in our history, shaping the life of a large proportion of Jewry over a period of centuries, while its contemporary, rational Jewish philosophy, was incapable of achieving the spiritual hegemony after which it strove? [...] Persecution and decline weakened the spirit of the people and made them seek refuge in the darkness of Mysticism because they could not bear the light of Reason. [...] The secret of the success of the Kabbalah lies in the nature of its relation to the spiritual heritage of rabbinical Judaism. This relation differs from that of rationalist philosophy, in that it is more deeply and in a more vital sense connected with the main forces active in Judaism.”

*Verschriftlichter Auszug des vorgelesenen
Textes der Audioquelle im Ausstellungsraum.*

SYNAGOGE

Objekte

1 MDF-Toraschrein mit Stoffvorhang, 1 Bima, 6 Gebetspulte und -bänke, 5 Gebetsbücher
Holzobjekte: Leihgaben des Jüdischen Museums der Schweiz, Basel (Depositum Museum der Kulturen Basel, Basel)

Texte der Audioquellen

Gershom Scholem: Major Trends in Jewish Mysticism, 2011
Psalm 137: By the rivers of Babylon & Jeremiah 4:1: If you, Israel, will return, then return to me

Fotos

David Elye, der Sofer von Annopol, 1997/2017
Rabin Bev Meizels, 1997/2017
Der Schammes von Wysokie Litewskie, 1997/2017
3 C-Prints aufgezogen auf MDF
Leihgaben der Künstler

Vitrine

Toraschrein und Bima in der Regensburger Synagoge, 1941
Toraschrein der Chai Adam Synagoge in Burlington, 1910
Abraham Moshe Bernstein, 1921
Betende Juden in der Synagoge am Jom Kippur, 1878
4 C-Prints (Reproduktionen)
Objekte: Kippa, Menorah (Korfu, ca. 1910)



Address to the First Zionist Congress, 1897

Theodor Herzl

“Fellow Delegates [...]. We want to lay the cornerstone of the edifice which is one day to house the Jewish nation. [...] Anti-Semitism—you know it, alas, too well—is the up-to-date designation of the movement. [...] Perhaps our enemies are quite unaware how deeply they wounded the sensibilities of just those of us who were possibly not the primary objects of their attack. That very part of Jewry which is modern and cultured, which has outgrown the Ghetto and lost the habit of petty trading, was pierced to the heart. [...] For Zionism is a homecoming to the Jewish fold even before it becomes a home-coming to the Jewish land. [...] A close union between the ultra-modern and the ultra-conservative elements of Jewry. [...] A union of this kind is possible only on a national basis. [...] We Zionists desire not an international league but international discussion. [...] It is this distinction which justifies the convening of our Congress. There will be no question of intrigues, secret interventions, and devious methods in our ranks. [...] We are aiming toward a broader culture, such as an increase of knowledge brings with it. [...] But we Zionists want to rouse the people to self-help. [...] It is generally known that the difficulties of obtaining colonization rights were not created by Zionism in its present form. [...] The confidence of the government with which we want to negotiate regarding the settlement of Jewish masses on a large scale can be gained by frank language and upright dealing. [...] The agreement must be based on rights, and not on toleration. Truly we have had enough experience of toleration and of ‘protection’ which could be revoked at any time. [...] But colonization in its present form is not, and cannot be the solution of the Jewish question. And we must admit unreservedly that it has failed to evoke much sympathy. Why? Because the Jews know how to calculate [...]. Thus if we assume that there are nine million Jews in the world, and that it would be possible to colonize ten thousand Jews in Palestine every year, the Jewish question would require nine hundred years for its solution. This would seem to be impracticable. On the other hand, you know that to count on ten thousand settlers a year under existing circum-

stances is nothing short of fantastic. The Turkish government would doubtless unearth the old immigration restrictions immediately, and to that we would have little objection. For if anyone thinks that the Jews can steal into the land of their fathers, he is deceiving either himself or others. [...] The immigration of Jews signifies an unhoped-for accession of strength for the land which is now so poor; in fact, for the whole Ottoman Empire.

[...] The advent of Jews would bring about an improvement in the situation of the Christians in the Orient. [...] But if the government maintains a neutral attitude, the Jews find themselves unprotected by the established regime and rush into the arms of the revolutionaries. Zionism, or self-help for the Jews, points to a way out of these numerous and extraordinary difficulties. Zionism is simply a peacemaker. [...] It will last only so long in each country as that country desires to be rid of its Jews. How will the current be stopped? Simply by the gradual decrease and the final cessation of anti-Semitism. Thus it is that we understand and anticipate the solution of the Jewish problem. [...] But wherever we shall be, and however distant the accomplishment of our task, let our Congress be earnest and high-minded, a source of welfare to the unhappy, of defiance to none, of honour to all Jewry. Let it be worthy of our past, the renown of which, though remote, is eternal!”

*Verschriftlichter Auszug des vorgelesenen
Textes der Audioquelle im Ausstellungsraum.*

KONGRESSHALLE

Objekte

1 MDF-Kongresshalle, 1 Faksimile-Karte von Palästina (Original: 1866), 4 Tische, Filzstoff, 8 Ordner mit Dokumenten zum Ersten Zionistenkongress in Basel

Texte der Audioquellen

Theodor Herzl: Address to the First Zionist Congress, 1897

Ahad Ha'am: The Jewish State and Jewish Problem, 1897

Fotos

Dr. Max Nordau, 1997/2017

Theodor Herzl, 1997/2017

2 C-Prints aufgezogen auf MDF

Leihgaben der Künstler

Vitrine

Protokoll des Ersten Zionistenkongresses in Basel, 1897

Delegiertenkarte für den 5. Zionistenkongress in Basel, 1901

Postkarte von Theodor Herzl, 1904

Kongresszeitung, offizielles Organ des 17. Zionistenkongresses in Basel, 1931

Der Zionistische Student, 1909

Der Jüdische Student, 1908

Druckgrafiken: Leihgaben des Jüdischen Museums der Schweiz, Basel

5



Buchmendel, 1929

Stefan Zweig

“A senior student introduced me to him. I was studying the life and doings of a man who is even today too little known, Mesmer the magnetiser. [...] Then my college friend suggested taking me to Mendel. He knows everything about books, and will tell you where to find the information you want. [...] We went, therefore, to the Cafe Gluck and found Buch-Mendel in his usual place, bespectacled, bearded, wearing a rusty black suit, and rocking as I have described. [...] My friend introduced me, and I explained my quandary, being careful (as Schmidt had advised) to express great annoyance at the librarian’s unwillingness to assist me. Mendel leant back, laughed scornfully, and answered with a strong Galician accent: ‘Unwillingness, you think? Incompetence, that’s what the matter with him. He’s a jackass, I’ve known him (for my sins) twenty years at least, and he’s learnt nothing in the whole of that time. Pocket their wages that’s all such fellows can do. They should be mending the road, instead of sitting over books.’ [...] Then, as though reading from an invisible catalogue he reeled out the names of two or three dozen titles, giving in each case place and date of publication and approximate price. I was amazed, though Schmidt had warned me what to expect. [...] I was beginning to understand that Jacob Mendel was a living lexicon. [...] Hoping to conceal my astonishment, I enquired: ‘Which among these works do you think you could get for me without too much trouble?’

‘Oh, I’ll have a look round,’ he answered, ‘Come here tomorrow and I shall certainly have some of them. As for the others, it’s only a question of time, and of knowing where to look.’ [...] In a word Jacob Mendel never forgot a title or a figure, he knew every plant, every animal, every star, in the continually revolving and incessantly changing cosmos of the book universe. [...] Though he had nothing to guide him except the magical powers of his inexplicable but invariably accurate memory. True, this memory owed its infallibility to the man’s limitations, to his extraordinary power of concentration. Apart from books, he knew nothing of the world. [...] What aroused his passionate interest, what fixed his attention, was the name, the price, the format, the title page. [...] In the book

trade and among ordinary persons, Jacob Mendel was regarded as nothing more than a second-hand dealer in a small way of business. Sunday after Sunday, his stereotyped advertisement appeared in the Neue Freie Presse and the Neues Wiener Tagblatt, it ran as follows:

‘Best prices paid for old books, Mendel, Obere Alserstrasse’

[...] He did not smoke: he did not play cards: one might almost say he did not live, were it not that his eyes were alive behind his spectacles and unceasingly fed his enigmatic brain with words, titles, names. The brain, like a fertile pasture, greedily sucked in this abundant irrigation. Human beings did not interest him, and of all human passions perhaps one only moved him, the most universal—vanity. [...] The bibliophiles of Vienna, when they had a particularly hard nut to crack, make a pilgrimage to the Cafe Gluck and lay their difficulty before Jacob Mendel.”

*Verschriftlichter Auszug des vorgelesenen
Textes der Audioquelle im Ausstellungsraum.*

WIENER KAFFEEHAUS

Objekte

3 MDF-Zeitungsständer, 4 Kaffeehaustische, 8 Stühle, 8 Ausgaben der Zeitung »Neue Freie Presse«, 1897/1903

Text der Audioquelle

Stefan Zweig: Buchmendel, 1929

Fotos

Leopold Stanislaw Kronenberg, 1997/2017

Sigmund Freud with his mother Amalia, 1997/2017

2 C-Prints aufgezogen auf MDF

Leihgaben der Künstler

Vitrine

Café Griensteidl, 1897

»J'accuse«-Artikel von Émile Zola, 1898

Arthur Schnitzler, 1912

Stefan Zweig, ohne Datum

Herzl und Mitglieder der Zionistischen Organisation im Luber Café in Wien, 1896

Alfred Dreyfus, 1910

Otto Weininger: Geschlecht und Charakter, 1903 (Buchcover)

7 C-Prints (Reproduktionen)

6



Our Community, 2017

Martin Guttman

“Between 1920 and 1922 six hundred members of Hashomer Hatzair sailed from Europe to Palestine. Upon arrival, twenty men and four women aged 18 to 24 from this group settled on a remote hill over-looking the Sea of Galilee, establishing one of the first communities that laid the foundations to the Israeli kibbutz. Bitania Illit, as the settlement was called, lasted for only eight months [...] an organic ‘face-to-face’ community. [...] In Bitania, collectivism was not a pragmatic choice—strength in numbers, as it were—but a moral one [...]. Another difference expressed by the poet Zvi Shatz who was a member of Bitania, was the rejection of large cooperative settlements. [...] Hashomer Hatzair saw this social form—the Eda—as a realization of the notion of an organic society—Gemeinschaft—the holy grail of German sociology ever since the romantic movement that opposed it to the ‘inorganic’ Gesellschaft. More specifically, the idea was to create a Bund—a Gemeinschaft with the organic characteristics of old religious communities. [...] A Bund is based on affective bonds—emotions that reach ecstatic heights. [...] Even though the fusion fantasy and the rituals it created died rather quickly, their memory was incorporated into the collective subconscious of the kibbutz movement [...]. The main ideologue of the group was Meir Yaari who sensed the epistemological crisis inherent in the liberal tradition and in its intellectual constructions, namely, scientific rationality and positivism. [...] The root of the problem, they all agreed, was the curse of individuation—the perception of the world as a set of discreet or separate objects. [...] Nietzsche’s Dionysian ethos was formulated as a therapeutic corrective principle—using ecstasy to tear down these boundaries and thus undermine the *principium individualis* with the aim of opening the way to the innermost heart of things and to authentic knowledge of the world. [...] The most direct way to induce the members to feel they had lost their separate individuality was to dance together ecstatically through the night. [...] On these occasions the members were supposed to reveal their deepest and most personal secrets. [...] Such confessions must have been influenced by Viennese psychoanalysis. [...] The group was willing to take risks and go be-

yond the limits set by individualism in their search for true collective existence. [...] One account even called the practice of public confessions ‘a ritual of spiritual cruelty’ and the deprivation of the members’ privacy, ‘worthy of a cult.’ [...] ”

*Verschriftlichter Auszug des vorgelesenen
Textes der Audioquelle im Ausstellungsraum.*

KIBBUZ

Objekte

6 MDF-Bänke, 3 Holztische, 1 Plastiktischtuch

Texte der Audioquellen

Martin Guttman: Our Community, 2017

Arik Einstein: Layla Layla (israelisches Volkslied)

Fotos

View of Jerusalem New City, 1997/2017

View of Jerusalem Old City, 1997/2017

2 C-Prints aufgezogen auf MDF

Leihgaben der Künstler

Vitrine

Hora-Tanz im Kibbutz Nir, ca. 1960

Esszimmer im Kibbutz Sa'ar, ca. 1960

Homa u'migdal (Turm und Palisade) im Kibbutz Kfar Menachem, 1938

Homa u'migdal (Turm und Palisade) im Kibbutz Ein HaShofet, 1938

Maapilim, der Palmach, 1946

Temporäres Esszimmer im Kibbutz Gan Samuel, 1953

Einwanderer der zweiten Alija auf den Feldern von Migdal, 1912

Die Kinder vom Kibbutz Givati, 1948

8 C-Prints (Reproduktionen)

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