

International Exhibition “Transcending Tradition: Jewish Mathematicians in German-Speaking Academic Culture”

The exhibition explores the working lives and activities of Jewish mathematicians in German-speaking countries during the period between the legal and political emancipation of the Jews in the 19th century and their persecution in Nazi Germany. It highlights the important role Jewish mathematicians played in all areas of mathematical culture during the German Empire and the Weimar Republic, and recalls their emigration, flight or death after 1933.



The exhibition had been produced in cooperation with the Jewish Museum Frankfurt and with the support of three German ministries: the Federal Ministry for Education and Research, the Federal Foreign office and the Ministry of Science of North Rhine-Westphalia. The award-winning German exhibition has toured Germany in 2008 to much acclaim.

A newly designed English version is now touring Israel, showing in **Beit Hatfutsot – The Museum of the Jewish People** (Tel Aviv University), **Madatech – The Israel National Museum of Science, Technology & Space** (Technion, Haifa) and the **National Library of Israel** (Jerusalem). It has garnered positive reviews in the media and has been extended in both Haifa and Jerusalem due to public interest.

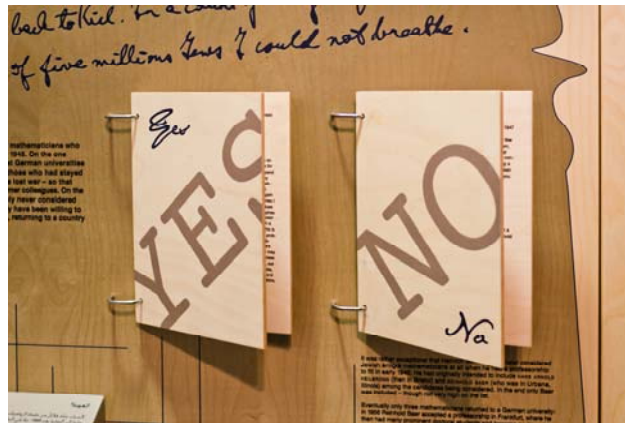
An English catalogue by Springer and a website are available as well: www.gj-math.de.

The concept of the exhibition

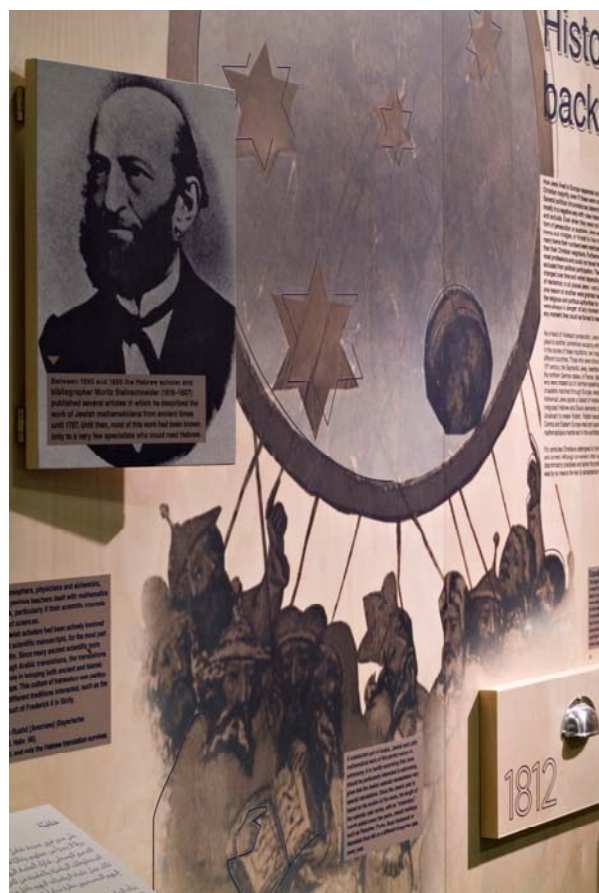
From 1933 onwards, Jewish mathematicians in Germany lost their jobs and were forced to emigrate. Those who did not escape on time faced concentration camps and death. Some of those who managed to flee the country or survive the camps were able to establish new careers in their host countries. However, others suffered greatly from losses caused by their forced exile and never managed to rebuild their lives. The exhibition aims to showcase the impressive technical and professional scope of the contribution made by Jewish mathematicians to the development of mathematical culture in the German states before 1933. Therefore, the exhibition focuses on the time between the legal and political emancipation of Jews in the 19th century and the rise of the Nazis, a time in which Jewish mathematicians in German-speaking countries achieved their most prominent successes.



For decades before their expulsion and extermination Jewish mathematicians were an important part of the German-speaking mathematical world. “Advancement through education”, which characterized German-Jewish life in the 19th and early 20th century, was especially successful in the field of mathematics. This exhibition aims to showcase the impressive technical and professional scope of the contribution made by Jewish mathematicians to the development of mathematical culture in the German states before 1933. Therefore, the exhibition focuses on the time between the legal and political emancipation of Jews in the 19th century and the beginning of National Socialism, a time in which Jewish mathematicians in German-speaking countries achieved their most prominent successes.



The exhibition highlights two points in particular. First, during the period in question, there was probably no part of the academic culture of mathematics in which Jewish mathematicians were not actively involved. In the German Empire and the Weimar Republic Jewish mathematicians worked in research, teaching, and publishing, they were active in professional organizations like the German Mathematical Society, and they participated in the public discourse on mathematics. They contributed to shaping the German-speaking mathematical culture of their time. Second, their activities were so varied and multifaceted, that every stereotype of a “Jewish” style in mathematics is immediately refuted.



The project team

The Exhibition was designed by a group of seven historians of mathematics in cooperation with the Jewish Museum Frankfurt and the German Mathematical society.

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The German Foreign Office

The Ministry of Science of North Rhine-Westphalia

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