

How to tell if you have a treasure on your hands:



Indicators in books from the
Higher Institute for Jewish Studies
(Hochschule für die Wissenschaft des Judentums)

INSPECT THE WHOLE BOOK!

You can find indicators in various places, not only on the first page, but also on the last one, in the middle, or on the spine. That's right: anywhere!

PAY ATTENTION WITH HEBREW BOOKS!

Hebrew is written from right to left. If you're examining a Hebrew-language book, the first page will be inside the right-side cover, where an English book would end.

YEAR OF PUBLICATION

First things first: was the book published before 1942? If so, it's made it through the first check. If it was published later, it isn't a book from the library of the Higher Institute for Jewish Studies. Of course, you can still look through it for yourself.

STAMPS

Ink stamps are the institute's clearest traces. You will usually find them at the front of the book, near the title, author, publication year, and publisher. Some books bear multiple stamps from different libraries. Even the Higher Institute for Jewish Studies had different stamps. Because it was forced to change their name. Or because the style was updated to fit the times. The institute used all the different stamps below:



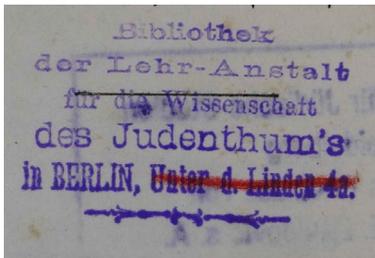
Bibliothek der Hochschule für die Wissenschaft des Judenthums in Berlin
(Library of the Higher Institute for Jewish Studies in Berlin)

This is probably the institute's oldest stamp, used between 1872 and 1882.



Bibliothek der Lehranstalt für die Wissenschaft des Judenthums Berlin
(Library of the Teaching Institution for Jewish Studies in Berlin)

Beginning in 1883, the institute was forced to call itself a Lehranstalt, "teaching institution," a downgrade the staff was not happy to accept. In 1922, they managed to regain the designation of a Hochschule, or university-level institute, only to lose this status in 1933. We believe this stamp was used between 1883 and 1922.



Another old stamp. We know its age because the institute is called a Lehr-Anstalt (teaching institution) and its address is on Unter den Linden, one of Berlin's central avenues. This stamp must have been used before 1907, when the institute moved to its own building on Artilleriestrasse.

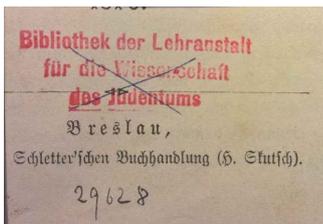


Here is a stamp from the period after the move, as we can tell from the new address in the centre, "Artillerie-Str. 14." Since the institute is still called a Lehranstalt here, we can conclude that it was used between 1907 and 1922.



Bibliothek der Hochschule für die Wissenschaft des Judenthums
(Library of the Higher Institute for Jewish Studies)

A stamp from the Roaring Twenties. Based on the design, this stamp is much more recent. It must have been used between 1923 and 1933.

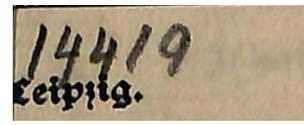
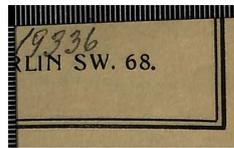
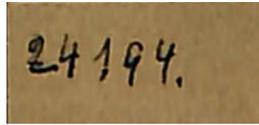
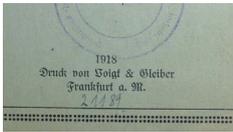


One of the last known stamps used by the institute, featuring a modern design and red ink. However, it again includes the word Lehranstalt. This stamp must have been used after 1933. It's also noticeable that someone has crossed out the stamp.

Sometimes attempts were made to remove stamps or cover them with stickers, or else they were simply crossed out. Can you spot a promising candidate anyway?

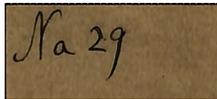
ACCESSION NUMBER

That is the term for the number librarians wrote in the book to track the number of books in the library's collection. These serial numbers are almost always found on the lower half of the title page (near the publisher's name). Can you identify small handwritten number sequences written by the institute's librarian, Jenny Wilde? Here are a few examples:

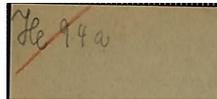


CALL NUMBERS

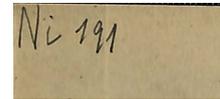
In the case of the Higher Institute for Jewish Studies, a book's call number indicates its subject matter. The institute's librarians wrote them inside the book by hand. You can recognise one of these call numbers by its typical pattern, which consisted of a capital letter, then a lowercase letter, then a number. Here are a few examples:



Na 29



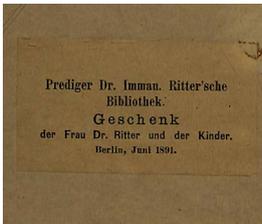
He 94a



Ni 191

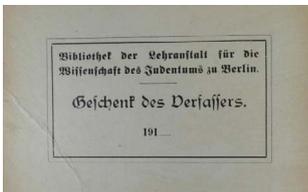
PAPER LABELS

Whenever someone donated a book to the institute library back then, the librarians would insert a paper label in the book. This was the institute's way of acknowledging and thanking the donor. Here's an example of what this looked like:



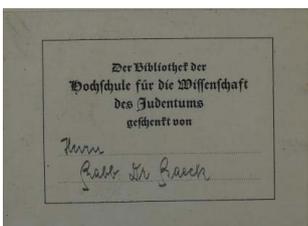
"Prediger Dr. Imman. Ritter'sche Bibliothek. Geschenk der Frau Dr. Ritter und der Kinder. Berlin, Juni 1891." ("Pastor Dr. Imman. Ritter Library. Gift of Mrs. Ritter and children. Berlin, June 1891.")

This book originally belonged to Immanuel Ritter, a pastor and historian born in 1825. Thanks to this label, we know that it was his family who donated this book to the institute, a year after his death.



"Bibliothek der Lehranstalt für die Wissenschaft des Judentums zu Berlin. Geschenk des Verfassers. 191—" ("Library of the Teaching Institution for Jewish Studies of Berlin. 19—.")

This label was glued into all books that were donated to the institute by their authors directly. The last digit of the year is missing. It was supposed to be filled in by hand, but apparently someone forgot.



"Der Bibliothek der Hochschule für die Wissenschaft des Judentums geschenkt von Herrn Rabb. Dr. Baeck" ("The Library of the Higher Institute for Jewish Studies, gift of Rabbi Dr. Baeck")

The man in question is Leo Baeck, who was ordained as a rabbi in 1897 and appointed to a post in Berlin shortly before the First World War. Like other lecturers at the institute, he apparently was in the habit of donating books to their library.

REMNANTS OF GLUE AND PAPER

One characteristic feature of the institute's books were strips of paper nicknamed "book tails." Some books were too thin for labels to fit on their spines, so a paper strip bearing the call number was glued to the very back of the books on the inside. These "book tails" were later torn out, probably by forced laborers. You may still be able to spot some traces of glue:



Here is a remnant of a "book tail" in a book from the institute's library.

PAPER LABEL FROM JEWISH CULTURAL RECONSTRUCTION (JCR)

After the war, the books passed through various hands and institutions. One of these institutions was the JCR. When stolen books could not be returned to their original owners, the JCR's job was to find them new homes in institutions that could make good use of them. Their labels might look like this:



„Jewish Cultural Reconstruction“

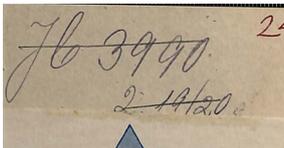
The Jewish Cultural Reconstruction Organisation's logo was a Star of David printed in two different shades of blue on white paper. The logo was designed by Aaron Fastove, an American painter with Russian roots.

CALL NUMBER FROM THE "JUDENBIBLIOTHEK DES REICHSSICHERHEITSHAUPTAMTS" (JEWISH LIBRARY OF THE REICH MAIN SECURITY OFFICE)

Some of the books bear a second call number in addition to the call number assigned by the institute. Forced laborers were forced to re-catalog stolen books for the Nazis. This call number was usually written in pencil at the front of the book, but sometimes it was also written in ink on a small white or yellow label on the spine. Here's an example:



This is what the call number from the "Judenbibliothek des Reichssicherheitshauptamtes" can look like when it has been written on a label glued to the outside of the book.



This is an example of a handwritten call number inside a book's front cover.



Very important: Take photos of all the clues and the book in which you found them!

Even of clues that you are not entirely sure are informative.



You can upload your findings here.