

Moritz Steinschneider: an Appreciation

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This article is, with minor changes, a lecture delivered in April 2008 at The Library of The Jewish Theological Seminary as part of the commemoration of the Steinschneider Centennial. Much of the flavor of the original oral presentation has been maintained.

More than a hundred years after his death, international conferences, lectures, exhibitions and papers¹ are devoted to Moritz Steinschneider, whose name is usually accompanied by the epithet, ‘the father of Jewish bibliography.’ Since when is bibliography such a celebration-worthy topic? Who was this Steinschneider and why do we commemorate his work in the first decade of the twenty-first century?

Before attempting to explain why, in my view, this veneration is fully justified, I would like to mention a few of the more laudatory comments that have been offered to characterize Steinschneider. Gershom Scholem, in his famous essay on modern Jewish scholarship, called him “one of the most

1. Such as “Moritz Steinschneider—A Centennial Conference: Bibliography and the Study of Cultural Transfer,” Berlin, 20–22 November 2007, organized by the Staatsbibliothek in Berlin. Various events took place in Israel as well. Professor Ismar Schorsch delivered lectures on Steinschneider in Jerusalem and Berlin, as well as in New York.

significant scholars the Jewish people ever produced.”² George Kohut, a pupil of Steinschneider, referred to him as the prince of bibliography.³ Solomon Schechter called one of Steinschneider’s major works “the Urim and Thummim of every Jewish student.”⁴ In general, he is regarded as one of the founding fathers of the modern, scholarly study of Judaism and the Jews. When he died in 1907, a slew of obituaries appeared in the Jewish press in which Steinschneider was described in the most adulatory manner.

So, who was Steinschneider, what did he do, and which of his contributions are still valid, and essential even today?

Steinschneider⁵ was born in Moravia in 1816 and died in Berlin in 1907. Nikolsburg, Prague, Vienna, Leipzig, and Berlin were the stations on the road of the pursuit of his studies, which included traditional Jewish subjects as well as classical and Semitic languages and cultures. He earned his living at one time or another as the principal of a girls’ school, by performing weddings, administering the Jewish oath, and, for many years, giving lectures at a private institution and serving as an assistant librarian at the Royal Library in Berlin.

2. Gershom Scholem, “The Science of Judaism—Then and Now,” in his *The Messianic Idea in Judaism and Other Essays on Jewish Spirituality* (New York: Schocken, 1971), 306.

3. Quoting A. S. Freidus and others. See George A. Kohut, “Steinschneideriana,” in *Studies in Jewish Bibliography and Related Subjects, in Memory of Abraham Solomon Freidus (1867-1923)* (New York: Alexander Kohut Memorial Foundation, 1929), 77.

4. Solomon Schechter, “Moritz Steinschneider,” *Publications of the American Jewish Historical Society* 17 (1909): 229.

5. I offer here a very brief capsule of his life. For a much more colorful, vivid, and full portrait, one should read Alexander Marx’s biography of his master; see Alexander Marx, “Moritz Steinschneider,” in *Essays in Jewish Biography* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1947), 112-184.

His influence, in his life and afterward, is manifested first and foremost in his published work. Someone observed that if one were to stack all his publications on top of each other, they would exceed the height of their author. The statistics are staggering: the list of his books and articles occupies some thirty-five tightly printed pages, and this includes his writings until only 1896.⁶ The author's own copies of these books and articles, preserved in our Library and richly annotated by the almost illegible handwriting of Steinschneider himself, hide a great deal of scholarship, to a large extent still awaiting exploration. His correspondence, also at JTS, preserves his contacts with hundreds of Jewish and non-Jewish scholars, showing that he was considered during most of the nineteenth century to be the oracle of Jewish and related studies. A considerable amount of his private and scholarly correspondence has been studied and published, but much more still awaits deciphering, publication and interpretation.

Alongside his books, we also should consider his legacy as perpetuated, transmitted, and enhanced by his students, Jew and non-Jew alike. They came to the private institution where he lectured from Berlin's two seminaries, the liberal and the orthodox, and also from the university. Although we do not have a list of all who attended his lectures, we do have some of the names. Consider this roster: Ignaz Goldziher, Solomon Schechter, Judah L. Magnes, Heinrich Brody, Alexander Marx, Samuel Poznanski, and H. L. Strack, to name just a few.⁷ These people and others carried their master's approach to Jewish scholarship to the four corners of the earth. We shall come back to this aspect of his influence later.

6. George A. Kohut, "Bibliography of the Writings of Professor Dr. Moritz Steinschneider," in *Festschrift zum achtzigsten Geburtstag Moritz Steinschneider's* (Leipzig: Harrassowitz, 1896), v-xxxix.

7. See Kohut (note 3), 69-70, 82, and Marx (note 5), 141.

When Steinschneider was a young lad, his teacher of rabbinic subjects was a traditional scholar of the old school, Nehemiah Trebitsch, for a while chief rabbi of Moravia and the author of notes on the Jerusalem Talmud and Maimonides. To illustrate the distance between this teacher's old-fashioned type of learning and the later development of Steinschneider's wide-ranging scholarship, a quote from the Hebrew testimonial given by Trebitsch to his student should suffice: Rabbi Trebitsch praised effusively his pupil's excellence in Talmudic studies and expressed the pious wish that he not stray from the basic core of traditional study to the periphery of newer areas.⁸ We shall see how Steinschneider actually did "stray"!

Together with a few more pioneers, first and foremost among them Leopold Zunz, Steinschneider changed the landscape of Jewish learning from strict rabbinics to the entire range of Jewish civilization. This revolution could be accomplished only by turning to the exploration of the various branches of Jewish lore hidden in medieval manuscripts and by taking into account not only the books then available to the average scholar, but the entire output of printed books, in every language, that touched upon Jews and Judaism. In order to do this, it was essential to provide a foundation by mapping the territory thoroughly. Steinschneider devoted much of his effort to the creation of such a map by preparing catalogs of collections of Hebrew manuscripts and Hebrew printed books.

In those days the major collections of Hebraica were housed in non-Jewish state, municipal, or university libraries. While in the century before Steinschneider significant collec-

8. See Alexander Marx, "Steinschneideriana II," in *Jewish Studies in Memory of George A. Kohut, 1874-1933* (New York: The Alexander Kohut Memorial Foundation, 1935), 498-499

tions in this field were owned by private scholars and bibliophiles, such as David Oppenheim and Heimann Michael, and Christian scholars, such as Giovanni de Rossi and Johann Christoph Wolf, by the nineteenth century these collections were in public institutions such as the Bodleian Library in Oxford, the British Museum in London, the Palatina in Parma, and the City Library in Hamburg. There were no libraries under Jewish auspices with noteworthy Hebraica collections, and there were very few, if any, catalogs with precise and reliable information, classification and proper organization. Steinschneider set out to correct this situation. No one was more aware of the thanklessness of these tasks than Steinschneider himself. He concluded his introduction to the Hamburg catalog with these words (in my translation): "It is the business of a catalog to induce the utilization of the manuscripts through which it itself becomes superfluous; the author should feel himself rewarded if thorough works render him forgotten."⁹

His catalogs of manuscripts brought to light materials that were outside the realm of conventional Jewish learning and subjects that had been unstudied for centuries. The cultural creativity of communities distant in time and space also came to the fore through the opening up of these depositories. The new subject areas were poetry, belles lettres, philosophy, history, astronomy, medicine, botany, and physics. For traditional students with a German and Eastern European orientation, becoming acquainted with the cultural heritage of Spain and Portugal, North Africa, Persia, and Yemen meant gaining access to new avenues for a freshly-awakening interest in the Jewish past. The forgotten world of medieval Jewish commu-

9. Moritz Steinschneider, *Catalog der hebräischen Handschriften in der Stadtbibliothek zu Hamburg* (Hamburg: Meissner, 1878), xvii.

nities was revealed through the manuscripts, the only monuments documenting their past in the absence of physical remnants such as synagogues and other edifices or surviving material objects. Suddenly, in German, the language of Western European scholarship, in a systematic, precise manner, people could gain access to a wide variety of sources on the intellectual history of the Jews. Perhaps the most revolutionary aspect of this effort was the realization of the existence of intense intercultural contacts between Jews, Muslims, and Christians in the Middle Ages. Philosophical, scientific, and medical works written in Hebrew characters but in the Arabic language, along with translations from Arabic and Latin into Hebrew, were represented abundantly in the Hebrew manuscript collections of the great libraries of Munich, Hamburg, Leiden, Berlin, and others. Before the publication by Steinschneider of the catalogs of these collections, this field in all its variety and richness was almost completely *terra incognita*.

The other direction of Steinschneider's work is found in his endeavor to provide as complete and accurate a record of past—and then present—printed publications in Hebraica and Judaica as possible. His catalog of printed Hebrew books in the Bodleian Library in Oxford,¹⁰ the fullest and richest collection in the world, records in great detail all information relevant to the author of a given book, the book itself, and the printing of that particular edition. Biography, subject matter, bibliography, typography, and printing history are treated in each of the 9,559 entries of the CB (as the catalog of the Bodleian is routinely referred to since its publication about 150 years ago). Just to give an idea of the scope of the work,

10. Moritz Steinschneider, *Catalogus librorum hebraeorum in bibliotheca Bodleiana* (Berlin: Friedlaender, 1852–1860).

let me mention the entry on Maimonides. It spreads over forty pages, is meticulously subdivided by the relevant subjects, and contains all the information about Maimonides and his works in the original languages of their composition and in translations from Hebrew, Latin, Arabic, and vernacular sources. It is difficult to decide what to admire more: the systematic classification of the knowledge or the completeness of the information.

The CB is composed in Latin, a requirement of the authorities of the Bodleian Library. Steinschneider himself was aware of the difficulty of the language barrier. As if to compensate, another of Steinschneider's contributions in this field is in Hebrew. I am referring to his contributions to the encyclopedic *Otsar ha-sefarim* (Thesaurus of Hebrew books), by the Vilna scholar Isaac Benjacob.¹¹ Benjacob, an Eastern European Jew, labored for a lifetime on a complete bibliography of Hebrew books printed up to 1863. Steinschneider, the embodiment of Western European culture, cooperated closely with Benjacob and revised almost the entire work, sending him information and corrections, which are incorporated into the book and indicated by the initials רמ"ש (Rabbi Moshe Steinschneider). The *Benjacob*, as it is called, was intended, to a great extent, for the Jews of Lithuania and Poland. It has approbations by members of the Vilna rabbinate and its introduction is written in the spirit and style of old rabbinic learning. Steinschneider's work, which may be characterized as directed to the scholarly audiences of the Western world, here becomes part of the Eastern European Jewish culture. His knowledge bridged the two worlds.

A third project of Steinschneider's in the area of printed Judaica and Hebraica was the bibliographical journal *Ha-Mazkir*,

11. Isaac Benjacob, *Otsar ha-sefarim*. (Vilna, 1880).

or in its German title, *Hebräische Bibliographie*. Steinschneider founded and edited the journal and wrote hundreds of its notices and articles, beginning in 1858.

The Hebrew motto at the head of each issue is the biblical verse הָרְאשׁוֹנוֹת הֵנָּה-בָּאוּ וְחִדְשׁוֹת אֲנִי מְגִיד (Isaiah 42:9), which in this context should be translated: “See, the early things are here, and of new things I shall speak.” The program of the journal, written by Steinschneider and printed in the first issue, provides some indication of the vision of its author. Let me paraphrase a few sentences:

The first section should in all possible completeness enumerate the literary publications of the current year. To this section belongs all that Jews or non-Jews have published on the subject of Jews and Judaism in the widest sense, directly, or at least substantially. At the end of the year a review of the literary activities of Jews in the areas of the sciences and the arts will also be given. The second section will include learned articles of lasting value touching upon Hebrew bibliography, which at present is at a very low level. The journal should serve as a corrective in a situation where Judaism has no real class of professional scholars; it lacks appropriate learned institutions and its representation at general institutions is deficient [this complaint by Steinschneider occurs frequently; it took almost a century for this situation to change radically].

Hebräische Bibliographie was published for over twenty years and then, after a short interval, it was renewed under a slightly different name by two students of Steinschneider, Aron Freimann and Heinrich Brody.¹² When, in the 1920s, this journal ceased to be published, it was continued by *Kiryat Sefer*. *Kiryat Sefer* appeared first in 1924 and has been published

12. *Zeitschrift für hebräische Bibliographie*, from 1896/97.

continuously since then in Jerusalem by the Jewish National and University Library, serving basically the same purposes that were articulated by Steinschneider in the first issue of his *Hebräische Bibliographie*.

The catalogs of Hebrew manuscripts, the CB, the *Otsar ha-sefarim* of Benjacob with Steinschneider's additions, and the *Hebräische Bibliographie*, were, taken together, the foundation on which twentieth-century Jewish scholarship was built. If we now ask about the identity of the builders and the nature of what they built, the answer will lead us again to Steinschneider.

I mentioned above some of the names of his students. It is intriguing to note that despite the well-deserved reputation of Steinschneider as a very severe and often vitriolic critic of many figures and institutions in nineteenth-century Jewish scholarship, his students spoke and wrote about him with great love, admiration, and awe. Let me quote Alexander Marx: "This apparently crusty scholar, who guarded every moment for his research, readily gave of his precious time to his young pupils and took an abiding interest in their scholarly as well as in their personal concerns... Those of his pupils in whom he recognized true zeal and promise for Jewish learning had free access to his home and were treated as friends. Some of them he even helped out of financial difficulties from his own moderate means... these younger men loved and revered him, looked up to him like a father and cherished, long after his death, the memory of the hours spent with the great teacher."¹³

These students carried the work forward in Europe (east and west), the United States, and what was then Palestine. I shall mention some of his pupils again: Solomon Schechter's

13. Marx (note 6), 183.

role in the growth of The Jewish Theological Seminary, and in American Jewry and Jewish scholarship more generally, does not require elaboration. Alexander Marx came to New York to teach history at the Jewish Theological Seminary and to develop its library. Henry Malter first served as librarian at the library of the Jewish community in Berlin and later became a professor at Hebrew Union College in Cincinnati. Judah Magnes, before becoming a Zionist leader, and later president of the new Hebrew University in Jerusalem, was a librarian for a short time at HUC in Cincinnati. Heinrich Brody became Chief Rabbi of Prague, the librarian of its community library, and the foremost scholar of medieval Hebrew poetry. Aron Freiman led the Hebraica and Judaica collection of the Frankfurt municipal library and was a bibliographer, historian, and editor of rabbinic texts. Samuel Poznanski became the rabbi of the Tlomackie Synagogue in Warsaw, the head of its library, and a pioneering scholar of the Geonic period. Isaac Markon went to St. Petersburg and taught at the university there; later he was the librarian of the Jewish community library in Hamburg and published in the field of Karaite studies. Ignaz Goldziher returned to his native Hungary and was regarded as one of the fathers of the modern study of Islam—and the list could go on.

I would like to mention an article that Shalom Spiegel wrote about Arthur Biram, one of Steinschneider's students. Biram left his native Germany as a young man and became one of the foremost and most influential Jewish pedagogues in Palestine and later in Israel. For many years he was the principal of the elite school, Beit Sefer Reali, in Haifa. Many leaders of the future state were graduates of the school. Biram, while still in Germany, wrote an article in honor of the ninetieth birthday of Steinschneider. There he stated that we owe it to Steinschneider that "Jewish scholarship is the schol-

arship of all life manifestations of the Jewish people in the past and in the present.” On the occasion of Biram’s seventy-fifth birthday, Spiegel, who in the ‘20s was a teacher in Biram’s school in Haifa and a close friend, and who later became a professor at JTS, wrote an appreciation of Biram, titled in Hebrew *תלמידו של רמשיש* (The disciple of Rabbi Moshe Steinschneider). There is a startling statement in this essay—Spiegel’s claim that there is a logical continuity from Steinschneider to Herzl, a road leading from Berlin to Haifa. This road is the road of the pioneers who recognize that in order to build a free Jewish edifice, whether in scholarship, labor, society or culture, you have to lay the foundation with precision, thoroughness, hard work, discipline and minute attention to detail.¹⁴ How ironic! Steinschneider was against nationalism and Zionism, as he was against the pursuit of Jewish studies in Jewish institutions. He wanted Jewish studies to be placed in general universities. Most of his devoted students, however, carried out their work in institutions under Jewish auspices; some of them became ardent Zionists. The reasons for this are complicated and perhaps should be explored on a different occasion.

We could discuss the scholarship and life work of each of these personalities, and point out their indebtedness to Steinschneider and their master’s influence on their methodology and scholarly direction. Instead, I would like to single out one aspect of their activities, namely their role in establishing, developing, and leading libraries of Judaica and Hebraica, mostly under Jewish auspices. I mentioned before that until the nineteenth century, Judaica and Hebraica collections

14. See *Sefer Biram : ma’amarim be-ḥeker ha-Tanakh*, Pirsume ha-Ḥevrah le-ḥeker ha-Miḳra be-Yiśra’el 2 (Jerusalem: Kiryat sefer, 1956) 1–8, esp. p. 1, n. 1 and p. 7.

were gathered by individual scholars and bibliophiles. In the nineteenth century many of these private collections became the property of general, non-Jewish, university, state, and city libraries. Only in the later years of the 1800s and at the beginning of the 1900s did significant Jewish libraries come into existence. The history of Jewish libraries is a relatively unexplored field.

In the context of trying to examine Steinschneider's impact on the development of such libraries, let me call attention to a few points. It was in Steinschneider's *Hebräische Bibliographie*, in 1861, that Abraham Geiger, the famous scholar and Reform leader, announced the opening of the library of the Jewish community in Breslau. This was the congregational library, not that of the famous Breslau Seminary, which had developed over the years its own significant collection of manuscripts and printed books. About the community's new library, Geiger offers a vision and a program in a very flowery style. I shall try to convey some of the ideas expressed in Geiger's rich manifesto in my own paraphrase. He speaks about the centrality of the book, namely, the Bible, in the context of the always vigorous intellectual activity of Jewish communities. Diligent study of the Bible produces new results. Jews are thus truly the 'people of the book,' and Jewish scholars are the aristocracy of this people. This intellectual creativity has never rested; rather, in each period it has produced its specific stamp and allowed for future transformation and development. A Jewish library, wrote Geiger, should contain the products of this ongoing activity; it should be a source of nourishment, as well as a monument to this spirit and mind. The Bible, the Talmud, the literatures created under Christian and Muslim dominance, the writings that came into being during the sufferings of the Middle Ages, and the blossoming of the new spirit of modern times should all be

represented in the new library. He concluded by writing, "A Jewish community library is the expression of the respect for the spirit which ruled and rules in Judaism."¹⁵ In simple words, the collection policy of a Jewish library should be to cover all aspects of Judaism from the Bible to modern times.

If we look back and consider that synagogues and study halls of earlier times contained only conventional rabbinics, this expansion of book collections under Jewish communal auspices into new areas constituted a major change. Indeed, the ultra-orthodox rabbis did not spare their condemnation of these efforts. In Jerusalem in 1875, again in 1904, and as late as 1927, rabbinic declarations were issued condemning visits to what is now the National Library, stating that the founders of the library intended to deceive the public by including holy books in it, while in truth their library was a place for books written by unbelievers (*minim* and *apikorsin*), Karaites, missionaries, and Jews who do not believe in the words of the Sages. Visiting such a place would lead to the corruption of the youth, and it was forbidden, therefore, to enter the library or to have anything to do with the people who were associated with it.¹⁶

But this opposition could not stop the movement toward inclusiveness in attempts to provide intellectual nourishment, and, at the same time, full documentation of the past, in Jewish libraries. Through Steinschneider's bibliographical scholarship, the tools became available, the territory was mapped, and the collection of materials could proceed in a programmatic fashion. This is precisely what happened in New York, Cincinnati, Frankfurt, Berlin, Warsaw, St. Petersburg, Amsterdam, Jerusalem, Vienna, Prague, and Hamburg.

15. See *Hebräische Bibliographie* 4 (1861), 25-27.

16. See Dov Schidorsky, *Sifriyah ye-sefer be-Erets-Yisra'el be-shilhe ha-teḳufah ha-'Otmanit* (Jerusalem: Magnes, 1990), 349-351.

Let me say a few words about Warsaw and New York. Warsaw had one of the largest Jewish populations of the world at the end of the nineteenth century. There, next to the liberal synagogue of Tlomackie Street, a library was established in 1880. For many years its librarian was Samuel Poznanski, the rabbi of the synagogue and one of Steinschneider's favorite pupils. Solomon Schechter invited Poznanski to join the Seminary faculty and to become its librarian in 1902, but for some reason nothing came of this. Under Poznanski's leadership the library in Warsaw grew into an important collection containing some 40,000 books, including valuable manuscripts. At first the library occupied just a few rooms, but later it was housed in an attractive separate building. I have found little information about the actual composition of its collection, but there is an account of how the Nazis pillaged the library in 1939. In the Warsaw Ghetto diary of Chaim Kaplan, *Scroll of Agony*, we read: "The day before yesterday [October 23], like true Vandals, the conquerors entered the Tlomackie Library, where rare spiritual treasures were stored. They removed all the valuable books and manuscripts, put them on trucks, and took them to some unknown place. This is a burning of the soul of Polish Jewry, for this library was our spiritual sanctuary..."¹⁷

Poznanski's good friend and fellow student of Steinschneider, Alexander Marx, was the one who was called upon by Schechter to join the faculty of the Seminary and become its

17. See Chaim Kaplan, *Scroll of Agony* (New York: Macmillan, 1965), 57. On the library in general see Bathia Temkin-Berman, in *Pinkes Yarshe* (Buenos Aires, 1955), 377-378 (in Yiddish). On Poznanski's invitation to New York see Mel Scult, in Jack Wertheimer, ed. *Tradition Renewed: a History of the Jewish Theological Seminary* (New York: The Jewish Theological Seminary of America, 1997), 61-62.

librarian. We can follow how Marx's use of Steinschneider's work as the road map for its acquisition policies made the Seminary Library into a vast resource for Judaic studies. The ambition that drove Marx was nothing less than the translation of Steinschneider's catalog of the full production of the Hebrew printing press into actual books. For this reason, for Marx it was not sufficient to acquire important and representative editions of Hebraica. All available editions of a work, even variants of the same edition, were to be collected.

Let me illustrate. In order to document the full range of the output of Hebrew printing, in the 1920s Marx assigned Isaac Rivkind, a fine scholar and bibliographer, to collate editions of one and the same work for typographical variants. This is why the Seminary Library owns thousands of various haggadot and prayerbooks, many in stereotype editions, from the beginning of Hebrew printing until today. This is also why the Library has what is probably the world's most complete collection of fifteenth- and sixteenth-century Latin books in which there is even a sporadic use of Hebrew type.

Steinschneider published bibliographies of Judeo-German, Judeo-Italian, and most famously, Arabic works by Jews. The Library's collection reflects all these areas. One of Steinschneider's important works is his *Bibliographisches Handbuch*.¹⁸ In it Steinschneider lists close to 2,300 titles on the Hebrew language and related topics, written in great part by Christian authors. No wonder, then, that Marx assembled one of the most comprehensive collections of books by Christian Hebraists, some of utmost rarity. One could practically check off

18. Moritz Steinschneider, *Bibliographisches Handbuch über die theoretische und praktische Literatur für hebräische Sprachkunde* (Leipzig: Vogel, 1859. 2nd ed., Jerusalem: Bamberger and Wahrmann, 1937).

each entry in the *Bibliographisches Handbuch*, as well as in Steinschneider's other works, against the holdings of the JTS Library.

The acquisition of Hebrew manuscripts posed different problems. When Marx took over the helm of the JTS Library, there was no longer an opportunity to duplicate the famous medieval manuscript collections of European libraries. Still, throughout his career, Marx endeavored to acquire Hebrew manuscripts not only on rabbinic subjects, but in the sciences, medicine, and mathematics as well, again guided by Steinschneider's classic works in these areas. The library's corresponding sections are very comprehensive, and one is amazed at Marx's success in creating in the twentieth century such a rich representation of works in manuscript, works about which we first learned from his master's researches and discoveries.

I have no doubt that other major Jewish collections of the twentieth century also used Steinschneider's contributions, directly or indirectly, as a compass to help them in assembling their materials. In the book-length histories of the Frankfurt Municipal Library's Judaica and Hebraica department and of the Jewish National and University Library of Jerusalem, respectively, there are numerous references to nineteenth century catalogs and bibliographies that guided their acquisition activities.¹⁹ We can safely sum up and say that Steinschneider's pioneering bibliographical work in the nineteenth century served as the foundation for the growth of Jewish libraries in the twentieth.

19. Rachel Heuberger, *Bibliothek des Judentums : die Hebraica- und Judaica-Sammlung der Stadt- und Universitätsbibliothek Frankfurt am Main* (Frankfurt am Main: Klostermann, 1996)

I would like to conclude with this musing: I used to be quite upset by the program of the Association for Jewish Studies at their annual conferences. There are hundreds of lectures offered each year and only a minority deals with what I thought to be “important” topics on the classical, traditional subjects of Jewish scholarship. Instead, many Jewish studies scholars read papers on modern and, needless to say, post-modern themes. Upon reflecting on Steinschneider, I came to the realization that the expansion of the boundaries of what constitutes Jewish scholarship was perhaps the greatest contribution of the master. He started a process that irrepressibly continues to our own day, the goal of which is to embrace the scholarly investigation of all aspects of Jewish existence. For this he will always be gratefully remembered.