

To whom it may concern:

We, Israeli historians, public figures, Israeli citizens, including individuals whose ancestors lived in Hamburg, some of whom in this particular area of the city, wish to express our opposition to the **initiative to build on the Joseph Carlebach square, formerly the Bornplatz, a monumental synagogue**, similar to the large and imposing synagogue destroyed by the Nazis, where presently an impressive memorial exists.

The phrase that has been used to garner support for this project “Against Antisemitism- In Favor of a New Synagogue on the Bornplatz” is outrightly false and misleading. Clearly, anyone who wants to counter Antisemitism will not achieve anything by a building, nor should an opponent of such an undertaking be labelled necessarily as an anti-Semite.

The supporters of the project wish to promote their goal by claiming that it will highlight “Jewish visibility.” Clearly such a building will project “Jewish visibility” but will it serve the true goals of “Jewish visibility” in the area of values and culture? A synagogue already exists in the city which serves the religious needs of the community; rather than utilize a huge sum of money to showcase Judaism, would it not be more useful to channel the funds to develop and further more purposeful elements of Jewish culture and tradition?

And yet, if members of the community sense the need for another synagogue, one can certainly find an alternative location that does not override the memorial, created by the late Margrit Kahl in 1988, to convey the loss due to destruction. The memorial site was designed to spatially mark the contours of the 1906 synagogue; Jews from Hamburg who survived the Holocaust intended in a dignified manner to create a visible memory of what was destroyed. Some of them took part in the inaugural ceremony in 1988. Will a monumental replica of the original building fill the void left by destruction or will it in some sense replace the empty space that evokes memory and thoughtfulness of what was destroyed? We think it will serve the latter and undermine the tragedy that was perpetrated by the Nazis.

The present initiative, supported by federal funding and the state of Hamburg, appears to us inimical to the manner in which Jewish and German memory developed over the last decades, and inappropriate to the memory of Jews in Hamburg.

We are of the opinion that at this procedural stage, all effort must be made to halt the undergoing initiative and find more appropriate means to satisfy the needs of the

community that will not overturn the sensitive manner in which the destruction and loss have been expressed in the present memorial in the Joseph Carlebach square.

The following individuals have expressed their desire to have their names added to this letter:

Prof. Steven **A**schheim, Prof. Emeritus of History, The Hebrew University

Prof. Ofer Ashkenazi, Director, Koebner Center for German History, The Hebrew University

Prof. Galit Noga-**B**anai , Head, Department of History of Art, The Hebrew University

Ms. Yehudit Bar-Chen, Daughter of Supreme Court Judge Haim Cohn from Hamburg

Prof. Israel Bartal, Prof. Emeritus of Jewish History, The Hebrew University; member of the Israel Academy of Arts and Sciences

Ms. Ilana Alroy-**B**rosh, media committee, Association of Israelis of Central European Origin

Prof. Richard I. **C**ohen, Prof. Emeritus of Jewish History, The Hebrew University

Ms. Daniela Eppstein, of the families Wartenberger und Borchardt from Hamburg

Prof. Sidra DeKoven **E**zrahi, Prof. Emerita of Literature, The Hebrew University

Prof. Shmuel **F**einer, Historian, Chairperson of The Israel Historical Society, Bar Ilan University

Ms. Ofra **G**ivon, daughter of the Gross family from Hamburg

Prof. Amiram Goldblum, Professor Emeritus. Head, Drug Research and Fraunhofer Project Center for Drug Discovery and Delivery, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem

Prof. Yossi Goldstein, Historian of Modern Jewry, Ariel University

Devora **H**aberfeld, Chairwoman of Presidium, Association of Israelis of Central European Origin

Prof. Galit Hasan-Rokem, Prof. Emerita of Folklore, The Hebrew University

Prof. Yosef **K**aplan, Prof. Emeritus of Jewish History, The Hebrew University;
member of the Israel Academy of Arts and Sciences

Dr. Marcel **L**angbeheim, owner of a chemical business

Ms. Pnina Lebovich, of the family of Rabbi Loeb from Altona

Ms. Ruth Leshem-Arnon, individual whose ancestors lived in Hamburg

Mr. Oded Arnon, individual whose ancestors lived in Hamburg

Dr. Vered **M**adar, Scholar of Folklore

Dr. Gabriella Mann-Kanowitz, Psychoanalyst

Prof. Kenneth Mann, Faculty of Law, Tel Aviv University

Ms. Tami Manor-Friedman, Independent Curator, Jerusalem

Prof. Doron Mendels, Prof. Emeritus of Ancient History, The Hebrew University

Mr. Reuven Merhav, Former Chairman of Presidium, Association of Israelis of
Central European Origin, former state secretary of the Foreign Ministry

Prof. Amos Morris-Reich, Director, The Stephen Roth Institute for the Study of
Contemporary Antisemitism and Racism, Tel Aviv University

Ms. Lilith **O**r, individual whose ancestors lived in Hamburg

Ambassador Avi **P**rimor, Former Ambassador to Germany

Prof. Freddy **R**okem, Prof. Emeritus in Theatre, Tel Aviv University

Mr. Elchanen Rosenheim, Grandson of Rabbi Bamberger of Wandsbek

Prof. Abraham **S**ela, Historian, Professor of International relations, The Hebrew
University

Ms. Michal Sela, individual whose ancestors lived in Hamburg

Prof. Aner Sela, University of Florida, individual whose ancestors lived in Hamburg

Dr. Yael Sela-Teichler, Cultural Studies, on leave at Michigan University

Dr. Matthias Schmidt, Koebner Center for German History, The Hebrew University

Prof. Dimitry Shumsky, Historian of Modern Jewry, The Hebrew University

Prof. Rina **T**algam, Dept. of Art History, The Hebrew University

Prof. Micha Ullman, Professor emeritus of Sculpture at the State Academy of Fine Arts Stuttgart, sculptor. Creator *inter alia* of the sculpture “Empty Library” in Bebelplatz, Berlin

Dr. Scott Ury, Historian of Modern Jewry, Tel Aviv University

Prof. Gal Ventura, Head of the Institute of the Arts, The Hebrew University

Dr. Martina Weiss, Historian, Research Fellow The Vidal Sassoon International Center for the Study of Antisemitism, The Hebrew University

Dr. Noga Wolff, the Faculty of Education, the College of Management Academic Studies, Rishon LeZion.

Prof. Emer. Moshe Zimmermann, Koebner Chair of German History, The Hebrew University

Prof. Moshe Zuckermann, Prof. emeritus of Sociology, Tel Aviv