

Toleration in the Age of Projects: Cameralism, German Police Science, and the Jews

Ari Joskowicz

ABSTRACT

This essay offers an alternative genealogy of modern debates on Jews, focusing on the rise of new ideas about Jews' role in society among eighteenth-century German technocratic thinkers. Drawing on recent work in science and technology studies, it examines how major debates on Jews took place not only earlier than is usually assumed but also in disciplines—namely, cameralism and police science—that were despised by most of the humanistic enlighteners at the center of modern European Jewish historiography. Yet, it was in the so-called Age of Projects—and not merely in the Age of Enlightenment—that new visions of dealing with Jews emerged.

Key words: cameralism, Enlightenment, police science, Jewish emancipation

This article identifies a turning point in eighteenth-century debates about Jews in German lands that took place within discussions of cameralism and police science—the leading academic disciplines dealing with political economy and governance in Germany at the time. Although the technocrats who initiated this shift have received sustained attention from historians working at the intersection of governance, science, and economics, they have rarely figured in Jewish historiography and Enlightenment scholarship. For those following in the footsteps of Jacob Katz, who saw Germany as the great laboratory of Jewish modernization, the focus had been largely

Ari Joskowicz, "Toleration in the Age of Projects: Cameralism, German Police Science, and the Jews," *Jewish Social Studies: History, Culture, Society* n.s. 22, no. 2 (Winter 2017): 1–37. Copyright © 2017 The Trustees of Indiana University. doi:10.2979/jewisocistud.22.2.01

[2]

Jewish
Social
Studies



Vol. 22
No. 2

on the humanistic contributors to eighteenth-century debates, such as Moses Mendelssohn (1729–86), G. E. Lessing (1729–81), or Christian Wilhelm von Dohm (1751–1820). Although these and other enlighteners ultimately proved more influential in shaping later European debates on Jews, the measuring stick of long-term impact fails to capture the extent to which cameralism proved a testing ground for early proposals about how to transform Jews' relationship to their neighbors and their state. Focusing only on those who have been traditionally called *enlighteners* thus misses a major competing framework of eighteenth-century thought concerning the role of Jews in society during the modern era.

Nearly three decades before Dohm wrote his famous treatise, *Über die bürgerliche Verbesserung der Juden*, in 1781, German police and population experts known as cameralists started to consider new ways to make poor Jews productive. The most prominent of these scholars, Johann Justi (1717–71), called for laws that would invite Jews into manufacturing or, in another version, open all occupations to them. Others, such as Johann Bernhard Hoffer (1728–92), described Christians and Jews as driven by the same motives and thus equally disposed to respond favorably to the same legal incentives for productive behavior. Years and even decades before most humanistic enlighteners began to do so, these technocrats took radical steps to rethink the social, economic, and legal position of Jews. My aim here is to show both why Justi and his fellow cameralists merit our scholarly attention and why their innovative debates on Jews have received such scant attention.¹

Although scholars of Jewish history have paid little heed to cameralism and related disciplines, it has remained central to powerful narratives of an instrumental and state-centered modernity. In discussing the innovations of eighteenth-century German police and state science, I locate the origins of new thinking about Jews in modern Europe in disciplines closely associated with the oppressive power of the state and the antihumanistic rationality of science. Scholars influenced by Michel Foucault's notion of governmentality have identified police science (or, less commonly, the uniquely German discipline of cameralism) as the beginning of endeavors to make all human and material resources of the state productive.² This includes James Scott, whose *Seeing like a State* starts with a long exploration of cameralist forest improvement.³ Zygmunt Bauman, whose *Modernity and the Holocaust* locates the origins of genocidal impulses in seventeenth- and eighteenth-century developments, never mentions cameralism; yet the "activist, engineering attitude toward nature," which he views

as the origin of racism's genocidal turn, is a perfect description of cameralist writing.⁴

Although my understanding of this turning point is partially indebted to Bauman's discussion of technocratic utopianism, I base my interpretation of cameralism on more recent literature in science and technology studies. Following the groundbreaking work of Andre Wakefield in particular, I see the core characteristic of cameralism in its sustained inability to make a practical impact on policy and society.⁵ Though cameralism was certainly a symptom of the pressures and ambitions engendered by centralizing states, it was not the embodiment of modernity's ability to create omnipresent institutions of social control, *pace* Foucault and Scott.⁶ There are good reasons to investigate widely shared ideas that had no self-declared heirs. Indeed, intellectual history has a responsibility to turn not only to schools of thought that prevailed but also to those that failed, sometimes in spectacular ways. In this case, the failure itself is instructive. The general incompetence and bad repute of cameralist authors, most of whom had little influence outside the walls of the university, helps to explain why and how they turned to Jews as new subjects in their drive to improve society. Indeed, I argue that it was precisely cameralists' inability to find traction in other fields that sent them searching for new projects, including the "project" of improving Jews' role in society.

New eighteenth-century ideas about Jews' role in society were largely the outgrowth of a culture of "project makers" (*Projektmacher*), as the theologian Johann David Michaelis (1717–91) called Justi and his ilk.⁷ Cameralism embodied this "age of projects"—historian Maximilian Novak's moniker for the era, borrowed in turn from Daniel Defoe. For Michaelis and Defoe alike, the term *project* had a pejorative meaning and suggested shady financial dealings. Even Justi, who wrote a prominent essay trying to redeem the term, admitted that many Projectmacher, as he called them, were failed adventurers driving others to ruin after they had lost their own funds.⁸ Yet, as Justi and his colleagues understood, new projects also had the potential to create unprecedented opportunities and to bring much-desired recognition to their architects. They were harbingers simultaneously of glory and disaster. Novak puts this succinctly when he describes how Defoe and his contemporaries understood projects as representing a "mixture of hope and optimism with an expectation of failure."⁹ Both elements are crucial for understanding eighteenth-century debates on Jews. Suggestions to make Jews useful could be daring, enticing, or merely entertaining, but whatever they were, nobody was surprised when they led nowhere. These proposals promised wealth, much

[3]

*Toleration
in the Age of
Projects*



Ari
Joskowicz

[4]

Jewish
Social
Studies



Vol. 22
No. 2

like the financial and agricultural schemes devised by ever-growing numbers of independent experts during the period; like most such endeavors, they rarely generated any real profits.

Recent scholarship on non-Jews' discussions of Jews tends to claim that Jews served as crucial test cases for larger shifts in political, economic, and theological thought. Examples include David Nirenberg's suggestion that anti-Judaism gave "enduring form to some of the key concepts and questions in the history of thought," Jonathan Karp's claim that ideas about Jewish commerce "served a vital function in Western thought," and Ronald Schechter's position that French *philosophes* found Jews "good to think" with, as they offered a rich set of associations in discussions of civilization and modernity.¹⁰ Such positions are hard to sustain in this case, however. The proposals about Jews discussed here certainly drew on the existing repertoire of legal and religious arguments about Jews but rarely served as the pivot of new political, economic, or theological theories. What is more, despite western and central Europeans' long-standing fascination with Jews, cameralists were surprisingly immune to the allure of such positions. Although some of the earliest cameralists drew on legal, philosophical, and theological precedents that were at times both anti- and philosemitic, the mature debates in the field of cameralism, which lasted from the mid- to the late eighteenth century, cannot be explained by these continuities. In unprecedented ways, authors such as Johann Justi treated Jews as incidental targets of optimization. They were no "better to think with" than the other potentially fiscally productive people, plants, and minerals that appeared in cameralist writing. There was nevertheless a system behind cameralists' casual and often accidental approach to Jews. Academic cameralists put a premium on abstraction and detachment. It is this feature that makes them the perfect embodiment of the age of projects and also defines the legacy that cameralism—which did not have a direct academic successor—leaves us.

Cameralism

In spite of its marginal status in Enlightenment scholarship, cameralism was a fixture of German academic life in the eighteenth century, attracting a large number of students in its heyday and coming to dominate German university training in the crucial fields of economics, statecraft, mining, and forest administration.¹¹ Frederick William I installed the first chairs of cameralism in Frankfurt an der Oder and

Halle in 1727 with the intention of training Prussian civil servants to better administer his domains. The discipline was soon established in a large number of universities and became an expected part of the training of administrators. Even administrators and enlighteners who remained skeptical of cameralist projects accepted the discipline's assumptions about the need to reorganize centralizing states according to new fiscal principles. Cameralist metaphors, such as that of a well-ordered society (in which all parts function for the common good), formed part of a broader tendency to rationally rethink social relations.¹²

Cameralism was both more and less than a type of economic thought—and it is in the latter form that it has entered the only discussion of its contribution to debates on Jews, in Jonathan Karp's account of economic thinking and the Jews.¹³ Karp briefly analyzes cameralism as an economic doctrine that opened limited spaces for Jews due to its support for mercantile innovation and state-sanctioned enterprises, including—at least in theory—Jewish commercial activity. Like earlier studies of cameralism, however, this interpretation overstates the coherence of cameralism, as well as its proximity to mercantilism and its emphasis on rich Jews. In reality, cameralist thought was both less coherent and more wide-reaching in its ambitions. Cameralists claimed wide expertise in all matters of domain management for princes. In the context of the increasingly centralizing and cash-strapped administrations of German principalities, cameralists promised to reorganize mines and forests, improve production methods, and reconfigure aspects of public and private life so as to affect the population growth, wealth, and fiscal potential of a country. To these ends they drew on various disciplines of the earth sciences as much as they did on the field that later came to be known as economics.¹⁴ This was true especially after the mid-eighteenth century, when—largely thanks to Johann Justi—cameralism fully transformed from a science of organizing the fiscal affairs of the sovereign to the study of governance broadly understood.

Various scholars have emphasized how cameralism's ambitious program cannot be reduced to a single economic theory. Starting with Keith Tribe's *Governing Economy* in 1998, historians of cameralism have questioned the coherence and even relevance of their own subject in fascinating ways. After reading page upon page of repetitive formulas in cameralist textbooks, Tribe, who had set out to describe cameralism as a science, noted: "The reader who seeks precision, originality, and theoretical elaboration in the writings of eighteenth-century cameralism is doomed to disappointment and frustration."¹⁵ None have

[5]

*Toleration
in the Age of
Projects*



Ari
Joskowicz

[6]

*Jewish
Social
Studies*

•

Vol. 22
No. 2

pushed this argument further than Andre Wakefield, who concluded his study on the subject with the following words: “Our cameralists had every reason to suggest that systematic knowledge, carefully cultivated by good princes and their officials, would benefit the general welfare. They had every reason, that is, to connect the sciences with discipline, prosperity, and material progress. It is strange that we have believed them.”¹⁶

The point of such critiques is not to cast anachronistic judgments on eighteenth-century scholarship. On the contrary, Tribe and Wakefield allow us to see the seemingly tight deductive arguments and the thinly veiled plagiarism—including constant self-plagiarism—in cameralist textbooks and essays as a genre convention. We are likely to misinterpret the context of new debates on Jewish toleration if we try to understand the arguments of individuals such as Johann Justi in terms of stringent economic systems of thought. These arguments are to a great extent the result of the peculiar status of the individuals who started to write about Jews during this era. Since its institutionalization in the German university system, academic cameralism competed against so-called practical cameralists who acquired knowledge about domain administration on the job.¹⁷ Academic cameralists were thus always keen to draw up projects that were, on the one hand, profitable and viable and ones that, on the other hand, derived from their privileged, theoretical knowledge of the workings of the state. In short, German cameralists proposed schemes involving the productivization of Jews because practical and university-employed cameralists vied with one another to show their ability to constantly dream up new and original projects.

Unlike Voltaire (1694–1778) or John Toland (1670–1722), who both sought to reach a broad readership with their discussions of Jews (the former with a vastly greater degree of success), cameralists had a relatively narrow intended audience: they principally addressed state and university administrators who had the power to hire them or maintain their positions and students willing to pay fees to the university for their lectures. This focus is manifest in their textbooks, which constituted the principal genre of cameralist writing. Unlike a treatise like Dohm’s *Über die bürgerliche Verbesserung der Juden*, which was meant to be read out of personal interest, cameralist textbooks were required reading for students in institutional settings. They were sometimes read verbatim in lecture halls, but more often faculty expected that they had been read at home and used their lectures to comment on them.¹⁸ Cameralist textbooks thus had high circulation numbers but seem to have made relatively little impact beyond the university due to

their unwieldy prose, length, and organization. When they did break new ground—something to which their authors certainly aspired so as to distinguish themselves in a crowded field—this fact was often obscured by the systematic and didactic style of exposition.

The knowledge conveyed in these textbooks was at once influential and ridiculed. There are clear indications that cameralists' employers were aware of their employees' limitations. As Wakefield shows, for example, Johann Justi was hired into his position as police chief of Göttingen and lecturer at the city's university between 1855 and 1857 mainly because Baron Münchhausen, the Hanoverian chancellor who oversaw the university, hoped that he would attract paying students. Münchhausen had few illusions about the practical applications of Justi's plans. Nor did Justi ever have much influence on police regulations in the town.¹⁹ Those who did entrust major operations to cameralists, as Maria Theresa and Fredrick the Great did with Justi, soon came to regret that decision. Cameralists were thus powerful in the academy and yet had precarious and often interrupted careers. Their writings on Jews reflect all of this: motivated by their disciplinary tendency to come up with new, daring theories—however hidden in elaborate deductive expositions—their immediate aim appears to have been attracting paying readers and listeners rather than making a palpable impact on state policy.

[7]

*Toleration
in the Age of
Projects*



Ari
Joskowicz

Cameralism and Jews

Before the late 1740s, cameralist writers ignored Jews as a potential resource and excluded them from their postulation that an increase in population is always beneficial to the state. In the rare case that a cameralist textbook commented on Jews at all during this period, it discussed them as a challenge to the prosperity of the productive sectors of society. For authors like the late seventeenth-century cameralist Johann Joachim Becher (1635–82), fears of Jewish competition and the threat he felt Jews posed to the smooth running of commerce constituted a serious concern.²⁰ Becher demonstrated his expertise not in proposing ways to make Jews useful but in preventing them from being harmful.²¹

Often, cameralists viewed Jews as part of the larger problem they detected in the presence of urban and rural underclasses. In the early eighteenth century, for example, Theodor Lau (1670–1740) discussed Jews together with “Gypsies,” foreigners, beggars, journeymen, and discharged soldiers.²² These early cameralists understood

Jews, much as the other groups mentioned, to be highly mobile and thus a potential problem for the security of the state. Justus Christoph Dithmar (1678–1737) continued this approach. In his textbook on cameral and police science he twice commented on Jews.²³ At different points he discussed them together with day laborers, house servants, executioners, and knackers.²⁴ Like the other categories of individuals Dithmar described as problematic, Jews appeared in his work as a disruptive force that required the state to regulate its numbers. As he put it, “Attention has to be given that Jews are accepted in proportional numbers and that no Jew marries without the sovereign’s consent,” so as to maintain the prosperity of the general population.²⁵

Dithmar, Lau, and Becher aimed their comments at poor Jews, especially petty merchants, as their extensive use of the image of usurious and mobile Jews suggests. Their writings were a reaction to the contemporaneous impoverishment of significant segments of central European Jewry, a development described by Jonathan Israel in *European Jewry in the Age of Mercantilism*.²⁶ In spite of these early cameralists’ focus on poor Jews, the category of a Jewish beggar rarely appeared in their works, presumably because the authors assumed that Jewish indigents would be supported by their communities.²⁷

By contrast, cameralists only rarely mentioned wealthy Jews, large-scale Jewish moneylending, or court Jews in their textbooks, much less than the popular depiction of cameralists as German mercantilists might suggest.²⁸ This is a peculiar absence considering that arguments about the usefulness of wealthy Jews for state financing had guided the immigration policies of Prussia and other states since the seventeenth century—for example, Elector Frederick William I’s acceptance of Jews from Vienna in 1671—and in light of the relevance of this trope for earlier debates.²⁹ In this sense, cameralist works departed from earlier texts influenced by mercantilism such as John Toland’s famous plea for the admittance of affluent foreign Jews to England.

The first stirrings of a new approach to Jewish population management appeared in a cameralist periodical in 1749. The anonymous author “M.” of the essay, subtitled “Ob die Juden nicht zur Handarbeit und Erlernung ehrlicher Professionen und Handwerker anzuhalten,” answered the challenge posed in the subtitle largely by making reference to legal and theological precedents.³⁰ Among these were the teachings of the father of Pietism, the German theologian Philipp Spener (1635–1705). Following Spener and the philosemitic branch of Pietism, M. emphasized the responsibility of Christians of “pagan” origins to show compassion toward the Jews who had not

yet embraced Jesus.³¹ In his view, this entailed prohibiting them from engaging in sinful work and admonishing them to engage in useful labor.³² Conceding that Luther “sometimes passed harsh judgment on the Jews,” the author nonetheless focused on the reformer’s demand that they be forced to “earn their bread with their sweat.”³³ The reasons for this demand were not simply economic, he ventured: Jews could not be converted, according to M., if their limited skills would make them lose their livelihood after conversion; nor would Jews want to convert as long as they could claim that God favored them by letting them earn their keep without effort.³⁴

The theological dimension of his demands also made a mark on the author’s terminology. M. called the improvement of the place of Jews in society *Zurechtbringung*—which can be translated as “correcting” or “setting straight”—rather than *Verbesserung* (improvement) as Dohm did three and a half decades later.³⁵ In contrast to *Verbesserung*, *Zurechtbringung*—like the term *régénération*, which served as the conceptual pivot of French debates on the transformation of Jews—had a Christian theological dimension.³⁶ It often referred to divine action in Christian soteriology, when all that was corrupt in the world would be returned to its proper place.³⁷ The anonymous author M. located this force in the state, which would communicate its admonitions “with birches and beatings [*mit Ruthen und Schlägen*].”³⁸

On a practical level, M.’s version of *Zurechtbringung* meant that Jewish boys would be instructed early to read, write, calculate, and draw; they would learn to become craftsmen and should become familiar with both German and Latin.³⁹ Jewish girls would learn sewing, knitting, spinning and washing linen or wool, and other “female occupations.”⁴⁰ States would ultimately be obliged to treat Jews like Christian subjects, who were also forbidden from engaging in usury and other “sinful” or “unproductive” means of work.

M.’s essay treated the economic and structural issues relevant for cameralists in less detail than it lent to ethical-religious questions. Guilds, which he viewed as a central obstacle to Jewish productivization, were the main target of his ridicule. Why did guild members believe it honorable to work for Jews’ stolen money, he wondered, but not to work alongside honest Jews?⁴¹ The mixture of theological and economic arguments was not unusual for cameralism in this early phase, before the discipline became more standardized in the technical approach of its textbooks during Justi’s day. The theological dominated. The persecution of Jews was for M. a sign of the fall of Christianity, which had been more tolerant before the popes had corrupted it with their “unholy fanaticism.”⁴²

[9]

*Toleration
in the Age of
Projects*

●
Ari
Joskowicz

Continuities abound between M.'s article and the various authors it cites as precedent, such as Spener or the German jurist Justus Henning Böhmer (1674–1749).⁴³ In this sense the anonymous author's "short investigation" was far from revolutionary. Yet it represents one of the first systematic attempts to rethink the position of Jews within cameralist debates. The venue of publication, Georg Zincke's *Leipziger Sammlungen von wirthschaftlichen, Policey- Cammer- und Finantz-Sachen*, is important in this regard, as it allowed this text to enter the new if still poorly defined discipline of cameralism. A few years later the well-known publisher Johann Andreas Erdmann Maschenbauer reprinted the article in a volume dedicated to new scholarly publications from a range of disciplines.⁴⁴

It is impossible to assess how many people read the article either in Zincke's or in Maschenbauer's journals. It was wedged between pieces on topics as diverse as Dutch trade practices, "natural" explanations for peasant superstitions, and reasons for miscarriages among sheep. As such, it could easily have been missed by those more concerned with questions of religious toleration. At the same time, there was not always an obvious distinction between the readership of Zincke's cameralist periodical, Maschenbauer's scientific miscellany, and publication venues more associated with highbrow Enlightenment thought, such as the *Göttingische Anzeigen von gelehrten Sachen*. Whereas the first two regularly printed cameralist essays, the latter also sometimes reviewed ideas by cameralists published elsewhere.

The peculiar history of these debates is nonetheless mainly characterized by strange gaps. The next person to take up these ideas was a second anonymous author who described the possibility of a cameralist rethinking of Jewish toleration in fictional form. *Schreiben eines Juden an einen Philosophen*, published under a pseudonym in 1753, repeated many of the arguments made in Zincke's periodical four years earlier: it highlighted pragmatic and economic arguments for Jewish rights and claimed that anything deviant about Jews was the result of Christian persecution.⁴⁵ Even more than the earlier essay, this piece sought to prove that Jews fit populationist tenets, which equated the growth of population with a rise in wealth. If an increase in population was always economically advantageous, then the increase in Jewish population should also be considered a boon, its author suggested. Written as an imagined correspondence between a philosopher and his Jewish reader, the short pamphlet presented itself as a Jew's reaction to a political treatise. In his response to the Jewish reader's arguments, the fictional philosopher promised to include his correspondent's arguments in favor of Jewish toleration in the

next edition of his *Politik*. In his conclusion, the fictional philosopher cautioned that it was unlikely that the addition to his own work would lead to any changes in policy.

Unlike the anonymous text in Zincke's periodical, *Schreiben* has received some attention from scholars of Jewish history. Jacob Toury, Jacob Katz, and Gad Freudenthal have identified it as the earliest systematic demand in German to give Jews increased economic and civic rights.⁴⁶ Yet this chronology is problematic both in light of the anonymous M.'s earlier economic arguments on the subject and because it misses the fact that this fictional epistolary exchange described a position that was soon to move to the center of the discipline of cameralism. What is more, previous discussions of this material also revolve around the identity of *Schreiben*'s author—particularly by raising the question whether it could have been written by a Jew—rather than the broader scholarly and disciplinary framework of its author's plea. Johann Justi's work can be read as the real-life realization of the imagined intervention predicted or hoped for in *Schreiben*.

[11]

*Toleration
in the Age of
Projects*

●
Ari
Joskowicz

Proposals for the Toleration of Wealthy Jews

Although Justi's recommendations for changing Jews' place in society were novel in many respects, he was by no means the only one training his focus on this question at the time. Indeed, during the 1750s a number of German authors published texts suggesting that the legal, social, or economic status of Jews deserved rethinking. Two events in particular placed the question of Jewish toleration on the public agenda just a year before Justi issued his earliest comments on Jews: the debates on Jewish naturalization in England and the publication of Gotthold Lessing's one-act play, *Die Juden* (1754). Understanding these twin developments helps put the ways in which Justi's proposals on the subject diverged from those of his contemporaries in stark relief.

Early in 1754, the English Jewish Naturalisation Act—commonly referred to as the Jew Bill (even after it was passed by Parliament and was thus no longer a bill)—caused a commotion in England. It also drew some attention in Germany.⁴⁷ The act, which regulated the ability of Parliament to naturalize a select number of Jews, met with broad attacks that eventually led to its repeal in the same year. The English debate made waves in Germany, where the bill was commonly perceived as establishing collective rather than selective naturalization.⁴⁸ Lessing, an influential humanist enlightener, was among those

who described the Jew Bill in this manner. More realistic assessments also appeared, however, such as those published in the *Göttingische Anzeigen von gelehrten Sachen*, then edited by the person most closely associated with opposition to demands for Jewish toleration in mid-eighteenth-century Germany: the previously mentioned orientalist Johann David Michaelis.⁴⁹ The controversy over the bill generated new interest in the problem of Jewish toleration in German lands and created fertile ground for the publication of Lessing's *Die Juden*.⁵⁰

Although it targeted Christian prejudice rather than legal issues, Lessing's drama indirectly influenced later debates on Jewish toleration and, as such, has entered standard narratives about Enlightenment discussions of Jews.⁵¹ Originally written in 1749, 30 years before he completed *Nathan the Wise*, the play was first published in 1754.⁵² It tells the story of a baron who is robbed by two of his servants, who have dressed up as Jews. Attempting to deflect suspicion from themselves by evoking anti-Jewish stereotypes about Jews' untrustworthiness, greed, and immorality, the servants initially succeed in convincing the baron that Jews have attacked him. Succumbing to this misguided belief, the baron makes a series of anti-Jewish remarks in his conversations with the traveler who has saved him, until the traveler helps to expose the true robbers. As a sign of his gratitude, the baron promises the hand of his daughter to the traveler, who in turn feels obliged to disclose the fact that he is Jewish—a reality that renders the marriage impossible. Although the trope of a happy ending where the hero gains love or reward is thus prevented, the play closes with the baron and the traveler embarking upon an improbable friendship.

Conceived with a clear didactic message, Lessing wrote his play with an eye to convincing his Christian audiences to undergo a personal transformation. The noble, enlightened Jewish character Lessing created put to shame the gentile characters, whose anti-Jewish remarks exposed them as either ignorant (the baron) or malicious (the robbers).⁵³ By giving the play the title *Die Juden*, Lessing alluded to comedies popular in his day in which outsiders were exposed to ridicule.⁵⁴ Coming to the play with such expectations, viewers were supposed to leave ashamed of their earlier misconceptions, as the figure of the baron had done on stage by showing contrition for his one-time prejudices.

Lessing sought to foster a dialogue that transcended religious divisions by drawing attention to participants' shared humanity. Such relationships would then be the basis of any future change in Jews'

legal status and would create a setting in which people would prioritize truth, open discussion, and reason.⁵⁵ The humanistic notion of toleration that appears in Lessing's play was primarily based on Lessing and other enlighteners' vision of a new form of personal intercourse: it ended not with a revolution in Jews' social or legal status but with the personal transformation of the protagonists, who learned to appreciate each other through sustained and unbiased discussion.

The early reception of Lessing's play was shaped by Michaelis's review in the *Göttingische Anzeigen von gelehrten Sachen*, published only three months after the journal reported on the Jew Bill.⁵⁶ Although Michaelis wrote approvingly of Lessing's educational aims, he doubted the possibility that such a noble Jew could really exist. Michaelis thus questioned the effectiveness of using this improbable figure as a tool in attacking Christian prejudice. The ensuing debate concentrated on the question whether a virtuous Jew could exist and, if so, which conditions might make it possible.

Lessing and Michaelis agreed that to some extent the current "fallen" moral state of Jews was the consequence of Christian attitudes toward them.⁵⁷ Even Michaelis—who claimed that Jews' "principles, ... way of life, and ... education" made it implausible that a Jew could ever be as respectable as Lessing's character—nonetheless suggested that Christians' mistreatment of Jews was also partly to blame for the latter group's moral degradation.⁵⁸ Lessing's more pronounced emphasis on environmental factors came to the fore in his response to Michaelis. The playwright argued that anyone with sufficient wealth and education could become an enlightened and moral person and that there was thus no reason to believe that this would not be possible in the case of Jews as well.⁵⁹ Indeed, Lessing claimed that his version of the noble Jew—as portrayed in the character of the traveler—was plausible precisely because he was the son of a wealthy merchant.⁶⁰ It was Jews of this type who Lessing argued deserved to be considered equal partners in civil society. He explicitly excluded from his vision the great masses of poor Jews, whom he described as "dissolute riff-raff that roams about at fairs."⁶¹

Lessing's emphasis on accommodating affluent Jews resonated with the positions of those eighteenth-century bureaucrats and writers associated with mercantilism who focused only on the Jewish wealthy. In this regard, Lessing shared certain concerns with Michaelis, who had made his first mark in such debates as a pragmatic defender of Jewish religious freedom, owing to his desire to keep "Jewish wealth" in the country. It was in this context that in 1745 Michaelis seconded

[13]

*Toleration
in the Age of
Projects*



Ari
Joskowicz

his father's dismissals of accusations that Jews were denouncing Jesus in their prayers.⁶² Prohibiting certain Jewish prayers might lead to the exodus of prosperous Jews, he cautioned.⁶³

Such demands for toleration, which were based on principles of mutual respect between men of means and the notion of friendship between the educated, stand in stark contrast to a different type of economic and pragmatic argument made by other German writers in the same period. Unlike their "humanist" enlightener counterparts, members of this latter group were beginning to consider not only wealthy Jews but also the "dissolute riff-raff" among them as possible subjects of their new policy recommendations. Thus, though "mercantile philosemitism" is an apt description of the position of someone like Michaelis, it does not apply in the case of cameralism.⁶⁴ New ideas about making poor Jews—not powerful merchants—useful were crucial to German technocratic debates from the beginning, long before Christian Dohm wrote his famous call for the civil improvement of Jews' status in 1781.

Ordering without Improving: Justi's Proposals to Make All Jews Useful

Although Justi's position was to some extent indebted to Lessing's and Michaelis's environmentalist approaches to Jews, it was more directly shaped by the discipline to which he contributed his remarks, as well as its most famous genre: cameralist textbooks about the proper administration of the state and the optimal use of its resources. Indeed, Justi's earliest comments on Jews appear in *Staatswirthschaft*, his first textbook on cameralism and economy.⁶⁵ Written while he was a teacher of German composition and cameral science at the Viennese Theresianische Ritterakademie during the years 1750–53 and published in 1755, the work became part of the canon of academic cameralism.⁶⁶ It also established Justi's reputation among supporters of cameralism as one of the foremost scholars of administrative science of his day and gained him a position as chief police commissioner in Göttingen.⁶⁷

As earlier cameralists had done, Justi treated Jews primarily as part of the problem of effectively ordering and policing society. It was thus no coincidence that he subsumed his discussions of Jews in chapters such as the one he titled "Securing Subjects and Their Belongings against All Sorts of Violence, Misdeeds, and Fraud."⁶⁸ He also considered the question whether "one should tolerate [*dulden*] the Jews" together with proposals on how to deal with violent crime, theft by

domestic servants, and methods of controlling “Gypsies,” “the rabble,” and “beggars.”⁶⁹ Within this framework, he wrote:

The question must be posed, if a wise government should tolerate the Jews in their country. One thing is certain: because of their usury and their cheating they do not bring any advantages to a country's trade and there are many of them, in their current state in Germany, who do not only make a living by engaging in all sorts of fraud and selling stolen goods, but who also are thieves. Yet, one must ask if they are not prompted to this by the oppression to which they are subjected in many places and by their exclusion from agriculture, guilds, and other modes of subsistence. These unfortunate people indeed deserve sympathy; and if they were admitted to all occupations [*Nahrungsarten*] and encouraged to practice them, they would become as useful as other subjects.⁷⁰

Lessing, who was interested in enlightened individuals and their ability to communicate with each other without prejudice, had no use for the kinds of Jews Justi described. Yet because Justi came from a discipline that concentrated on solving the problem of poor and “problematic” populations, he aimed his proposals precisely at the transformation of the Jewish masses that humanistic enlighteners neglected. In contrast to writers like Lessing, Justi was more interested in transformations at the state rather than the personal level.

In his call for the toleration of Jews in the first edition of *Staatswirthschaft*, Justi offered no explanation for how a change of occupation would make a people identified with criminal activity into productive inhabitants capable of contributing to the wealth of the country. Whatever his ideas might have been at this early stage, when he elaborated on the matter in a long footnote that he added to the above passage in the second edition of *Staatswirthschaft* three years later, his project now appeared in a somewhat altered form:

I have published a special treatise in the *Göttingische Intelligenzblätter* on the question whether the Jews are useful for a country. I showed there that everything depends on the laws and conditions of a country and that the state is to blame if they are harmful to it. In particular, I explained in detail that the Jews would greatly contribute to the prosperity of manufactories and factories if one would enact a law that prevents them from selling anything they did not produce themselves. They would thus work in manufactories and factories; and this thrifty people would certainly prosper, because in these occupations all depends on producing cheaply. I also showed there that, if they were given 10 years' time to study [these

[15]

*Toleration
in the Age of
Projects*

●
Ari
Joskowicz

new occupations], such a law would not demand anything unreasonable from the Jews.⁷¹

[16]

Jewish
Social
Studies

•

Vol. 22
No. 2

In his new footnote, Justi summarized a more elaborate proposal than the one he had put forward in the first edition of his textbook. In its earlier edition, Justi had cited Jews' exclusion from guilds and agricultural pursuits as a reason for their degraded state, suggesting in turn that the solution was to give them free access to "all occupations," a position that largely hinged on a vision of deregulation and self-regulation. Within a few years, his proposal had shifted toward pushing Jews into manufacturing. Instead of having Jews join the ranks of the guilds, per his earlier recommendation, Justi now suggested that they pursue an occupation that stood entirely outside of the guild system and could thus help to undermine it.

Before incorporating it into his new textbook edition, Justi first announced this vision in an article he published in the *Policey-Amts-Nachrichten*, a periodical for which he served as the sole author, editor, and owner during his two-year stay in Göttingen.⁷² Including weekly reports on set prices for commodities and essays, *inter alia*, on production methods for Prussian blue pigment or Venetian borax, the advantages of death registries, and the contagious qualities of a recent cattle disease, the periodical was an appropriate place to experiment with new policy recommendations. Although Michaelis, a fellow professor at the University of Göttingen, had a low opinion of Justi's abilities, he nonetheless had his colleague's newsletter reviewed in the paper he edited, the *Göttingische Anzeigen von gelehrten Sachen*.⁷³ This review included mention of Justi's proposals to improve Jews' status.⁷⁴

The first installment of Justi's essay suggested that his position was that of a radical environmentalist. This section posed the question "whether the Jews are useful for a country" only to reject all negative judgments about a "whole people, a whole estate, or way of life."⁷⁵ Like all other inhabitants, Jews were problematic not because of any intrinsic qualities but because of laws that were either improperly enforced or inherently faulty, he argued. The text went on to posit that it was the very nature of commerce, not Judaism, that persuaded Jewish merchants to engage in usury and other criminal activities. The same was true for non-Jewish merchants, Justi proposed, citing the example of Vienna, where, he claimed, "all petty merchants" were Christians who engaged in the same forms of fraud and usury as did Jews in the same occupation elsewhere.

Yet Justi's positions were not always coherent. Whereas in the first installment he dismissed previous attempts to generalize about Jews,

in the second he offered his own generalized conclusions. No longer a radical environmentalist, Justi now proposed that Jews posed a problem to society due to their inherent qualities. Most of all he worried that Jews—whom he viewed as eternal *Fremde* (foreigners) and *Weltbürger* (cosmopolitans)—would readily leave the country if they detected better opportunities elsewhere.⁷⁶ Jews' concentration in commerce was thus a problem, according to Justi, as long as bills of exchange and poorly designed laws facilitated the movement of wealthy Jews across borders.⁷⁷ Justi mused, "One allows them to pursue commerce with no inhibitions and forbids them to own immobile assets. What could be more absurd?"⁷⁸ His solution was simple enough. Even if Jews were incapable of loving the country where they resided, encouraging them to own real estate and open factories would serve state interests by binding greater numbers of them to the land.

Although Justi's proposal anticipated Dohm's critique that restrictions against Jews contradicted broader efforts to increase populations across Europe, in other respects his positions on the subject of Jews moved in a very different direction: unlike Dohm, Justi was at best an inconsistent and tepid champion of theories of moral improvement through work.⁷⁹ His policy recommendations tended instead to focus on change at the societal level, such as creating the structures through which Jews would be encouraged to stay put—thus keeping their wealth in the country—and through which their stereotypical thriftiness could be properly harnessed.

In light of later eighteenth-century European enlighteners' consistent preoccupation with uplifting Jews, Justi's lack of investment in this particular approach may appear striking, yet it fit his overall vision of a well-ordered state. The recommendations he made for dealing with beggars at various points in his career similarly suggest his ambivalence to proposals geared toward changing the behavior of those he considered socially aberrant. Indeed, although he briefly supported the idea of releasing those beggars who proved themselves diligent and honest from workhouses, he later proposed that beggars should never be released from the workhouse, irrespective of their actions. Rather than convincing them of the merits of honest labor, Justi suggested, the state should either confine beggars for life or deport them. His scheme, he claimed, would result in the absence of public begging within a generation.⁸⁰

Much as he shied away from proposals focused on reforming beggars, Justi did not center his recommendations on the argument that moving Jews into new professions would make them better people. However much Justi vacillated between radical environmentalism and

[17]

*Toleration
in the Age of
Projects*

•
Ari
Joskowicz

faith in the fixity of people's proclivities, in neither case did he suggest that education would change people. In his portrayals, people were either all influenced by the same momentary calculus, which could be altered only by offering them new opportunities and punishments, or their qualities were innate and could—in this case too—only be guided in the right direction through the proper incentives. The difference between Justi and people like Lessing, Dohm, and most French enlighteners was Justi's general disinterest in human perfectibility.⁸¹ Jews, like other people, were not to be improved; laws were.

Justi and the Law of the Jews

Although Justi's notion of reordering the place of Jews in society without morally transforming them distinguishes him from later thinkers who wrote of "improving" Jews, his claim to speak as an expert on all of society's populations, by contrast, is one he shared with generations of future technocrats. Far from asserting a privileged knowledge of Judaism as did Michaelis, Justi dealt with the subject of Jews as an "expert" on the concerns of statecraft writ large. It is precisely this approach that explains why he gave so many of his projects a definite time frame, as when he promised that beggars would disappear within one generation or when he predicted that it would take Jews only 10 years to learn new occupations and become productive and useful.⁸²

In this regard Justi's approach was not without precedent. Earlier defenders of Jewish toleration who had argued that the acceptance of a small number of Jewish merchants would benefit society also spoke in the language of political economy. Menasseh ben Israel's 1656 plea to allow Jews into England, for example, had included an exposition of the economic utility of Jews to the state.⁸³ Toland and (later) Dohm also used pragmatic arguments. Only Justi denied the importance of knowledge about religious practices and laws on principle, however. Indeed, even though cameralist textbooks retained the Leibnitzian style of presenting the world in terms of hierarchies of interconnected knowledge (with headings and numerous subheadings), Justi's main intervention was to fully unmoor cameralism from the approach of traditional textbooks on political wisdom (*Weisheitslehre*), with their long citations of classical texts. The expertise he claimed was based on his visions of the proper workings of the state and its various elements, not any particular canon.⁸⁴

This turn away from theological knowledge was partly grounded in Justi's religious relativism. Earlier cameralists had written with a clear

idea about the value of Christianity even when they also displayed a pragmatic approach to the issue. In the early eighteenth century, for example, the cameralist Justus Christoph Dithmar had argued that Christianity was the only true religion before adding that it was also the most convenient one for a well-ordered state.⁸⁵ Justi replaced all theological considerations with a functionalist approach. As he put it, the “purpose of the republic is ... temporal happiness. Even though the sovereign is responsible for promoting the moral happiness of his subjects, this is only necessary insofar as the moral state of his subjects has bearing on the temporal happiness of the state.”⁸⁶

Justi’s relativism at times led him to seek inspiration for his social-engineering projects in non-Christian religious traditions. One such proposal involving Jews can be found in his late work *Physicalische und Politische Betrachtungen über die Erzeugung des Menschen und Bevölkerung der Länder*, which he published in 1769 under the pseudonym Anaxagoras von Occident.⁸⁷ In this treatise, which discussed the connection between human procreation and increases in population, Justi cited the biblical tradition of checking a bride’s virginity before her wedding as the source of Jews’ allegedly high fertility rates.⁸⁸ Since an unruptured hymen, the “proof” they used of virginity, became increasingly difficult to ensure as a woman grew older, he wrote, Jews tended to marry off their daughters at a young age. It was this development that had inadvertently spurred the growth of Jewish communities.⁸⁹ More striking than Justi’s rare excursion into Jewish tradition was the conclusion he drew from this example: “Each government can do whatever it wants,” in the realms of both law and custom, he ventured. “It should thus not be difficult to see to it that women have to be married before they reach the age of eighteen.”⁹⁰ Justi’s interest in Jews’ traditions here was not one of *Gelehrsamkeit*, the “useless” bookish expertise he opposed.⁹¹ His interest was rather in the practicability of such traditions for current policy.

In this sense, all of Jewish law and custom proved potentially fertile ground for Justi’s projects. Some 80 pages after he first mentioned Jewish law, he again picked up the theme to propose that the state should enact the Jewish law of showing the “signs of virginity” at weddings.⁹² Going even further than he had previously, he declared the whole corpus of Jewish law potentially relevant:

If we were really Christians, then we would have great respect for everything that God regulated and established in the Jewish republic. What is more, the most reasonable interpretation of the Bible requires us to view the will of God as revealed in the Old Testament as the religious

[19]

*Toleration
in the Age of
Projects*

•
Ari
Joskowicz

law, insofar as it has not been explicitly revoked and changed in the New Testament.⁹³

[20]

Jewish
Social
Studies

•

Vol. 22
No. 2

Like the early modern British religious revolutionaries who saw the Hebrew republic of biblical times as a political guide, Justi presented divine revelation as the process of regulating (*verordnen*) and setting up (*einrichten*) a republic.⁹⁴ Yet, unlike the Protestant thinkers who centered so much of their theology on the Hebraic sources of their religion, Justi cited biblical sources only selectively, as inspiration for his extravagant plans, not as a source of ultimate authority. His invocation of biblical precedent was decidedly rhetorical. It was the result of his own cultural relativism, an approach that served both Justi and a growing number of cameralists in his day as “a strategically placed fulcrum helping them displace the old and engineer the future.”⁹⁵

The Reception of Justi's Ideas

The most prominent writer to directly respond to Justi was Johann Albrecht Philipp (1721–91), a legal scholar and reform-oriented Prussian administrator who served as Berlin's police director from 1771 to 1791. In his 1759 textbook *Der vergrößerte Staat*, Philipp began his discussion of Jews with a reference to Justi's *Staatswirthschaft*. In his view, Justi had advocated for Jews' freedom of occupation and movement because he believed “one could make Jews qua Jews into good citizens of the state,” just as one could with Christians.⁹⁶ Philipp demurred. For him, Jews' principal usefulness remained within the realm of commerce. His view thus came closer to Frederick the Great's mercantilist policies toward Jews. At the same time, Philipp attempted to distinguish between Jews' roles in large and small states, as many would do after him. Large states, Philipp explained, had no need for Jews and should seek to replace them with Christians who could fulfill similar functions; smaller states, by contrast, could profit from the special taxes they could levy on their Jewish subjects.

Philipp returned to the topic six years later in a work about *Kornjuden* (corn Jews), an anti-Jewish term denoting a person's attempts to corner the grain market or buy cereals outside of regulated markets.⁹⁷ Kornjuden were not usually Jews, either in common parlance or in Philipp's understanding of the term, but Philipp nevertheless found it opportune to include a few brief remarks on the group to whom the phenomenon was attributed. Philipp, who defended merchants against the term throughout the book, had few positive things to

say about actual Jews. Although he agreed that Jewish trade might contribute to the comforts of urban life, he rejected the notion that Jews could be useful citizens. The latter position he attributed mainly to Justi, claiming that “nobody has a higher estimation of the Jews than Herr von Justi in his *Staats-Wirthschaft*.”⁹⁸

Johann Bernhard Hoffer took Justi’s proposals for the Jews in more radical directions reminiscent of Dohm’s writings on Jewish equality. Hoffer, a professor of law at Altburg, frequently cited Justi when he commented on Jewish toleration in his 1765 *Beyträge zum Polizeyrecht der Teutschen*.⁹⁹ The book represented an attempt to bring police science and law together, compiling statutes and commenting on them from the perspective of policy and productivity concerns. Although Hoffer’s influence remained limited, his book marked an important juncture in the creation of the field of German *Policey-Recht*, or police law.¹⁰⁰

Hoffer radically challenged existing legislation on Jews. As Justi had before him, he portrayed Jews and Christians as equally prone to breaking laws. The difference was that Christians broke laws that were originally established to aid them, he proposed. How could one expect Jews to do anything less when they found the deck stacked against them?¹⁰¹ In Hoffer’s view, there existed both ethical and pragmatic reasons to give Jews access to new forms of work. It was indefensible to ask Jews to pay for particular economic privileges, he argued, since acceptance into a territory implied the right to make a living.¹⁰² In practical terms, the monetary gains accrued from selling particular privileges were too small to compensate for the damage these types of arrangements would cause to society, Hoffer posited.

Hoffer’s conclusions, published 18 years before Dohm’s treatise, bear striking similarities to those of the later thinker: “In the general deceitfulness of the Jews the Christians have their fair share of guilt,” Hoffer wrote before asking why it should not be possible “to decide to start to reform the latter.”¹⁰³ All previous attempts to regulate Jews by forcing them to abide by special rules appeared to Hoffer to have led to ever-greater complaints about them.¹⁰⁴ Unlike Dohm, however, Hoffer retained Justi’s argument from the later editions of *Staatswirthschaft* that Jews should be restricted from engaging in commerce.¹⁰⁵

Others who read Justi were less convinced by his arguments. This was the case with Johann Bergius (1718–81), a cameralist who came from a long line of Protestant preachers. In his *Policey- und Cameralmagazin*, Bergius rejected Justi’s suggestion that Jews be pushed out of commerce and instead encouraged to open factories.¹⁰⁶ Although he agreed in principle that Jews might productively serve

[21]

*Toleration
in the Age of
Projects*

•

Ari
Joskowicz

the state as manufacturers, Bergius argued that there were too few opportunities in manufacturing to allow significant numbers of Jews to enter that field.¹⁰⁷ Nor did he consider it feasible to restrict Jews from engaging in commerce. Convinced of the impossibility of suppressing the guild regulations that excluded Jews, Bergius posited that most crafts were by definition out of the question. This left few other occupations, he proposed, since he saw Jews as incapable of farming and considered all peddling detrimental to the state. (In this he explicitly challenged Hoffer, who had suggested that peddling could be useful in small towns.¹⁰⁸) Jews thus had to be limited to—if still prohibited from dominating—the occupational pursuits that fell outside the domain of guild monopolies, in Bergius's view. In contrast to Justi, who argued for the corrupting influence of commerce, Bergius suggested that the need to find a reliable customer base incentivized Jewish and Christian merchants alike to engage in honest business practices.¹⁰⁹

Other cameralists, including the Prussian reformer Johann Friedrich von Pfeiffer (1718–87), appear to have adopted a number of Justi's ideas about Jews without explicitly citing them. In his major work *Lehrbegriff sämtlicher oekonomischer und Cameralwissenschaften*, Pfeiffer attributed what he saw as Jews' vices to the oppressive treatment they were subjected to by Christians, just as Justi had—and as other cameralists writing after him would continue to do. Although Pfeiffer proposed that Jews should be given the right to pursue foreign trade, he maintained—following Justi's similar suggestions—that they should be allowed to sell only what they produced themselves on the domestic market.¹¹⁰ Other aspects of Pfeiffer's arguments also echo Justi's writing on the topic, including Pfeiffer's suggestion that Jews' thriftiness would help them excel in manufacturing and that their work in that field would make them more useful to the state.¹¹¹ Although Pfeiffer was ultimately more focused than Justi on reeducating Jews, the fact that he was familiar with Justi's work, alongside cameralists' common use of plagiarism, makes it likely that Pfeiffer's thinking on the topic had been shaped by his reading of Justi. Indeed, though he did not reference Justi's writings in the context of his discussion of Jews, Pfeiffer started his multivolume project by acknowledging his universal debt to Justi, so that people would not think he was “adorning himself with borrowed plumes.”¹¹²

Other writers working within the orbit of police science instead veered in the direction of more humanistic demands for toleration. Johann Peter Willebrand (1719–86), the police director of Altona, was among them. His *Innbegriff der Policy* included a chapter entitled “On

the Toleration of Religions.”¹¹³ Rejecting the link between policing and governing prevalent in cameralist tracts, he clarified that he did not see it as the duty of the police to decide whether Jews should be tolerated, since this was exclusively the decision of the government.¹¹⁴ The function of the police should rather be to guarantee the peace between those groups that had been legally admitted. Willebrand continued by asserting that he had seen firsthand how Christians and Jews could successfully coexist during his tenure as Altona’s police director.¹¹⁵

[23]

*Toleration
in the Age of
Projects*

•
Ari
Joskowicz

Dohm and the Cameralist Legacy

Dohm, who was by far the most influential figure in the German debates on Jews in the late eighteenth century, similarly made no reference to Justi in his work. Yet his assumptions about the different mentalities of farmers, artisans, and merchants drove him to similar conclusions—namely, that Jews should leave the realm of commerce and instead be encouraged to become artisans.¹¹⁶ Though distinct from Justi’s call to move Jews into manufacturing, Dohm’s economic rationale was essentially the same. Both authors shared an interest in undermining the influence and monopolies of guilds.¹¹⁷ Justi’s proposal to give Jews full access to guilds and his later proposal to push Jews into trades not organized in guilds were both meant to undermine the guilds’ power. Dohm expressed similar aims in his *Über die bürgerliche Verbesserung der Juden*, where he suggested that the guilds’ harmful effects on society might be minimized by preserving their “rights, honors, and customs” while also “allowing industrious citizens to live off their skills even if they were not guild-approved.”¹¹⁸ Instead of explicitly calling for the abolishment of guilds, Dohm and Justi alike proposed that individuals should be allowed to work outside of the guild system.

The similarities did not end there. Although Dohm began his intellectual career more focused than Justi on pedagogical platforms—including those of the educational reformer Johann Bernhard Basedow (1724–90) and the Berlin Enlightenment thinker Friedrich Nicolai (1733–1811)—their career paths soon began to converge.¹¹⁹ By the late 1770s, Dohm became deeply involved in the discipline of statistics, a close relative to cameralism and police science, enrolling in the subject for most of his studies at the University of Göttingen.¹²⁰ In the late 1770s, he visited the duke of Baden’s cameral school in Kaiserslautern. He even followed earlier academic cameralists in implementing failed real-life projects, including a scheme for growing

madder that he had proposed to the margrave of Hesse. Continuing the patterns established by his cameralist predecessors, who had similarly dreamt up ambitious if impractical agricultural plans, Dohm's plantation proved "disappointing," as one of his biographers politely put it.¹²¹

Dohm's writings on the topic of Jews similarly make clear that he and Justi were working within the same disciplinary framework. Like other cameralists, Dohm did not argue for the usefulness of Jewish merchants and financiers alone, as did most of the humanistic enlighteners. As Justi had done before him, Dohm instead proposed that all Jews could be made "productive" regardless of their social station.¹²² Dohm showed his cameralist inclinations in other realms as well. Against those who argued that abolishing special laws for Jews would be too costly for the state, which would lose its direct taxes from its Jewish subjects, Dohm wrote: "I expect this objection only from a very limited cameralist, but not from one who grasps the whole of the state economy, knows the true nature of taxes, and realizes that the lasting and rightly understood interest of the sovereign does not contradict the well-being of his subjects."¹²³

As an administrator, Dohm also shared Justi's vision of the state as an institution of social transformation that should play a principal role in effecting the Jews' improvement. In Dohm's view, all parts of society were susceptible to improvement, just as all inhabitants were potentially useful in Justi's writings. Both authors were employed by the state and made their proposals from an administrative perspective; both were guided by the same professional bias—an extreme and self-serving belief in the power of the state to shape society.

Even though Dohm shared much in common with humanistic enlighteners like Lessing, he never abandoned the technocratic fold. Indeed, he retained his cameralist visions as an argument of last resort despite his growing preference for humanistic interpretations of society. The hierarchy of arguments that resulted in his writing is apparent, for example, in the following passage from his treatise on Jews: "Either [the Jewish religion] does not contain anything that contradicts the duties of a citizen or these contradictory elements will be canceled out through moral and political rules."¹²⁴ Dohm thus sought to convince his readers of Jewish corrigibility with a densely footnoted survey of Jewish history while also suggesting, in characteristic cameralist fashion, that even if this were not the case, the laws of the state would correct any problematic tendencies that might have inhered in Judaism. Here, as elsewhere, Dohm clearly inherited much from Justi and his fellow cameralists.

Yet in works written after 1781, when Dohm published his call to “improve” the civil standing of Jews, it becomes increasingly difficult to discern the influence of Justi’s ideas on the subject. Dohm’s project of improvement swiftly became the dominant model of state-centered reform of the Jews, even in the field of cameral science where Justi had once been a towering figure. An 1802 bibliography of works on police and cameral science published between 1762 and 1802 illustrates this well.¹²⁵ Of the volume’s 86 entries filed under the category of “Jews” (*Juden*) and its additional 17 indexed under “Laws concerning Jews” (*Judenrecht*), the bibliographer mentioned Justi only once.¹²⁶ Works making reference to Dohm and the debates he had inspired—largely pamphlets that made no explicit mention of cameralism—by contrast, constituted the majority of these entries. Justi’s ideas about how to change Jews’ position in society, which had met a modest response before Dohm, now became almost invisible.

[25]

*Toleration
in the Age of
Projects*



Ari
Joskowicz

Conclusion

Cameralist debates about Jews remain largely forgotten today, above all because of the genre in which they appeared. Cameralist textbooks left little mark on later debates on most topics, let alone that of Jews’ civil status. Like college textbooks today, they were regularly reprinted. In ever-new editions, with information plagiarized from other scholars, each academic cameralist lecturer promoted his latest publication. Because students and administrators rarely consulted older textbooks, information that was not reproduced from earlier editions disappeared from debates. Justi’s textbooks proved more resilient than most, as cameralists cited his works for another decade or two after he wrote them, but even for this most successful of cameralists all proposals that were not actively adopted by new authors were lost.

Yet cameralist debates on Jews were also forgotten because their protagonists were so poorly regarded. This is true for no one more so than Justi. Indeed, Jean le Rond d’Alembert (1717–83) thought a prize-winning essay by Justi on Leibnitz’s monads—which launched Justi’s career—was so bad that it proved foul play among the judges of Berlin’s Academy of Science.¹²⁷ The Berlin enlighteners disliked Justi even more intensely. Although Mendelssohn, Nicolai, and Thomas Abbt did not publish reactions to Justi’s proposals on Jewish toleration, they were clearly familiar with his oeuvre and regularly came into conflict with the older scholar. Indeed, the Berlin enlighteners utterly

broke with him after an affair that nearly got Mendelssohn expelled from Prussia. The conflict was triggered by a negative review of Justi's political-historical tale *Die Wirkungen und Folgen so wohl der wahren als der falschen Staatskunst in der Geschichte des Psammitichus*, anonymously penned by Mendelssohn's friend Abbt for the weekly *Briefe, die neueste Literatur betreffend*.¹²⁸ In his review, Abbt described Justi as an author better known for the quantity than the quality of his works.¹²⁹ Justi apparently presumed incorrectly that Mendelssohn, who happened to write for the same journal, was the review's author.¹³⁰ No doubt in an attempt to seek his revenge, Justi soon wrote of another anonymous review (this time of the king's poetry) that had been attributed to Mendelssohn, "I cannot ignore the fact that ... Christ is referred to disdainfully as 'the boy Jesus,' as part of the most ordinary and vulgar mockery. This has likely come from the pen of the Jew Moses. It would really be going too far if a Jew was permitted to use such derogatory terms in public writings."¹³¹ As a result, *Briefe, die neueste Literatur betreffend* was temporarily prohibited, until the publisher, Nicolai, proved that the journal had already passed censorship when it published the review of the king's poetry.

Of greater consequence for historiography were the purported repercussions this affair had for Mendelssohn. According to Nicolai's later account of the event, soon after Justi published his charges against "the Jew Moses," Mendelssohn was summoned to the Generalfiskal (the person responsible for policing Berlin's Jews), who threatened him with expulsion.¹³² The Prussian Council of State reportedly considered further measures against Mendelssohn, which were averted only through the personal intervention of Johann Georg Sulzer, a professor of philosophy in Berlin.¹³³ A different version of this story was also in circulation, this one based on a report from Lessing's son in his biography of his father. In this version, Mendelssohn ensured his own release by persuasively making his case to the Generalfiskal.¹³⁴ Various other versions combine Lessing's and Nicolai's accounts, suggesting both that Justi accused Mendelssohn and that the latter successfully extricated himself from legal troubles as a result of his witty remarks to the king.¹³⁵ However dubious, these contradictory narratives—which suspiciously quote direct speech decades after the events—make clear how devastating Justi's denunciation of a major Berlin enlightener proved for his legacy.

The whole affair, combined with Justi's overall reputation, no doubt impeded the cameralists' reception in Jewish historiography. Denounced by the Prussian enlighteners who saw their own debates as breaking new ground, Justi's proposals met with little recognition.

By the time the Berlin enlighteners acted as the sounding board for Dohm's and Mendelssohn's ideas, Justi had been thoroughly discredited. Meanwhile, although Frederick the Great appointed Justi to an administrative position toward the end of his life, the monarch had him arrested in 1768 on suspicion of embezzlement. Justi died in prison three years later.

Although references to his interventions in debates about Jews have been largely absent from later accounts, Justi's legacy as the founder of Germany's "mature" version of police and state science persisted despite his contemporaries' belief in his general incompetence. (They were more divided on the final accusation of financial malfeasance). Lately scholarship on Justi the economist and state theorist has even experienced a small renaissance.¹³⁶ Yet his erasure from Jewish historiography has been more complete. Even in the decades after the Holocaust, when émigré historians told the history of Jewish emancipation largely as a German or even specifically Prussian story, scholars ignored Justi's early attempts to rethink Jews from within eighteenth-century Germany's principal administrative tradition.

The few authors who noted Justi's interventions on the topic of Jews have depicted his work as marginal. Justi's reluctance to treat human perfectibility as a policy aim easily serves as a foil for liberal positions and notions of modern citizenship. Dohm's and Mendelssohn's interventions on the subject were much more in line with the teleology of emancipation: they offered a more robust theory of citizenship based on ideas of human autonomy and self-perfection. The well-ordered state within a state that Justi imagined, by contrast, appears symptomatic of a more baroque understanding of the workings of society.

None of Justi's assumptions were unusual in the 1750s, however. The major proposals floated in Germany during this period did not envision a homogeneous citizenry without status distinctions. Justi was in this sense a man of his time. He accepted on principle the segmentation of society and sought to reorder it in novel ways rather than to individualize state-membership. Yet he certainly differed from the more humanistically oriented of his contemporaries, who centered their proposals for reforms on the idea that Jews could be morally regenerated. Although Justi also argued for Jewish rights, he did so primarily with the aim of "fixing" society rather than Jews.

The case of Justi and his fellow cameralists also speaks to the long-standing role of technocratic fantasies in discussions of Jews. Following Zygmunt Bauman, it is certainly possible to search for continuities in the detached projects of remaking territories and populations from the eighteenth century to the Holocaust. Yet there is a

[27]

*Toleration
in the Age of
Projects*



Ari
Joskowicz

danger to overstating such continuities. Doing so does not capture the ambiguous legacy of cameralism, including the accidental nature by which figures like Justi came to the topic of Jews, the discipline's history of failures, and its long descent into near oblivion. In a broader sense, however, it is possible to see cameralism as the predecessor of multiple projects that have trusted the detached power of the state over new forms of sociability, including a number of statist ideologies—ranging from state-centered liberalism to communism—that reverberated among large numbers of Jews. Cameralism was not unique in this respect. Ultimately, its legacy is as multivalent as that of the humanistic Enlightenment, which many scholars since the Holocaust have similarly indicted as exclusionary.¹³⁷

Foucault, Scott, and Bauman may overstate the teleology inherent in these detached projects, but there may nonetheless be something to their suggestion that these eighteenth-century technocrats speak to a topic with staying power. Interest in the “age of projects” among scholars of the European Enlightenment over the last decade arguably draws on the fact that it is unclear whether we might still be living in that age. Jews have become the subjects of new proposals for remaking society since the early modern period, as the result of an enlarged “sense of possibility,” or *Möglichkeitssinn*, a term Robert Musil coined as a contrast to *Realitätssinn*, the sense of reality or realism.¹³⁸ Cameralists were among the first to cultivate a technocratic sense of possibility and to apply that sense to the Jews. Their proposals thus speak both to the narrowly defined age of projects that ended in the late eighteenth century and to the age of projects that we still inhabit.

Notes

I am grateful to Adam Sutcliffe, Francesca Trivellato, Christoph Zeller, and the members of the Early Modern History Workshop at the University of Chicago for feedback on this essay. Unless otherwise indicated, all translations are mine.

- 1 A few scholars of Jewish history have noted Justi's arguments in passing: see Jacob Toury, “Die Behandlung jüdischer Problematik in der Tagesliteratur der Aufklärung (bis 1783),” *Jahrbuch des Instituts für Deutsche Geschichte* 5 (1976): 23, and Jonathan Karp, *The Politics of Jewish Commerce: Economic Thought and Emancipation in Europe, 1638–1848* (Cambridge, Engl., 2008), 130–31. The large and growing quantity of scholarship on Justi has, by contrast, largely missed the Jewish aspect

of his work. For a few brief references in this vein, see Ferdinand Frensdorff, *Über das Leben und die Schriften des Nationalökonom J.H.G. von Justi* (Göttingen, 1903), 481–82, and Marcel van Meerhaeghe, “The International Aspects of Justi’s Work,” in *The Beginnings of Political Economy: Johann Heinrich Gottlob von Justi*, ed. Jürgen G. Backhaus (New York, 2009), 105. Joachim Schlör, *Das Ich der Stadt: Debatten über Judentum und Urbanität 1822–1938* (Göttingen, 2005), 152–54, seeks to rehabilitate Justi’s ideas about urbanity, yet, despite the author’s general interest in Jewish themes, the book makes no mention of the fact that Justi also explicitly wrote about Jews.

- 2 Michel Foucault, “Pastoral Power and Political Reason,” in *Religion and Culture*, ed. Jeremy R. Carrette (Manchester, Engl., 1999), 150–51.
- 3 James C. Scott, *Seeing like a State: How Certain Schemes to Improve the Human Condition Have Failed* (New Haven, Conn., 1998), 11–23.
- 4 Zygmunt Bauman, *Modernity and the Holocaust* (Ithaca, N.Y., 2000), 70.
- 5 Andre Wakefield, *The Disordered Police State: German Cameralism as Science and Practice* (Chicago, 2009).
- 6 This is also how cameralism entered into historical work influenced by modernization theory. See, for example, Marc Raeff, *The Well-Ordered Police State: Social and Institutional Change through Law in the Germanies and Russia, 1600–1800* (New Haven, Conn., 1983).
- 7 Cited in Andre Wakefield, “The Apostles of Good Police: Science, Cameralism and the Culture of Administration in Central Europe, 1656–1800” (Ph.D. diss., University of Chicago, 1999), 81. On the history of the term *Projektmacher*, see Georg Stanitzek, “Der Projektmacher: Projektionen auf eine ‘unmögliche’ moderne Kategorie,” *Ästhetik und Kommunikation* 17, no. 65–66 (1987): 135–46.
- 8 Johann Heinrich Gottlob von Justi, “Gedanken von Projecten und Projectmachern,” in *Gesammelte politische und Finanzschriften über wichtige Gegenstände der Staatskunst, der Kriegswissenschaften und des Cameral- und Finanzwesens* (Rothe, 1761), 266.
- 9 Maximillian E. Novak, introduction to *The Age of Projects*, ed. Maximillian E. Novak (Toronto, 2008), 7; see also Markus Krajewski, ed., *Projektmacher: Zur Produktion von Wissen in der Vorform des Scheiterns* (Berlin, 2004).
- 10 David Nirenberg, *Anti-Judaism: The Western Tradition* (New York, 2013), 10; Karp, *Politics of Jewish Commerce*, 2; Ronald Schechter, *Obstinate Hebrews: Representations of Jews in France, 1715–1815* (Berkeley, 2003). Schechter borrows the phrase “good to think” from Claude Lévi-Strauss.
- 11 For standard overviews on cameralism, see Keith Tribe, *Governing Economy: The Reformation of German Economic Discourse, 1750–1840* (Cambridge, Engl., 1988); Erhard Dittrich, *Die deutschen und österreichischen Kameralisten* (Darmstadt, 1974); Hans Maier, *Die ältere deutsche Staats- und Verwaltungslehre* (Munich, 1986); and Mack Walker,

[29]

*Toleration
in the Age of
Projects*

●

Ari
Joskowicz

German Home Towns: Community, State, and General Estate, 1648–1871 (Ithaca, N.Y., 1971), 145–84.

- [30] 12 Tribe, *Governing Economy*, 19–20; Barbara Stollberg-Rilinger, “Der absolute deutsche Fürstenstaat als Maschine,” *Annali dell’Istituto storico italo-germanico in Trento* 15 (1989): 99–112.
- Jewish Social Studies* 13 Karp, *Politics of Jewish Commerce*, 130–31.
- 14 For a critique of the systematic use of anachronisms such as “economics” to describe eighteenth-century *oeconomie*, see Andre Wakefield, “Butterfield’s Nightmare: The History of Science as Disney History,” *History and Technology* 30, no. 3 (2014): 232–51.
- Vol. 22 15 Tribe, *Governing Economy*, 60.
- No. 2 16 Wakefield, *Disordered Police State*, 144.
- 17 See Andre Wakefield, “Police Chemistry,” *Science in Context* 12, no. 3 (2000): 231–67.
- 18 On the use of textbooks, see Tribe, *Governing Economy*, 11–12.
- 19 Wakefield, *Disordered Police State*, 79–80. Justi was as much limited by the fact that the state-appointed police chief had little jurisdictional competence in a city like Göttingen, with its vast municipal autonomy.
- 20 Johann Joachim Becher, *Politische Discurs, von den eigentlichen Ursachen deß Auf- und Abnehmens der Städt Länder und Republiken* (Frankfurt, 1673), 218–19.
- 21 Ibid., 95–96.
- 22 Theodor Ludwig Lau, *Entwurf einer wohl-eingerichteten Policey* (Frankfurt, 1717), 76, 79. On the relation between antizyganism and antisemitism, see Wolfgang Wippermann, *Wie die Zigeuner: Antisemitismus und Antizyganismus im Vergleich* (Berlin, 1997), and Herbert Uerlings and Iulia-Karin Patrut, eds., “Zigeuner” und Nation: Repräsentation – Inklusion – Exklusion (Frankfurt, 2008), 137–99.
- 23 Justus Christoph Dithmar, *Einleitung in die Oeconomischen Policei- und Cameral-Wissenschaften* (Frankfurt an der Oder, 1748 [1st ed., 1731]).
- 24 Ibid., 210 and 130.
- 25 Ibid., 211.
- 26 Jonathan I. Israel, *European Jewry in the Age of Mercantilism, 1550–1750* (Oxford, 1998).
- 27 Such arguments are mentioned in the reports on the Jew Bill in the article “London,” *Göttingische Anzeigen von gelehrten Sachen*, Mar. 14, 1754, pp. 257–61.
- 28 For a challenge to the view that cameralism was a form of mercantilism, see Andre Wakefield, “Cameralism: A German Alternative to Mercantilism,” in *Mercantilism Reimagined: Political Economy in Early Modern Britain and Its Empire*, ed. Philip J. Stern and Carl Wennerlind (New York, 2013), 134–50.
- 29 See Mordechai Breuer, “The Early Modern Period,” in *German-Jewish History in Modern Times*, ed. Michael Meyer, 4 vols. (New York, 1996), 1: 102–3, 144–49; Selma Stern, *Der Preussische Staat und die Juden*, 2 vols.

- (Tübingen, 1962), vol. 1; and Stefi Jersch-Wenzel, *Juden und "Franzosen" in der Wirtschaft des Raumes Berlin/Brandenburg* (Berlin, 1978).
- 30 M., "Kurze Untersuchung der Frage: Ob die Juden nicht zur Handarbeit und Erlernung ehrlicher Professionen und Handwerker anzuhalten," in *Leipziger Sammlungen von wirthschaftlichen, Policey- Cammer- und Finantz-Sachen*, ed. Georg Heinrich Zincke, 16 vols. (Leipzig, 1749) 5: 578–605.
- 31 On Spener's position, see Martin Friedrich, *Zwischen Abwehr und Bekehrung: Die Stellung der deutschen evangelischen Theologie zum Judentum im 17. Jahrhundert* (Tübingen, 1988), 124–40. On the divergent approaches to Jews and Judaism among Pietists, see Peter Vogt, "Connectedness in Hope: German Pietism and the Jews," in *A Companion to German Pietism, 1660–1800*, ed. Douglas Shantz (Boston, 2014), 81–115.
- 32 M., "Kurze Untersuchung der Frage," 581.
- 33 Ibid., 581–82.
- 34 Ibid., 583.
- 35 Ibid., 581.
- 36 On the French term *régénération*, see Jay R. Berkovitz, *The Shaping of Jewish Identity in Nineteenth-Century France* (Detroit, 1989).
- 37 See, for example, the use around this time by the Pietist Siegmund Jakob Baumgarten, *Evangelische Glaubenslehre*, ed. Johann Salomo Semler (Halle, 1760).
- 38 M., "Kurze Untersuchung der Frage," 589. The phrase comes from Luther's commentary on Genesis and refers to parents' need to discipline their children for their own good.
- 39 M., "Kurze Untersuchung der Frage," 587.
- 40 Ibid.
- 41 M., "Kurze Untersuchung der Frage," 594–95.
- 42 Ibid., 596. All the voices for toleration cited by M. were Protestants, including Spener, Böhmer, Jacques Basnage, and Ludvig Holberg. As was often the case, statements about Jews were closely entangled with polemics between Christian denominations. On this, see Ari Joskowicz, *The Modernity of Others: Jewish Anti-Catholicism in Germany and France* (Stanford, 2013), 37–43.
- 43 On Böhmer, see Matthias J. Fritsch, *Religiöse Toleranz im Zeitalter der Aufklärung: Naturrechtliche Begründung – konfessionelle Differenzen* (Hamburg, 2004), 199–212.
- 44 Johann Andreas Erdmann Maschenbauer, *Der aus dem Reiche der Wissenschaften wohlversuchte Referendarius, oder auserlesene Sammlungen von allerhand vermischten Schrifften und Versuchen aus der Naturlehre, Arzneiwissenschaft, natürlichen Theologie und Rechtsgelehrsamkeit . . .* (Augsburg, 1750), part 2, 140–50.
- 45 *Schreiben eines Juden an einen Philosophen: Nebst der Antwort* (Berlin, 1753).
- 46 Jacob Toury, "Eine vergessene Frühschrift zur Emanzipation der Juden in Deutschland," *Bulletin des Leo Baeck Instituts* 48 (1969): 253–81; Jacob

[31]

*Toleration
in the Age of
Projects*

●

Ari
Joskowicz

- Katz, "The Term 'Jewish Emancipation': Its Origin and Historical Impact," in *Studies in Nineteenth-Century Jewish Intellectual History*, ed. Alexander Altmann (Cambridge, Mass., 1964), 10–11; Gad Freudenthal, "Aaron Solomon Gumpertz, Gotthold Ephraim Lessing, and the First Call for an Improvement of the Civil Rights of Jews in Germany (1753)," *AJS Review* 29 (2005): 299–353.
- 47 On the Jew Bill, see Thomas W. Perry, *Public Opinion, Propaganda, and Politics in Eighteenth-Century England: A Study of the Jew Bill of 1753* (Cambridge, Mass., 1962); Karp, *Politics of Jewish Commerce*, 67–93; and Dana Rabin, "The Jew Bill of 1753: Masculinity, Virility, and the Nation," *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 39, no. 2 (2006): 157–71.
- 48 Toury, "Die Behandlung jüdischer Problematik," 21–22.
- 49 Franklin Kopitzsch, "Lessing im Spannungsfeld von Toleranz und Intoleranz," in *Deutsche Aufklärung und Judenemanzipation: Internationales Symposium anlässlich der 250. Geburtstage Lessings und Mendelssohns*, ed. Walter Grab (Tel Aviv, 1980), 42–43; "Göttingen," *Göttingische Anzeigen von gelehrten Sachen*, Mar. 14, 1754, pp. 257–61.
- 50 Gotthold Ephraim Lessing, *Die Juden*, in *Gesammelte Werke*, ed. Paul Rilla, 10 vols. (Berlin, 1954), 1: 531–71.
- 51 Wilfried Barner, "Lessings 'Die Juden' im Zusammenhang seines Frühwerks," in *Humanität und Dialog: Lessing und Mendelssohn in neuer Sicht*, ed. Ehrhard Bahr, Edward P. Harris, and Lawrence G. Lyon (Detroit, 1979), 189–201.
- 52 It was first performed only in 1766, however.
- 53 Lessing was not the first to use the figure of the "noble Jew" in literature for critical and utopian purposes. See Wolfgang Martens, "Zur Figur eines edlen Juden im Aufklärungsroman vor Lessing," *Wolfenbütteler Studien zur Aufklärung* 10 (1994): 65–77.
- 54 Klaus L. Berghahn, *Die Grenzen der Toleranz: Juden und Christen im Zeitalter der Aufklärung* (Cologne, 2000), 71–72.
- 55 Harald Schulze, *Lessings Toleranzbegriff: Eine theologische Studie* (Göttingen, 1969), 43; Kopitzsch, "Lessing," 29–85.
- 56 "Berlin," review of *Die Juden*, by G. E. Lessing, *Göttingische Anzeigen von gelehrten Sachen*, June 13, 1754, 620–22, reprinted in *Lessing im Urtheile seiner Zeitgenossen: Zeitungskritiken, Berichte und Notizen, Lessing und seine Werke betreffend, aus den Jahren 1747–1781*, ed. Julius Braun, 3 vols. (Berlin, 1884), 1: 35–37.
- 57 See, for example, Lessing, *Die Juden*, 538.
- 58 Review of *Die Juden*, 36.
- 59 Gotthold Ephraim Lessing, "Über das Lustspiel 'Die Juden' im vierten Teile der Lessingschen Schriften," in Rilla, *Gesammelte Werke*, 3: 654.
- 60 Ibid.
- 61 Ibid., 655. Translation from Ritchie Robertson, *The Jewish Question in German Literature, 1749–1939: Emancipation and Its Discontents* (Oxford, 1999), 36.

- 62 Johann David Michaelis, *Vertheydigung des wegen der Jüdischen Selichoth gestellten Bedenkens seines Vaters des D. Chr. Ben. Michaelis gegen die in den Regensburger Gelehrten Zeitungen befindliche ungütige Beurtheilung solchen Bedenkens* (Halle, 1745).
- 63 Ibid., 14.
- 64 Cf. Karp, *Politics of Jewish Commerce*, 91–93.
- 65 Johann Heinrich Gottlob von Justi, *Staatswirthschaft oder systematische Abhandlung aller Oeconomischen und Cameral-Wissenschaften, die zur Regierung eines Landes erfordert werden*, 2 vols. (Leipzig, 1755).
- 66 Tribe, *Governing Economy*, 55.
- 67 Wakefield, “Apostles,” 56. More general accounts of Justi’s scientific contributions can be found in Tribe, *Governing Economy*, 55–90; Albion Small, *The Cameralists: The Pioneers of German Social Polity* (New York, 1962 [1st ed., Chicago, 1909]), 285–314; and Dittrich, *Die deutschen und österreichischen Kameralisten*, 103–10.
- 68 Justi, *Staatswirthschaft* (1755), 1: 120.
- 69 Ibid., 1: 129.
- 70 Ibid.
- 71 Johann Heinrich Gottlob von Justi, *Staatswirthschaft oder Systematische Abhandlung aller Oekonomischen und Cameral-Wissenschaften die zur Regierung eines Landes erfordert werden*, 2 vols. (Leipzig, 1758), 1: 150–51. The *Göttingische Intelligenzblätter* were meant to be reprints of older editions of the *Policy-Amts-Nachrichten*. “Göttingen,” *Göttingische Anzeigen von gelehrten Sachen*, Feb. 24, 1757, pp. 233–34, asked for subscribers to this work. Since Justi left Göttingen a few months after the announcement, and after Hanover refused to give him further funds for his journal, it is unlikely that the reprint was ever produced. See Wakefield, “Apostles,” 80–81, on his financial problems with the journal. No catalogue or bibliography I consulted listed the *Göttingische Intelligenzblätter*.
- 72 Johann Heinrich Gottlob von Justi, “Ob die Juden einem Lande nützliche sind,” *Göttingische Policy-Amts Nachrichten* 3, no. 16 (1757): 61–63; no. 17 (1757): 65–67.
- 73 “Göttingen,” *Göttingische Anzeigen von gelehrten Sachen*, Mar. 14, 1757, pp. 313–14. On Michaelis’s negative opinion of Justi, see Wakefield, *Disordered Police State*, 75.
- 74 Justi also reprinted his proposals in his 1760 treatise *Grundfeste*, retaining all parts of the piece but formatting it in the style of a textbook.
- 75 Justi, “Ob die Juden,” 61.
- 76 Ibid., 65, 66. On the importance Justi ascribed to patriotism for the working of the state after the Seven Years’ War, see Nicholas Vazsonyi, “Montesquieu, Friedrich Carl von Moser, and the ‘National Spirit Debate’ in Germany, 1765–1767,” *German Studies Review* 22, no. 2 (1999): 232–33.
- 77 Justi did not mention the idea that Jews invented bills of exchange, which Montesquieu had popularized; see Francesca Trivellato, “Credit,

[33]

*Toleration
in the Age of
Projects*

•
Ari
Joskowicz

- Honor, and the Early Modern French Legend of the Jewish Invention of Bills of Exchange,” *Journal of Modern History* 84, no. 2 (2012): 323.
- [34] 78 Justi, “Ob die Juden,” 66.
- 79 Christian Konrad Wilhelm von Dohm, *Über die bürgerliche Verbesserung der Juden, 2 Teile in einem Band* (Hildesheim, 1973 [1st ed., Berlin, 1781]), 7–8.
- Jewish Social Studies* ●
- Vol. 22
- No. 2
- 80 In his *Staatswirthschaft* (1755), 1: 275–86, Justi had considered releasing beggars from workhouses only with an outside guarantee for their conduct. In Johann Heinrich Gottlob von Justi, *Grundsätze der Policey-Wissenschaft in einem vernünftigen, auf den Endzweck der Policey gegründeten Zusammenhange und zum Gebrauch academischer Vorlesungen abgefasst* (Göttingen, 1759 [1st ed., 1756]), 248–49, he then suggested that they should be released if they proved diligent. Later, in Johann Heinrich Gottlob von Justi, “Sicheres Mittel das Betteln in einem Lande gänzlich abzuschaffen,” in *Deutsche Memoires*, 3 vols. (Vienna, 1761), 3: 21–27, he suggested interminable detention.
- 81 On perfectibility in eighteenth-century French debates on Jews, see Schechter, *Obstinate Hebrews*, 62.
- 82 On the time frame for ending begging, see Justi, “Sicheres Mittel.”
- 83 This early utilitarianism was also influential in the German debates of the 1780s. Moses Mendelssohn published a translation of the work into German in 1783. See Menasseh ben Israel, *Rettung der Juden* (Berlin, 1919), 54–59. It should be noted that the greatest part of ben Israel’s work was dedicated to theologically disproving claims about Jewish ritual crimes, however.
- 84 Although Justi did not introduce new statistical methods, he and other cameralists were part of a crucial debate with Johann Peter Süssmilch that established new quantitative and empirical methods in population research. Justus Nipperdey, “Johann Peter Süssmilch: From Divine Law to Human Intervention,” *Population* 66, no. 3–4 (2011): 611–36.
- 85 Dithmar, *Einleitung in die Oeconomischen Policei- und Cameral-Wissenschaften*, 140. Dithmar’s translation of Maimonides also suggests that he had some knowledge about Judaism, which never influenced his view of Jews as a problem. Moses Maimonides, *Constitutiones de jurejurando*, trans. Justus Christopher Dithmar (Lugduni in Batavis, 1706).
- 86 Justi, *Staatswirthschaft* (1758), 1: 123. For earlier cameralists, like Becher, eternal welfare (*ewige Wohlfahrt*) was as much the problem of the religious police as was the earthly wellbeing of the state. See Becher, *Politische Discurs*, 48.
- 87 Anaxagoras von Occident [J. H. G. von Justi], *Physicalische und Politische Betrachtungen über die Erzeugung des Menschen und Bevölkerung der Länder* (Smyrna, 1769).
- 88 *Ibid.*, 43.
- 89 *Ibid.*, 43–44.

- 90 Ibid., 44.
- 91 Wakefield, "Police Chemistry," 243, 259.
- 92 Anaxagoras von Occident, *Physicalische und Politische Betrachtungen*, 127.
- 93 Ibid., 127–28.
- 94 Eric Nelson, *The Hebrew Republic: Jewish Sources and the Transformation of European Political Thought* (Cambridge, Mass., 2011).
- 95 Isabell Hull, *Sexuality, State and Civil Society in Germany, 1700–1815* (Ithaca, N.Y., 1996), 177. Justi similarly used examples from China for his purposes. See Johanna M. Menzel, "The Sinophilism of J. H. G. Justi," *Journal of the History of Ideas* 17, no. 3 (1956): 300–310, and Franz Leander Fillafer and Jürgen Osterhammel, "Cosmopolitanism and the German Enlightenment," in *The Oxford Handbook of Modern German History*, ed. Helmut Walser Smith (New York, 2011), 123.
- 96 Johann Albrecht Philippi, *Der vergrößerte Staat* (Leipzig, 1759), 151.
- 97 On the history of the term *Kornjuden*, see Manfred Gailus, "Die Erfindung des 'Korn-Juden': Zur Geschichte eines antijüdischen Feindbildes des 18. und frühen 19. Jahrhunderts," *Historische Zeitschrift* 272, no. 3 (2001): 597–622; on Philippi's work, see 609–11.
- 98 Johann Albrecht Philippi, *Der vertheidigte Kornjude* (Berlin, 1765), 65.
- 99 Johann Bernhard Hoffer, *Beyträge zum Policyrecht der Teutschen* (Frankfurt, 1765).
- 100 For a negative assessment of Hoffer's legacy, see Johann Christian Pauly, *Die Entstehung des Polizeirechts als wissenschaftliche Disziplin: Ein Beitrag zur Wissenschaftsgeschichte des öffentlichen Rechts* (Frankfurt, 2000), 49.
- 101 Hoffer, *Beyträge zum Policyrecht*, 464.
- 102 Ibid., 442.
- 103 Ibid., 480.
- 104 Ibid., 459.
- 105 Ibid., 462, 467–68.
- 106 Johann Heinrich Ludwig Bergius, *Policy- und Cameral-Magazin in welchem nach alphabetischer Ordnung die vornehmsten und wichtigsten bey dem Policy- und Cameralwesen vorkommende Materien ... erläutert werden* (Frankfurt, 1767).
- 107 Ibid., 230–32.
- 108 Ibid., 243–44.
- 109 Ibid., 244–48.
- 110 Johann Friedrich von Pfeiffer, *Lehrbegriff sämtlicher oeconomischer und Cameralwissenschaften*, 5 vols. (Stuttgart, 1764), 5: 53–54. See Dittrich, *Die deutschen und österreichischen Kameralisten*, 98–103, on Pfeiffer's biography and work.
- 111 Pfeiffer, *Lehrbegriff*, 5: 54.
- 112 Ibid., 1: 5.
- 113 Johann Peter Willebrand, *Innbegriff der Policy nebst Betrachtungen über das Wachsthum der Städte* (Leipzig, 1767), 58–60.
- 114 Ibid., 58.

[35]

*Toleration
in the Age of
Projects*

●

Ari
Joskowicz

- 115 Ibid., 59.
- 116 Dohm, *Über die bürgerliche Verbesserung*, 111–14.
- [36] 117 Ibid., 114; Walker, *German Home Towns*, 166–70; cf. Karp, *Politics of Jewish Commerce*, 101–2.
- Jewish 118 Dohm, *Verbesserung*, 114.
- Social 119 On Dohm's life, see the work of his first biographer, Wilhelm Gronau, *Christian Wilhelm von Dohm nach seinem Willen und Handeln: Ein biographischer Versuch* (Lemgo, 1824).
- Studies ●
- Vol. 22 120 On the discipline of statistics, see Gerhard Lutz, "Geographie und Statistik im 18. Jahrhundert: Zu Neugliederung und Inhalten von 'Fächern' im Bereich der historischen Wissenschaften," in *Statistik und Staatsbeschreibung in der Neuzeit, vornehmlich im 16.–18. Jahrhundert*, ed. Mohammed Rassem and Justin Stagl (Paderborn, 1980), 249–63. On Dohm's student days in Göttingen, see Ilsegrit Dambacher, *Christian Wilhelm von Dohm: Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte des preußischen aufgeklärten Beamtentums und seiner Reformbestrebungen am Ausgang des 18. Jahrhunderts* (Bern, 1974), 9–14.
- No. 2 121 Mordché Wolf Rapaport, *Chr. W. Dohm: Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der Nationalökonomie* (Leipzig, 1907), 12–13.
- 122 Tribe, *Governing Economy*, 19–34.
- 123 Dohm, *Verbesserung*, 131. Similar statements can be found in Justi, *Staatswirthschaft* (1755), 1: 44: "Das Wohl des Regenten und der Unterthanen sind unzertrennlich."
- 124 Dohm, *Verbesserung*, 33.
- 125 Carl Gottlob Rössig, *Die neuere Literatur der Polizey und Cameralistik vorzüglich vom Jahr 1762 bis 1802*, pt. 2 (Chemnitz, 1802).
- 126 Ibid., 12–17, on Juden, and 17–18, on Judenrecht.
- 127 Ursula Goldenbaum, "Das Publikum als Garant der Freiheit der Gelehrtenrepublik: Die öffentliche Debatte über den Jugement de l'Académie Royale des Sciences et Belles Lettres sur une Lettre prétendue de M. de Leibnitz, 1752–1753," in *Appell an das Publikum: Die öffentliche Debatte in der deutschen Aufklärung, 1687–1796*, ed. Ursula Goldenbaum and Frank Grunert (Berlin, 2004), 559 n. 155.
- 128 Thomas Abbt, review of *Die Wirkungen und Folgen so wohl der wahren als der falschen Staatskunst in der Geschichte des Psammitichus, Königs von Egypten*, by Johann Justi, *Briefe, die Neueste Litteratur betreffend* (1761), 255–84.
- 129 Ibid., 255. See also Ferdinand Frensdorff, *Die Vertretung der ökonomischen Wissenschaften in Göttingen vornehmlich im 18. Jahrhundert* (Berlin, 1901), 526–27. The quantity of Justi's writing seems to have become a point of ongoing ridicule between Abbt and Mendelssohn. For example, in a letter from Jan. 1, 1763, Mendelssohn criticizes Abbt for his attempt to answer a prize question of the Berlin Academy, saying: "so muß die Schreibseeligkeit des Herrn von Justi in Sie gefahren seyn [the writing mania of von Justi must have entered into you]." Moses Mendelssohn,

Gesammelte Schriften, Jubiläumsausgabe, ed. Ismar Elbogen et al., 25 vols. (Stuttgart-Bad Cannstatt, 1971–), 12.1: 4.

- 130 Annotations to a letter from Thomas Abbt to Moses Mendelssohn, in Moses Mendelssohn, *Gesammelte Schriften*, 11: 495; see also Alexander Altmann, *Moses Mendelssohn: A Biographical Study* (Philadelphia, 1973), 199.
- 131 Moses Mendelssohn, *Gesammelte Schriften*, 5.1: xxv; idem, review of *Poésies diverses*, by Frederick II, King of Prussia, in *Briefe, die Neueste Litteratur betreffend* (1760), 257–71, 273–88.
- 132 Nicolai's account was published as "Fortsetzung der Berlinischen Nachlese," *Neue Berlinische Monatsschrift* 18 (Dec. 1807): 340–59, reprinted in Mendelssohn, *Gesammelte Schriften*, 5.1: xxxii–xli; on the interview with the Generalfiskal, see xxxv–xxxvii.
- 133 Ibid., xxxix–xl.
- 134 Karl Gotthelf Lessing, *Gotthold Ephraim Lessings Leben, nebst seinem noch übrigen litterarischen Nachlasse* (Berlin, 1793), 208.
- 135 Isaac M. Wise, "Reformed Judaism (1871)," *Selected Writings of Isaac M. Wise* (Bedford, Mass., 2009 [1st ed., Cincinnati, Ohio, 1900]), 310–11; Mayer Kayserling, "Moses Mendelssohn," in *The Jewish Encyclopedia*, ed. Isidore Singer, 12 vols. (New York, 1924), 8: 479–85; Peter Jameson Mercer-Taylor, *The Life of Mendelssohn* (Cambridge, Engl., 2000), 10. Later Jewish commentators did not always know who Justi was. Meyer Kayserling had a more poetic rendering of the incident and believed Justi to have been a preacher; see Meyer Kayserling, *Moses Mendelssohn: Sein Leben und seine Werke; Nebst einem Anhang ungedruckter Briefe von und an Moses Mendelssohn* (Leipzig, 1862), 122–23.
- 136 Marcus Obert, *Die naturrechtliche "politische Metaphysik" des Johann Heinrich Gottlob von Justi (1717–1771)* (Frankfurt, 1992); Bertram Schefold, ed., *Vademecum zu einem Klassiker des Kameralismus, Handelsblatt-Bibliothek "Klassiker der Nationalökonomie"* (Düsseldorf, 1993); Ulrich Adam, *The Political Economy of J.H.G. Justi* (Bern, 2006); Backhaus, *Beginnings of Political Economy*; Ere Pertti Nokkala, "The Machine of State in Germany: The Case of Johann Heinrich Gottlob von Justi (1717–1771)," *Contributions to the History of Concepts* 5, no. 1 (2009): 71–93.
- 137 The best-known example is Arthur Hertzberg, *The French Enlightenment and the Jews: The Origins of Modern Anti-Semitism* (New York, 1970). Many newer accounts with a more nuanced approach to the Enlightenment also fall into this category: see Jonathan M. Hess, *Germans, Jews and the Claims of Modernity* (New Haven, Conn., 2002), and Aamir Mufti, *Enlightenment in the Colony: The Jewish Question and the Crisis of Postcolonial Culture* (Princeton, 2007).
- 138 Robert Musil, *The Man without Qualities*, trans. Sophie Wilkins (New York, 1996), 10–13.

[37]

*Toleration
in the Age of
Projects*

•
Ari
Joskowicz

Copyright of Jewish Social Studies is the property of Indiana University Press and its content may not be copied or emailed to multiple sites or posted to a listserv without the copyright holder's express written permission. However, users may print, download, or email articles for individual use.