A Finding Aid to the
Alexander Guttmann Papers

Manuscript Collection No. 663
Collection Summary

Title Alexander Guttmann Papers
Dates 1908-1988
Collection Number MS-663
Repository The Jacob Rader Marcus Center of the American Jewish Archives
Creator Guttmann, Alexander, 1904-1994
Extent 11.6 linear feet (29 Hollinger boxes
Language of the Material English, Hebrew, German, and Hungarian

Administrative Information

Biographical Sketch
Alexander Guttmann was born in 1904 in Budapest, Hungary to Michael and Camilla Guttmann. His father was a renowned rabbi and scholar who was also the president of the Budapest Theological Seminary. Guttmann received undergraduate degrees in Semitic languages from both the University of Budapest and the University of Breslau. In 1924, he received his Ph.D. from the University of Breslau.

Guttmann began his academic career in Berlin at the Liberal Teachers College and as a lecturer in a local adult education program. He became a professor at the Hochschule fur die Wissenschaft des Judentums in 1935. At the Hochschule, Guttmann had the exclusive privilege to ordain rabbis. Several of these students, including Emil Fackenheim, Abraham Brody and Abraham Joshua Heschel, later became prominent scholars at universities in America, Europe and Israel. In 1940, Guttmann and his family accepted an invitation from Julian Morgenstern to become a visiting Talmud professor at Hebrew Union College. He became a permanent member of the faculty in 1943.

As a professor at HUC-JIR, Guttmann frequently acted as the campus responsa on halakhah issues for President Nelson Glueck and other faculty. He was active in campus politics and a mentor to several master's and Ph.D. candidates. Guttmann revised, created and ran the Talmud and Codes courses for the forty years he was on faculty. Younger faculty members adapted and created their own courses with the full cooperation and guidance of Guttmann.

Guttmann retired from the HUC-JIR faculty in 1978, although he continued to teach. In 1981, Guttmann returned to Germany as a visiting professor of Talmud for one year at the newly formed Hochschule fur Judische Studien in Heidelberg. Because of his teaching commitments to HUC-JIR he was unable to teach sessions in succeeding years.

In June 1984, Sotheby's auctioned off an anonymous lot of Judaica books which had been moved by Guttmann from the Hochschule to the United States during his escape from Nazi Germany. Guttmann said that H. Veit Simon, director of the Hochschule, had given him the property and the rights to dispose of it prior to his Berlin departure. However, the sale was blocked by various survivor groups and ownership of the materials became a court case. In 1985 a settlement was reached between the New York State Attorney General and the Guttmann family resolving the dispute.

Guttmann authored a number of books starting with Das reaktionelle und sachliche Verhaeltnis zwischen Misna und Tosephet in 1928, which won the Israel Lewy Prize at the University of Breslau. Other titles included Rabbinic Judaism in the Making, Studies in Rabbinic Judaism and Struggle over Reform in Rabbinic Literature During the Last Century and A Half. He was an active contributor to several journals including the Hebrew Union College Annual where he also served as a committee member.

Guttmann participated in several Jewish scholarly organizations, including the Colloquium on Judaism and Christianity at Harvard in 1966, committees in both the Central Conference of American Rabbis, and Union of American Hebrew Congregations, and the World Congress of Jewish Studies (for which he won a 1969 Guggenheim fellowship in support of his lecture).

Guttmann was also an avid amateur photographer and made frequent trips to Israel and Europe. He died in Cincinnati, Ohio in 1994.


Scope and Content

The collection details the scholarly career and personal life of Alexander Guttmann. Guttmann served as a professor at the Hochschule in Berlin prior to his emigration to America in 1940 when he became a Professor of Talmud at Hebrew Union College. He remained there until his retirement in 1978. An ordained rabbi, Guttmann wrote and lectured extensively.
The papers consist of correspondence, research notes and writings and materials relating to his 1985 court case. A noted expert on halakkah, much of his correspondence and research files relate to this topic. Another common subject in correspondence is the advising of doctoral students working on their coursework and dissertations. There is information about the Guttmann family’s escape to America and the subsequent efforts to obtain restitution for their property.

**Arrangement**
The Alexander Guttmann Papers are divided into six (6) series: A. Correspondence; B. Lectures, Sermons and Writings; C. Responsa and Research Files; D. Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion; E. Court Case Records; F. Personal and Family Records.

**Access Restrictions**
All papers pertaining to or about living family members are restricted until one (1) year after their death.

**Preferred Citation**
Footnotes and bibliographic references should refer to the Alexander Guttmann Papers and the American Jewish Archives. A suggestion for at least the first citation is as follows:

[Description], [Date], Box #, Folder #. MS-663. Alexander Guttmann Papers. American Jewish Archives, Cincinnati, Ohio.

**Provenance**
Received from the Guttmann family, Cincinnati, Ohio, September 1992 and Herbert Zafren, Cincinnati, Ohio, 1996.

**Processing Information**

**Index Terms**

**Subjects**  
Biblical scholars / Holocaust survivors / Rabbis / Talmud

**Personal Names**
Guttmann, Alexander / Guttmann, Manya / Guttmann, Michael, 1872-1942

**Corporate Names**
Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion / Hochschule fur die Wissenschaft des Judentums (Berlin, Germany)

**Media**
Responsa (Jewish law)

**Series A. Correspondence, 1920-1988**

**Extent**  
4 linear feet (10 Hollinger boxes)

**Scope and Content Note**
Consists of material relating to halakkah queries, HUC student candidacies, and publications. The correspondence is both personal and professional. Guttmann corresponded with current HUC students such as Stephen Pasemanek or his former Hochschule students such as Harris Hirschberg, a rabbi in Los Angeles, California, about both their research interests and family lives. Of special interest are the Hungarian claims, liftvan (luggage), and Morgenstern correspondence which concerns the family emigration to the United States in 1940.

**Arrangement**
Arranged alphabetically by name. Where a correspondent has more than five items, that correspondence has been given its own folder. If correspondence is in multiple languages, or a language other than English, it is noted in parentheses in the box and folder list. Family relationships are identified in brackets when known.

**Box and Folder Listing**

Box 1. Folder 1. A, General.

Box 1. Folder 2. Abraham, Henry S. [German], 1945


Box 1. Folder 5. American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, 1944
Box 1. Folder 6. Apfel, Ha [German], 1944-1971
Box 1. Folder 7. Arfa, Cyrus, 1960-1961
Box 1. Folder 11. Baeck, Leo [German], 1940-1956
Box 1. Folder 15. Berkowitz, Lazlo, 1983
Box 1. Folder 16. Berlin, Germany. Jüdische Enzyklöpadie/ Jüdisch Verlag [German], 1927-1930
Box 1. Folder 17. Berlin, Germany. Jüdischen Gemeinde [German], 1925-1936
Box 1. Folder 18. Berlin, Germany. Lehrenstalt für die Wissenschaft des Judentums [German], 1930-1941
Box 1. Folder 21. Bloch, Chaim [Hebrew], undated
Box 1. Folder 23. Blooming, Sister Mary Catherine, 1973-1974, undated
Box 1. Folder 27. Braude, Abraham S., 1976
Box 1. Folder 28. Breslau, Germany. Kuratorium [German], 1927-1929
Box 1. Folder 29. Brichto, Chanan [Herbert], 1965-1969
Box 1. Folder 30. Brieger, Gerald. Includes candidacy exams, 1975
Box 1. Folder 32. Brody, Abraham S. [German], 1942-1974
Box 1. Folder 33. Buchanan, George W., 1963-1976
Box 1. Folder 34. C-D, General.
Box 2. Folder 1. Carlebach, A. [German], 1933-1936
Box 2. Folder 2. Carmilly, Moshe, 1979-1983
Box 2. Folder 4. Chyet, Stanley, 1983
Box 2. Folder 5. Chofetz Chaim Day School (Cincinnati, Ohio), 1949
Box 2. Folder 6. Jewish Community Relations Council (Cincinnati, Ohio), 1984
Box 2. Folder 7. K.K. Adath Israel (Cincinnati, Ohio), 1953-1955
Box 2. Folder 8. Colloquium on Judaism and Christianity, 1966
Box 2. Folder 12. David, Jerome, 1974-1980
Box 2. Folder 15. E-F, General.
Box 2. Folder 17. Eisenberg, Azriel, 1964
Box 2. Folder 18. Elbogen, Ismar [See also Jüdische Verlag] [English, German], 1935-1961
Box 2. Folder 20. Fischel, Heinz, 1940-1971
Box 2. Folder 21. Fischer, Lajos [Hungarian], 1956-1958, undated
Box 2. Folder 22. Foreign Claims Settlement Commission Restitution, 1975
Box 2. Folder 23. Frank, Herbert [German], 1940-1943
Box 2. Folder 25. Freier, G. [German], 1966, undated
Box 2. Folder 27. Frisch, Ephraim, 1954-1957
Box 3. Folder 1. Galliner, Elisabeth and Helmud [German], 1935-1963
Box 3. Folder 2. Galliner, J. [German], 1932-1949
Box 3. Folder 5. Glickstein, Gary, 1974-1980
Box 3. Folder 15. Gross, Anna and Eugene [Hungarian], 1949-1950, undated
Box 3. Folder 17. Gruenwald, Max [English, German, Hebrew], 1955-1968
Box 3. Folder 19. Guttmann, Ariel [son], 1946-1975
Box 3. Folder 20. Gutmann, Henry [brother] [English, German], 1927-1945
Box 3. Folder 21. Gutmann, Henry [brother] [English, German], 1946-1948
Box 3. Folder 22. Gutmann, Henry [brother] [English, German], 1949-1969
Box 3. Folder 23. Gutmann, Henry [brother] [English, German], 1970-1988, undated
Box 4. Folder 1. Gutmann, Manya Kampf [wife] [English, German], 1940-1964
Box 4. Folder 2. Gutmann, Manya Kampf [wife] [English, German], 1965-1968
Box 4. Folder 3. Gutmann, Manya Kampf [wife] [English, German], 1969-1971, undated
Box 4. Folder 4. Gutmann, Michael and Camilla [parents] [German, Hebrew], 1920-1933
Box 4. Folder 5. Gutmann, Michael and Camilla [parents] [German, Hebrew], 1934-1952
Box 4. Folder 6. Gutmann, Michael and Camilla [parents] [English, German], undated
Box 4. Folder 11. Hans, ? [German], 1942
Box 4. Folder 13. Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion. Faculty Publication Committee, 1974
Box 4. Folder 15. Hochshule für Jüdische Studien (Heidelberg, Germany) [German], 1979-1983
Box 4. Folder 16. Heineman, L. [German], 1943-1957
Box 4. Folder 17. Heisman, Mordecai, 1944-1945
Box 4. Folder 18. Helfern, Judith [German], 1940-1978, undated
Box 4. Folder 19. Herman, Ginzcler [German], 1928-1948
Box 4. Folder 20. Herscher, Uri, 1977
Box 4. Folder 23. Hirschberg, Harris [German, Hebrew], 1943-1960
Box 5. Folder 1. Hirschberg, Harris [German, Hebrew], 1961-1970
Box 5. Folder 2. Hirschberg, Harris [German, Hebrew], 1971-1977, undated
Box 5. Folder 3. Hoffman, Lawrence, 1971-1973
Box 4. Folder 4. Hungary claims [English, German, Hungarian], 1947-1950
Box 5. Folder 5. Hungary claims, undated
Box 5. Folder 6. Insel, Eugene and Margaret [English, German], 1949-1965
Box 5. Folder 7. Jacob, Walter, 1945-1985
Box 5. Folder 10. Jerusalmi, Isaac [Hebrew], undated
Box 5. Folder 12. Jüdische Blindenstalt für Deutschland [German], 1927
Box 5. Folder 14. Kammermeyer, J., 1944
Box 5. Folder 15. Kampf, Abraham and Tauba [father and mother-in-law] [German, Hungarian], 1940-1972
Box 5. Folder 17. Katten, Max and Vilma [sister] [English, German], 1927-1942
Box 5. Folder 18. Katten, Max and Vilma [sister] [English, German], 1943-1950
Box 5. Folder 19. Katten, Max and Vilma [sister] [English, German], 1951-1959
Box 5. Folder 20. Katten, Vilma [sister] [English, German], 1960-1986, undated
Box 6. Folder 1. Katten, Merianne, 1940
Box 6. Folder 2. Katten, Nanny [German], 1940-1941
Box 6. Folder 5. Kaufman, Max, 1959, undated
Box 6. Folder 6. Kende family [cousin] [Hebrew], 1959-1985, undated
Box 6. Folder 9. Klein, Moric [Hungarian], 1940-1946, undated
Box 6. Folder 14. Landsberger, Dora [German], 1964-1966
Box 6. Folder 15. Lauterbach, Jacob, 1928-1940
Box 6. Folder 17. Leo Baeck Institute, 1955-1966
Box 6. Folder 19. Liftvan. Re: luggage transfer from Germany [German], 1939-1942, undated
Box 6. Folder 21. Lost, M. [German], 1938-1941
Box 6. Folder 22. Lowinger, S. [Hebrew, Hungarian], 1946-1972
Box 6. Folder 25. Mannheimer, J. [German], 1948-1952
Box 6. Folder 26. Marcus, Jacob Rader, 1942-1986
Box 6. Folder 31. Morgenstern, Julian [English, German], 1928-1940
Box 6. Folder 32. Morgenstern, Julian, 1941-1974
Box 7. Folder 1. Mosad, Harav Kook, 1975
Box 7. Folder 2. Moses, Sig, 1940
Box 7. Folder 5. Nathan, Y. [German], 1941
Box 7. Folder 17. Passamanec, Stephen, 1961-1965
Box 7. Folder 21. Pessner, ? [German], 1935-1941
Box 7. Folder 22. Petuchowski, Jakob [English, Hebrew], 1965-1978, undated
Box 7. Folder 23. Philo Press, 1963
Box 7. Folder 30. Raynor, John, 1965-1973
Box 7. Folder 32. Rivkin, Ellis, 1965-1979
Box 8. Folder 1. Roseman, Kenneth, 1966-1972, undated
1968-1973
Box 10. Folder 1. Veit Simon, Heinrich [German], 1936-1940
Box 10. Folder 3. Voëckers, Johannes [German], 1976-1982
Box 10. Folder 5. Wallach, Leopold [English, German], 1940-1976
Box 10. Folder 7. Wedding telegrams, 1937
Box 10. Folder 11. Weinryb, Bernard, 1943
Box 10. Folder 15. Whitman, Esther Guttmann [daughter], 1957-1968, undated
Box 10. Folder 16. Wiener, Tori [German], 1945-1946
Box 10. Folder 17. Wolf, Sylvan, 1962
Box 10. Folder 19. World Jewish Congress, 1944
Box 10. Folder 20. Zionist Organization of America, 1945-1946
Box 10. Folder 22. Unidentified correspondence.

Series B. Lectures, Sermons and Writings, 1928-1983

Extent 1.6 linear feet (4 Hollinger boxes)

Scope and Content Note Writings are in either draft or note form, and are sometimes accompanied by relevant correspondence. Many of the lectures were given either at the Hochschule or HUC-JIR. Manuscript writings do not normally identify their eventual place of publication.

Arrangement Arranged alphabetically by title.

Box and Folder Listing

Box 11. Folder 1. Adult Education lecture, undated
Box 11. Folder 2. Article fragments, undated
Box 11. Folder 3. Bann im Judentum im fruhtalmudischer Zeit [German], undated
Box 11. Folder 4. Bible interpretations and observations, undated


Box 12. Folder 16. Pharisees and Sadducees: an opinion, undated

Box 12. Folder 17. Place of the Minhag in the Talmud, undated

Box 12. Folder 18. Psychology as applied by rabbis with respect to and during the Nazi Holocaust, undated

Box 12. Folder 19. Punkko die altasyrischen hethischen Gesetz und das alte Testament [German], undated


Box 14. Folder 1. Das redaktionelle und sachliche Verhallniz zwischen Misna und Tosephta. Review [German], 1928-1929

Box 14. Folder 2. Responsa- Life Cycle [Hebrew], 1973


Box 14. Folder 4. Road to the Promised Land. Ordination address, 1973

Box 14. Folder 5. Role of Laymen in Talmudic and Rabbinic Laws, undated

Box 14. Folder 6. Second Commonwealth, undated


Box 14. Folder 10. Some aspects of theoretical halakkah, undated

Box 14. Folder 11. Some rabbinical authorities and codifiers, undated

Box 14. Folder 12. Some responsa dealing with Holocaust causes, 1971

Box 14. Folder 13. Spatpharisaertum [German], 1969

Box 14. Folder 14. Stellund des Minhag im Talmud [German], 1939

Box 14. Folder 15. Struggle over Reform in Rabbinic Literature, 1973-1975

Box 14. Folder 16. Talmud lecture, undated

Box 14. Folder 17. Talmud: a few glimpses, undated

Box 14. Folder 18. Talmud and Antisemitism, undated


Box 14. Folder 20. Talmud- Vergangenheit und Gegenwort [German], undated
Box 14. Folder 21. Tragedies at Hebrew Union College, undated
Box 14. Folder 22. Undated speeches, undated
Box 14. Folder 23. Unsere leser schreiben [German], 1970
Box 14. Folder 24. Weintraub, Joseph. Tribute, undated
Box 14. Folder 25. Woman Rabbi, 1982

Series C. Responsa and Research Files, 1936-1975

Extent 2.4 linear feet (6 Hollinger boxes)

Scope and Content Note Materials in the files range from personal notes to printed sources and Talmudic authorities. Some of the material is accompanied by the original correspondence requesting information about the subject. Guttmann frequently provided responsa for his fellow HUC-JIR faculty.

Arrangement Arranged alphabetically by subject.

Box and Folder Listing

Box 15. Folder 1. Abortion.
Box 15. Folder 2. Adoption.
Box 15. Folder 3. Articles [Hebrew].
Box 15. Folder 4. Artificial insemination.
Box 15. Folder 5. Ark.
Box 15. Folder 7. Bibliographies.
Box 15. Folder 8. Burial.
Box 15. Folder 9. Calendar.
Box 15. Folder 12. Children and registration.
Box 15. Folder 13. Codes- Responsa.
Box 15. Folder 15. Conversions- adoptions.
Box 15. Folder 17. Cyrogenics.
Box 15. Folder 18. Dead Sea Scrolls.
Box 15. Folder 19. Divorce.
Box 15. Folder 20. Exegenesis notes.
Box 15. Folder 22. Halakkah [German].
Box 15. Folder 24. Hebrew abbreviations.
Box 15. Folder 25. Hillel notes.
Box 15. Folder 27. Holocaust.
Box 15. Folder 28. Homosexuality.
Box 15. Folder 29. Human rights.
Box 16. Folder 1. Israel Double Standard.
Box 16. Folder 2. Jerusalem in Jewish law and custom.
Box 17. Folder 1. Notes.
Box 17. Folder 2. Numbers.
Box 17. Folder 3. Pesach.
Box 17. Folder 4. Pesach. Talmudic authorities.
Box 17. Folder 5. Pharisees notes.
Box 17. Folder 6. Potatoes.
Box 17. Folder 7. Prayerbooks.
Box 17. Folder 10. Rabbi as counselor.
Box 17. Folder 11. Rabbis in literature.
Box 17. Folder 13. Responsa literature [Hebrew].
Box 17. Folder 15. Sabbath.
Box 17. Folder 17. Sanhedrin notes.
Introduction:

Box 17. Folder 22. Synagogue dues.
Box 18. Folder 1. Tabulation notes.
Box 18. Folder 2. Talmud- rabbi relations.
Box 18. Folder 3. Talmudic rabbis.
Box 18. Folder 5. Terminology notes.
Box 18. Folder 6. Todstraffen notes.
Box 18. Folder 7. Torah reading.
Box 18. Folder 8. Transplants.
Box 18. Folder 10. Weinberg, Werner.
Box 18. Folder 15. Zadokte documents.
Box 19. Folder Unidentified Talmud notes [Hebrew].
Box 20. Folder Unidentified Talmud notes [Hebrew].

**Series D. Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion, 1940-1983**

**Extent** 0.8 linear feet (2 Hollinger boxes)

**Scope and Content Note** Includes correspondence and minutes from committees in which Guttmann was active, including the Committee on Religious Affairs and the Hebrew Union College Annual. Guttmann taught Talmud and other Biblical courses for over 40 years. This series has course bibliographies, exams and worksheets filed by course title. There are thesis reports for the students whom Guttmann advised. Finally, the series also has the degree requirements for majors, minors and Ph.Ds. These degree requirements are sorted alphabetically within the major/minor/Ph.D.

**Arrangement** Arranged alphabetically by subject, and chronologically within the subject.

**Box and Folder Listing**

Box 21. Folder 1. Bachelor of Hebrew Letters exams, 1957
Box 21. Folder 3. Codes courses, 1956-1975, undated
Box 21. Folder 5. Committee minutes, 1953-1973
Box 21. Folder 6. Committee on Curriculum, 1941-1979
Box 21. Folder 7. Committee on Faculty, 1974-1975
Series E. Court Case Records, 1984-1987

Extent  2 linear feet (5 Hollinger boxes)

Scope and Content Note  In June 1984, Sotheby's auctioned off an anonymous lot of Judaica books which had been moved by Guttman from the Hochschule to the United States. The sale was blocked by various survivor groups and the ownership of the materials became a court case. This series contains depositions and documents used in the case followed by articles about the case written by Guttman and others. It is primarily the official court documents, with some media response at the end.
Series F. Personal and Family Records, 1908-1984

Extent 0.8 linear feet (2 Hollinger boxes)

Scope and Content Note Includes classroom notes of both Alexander and Manya Guttmann, papers from the Hochschule in Berlin, photographs and police registration papers for the Guttmann family between 1937 and 1940.

Arrangement Arranged alphabetically by subject/name.

Box and Folder Listing

Box 28. Folder 1. Autograph book [German], undated
Box 28. Folder 2. Lehrenstadt (Berlin, Germany) [German], 1935-1940
Box 28. Folder 3. Lehrenstadt (Berlin, Germany) teaching worksheets [German], undated
Box 28. Folder 4. Biographical sketches, undated
Box 28. Folder 5. Birth certificates, 1939-1943
Box 28. Folder 6. Jewish Theological Seminary (Breslau, Germany) [German], 1921
Box 28. Folder 7. Calendars [German], 1938-1943
Box 28. Folder 8. Cartoon, undated
Box 28. Folder 9. Classroom notes [German], 1924
Box 28. Folder 10. Classroom notes [German], 1929, undated
Box 28. Folder 11. Educational records [German, Hungarian], 1920-1932, undated
Box 28. Folder 13. Family history, undated
Box 28. Folder 14. Guttmann, Manya Kampf. Classroom notes [German], 1930s
Box 29. Folder 2. Guttmann, Michael [German, Hungarian], undated
Box 29. Folder 3. Ministerial license/marriage certificates, 1961, undated
Box 29. Folder 5. Newspaper clippings [English, German], 1936-1981
Box 29. Folder 6. Official documents [Hungarian, German], 1920-1936
Box 29. Folder 7. Official documents [Hungarian, German], 1937-1941
Box 29. Folder 8. Passports, undated
Box 29. Folder 10. Photographs. Guttmann family, undated
Box 29. Folder 11. Photographs. Unidentified, undated
Box 29. Folder 12. Report cards [German, Hungarian], 1916-1936
Box 29. Folder 13. Schoolbooks [Hungarian], 1908-1920
Box 29. Folder 14. Talmudic postcards, undated