

HERMANN COHEN was one of the most eminent academic philosophers in Germany at the turn of the twentieth century. From 1875 to 1912, he taught at the University of Marburg, then relocating to teach at the College for the Science of Judaism (Lehranstalt für die Wissenschaft des Judentums) in Berlin (1913–1918). As a prominent exponent of neo-Kantian thought and a philosophically oriented “science of Judaism”, Cohen laid important foundations for theoretical and ethical orientation in modern scientific-technological civilization. From the first edition of his "Kants Theorie der Erfahrung" (1871), a book that made him famous, Cohen saw his continuous rethinking and transformation of the Kantian heritage not only as a historical or philological task: he pursued his philosophical study also as a critical analysis of contemporary cultural consciousness. At the beginning of the new century this approach culminated in his "System der Philosophie", originally envisaged in four parts, with three of them finally published between 1902 and 1912. He gained close familiarity with Jewish tradition at an early age through his father and his studies at the Jewish Theological Seminary in Breslau. On the basis of this knowledge, Cohen, in a number of publications, developed his conception of the religion of reason from the sources of Judaism, an uncompromisingly humane monotheism that excluded any form of fundamentalism. Neither the philosophical zeitgeist, which for many years stood opposed to Cohen's work, nor National Socialism proved able to suppress the powerful impact of his thought. Diverse thinkers such as Shmuel Hugo Bergman, Ernst Cassirer, Jacob Gordin, Albert Görland, Nicolai Hartmann, Heinz Heimsoeth, Jacob Klatzkin, Paul Natorp, David Neumark, José Ortega y Gasset, Franz Rosenzweig, Josef D. Soloveitchik, Wladyslaw Tatarkiewicz, Karl Vorländer, Max Wiener, and others had, early on in their development, crystallized their positions in significant measure in critical confrontation with the work of Hermann Cohen. They in turn went on to become key mentors of later generations in Europe, Israel and the United States.

<http://www.hermann-cohen-gesellschaft.org>

Exploratory Workshop
organized by the Department of Theology of Aristotle
University of Thessaloniki
in collaboration with the German General Consulate
of Thessaloniki, the Goethe Institute of Thessaloniki
and the Hermann Cohen Society

"Resistance against disappearance"

**The Meaning of the Universalist
Philosophy of Hermann Cohen for the
Experience of Tolerance in the
Cosmopolitical Arena of the Eastern
Mediterranean**

Monday 3 October 2011
Aristotle University of Thessaloniki
Faculty of Theology
1st floor

Program

10.00

A welcome from the academic authorities

10.15

The Culture of Tolerance in the Eastern Mediterranean - *Dirk Hartwig (Berlin/New York) - Renate Schindler (Berlin)*

SECTION I

HERMANN COHEN'S ETHICAL THOUGHT AND PHILOSOPHY OF RELIGION

10.30

Hermann Cohen's concept of Religion *Rico Sneller (Leiden)*

11.00

Hermann Cohen and His Idea of 'Negation of Privation': Monotheism, Logic and Historically Oriented Philosophy - *Renate Schindler (Berlin)*

Coffee brake

Section II. Memory Culture: Switch Stands for Today and Tomorrow?

12.00

Old Testament and Multicultural Society - *Miltiadis Konstantinou (Thessaloniki)*

12.15

The Greek Orthodox Church in the Greek legal framework - *Nikos Maghioros (Thessaloniki)*

12.30

Cultural Pluralism in Greece and Europe. Social and Ethical considerations - *Christos Tsironis (Thessaloniki)*

12.45

Cohen's concept of the Neighbour - *Rico Sneller (Leiden)*

13.00

Investigations into Jewish History and the Image of "little Jerusalem at the Aegean sea": "Erasing the Ottoman Empire" as Goal of Modernity? - *Renate Schindler (Berlin)*

13.00 – 14.00

Round Table and Concluding Discussion
Perspectives for Future Co-operation