



BACHER, WILHELM

BACHER, WILHELM (Bīnyāmīn Ze'ev) 1850-1913), was born in Liptószentmiklós, Hungary (today in Czechoslovakia). His father, Simon, was a Hebrew poet who translated a part of Sa'dī's *Golestān* into Hebrew (*Hebräische Dichtungen*, Vienna, 1894). In 1867 Bacher was admitted to the University of Budapest where he studied Oriental languages, history, and philosophy. The famous Ármin Vámbéry was one of Bacher's teachers. In 1870 he earned his doctorate writing a dissertation on the life and poetry of the Persian poet Neẓāmī (*Nizāmī's Leben und Werke und der zweite Theil des Nizāmischen Alexanderbuches, mit persischen Texten als Anhang*, Leipzig, 1871; see also E. G. Browne, *Lit. Hist. Persia* II, p. 400). In 1876 Bacher was ordained a rabbi by Breslau Seminary and a year later was appointed by the Hungarian Government a professor at the newly founded Budapest Rabbinical Seminary, where he taught Bible, Jewish history, Midrash, Hebrew Poetry and Grammar. Bacher was one of the consulting editors of the *Jewish Encyclopaedia* (1901-05) where he published several articles on Judeo-Iranian subjects (see especially his "Judeo-Persian"). In 1907, Bacher was appointed head of the Seminary, which position he held until his death in 1913.

Bacher's scholarly output is exceptionally and outstandingly many-sided (the bibliography of his published works, compiled by Ludwig Blau, lists 48 books and close to 700 articles). He was a master of Hebrew, Aramaic, Arabic, and Persian. He is known to Iranists especially through his many works on Judeo-Persian language and literature. Bacher's valuable works in Judeo-Persian are mainly based on the collection of Judeo-Persian manuscripts that Dr. Elkan



Nathan Adler of England had bought during his travels to Central Asia, Afghanistan, and Iran at the end of the nineteenth century. The large part of this collection is now in the Jewish Theological Seminary of America in New York. About Bacher's list of important works on Judeo-Persian studies see Amnon Netzer, *Manuscripts of the Jews of Persia in the Ben Zvi Institute*, Jerusalem, 1985, p. 60.