

## ON TWO PAINTERS AND ELEVEN DOCTORS

Professor Emeritus OHRY Avi, MD

*Sackler Faculty of Medicine, Tel Aviv University & Reuth Medical & Rehabilitation Center, Tel Aviv, Israel***Abstract**

*Two famous Jewish painters, the German Max Liebermann (1847-1935) and the Dutch Jozef Israëls (1824 – 1911), were close friends. They both painted physicians who were their close acquaintances. This article pays tribute to these two painters and the physicians they immortalized in their paintings.*

**Key words: history of art and medicine, Max Liebermann, Jozef Israëls****Corresponding author: aohry@post.tau.acil**

On the occasion of our invitation to the opening of a new Liebermann exhibition at Villa Liebermann, Wannsee, I began to read and learn about this great painter. I always looked for the “historical-medical” aspects of art (1-4). Liebermann studied law and philosophy at the University of Berlin before turning to art. During the Franco-Prussian War (1870–71) Liebermann served as a medical orderly near Metz (5). For historians it may be of interest to compare with another painter’s war experience: Max Beckmann, 1884-1950. In 1914, Beckmann volunteered for World War I. He spent several months as a medical orderly in Belgium. There are some realistic drawings and etchings that reflect his war experience on the western front. In 1915 he was discharged from the army after suffering a nervous breakdown. Returning to Liebermann, I found that he painted a few physicians: I trust that art historians are familiar with Liebermann’s biography and his close ties with these physicians. His garden and coffee-houses scenes are well known worldwide.



Picture no. 1: Portrait of Dr. Max Linde, by Max Liebermann (1847-1935), oil on canvas, 84x66 cm, 1897

[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Max\\_Liebermann\\_Portrait\\_of\\_Max\\_Linde.jpeg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Max_Liebermann_Portrait_of_Max_Linde.jpeg) Portrait of Dr. Max Linde by Max Liebermann in Behnhaus, (c. 1897). <https://www.wikiart.org/en/max-liebermann/portrait-of-dr-max-linde>

Max Linde (1862-1940) was an ophthalmolo-

gist who is best known as a patron and art collector of the early 20th century. He was an important patron of the painter Edvard Munch, among others. His brothers Hermann and Heinrich were painters: "Ophthalmologist Maximilian Linde (1862-1940) had a passion for contemporary art and owned one of the most important private collections in Europe. He first met little known Norwegian expressionist Edvard Munch in 1903, recognized special talent, and welcomed him into his family. With Linde's encouragement, patronage, and friendship, Munch became one of the most important artists of his time. Many of Munch's works were commissioned by Linde and many featured Linde and his family as subjects" (6). On the occasion of his retirement from the position as head of the Jewish Hospital in Berlin in 1917, the famous kidney surgeon James Israel (1848-1926) was portrayed by Max Liebermann (1847-1935). At that time both men were leading members of their professions—medicine and fine arts—and represented the Jewish community in Berlin. Private contacts between the surgeon and the artist had been established when Liebermann and his wife needed surgical treatment themselves some years before. Liebermann's later friendship with the surgeon Ferdinand Sauerbruch (1875-1951) culminated in one of the best-known portraits of a member of the medical profession. This biographical article from the history of medicine and fine arts reflecting the relation of these men provides a special view of the development of urological surgery in Berlin at the beginning of the twentieth century" (7).



Picture no. 2: James Israel

Wikipedia on James Israel:

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/James\\_Israel](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/James_Israel)

In 1870 he received his medical doctorate from Friedrich-Wilhelms-Universität in Berlin, where he studied under Ludwig Traube (1818–1876). During the Franco-Prussian War, he served as a military physician, afterwards furthering his studies in Vienna (1871). During the following year he became an assistant physician at the hospital for the Jewish community. In 1875, after furthering his education in England and Scotland, he was appointed deputy physician-in-chief of the surgical department of the Jewish hospital in Berlin, where in 1880 he was promoted to chief-in-chief. In 1894 he received the title of professor. Among his students in Berlin was surgeon Ferdinand Karewski (1858-1923). Israel was a pioneer in modern urologic surgery. Bright's renal disease was mentioned in his thesis, and in 1882 he first reported on a renal operation. Along his long career, he published over 100 articles mainly on urology. He was co-founder of the

journal *Folia Urologica*. (8). Israel worked also in plastic, oral and maxillofacial surgery and strongly supported Joseph Lister's anti-septic measures. He is credited for design of a mobile hospital railcar known as a Lazarett. *Actinomyces israelii* is a Gram-positive, rod-shaped bacteria, which is an opportunistic pathogen and a cause of actinomycosis. It was named after Israel, who studied it for the first time in 1878. At Liebermann's funeral, only a few were presented, among them Käthe Kollwitz and Prof. Ferdinand Sauerbruch, his neighbour and doctor at Wannsee (9). Ernst Ferdinand Sauerbruch (3 July 1875 - 2 July 1951) was a famous leading German surgeon.



Picture no. 3: Max Liebermann: Ferdinand Sauerbruch (1932), Hamburger Kunsthalle. Ferdinand Sauerbruch 1875-1951 on p. 1230-34 (10).

<https://www.wikiart.org/en/max-liebermann/the-surgeon-ferdinand-sauerbruch-1932>

The role of German physicians under National Socialism is highly controversial. We show that Ferdinand Sauerbruch, one of twentieth century's most outstanding sur-

geons and chair of surgery at Berlin's Charité from 1927 to 1949, openly supported National Socialism in his public statements and in his position as head of the medical section of the Reich Research Council. He was appointed state councilor and received the Knight's Cross of the War Merit Cross by the National Socialists. But Sauerbruch also supported victims of Nazi persecution, attempted to use his influence to put a stop to the "Euthanasia Program T4," and in private expressed his criticism of National Socialists. The ambiguous stance of Ferdinand Sauerbruch is probably more typical of the role physicians played during National Socialism than the well-known black-and-white cases." (11). Sauerbruch designed in 1930, an artificial upper-limb (Sauerbruch-Armprothese), shown at the Berliner Medizinhistorisches Museum an der Charité. Otto Frentzel M.D, (1864–1954), was the "Präsident des Deutschen Industrie- und Handelstages, Vizepräsident der Preußischen Landesversammlung" (Association of German Chambers of Industry and Commerce, which was a chamber, as the English guild). A physician turned to be a chemical industrialist was also painted by Liebermann (12).



Picture no. 4: Otto Frentzel

[https://www.myheritage.co.il/names/otto\\_frentzel](https://www.myheritage.co.il/names/otto_frentzel)  
On p 659 band 2 (10), we can find Liebermann's famous drawing of three leading German scientists, ("Die Professoren Karl Kraepelin, Richard Schorr und Georg Thilenius on the occasion of "Hamburgisches Professorenkonvent 1906": Professor Karl Kraepelin (1848-1915), Richard Schorr (1867-1951), and Georg Thilenius (1868-1937). Karl Kraepelin was the brother of the famous leading neuro-psychiatrist Emil Wilhelm Magnus Georg Kraepelin, who was a pioneer in experimental psychiatry and served as a Professor of Psychiatry in Munich from 1903–1922. He coined the term "Alzheimer's disease" after his pupil Alois Alzheimer who had described the disease.



Picture no. 5: Die Professoren Karl Kraepelin, Richard Schorr und Georg Thilenius (Foto um 1895/1920?)

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<https://www.deutsche-digitale>

[bibliothek.de/item/5WQTLQWF5VAXK-MJKOYCINSTHYTKYPXJ](https://www.deutsche-digitale-bibliothek.de/item/5WQTLQWF5VAXK-MJKOYCINSTHYTKYPXJ).

Karl Matthias Friedrich Magnus Kraepelin was a naturalist –zoologist –biologist, who published in 1899 a monograph "Scorpiones und Pedipalpi". He served as the Director of

the Naturhistorisches Museum Hamburg from 1889 to 1914. During 1903-4 Emil and Karl travelled to Ceylon, India, Singapore and Java, and in 1908 they visited USA in a two-month trip . Karl was responsible for an scientific educational reform: he published the Leitfaden für den Unterricht an Botanischen mittleren und höheren Schulen ("Guide for botany classes in middle and high schools"). A few species were named after him: Boiga kraepelini, the square-headed cat snake, Physocypria kraepelini (an ostracod), Clavatula kraepelini (a sea-snail), Tetramorium kraepelini (an ant), Iurus kraepelini (a scorpion) and many others. The other scientist in that painting was Richard Reinhard Emil Schorr (1867–1951), was a German astronomer. The lunar crater Schorr and the asteroid 1235 Schorria are named after him.



Picture no. 6: Richard Reinhard Emil Schorr  
<https://ru.wikipedia.org/wiki/%D0%A8%D0%BE%D1%80%D1%80,%D0%A0%D0%B8%D1%85%D0%B0%D1%80%D0%B4>

The third one, Georg Christian Adolar Thile-



nius (1868 - 1937) was a physician, anatomist, and anthropologist. He studied medicine in Bonn and Berlin, and in 1896 worked at the University of Strasbourg. He travelled to Tunisia and the South Pacific. In 1900 he became a professor of anthropology and ethnology at the University of Breslau, and in 1904, he was appointed director of the Museum für Völkerkunde Hamburg (Museum of Ethnology, Hamburg). Another famous Jewish physician-scientist was immortalized by Liebermann in 1906. On p 851(10) we find Professor Paul Ehrlich (1854-1915). He worked in the fields of hematology, immunology, and antimicrobial chemotherapy. He developed a technique for staining bacteria and blood cells tissues. In his laboratory he discovered the first efficient chemotherapy for syphilis: arsphenamine (Salvarsan), and anti-serum against diphtheria. In 1908, he received the Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine for his contributions to immunology, and founded a research institute which became the Paul Ehrlich Institute. In 1886, after completing his clinical education at the Berlin's Charité medical school, Ehrlich travelled to Egypt and other countries in 1888 and 1889, where he studied infectious diseases, and especially, tuberculosis. In 1891, Robert Koch invited Ehrlich to join the staff at his Berlin Institute of Infectious Diseases, where in 1896 a new branch, the Institute for Serum Research and Testing (Institut für Serumforschung und Serumprüfung), was established for Ehrlich's specialization. Ehrlich was named its founding director (13).



Picture no. 7: Paul Ehrlich

<http://www.georg-speyer-haus.de/en/about-us/timeline.html>

On p 1026 (10) we can see the painting of Viktor Zuckerkandl, 1851-1927. He "was a Jewish-Austrian musicologist. His doctorate was granted in 1927 from Vienna University, having earlier studied under Richard Robert. He conducted freelance throughout the decade of the 1920s. He was a critic for Berlin newspapers from 1927-1933 and taught theory and appreciation courses in Vienna from 1934-1938. He emigrated to the US in 1940, teaching at Wellesley College until 1942, when he took a job as a machinist in the war effort. From 1946-48 he taught theory at The New School in New York, and joined the faculty at St. John's College, Annapolis in 1948. He remained at St. John's, teaching music as part of their Great Books program, until his retirement in 1964. His explanations of music theory were heavily indebted to the theories of musicologist Heinrich Schenker, and his understandings of musical perception owed much to Gestalt psychology, as well as German phenomenology. Zuckerkandl believed music was part of the "mystical aspect of human existence", and sought to explain its

existence in all cultures as a universal phenomenon. He was not well known until his works were rediscovered by scholars in the 1990s. His brothers were Emil Zuckerkandl (1849–1910), an Hungarian-Austrian anatomist and urologist Otto Zuckerkandl (1861–1921). Emil's wife was Berta Zuckerkandl-Szeps, (1864–1945) an Austrian writer, journalist, and critic. On p 1188 we find Dr Alfred Guttman (1873-1951) who studied Gesang und Medizin (singing and medicine) in Berlin, Munchen and Breslau. He got his MD degree in 1894 (14-15).

For sure, beyond Liebermann's portraits, his colorful gardens and coffee-houses, will ever remind us the lost pre-War period (16). In 1901, Max Liebermann published a book on his close friend: "Jozef Israëls. Kritische Studie". Jozef Israëls (1824 – 1911) was a Jewish -Dutch painter. "He was a leading member of the group of landscape painters referred to as the Hague School and, during his life time", the most respected Dutch artist of the second half of the nineteenth century"(17). Israëls has painted a few physician too (18). The portrait of professor Barend Joseph Stokvis (1834-1902) appears on p 256, in 15).



Picture no. 8: Barend Joseph Stokvis

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Barend\\_Joseph\\_Stokvis](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Barend_Joseph_Stokvis) [ oil on canvas, University of Amsterdam, Senate Chamber]

Stokvis (19), the son of a Jewish doctor, was "a leading medical specialist, among the pioneers of the history of science in the Netherlands, who was well-known for his engaging and agreeable character" (19). He studied medicine at Athenaeum Illustre, (later the University of Amsterdam), and at Utrecht University. He wrote on diabetes (his thesis), and practiced medicine in his town. Most of his patients were Jewish. His work on nephrology granted him an award in Brussels 1867. In 1874 he became a professor of pathology and medicine at the Athenaeum. He was involved in the Jewish life in Amsterdam. Israëls knew Stokvis since 1855. "He is mainly remembered for his description of acute porphyria in 1889 As a researcher in chemical pathology he made contributions to the understanding of a number of diseases, such as diabetes. He was also considered an expert in tropical medicine and a celebrated medical educator. (19) He authored an influential pharmacology textbook. Stokvis was one of a number of prominent 19th century Jewish physicians in the Netherlands He was one of the founders (in 1896) of Janus, an international journal for the history of medicine" (20). After Stokvis, an eponym was coined: Stokvis-Talma syndrome (Autotoxic cyanosis, enterogenic cyanosis, enterogenous cyanosis, idiopathic methemoglobinaemia, sulfhaemoglobinaemia) (21). In 1867 he was awarded a gold medal by the Brussels Academy for his essay "Recherches Expérimentales sur les Conditions Pathogéniques de l'Albuminurie." "In 1874, he was appointed professor of general pathology and clinical medicine at the "Athenæum illustre", Amsterdam. In 1883, He was elected as the president of the "Internationaal Koloniaal Geneeskundig Congres" held in Amsterdam, and also of the first congress of Dutch physicians and surgeons. In 1879 he was elected

a member of the Royal Dutch Academy of Sciences, and in 1896 its vice-president. In 1884 he was awarded by the University of Edinburgh the honorary degree of doctor of laws (LLD). Concerning his involvement in the life of the Jewish community, Stokvis succeeded his father as president of the Nederlandsche Israelietische Armbestuur at Amsterdam. In 1906, with Hendrik Fritz August Peypers (1855-1904) he founded Janus, an international journal for the history of medicine. (21). Israels painted another friend of his, Professor Samuel Sigmund Rosenstein (Berlin 1832-1906 Den Haag), in 1902.



Picture no. 9: Samuel Sigmund Rosenstein

The portrait is hanged on the wall of Leiden University's Academy Building. "Son of Rabbi Elhanan Rosenstein, and grandson of Rabbi Rosenstein of Bonn. He studied philosophy, and, later, medicine at the University of Berlin, graduating as M.D. in 1854. From 1856 to 1858 he was assistant at the general hospital at Danzig. He established himself as a physician in Berlin in 1858, and received from the university there the "venia legendi" in 1864. In 1866 he was elected professor of medicine at the University of

Gröningen, and in 1873 at that of Leyden, which latter position he still (1905) holds. In 1898 he received the degree of LL.D. from the University of Edinburgh. Rosenstein is the author of "Die Pathologie und Therapie der Nierenkrankheiten," Berlin, 1863 (4th ed. 1894), and has contributed to Ziemssen's "Handbuch der Allgemeinen Therapie" the section on diseases of the heart" (22). Although Jozef Israëls met Liebermann back in 1881, only when he celebrated his 85 birthday, he requested Liebermann to write an evaluation of his work. Israëls passed away in that year. Liebermann wrote that Israëls' art reflects Holland's landscape and its rich 17th century great Dutch masters (23). It is beyond the scope of this review to determine whether those doctors who were portrayed by these famous painters, paid for this artistic works or rather, they were portrayed just because their friendship with the painters. With both possibilities, these paintings are added to the long list of physicians and scientists who were immortalized in sculptures or paintings along history.

### Resumo

*Du famaj judaj pentristoj, la germana Max Lieberman (1847-1935) kaj la nederlanda Jozef Israëls (1824 - 1911), estis proksimaj amikoj. Ili ambaŭ pentris kuracistojn, kiuj estis iliaj proksimaj amikoj. Ĉi tiu artikolo omaĝas al ĉi tiuj du pentristoj kaj al la kuracistoj eternigitaj en siaj pentraĵoj.*

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