

*Responsa of Rabbi Simon b. Zemah Duran as a Source of the History of the Jews in North Africa* (1930); they were published together in their second editions as *Studies in the Communal Life of the Jews of Spain, as Reflected in the Responsa of Rabbi Solomon ben Adreth and Rabbi Simeon ben Zemach Duran* (1968). His *Faith of Judaism* (1954) is an important theological statement of the Orthodox position in the light of modern philosophy and science. While this work addressed itself chiefly to the believing Jew, Epstein's *Judaism* (1954), "a historical presentation," spoke to the non-Jewish world. Epstein contributed the article on Judaism to the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* (from the 1958 edition onward). He was the first Jewish scholar to be given this assignment and the first to present Judaism in its entirety, not merely as a forerunner of Christianity. Articles on Jewish subjects in *Chambers' Encyclopedia*, too, were either written or edited by him (1950 and subsequent editions). Epstein's major achievement in Jewish scholarship was supervising the English translation of the Babylonian Talmud (Soncino, 35 vols., 1935–52; 18 vols., 1961). This monumental work made the Talmud accessible to the English-speaking world. Epstein also edited *Moses Maimonides, 1135–1204; Anglo-Jewish Papers in Connection with the Eighth Century of His Birth* (1935) and coedited *Essays in Honor of the Very Rev. Dr. J.H. Hertz* (1943); he had assisted \*Hertz with many of his publications. Apart from contributions to learned periodicals and Festschriften, Epstein also published a variety of theological and historical studies for educational purposes. As a scholar, writer, and educator, Epstein played a significant role in modern Anglo-Jewish scholarship.

**BIBLIOGRAPHY:** H. Zeidman, in: S. Federbush (ed.), *Hokhmat Yisrael be-Eiropah* (1965), 18–26; C. Roth and R.P. Lehman, in: JHSET, 21 (1968), 327–36.

[Hirsch Jacob Zimmels]

**EPSTEIN, IZHAC** (1862–1943), Hebrew writer and linguist, and a pioneer in modern Hebrew education in Erez Israel and in the Diaspora. The brother of the writer Zalman \*Epstein, he was born in Luban, Belorussia. In 1886 he (together with five others) was sent to Palestine for training in agricultural colonies at the expense of Baron Edmond de Rothschild. After working for four years in Zikhron Ya'akov and Rosh Pinnah, he became a teacher. In 1891 he was appointed principal of a public school which had just been opened in Safed and later taught in public schools in Metullah and Rosh Pinnah. He studied at the University of Lausanne from 1902 to 1908 and directed the Alliance school in Salonika from 1908 to 1915. Influenced by the psychophysiological school of T.A. Ribot, Epstein pioneered in the new method (the "natural" method) of teaching Hebrew. According to this system explanations are made only in the language that is being taught. Epstein expounded the new method in "Ivrit be-Ivrit" (*Ha-Shilo'ah*, 4 (1898), 385–96), which was later published as an introduction to his textbook of that name in 1900. The work had a fundamental influence on Hebrew teaching. The subject was also treated by Epstein in his doctoral thesis "La Pensée et la Poly-

glossie" (1915). In "She'elah Ne'lamah" ("The Obscure Question," *Ha-Shilo'ah*, 17 (1907), 193–206), he discussed Jewish-Arab relationships in Erez Israel and urged Zionists to adopt a more compromising attitude.

After World War I, Epstein returned to Erez Israel where he served for a short time as principal of the Lewinsky Teachers' Seminary in Jaffa and then as supervisor of the schools under the auspices of the Zionist movement. Upon resigning from his official duties, he devoted himself to the study of Hebrew linguistics, concentrating especially on problems of phonetics. He coined many new words and phrases, particularly in pedagogy and psychology. Among his other books are *Hegyonei Lashon* (1947) and *Mehkarim ba-Psikhologyah shel ha-Lashon ve-ha-Hinnukh ha-Ivri* (1947).

**BIBLIOGRAPHY:** "Yizhak Epstein," in: *Sifriyyat Rishonim*, 8:1, 1943; *Tidhar*, 2 (1947), 822f.

**EPSTEIN, SIR JACOB** (1880–1959), English sculptor, considered one of the greatest sculptors of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, and probably the most famous Anglo-Jewish artist of his time. He was born on New York's Lower East Side into a family of Polish Jewish immigrants and studied at the Art Students League. His first assignment came from the non-Jewish writer, Hutchins Hapgood, who asked him to illustrate a book about the Jewish quarter of New York, *The Spirit of the Ghetto* (1902, reissued 1967). He used the fee to go to Paris, where he studied at the Ecole des Beaux-Arts. In 1905 he went to London, which became his home for the rest of his life; he was naturalized in 1910. In 1907 he was commissioned to decorate the facade of the British Medical Association in the Strand. His series of 18 figures, *The Birth of Energy*, shocked the British public because he had refused to disguise sexual characteristics, and because one figure was of a woman in advanced pregnancy. The nationwide protest made him famous. Epstein remained the subject of heated moral and aesthetic criticism almost to the end of his career.

Epstein was an admirer of the prehistoric carvers, the archaic Greek sculptors, the African, Polynesian, and pre-Columbian image-makers. In creating his works he drew on his vast knowledge of the sculpture of all places and periods, yet always retained the powerful imprint of his own style. His style passed through several successive phases. *The Birth of Energy* was executed in a naturalistic classical tradition. *The Tomb of Oscar Wilde in Paris* (1912) is in a very different style. It consists of a strange figure with a human face and swept-back wings reminiscent of the hieratic winged bulls of Assyrian sculpture. The face is surmounted by a crown decorated with representations of the Seven Deadly Sins.

Epstein's only abstract sculptures were executed during the years 1913–15. *Rock Drill* (1913) is a sculpture romanticizing the power of the machine; *Venus I* and *Venus II* are also experiments in abstraction. In later years Epstein felt that abstract sculpture was of no value in itself, but that it had helped him to develop his sense of form.