

## MWU - Maccabi World Union (before WW II)

The Maccabi World Union has its origins in the Zionist movement. At the 2<sup>nd</sup> Zionist Congress in Basel in 1898, Dr. Max Nordau coined the concept of "Muscular Judaism" as an appeal to the renewal of the Jewish people. Physical training and faith in the Jewish heritage and the Jewish nation should help to achieve the goals of Zionism.

On 08.01.1895, the first Jewish gymnastics club opened in İstanbul. In 1898, the TV Bar Kochba was founded in Berlin. In the following period the movement expanded but limited to the big cities. Until 1903, about 20 gymnastic clubs existed in Austria-Hungary, Bulgaria and Germany. In 1906, the movement reached the Middle East and Rishon LeZion was founded in Jaffa.

Parallel to the 6<sup>th</sup> Zionist Congress in Basel (1903), the first Turntag (gymnastics day) took place. On 21.08.1903, six clubs from Austria-Hungary, four from Germany and one club from Romania united to the **Jüdische Turnerschaft** (Jewish Gymnastics Association) as an umbrella organization. 1913, the organization restructured itself into regional districts: Austria-East, Austria-West, Bulgaria, Germany, Eretz Yisrael and Turkey. Shortly after the beginning of World War I the activities of the Jüdische Turnerschaft broke up.

At the World Jewish Congress on 29.08.-01.09.1921 in Karlovy Vary TCH, the Jüdische Turnerschaft met for the first time after the World War I. The delegates decided on the reorganization with the name Maccabi World Union. Maccabi is named after the original Maccabees - Jewish liberation fighters in the classical antiquity.

Until 1929, the headquarters of the MWU were in Wien, since 1930 in Berlin. In February 1933, they moved to London.



### Members

1925 - 160,000 members

1928 - 112,900 members (Jahrbuch für Leibesübungen 1929):

AUT 6,000, BEL 1,600, BUL 3,000, EGY 700, EST 2,000, FIN 250, FRA 100, GBR 150, GER 8,000, GRE 1,000, HUN 1,500, IRN 200, LAT 1,500, LTU 3,500, NED 1,000, Eretz Yisrael 2,500, POL 25,000, ROU 10,000, RUS 25,000, SUI 1,000, TCH 15,000, TUR 2,000, YUG 2,000

1930 new members: ARG, BRA, SAF, SYR, TUN, USA

### Presidents

#### Jüdische Turnerschaft

21.08.1903 - 23.04.1905	Dr. Ernst Tuch (Berlin)
23.04.1905 - 21.05.1907	Theobald Scholem (Berlin)
21.05.1907 - 23.11.1909 †	Dr. Georg Arndt (Berlin)
23.11.1909 - 31.12.1909	Theobald Scholem (Berlin)
01.01.1910 - 28.05.1912	Dr. Hermann Jalowicz (Berlin)
28.05.1912 - 01.07.1915 <sup>1</sup> †	Wilhelm Greifenhagen (Berlin)
01.07.1915 - 31.08.1921	---

#### Maccabi World Union

01.09.1921 - 29.06.1924	Heinrich Kuhn GER
29.06.1924 - 05.08.1928	Gustav Spiegler AUT
05.08.1928 - 29.06.1929	Dr. Karl Sonnenfeld GER
29.06.1929 - 12.09.1935	Dr. Hermann Lelewer GER
12.09.1935 - 1950	Prof. Zelig Brodetsky GBR

Remark: The further progression after World War II is not the concern of my web site.

<sup>1</sup> fallen in World War I, date of published casualty list