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Translations, Ephemerals, & Biographies Mathematics in Volume I of *Scripta Universitatis*

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Immanuel Velikovsky's journal, *Scripta Universitatis*, edited by Albert Einstein and first published in 1923, played a significant role in the establishment of the library, and hence, Hebrew University in Jerusalem. The inaugural issue contained an article by the French mathematician Jacques Hadamard. Excerpts from Velikovsky's diary pertaining to the rationale for the creation of the journal, and the interest in Jewish scholars such as Hadamard, are translated here.

Key words: *Scripta Universitatis*, Velikovsky, Hadamard, Hebrew University

Introduction

Immanuel Velikovsky (June 10, 1895 - November 17, 1979) studied medicine intermittently from 1913 through 1918 at various universities (Montpelier, Edinburgh, & Kharkov), eventually receiving the M. D. in 1921 from the University of Moscow. He was the author of *Worlds in Collision* (1950), *Ages in Chaos* (1952), *Earth in Upheaval* (1956), *Oedipus and Akhnaton* (1960), *Peoples of the Sea* (1977), *Ramses II and His Times* (1978), *Mankind in Amnesia* (1982, posthumously by his wife, Elisheva Kramer Velikovsky), and *Stargazers and Gravediggers* (1983, also posthumously).

While doing post-doctoral work at Charité and the Kaiser Wilhelm Akademie in Berlin in 1922 - 1923, he founded the journal *Scripta Universitatis*. This scholarly work comprised of two parts: (1) Mathematics and Physics, and (2) Judaica and Orientalia. It has been considered the impetus leading to the establishment of Hebrew University in Jerusalem. Jewish authors of note from around the world contributed articles in their native tongue, which were published in one side of the

Journal, while the other side of the journal contained a Hebrew translation of their work. A scan of the Hebrew cover of the first issue is presented in Figure 1, and the English cover of the same issue in Figure 2.

Velikovsky appointed Albert Einstein (March 14, 1879 – April 18, 1955) to serve as Editor. Einstein also contributed an article, with co-author Jacob Gommer from the University of Berlin, titled "Beweis der Nichtexistenz eines überall regulären zentrisch symmetrischen Feldes nach der Feld-Theorie von Th. Kaluza." Velikovsky relied on Einstein to recruit other notable Jewish scholars to submit to the journal.

Unfortunately, the two of them later parted ways. On July 5, 1946, Velikovsky met with Einstein in Princeton to discuss the extraterrestrial role of Venus in Earth's catastrophic planetary development that would become the premise of his *Worlds in Collision* (1950). Einstein found the theory to be preposterous, canceled further meetings with Velikovsky, and written communication between them was subsequently strained.

His elder daughter, Shulamit Velikovsky Kogan (b. 1925), gifted a copy of *Scripta* to a cataloger of her father's archives. She also included typeset excerpts from Velikovsky's letters written in the 1920s to his father (Figure 3) who lived in Israel. The excerpts are in diary format and pertain to the development of *Scripta*, written while Velikovsky was in Berlin and Leipzig. Autobiographical information in

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English pertaining to *Scripta* may also be found in Velikovsky (1978).

Among these excerpts, material regarding Albert Einstein and the mathematician Jacques Salomon Hadamard (December 8, 1865 – October 17, 1963) is translated below from Hebrew to (flowing American) English. A translation of Hadamard's contributed article in Volume 1 of *Scripta* will appear in the next issue

of the *Journal of Modern Applied Statistical methods*.

References

Velikovsky, I. (1978). Genesis of the first Jerusalem 'Scripta'. *Jewish Family Quarterly*, 26, 15-19.

August 20, 1922

Yesterday I visited Prof. Einstein, the purpose of which was to invite him to be the Editor of the [Physics and] Mathematics section [of *Scripta Universitatis*]. We spent a long time in conversation. He accepted upon himself to write to two important Jewish scholars, both close personal friends, who had yet to join us in this endeavor. They are the greatest mathematician in France, Hadamard, and the greatest biologist in America, Jacques Loeb. Because Einstein is now the Editor, I will bring to him, in the coming days, the hand written manuscripts in Mathematics [and Physics] to determine which to accept for publication. Afterward, I will invite editors for other sections. For Biology, I would like Wasserman.

December 17, 1922

In a few weeks, we will send as many as 500 circulars to a large number of scholars. I hope we will be able to thereby increase the number of participants, specifically Jewish scholars with international reputations, such as Volterra and Enriques (Italian mathematicians), Hadamard (French mathematician), Bergson (French philosopher), L. R. Flexner and J. Loeb (American biologists), and A. Michelson (American physicist). If these seven scholars will agree participate, it will become apparent to the Jewish world, and throughout the world for that matter, that the Jewish people have made important contributions to science, despite the fact that we are scattered all over the world.

January 2, 1923

There was a very important event that happened in our work this week. We were joined by the French scholar Hadamard, a famous mathematician. Einstein and I wrote him a letter of invitation to submit. In his answer he agreed, and attached a hand-written manuscript. Based on this, I will now have a much easier time to get other scholars in France to participate. Everyone knows that Einstein contributes to projects that promote Zionism, but when Hadamard joined us, this is something entirely new. Thus, getting such scholars to participate in the [Hebrew University] Jerusalem project was a worthwhile effort.*

[Footnote material added by Velikovsky much later] *Indeed, from that time, Hadamard became an active participant in Zionist activities, giving assistance to different projects in Israel. Many scholars who later became members of the board of directors of the Jerusalemite [Hebrew] University were initially attracted by their participation with *Scripta Universitatis*.

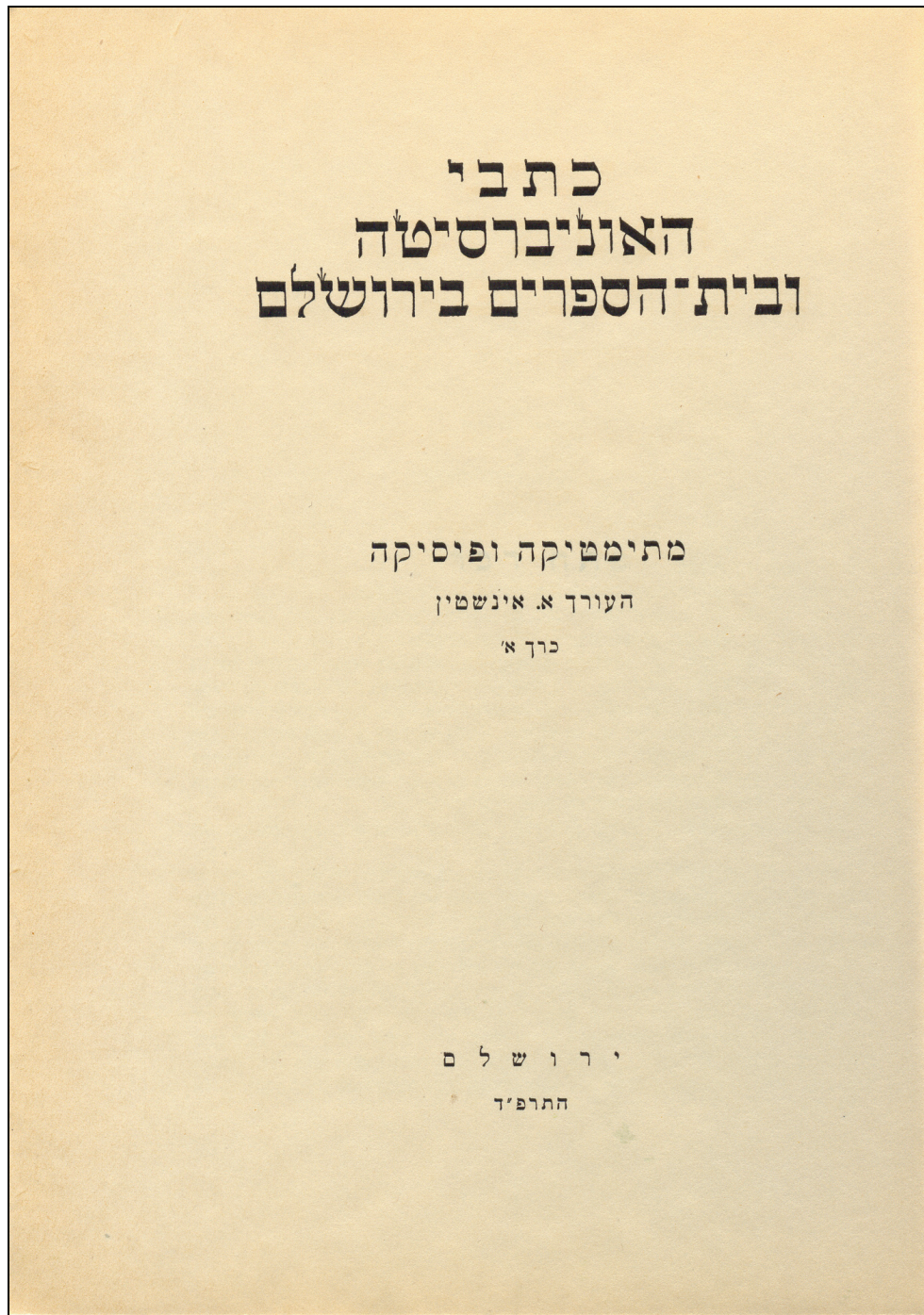


Figure 1. Cover of the Hebrew side of Volume I of *Scripta Universitatis*, indicating the Editor as Albert Einstein, and the journal was published in Jerusalem in the Jewish year 5684 (1923-1924).
From the private collection of Shlomo S. Sawilowsky.

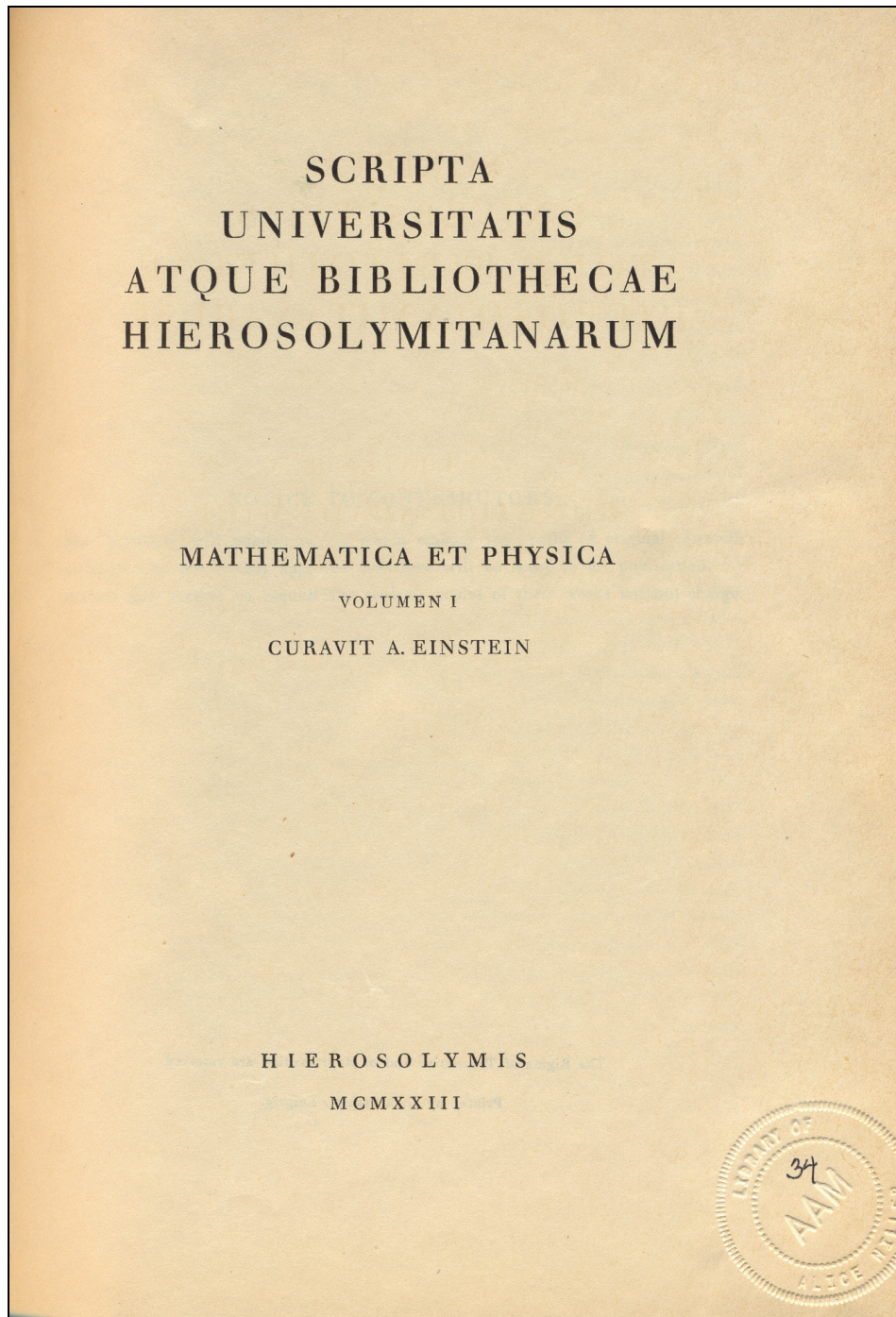


Figure 2. Cover of the English side of Volume I of *Scripta Universitatis*.
From the private collection of Shlomo S. Sawilowsky.

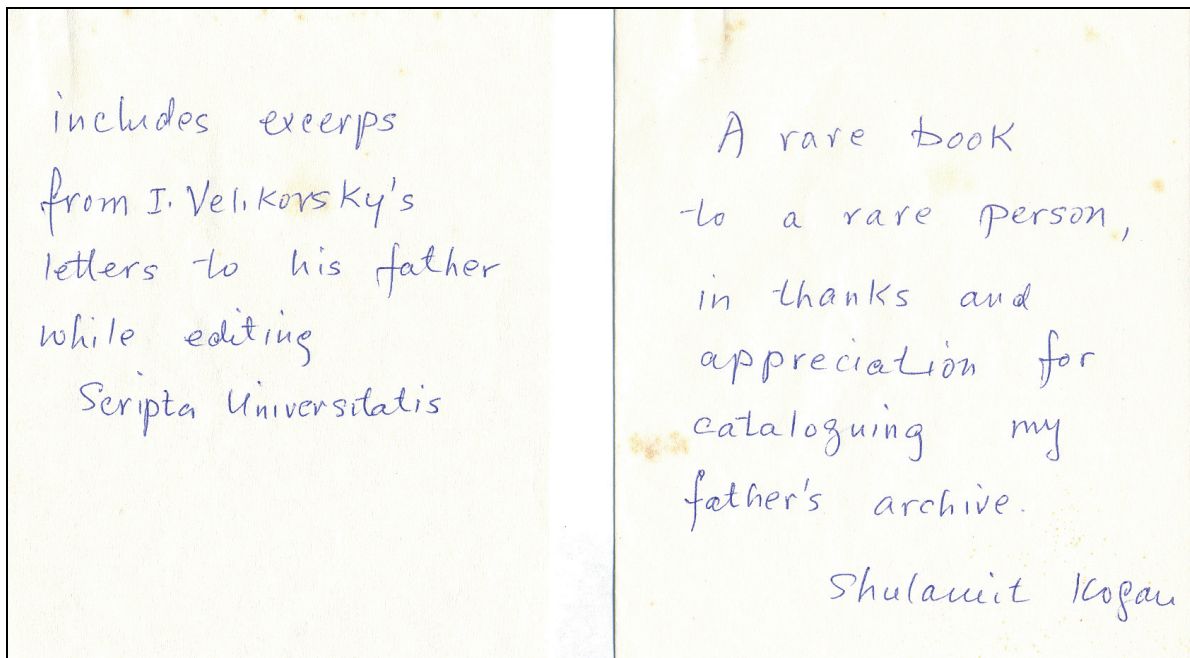


Figure 3. Two hand written notes with signature from Shulamit Velikovsky Kogan.
From the private collection of Shlomo S. Sawilowsky.