

The 7th Max and Hilde Kochmann Summer School

The Max and Hilde Kochmann Summer School for PhD Students in European-Jewish History and Culture was established in 2009. It offers research students, some of whom work in universities without Jewish Studies programmes, the opportunity to present their research in an academic setting that provides in-depth feedback from established and upcoming scholars in the field. Since its inauguration, the Summer School has generated a growing network of historians, philosophers and literary scholars – a young generation of talented scholars for whom the Summer School offers a major boost to their academic career.

This year The Max and Hilde Kochmann summer school took place between 2-5 July, at the University of Sussex. Twenty-three young scholars from eleven different countries were given the opportunity to present and discuss their research in an interdisciplinary setting. For the first time four Sussex students participated in the Summer School, three of them are currently writing their PhD. dissertation at the Centre. The wide range of topics spanning from the first-century to the new millennium, the consistently high-level of presentation, together with the friendly and supportive atmosphere made the Summer School an intellectually stimulating and inspiring event. One of the highlights of this year's Summer School was The Kurt Hellman Memorial Lecture delivered by Prof. Marjorie Perloff on *The Vienna Paradox, Jewish Identity and Austrian High Culture From World War I to The Anschluss*. Over fifty people attended the lecture, including members of the Kochmann and Hellman families as well as the Centre for German-Jewish Studies advisory board members.

This year's Summer School programme also included a visit to the Middle Street Synagogue in Brighton as well as to the Keep, which is a world-class centre for archives that opens up access to all the collections of the East Sussex Record Office, the Royal Pavilion & Museums Local History Collections and the internationally significant University of Sussex Special Collections where the Centre for German-Jewish Studies Archive is housed. The purpose of these visits was to introduce students to the history of Jews in Brighton and acquaint them with new resources that they might want to use in their future studies.

The Summer School was initially set up thanks to the generous support of Dr Kurt Hellman and named after Max and Hilde Kochmann, both founding members of the Centre for German-Jewish Studies London support Group. This year the Summer School was kindly sponsored by the Kochmann family, and the Leo Baeck Lodge in London, and we would like to use this opportunity to thank them for their support. Although the Max and Hilde Kochmann Summer School is now an established institution on the map of Jewish studies in Europe, we are still seeking ways to secure further funding in order to continue a fine tradition that has helped to generate a network of young scholars, for whom Sussex has become a stimulating source of Jewish learning.

The Vienna Paradox: Jewish Identity and Austrian High Culture from World War I to the Anschluss



Marjorie Perloff

This public lecture, delivered by Marjorie Perloff on 3 July 2017, was a highlight of the Summer School. One of the finest of her many books, *Edge of Irony: Modernism in the Shadow of the Habsburg Empire*, was recently featured in the *New York Review of Books* in an article by Adam Kirsch (quoted here with kind permission). He cites a key passage from her memoir, *The Vienna*

Paradox, in which she wrote: 'when I see my name in print, there is always a moment when I wonder who Marjorie Perloff is'. That is because, until she became a US citizen, she was called not Marjorie but Gabriele – Gabriele Mintz, the name she was born with in Vienna in 1931.

On March 13, 1938, the day after Hitler's armies marched into Austria, the Mintz family boarded a train for Zurich, and kept moving until they reached New York. The transformation from Gabriele to Marjorie lies at the heart of Perloff's narrative. The Austria where she was born was a rump state, carved at the end of World War I from the defeated Austro-Hungarian Empire. But it retained some of the grandeur of its multinational culture. None of the empire's many ethnic groups did more to create that culture than its Jews, including figures like Gustav Mahler and Sigmund Freud.

Vienna's Jews were passionate about German culture even though they were rejected as members of the German nation. Moreover 'Kultur' was conceived as having a distinct spiritual dimension. Perloff is alternately nostalgic for this religion of culture and suspicious of it. Plainly, their enthusiasm for art and intellect did not earn them a secure place in Austrian society. On the contrary, Vienna was the place where the young Hitler first expressed his hatred of Jews. In short, for all the accomplishments of the Austrian Jews, 'Kultur' (as Adam Kirsch puts it) could be seen as a 'kind of lullaby they sang to themselves as the walls closed in'.

The Centre will publish this public lecture as Centre research paper no. 13 in December 2017. Copies will be available for £12.00 including p and p.



Refugees Then and Now

World Refugee Day was marked at Sussex on 20 June 2017 by a seminar jointly hosted by the Centre and the University Chaplaincy. Introducing the event, Edward Timms compared the anti-Jewish rhetoric of the 1930s, directed against the so-called 'Alien Menace', with the anti-refugee attitudes of people now clamouring 'We want our country back'.

In the opening paper Dr Paul Oestreicher, who fled as a child with his parents from Nazi Germany to New Zealand, highlighted the responses of his patriotic father, a Jewish-born paediatrician who had served in the German army. The number of refugees accepted by New Zealand was severely restricted, and although Paul enjoyed a good education, he recalled being targeted by a playground game called 'Hunt the Hun', feeling vulnerable when a schoolmate called out: 'And he's a Jew!'

Fortunately, Paul's musically gifted mother smoothed the process of resettlement, and his parents subsequently joined the Quakers, the group that most actively supported refugees. Paul himself became a leading figure in the Anglican Church, Chair of Amnesty International UK, and Vice-President of the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament.

In a second paper (introduced by Barbara Einhorn), Prof Nadje Al-Ali, author of *Iraqi Women: Untold Stories from 1948 to the Present*, recalled her upbringing in the Federal Republic as the child of an Iraqi father and a German mother. She then shared the findings of research projects showing how refugees from countries like Bosnia and Iraq have coped with differing forms of Islamophobia. The difficulty of drawing a distinction between political refugees and economic migrants was also elucidated.

Nadje Al-Ali, who is a woman's rights activist as well as Professor of Gender Studies at SOAS in the University of London, concluded that it is increasingly difficult to influence public policy on behalf of refugees. Becoming 'British' presents serious obstacles, especially for Moslem women, but there was a more positive note in her voice when she added: 'I am a Londoner'.

Weidenfeld Institute

Building from over 20 years focused on studying the experiences of German Jews, we have for the last eighteen months been working to expand our remit.

For many years, our work has included study into the experiences of Jewish diaspora around the world and of topics including antisemitism, discrimination and segregation, but we recognise the need to extend this focus. Under the banner of the Sussex Weidenfeld Institute of Jewish Studies, remembering one of our most generous and enduring patrons, Lord George Weidenfeld, we have increased our efforts to raise funding for research. Again, building on our education and public outreach programme, which began with our extremely successful Holocaust Memorial Day activities, we are planning a programme of international Holocaust education. We are very proud of the Centre's fundraising history, and 'Friends of the Centre' programme, which have supported this work since it began in 1994 and our recent successes in fundraising for PhD research scholarships have been the beginning of this new phase in our efforts to study and bring awareness of the Jewish people's experiences now and in modern and contemporary history.

Honorary Degree

Hella Pick CBE, member of the Centre's Advisory Board is to be awarded an Honorary Degree by the University of Sussex in recognition of her distinguished public service as a journalist.

Hella's enthusiasm and commitment towards the Centre for German-Jewish Studies has been truly exemplary and the University is delighted to recognise her invaluable support in such a prominent way. Hella has recently been taking a leading role in advancing the work of the Centre through the development of the Weidenfeld initiative.

New Book publication: Consumer Culture and the Making of Modern Jewish Identity



Chanukah presents, an illustration by Peretz Rushkevitz from the collection of Rami Rushkevitz

Congratulations to Gideon Reuveni, Director of the Centre, on the publication of his new book entitled: *Consumer Culture and the Making of Modern Jewish Identity* with Cambridge University Press.

Consumer Culture and the Making of Modern Jewish Identity explores the changing nature and dynamic of consumer cultures in the context of Jewish history. It reveals the multifaceted process through which minorities are able to maintain a separate identity through consumption while concurrently, as consumers, feeling integrated in their host societies. Consumerism, it is here argued, refashioned Jewish cultures and provided new venues to imagine cultural belonging beyond the existing denomination of religious, social and political differences. The significance and contribution of this study is that it locates Jewish history within broader developments that may have facilitated cultural diversity and Jewish identities. In a wider sense, the book's innovation lies in the fact that it employs a cultural approach to economic activities, suggesting that the very coherence of the economy and its ability to function depends very much on the aptitude of people to interact, to allocate values and norms to others, and on their willingness to share mutual representations.

Lilian Levy



The Centre for German-Jewish Studies congratulates Lilian Levy, member of the Centre's Advisory Board, on being awarded the Aston Chase Award for Lifetime Achievement in Volunteering at a recent gala dinner in London celebrating the 10th anniversary of the Jewish Volunteering Network.

Lilian volunteers for the Association of Jewish Refugees and received the award for her role in assisting with the editing of the AJR Journal as well as her other voluntary work.

<https://youtu.be/YQ9RJHE8-24>

Congratulations and Farewell to Kim Wünschmann

After moving on from Sussex to her new appointment in Munich, Dr Wünschmann has shared with us the following reflections:

It was with mixed feelings that I said goodbye to Brighton this late summer. While greatly looking forward to new tasks at Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität Munich (LMU), it was not at all easy for me to leave my post as DAAD Lecturer at the University of Sussex. During the past two years, I enjoyed working in a friendly and supportive intellectual environment. I got to know many inspiring people and experienced meaningful exchanges of ideas in Sussex and at other places around the country.

Thanks to the affiliation with the Centre for German-Jewish Studies, the person appointed as DAAD Lecturer enjoys a unique position, which allows him or her to combine academic work with a wide range of cultural activities. I particularly valued opportunities to meet members of Britain's Jewish community and various generations of families with German-Jewish roots. It was moving to participate in important memorial initiatives like the annual Holocaust Memorial Day organised by the Centre in collaboration with the Association of Jewish Refugees. Public discussion of the future of Holocaust education in schools and universities tied in with my own teaching in the History Department. I was delighted to find that in both years around 40 students had signed up for my course on modern German-Jewish history. With Kristallnacht 1938 as our point of departure we took a broad view and studied a 200-year period of Jewish history and culture extending from the Haskalah until after the Shoah. Through a fruitful collaboration with colleagues working on the Sussex German-Jewish Archive Project, students could examine original documents preserved at The Keep and thus enrich their understanding of history at first hand. In a special archive session of research-based learning they experienced the challenges and rewards of primary source work. Many valued the direct connection to the past and the originality and authenticity of the records they studied.

During my time at Sussex, relations between the past and the present came alive in most striking ways. Key themes in German-Jewish studies like refuge, migration and exile are once again highly topical issues. Students taking a course on the history of fascism discussed the rise of nationalist populist movements in today's Europe and the election of Donald Trump as US President. And Brexit was debated everywhere. Unpacking boxes in Munich, I find that my winter coat still bears a pin reading "Citizen of Europe" – handed to me at one of Brighton's many demonstrations. I'll keep wearing it here in Germany just as I will hold on to the precious contacts I made in the past two years. Strengthening international cooperation is of utmost importance in times of growing isolationism and this is exactly what I plan to do in my new position at LMU. Coordinating activities between the History Department and the Center for Holocaust Studies at the Institut für Zeitgeschichte, I look forward to continuing to work with colleagues in the UK and the wider world.

Dr Kim Wünschmann can be contacted at:
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Centre Research Paper no. 12

Jewish Prisoners in the Concentration Camps: Instruments of Terror and Exclusion in Nazi Germany by Kim Wünschmann. Copies available from the Centre, price £10.00 including p and p.

Julia Wacker, volunteer at The Keep, German-Jewish Collections

After completing her work as a volunteer archivist, Julia Wacker has written the following personal report.



Julia at work in the conservation studio

'I wanted to get out of my daily routine, even if it was just for two months. I'm doing a Master's degree in Library and Information Science at the Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin. Besides my studies, I work as a student assistant at the Berlin-Brandenburg Academy of Sciences and Humanities. My weekdays include a three-hour commute between my hometown and Berlin.

The Erasmus programme gave me the opportunity to do the required internship for my Master's programme in another country. As I wanted to improve my spoken English, Great Britain was my first choice. I contacted many institutions all over the country and The Keep responded with interest. As my native language is German, the German-Jewish Collections held by the University of Sussex were a perfect fit. After organising the flights, lots of paper

work, a small language test and finding accommodation, I was able to start my adventure.

My first day at The Keep was 31 July. Everyone here is welcoming and very friendly, and speaking English all day turned out not to be that difficult. I was amazed when I saw how many different types of materials are held here: maps, photos, newspapers, prints – amongst others.

I was shown around the whole building, which includes the reading room, the repository for all the stunning archival material and the digitisation suite. I joined a number of workshops, helped at The Keep's Open Day and attended a conference, *Digitising the Past: Revealing Jewish History*, at the London Metropolitan Archives. I also got an insight into some of the other collections, such as the Mass Observation Archive and was excited to learn how to bind my own book in the conservation studio.

The family collections of the German-Jewish Collections include personal mementoes such as watches and *Poesiealben* (friendship books). I transcribed a German diary written by an 18-year old girl in 1884 from old German script which was quite difficult because of the handwriting. I particularly enjoyed that task as it contained gossip about a 'Mr Springer' and I wanted to know if they became a couple in the end – sadly they didn't as 'Mr Springer' paid no attention to her! I also processed digital images of archives so that they can be made accessible to The Keep's users. Further, I boxed and described books about Rudyard Kipling, and repackaged and listed new donations for the German-Jewish Collections'.

Art of the Twentieth Century and the Jewish Pioneers

Liza Weber is congratulated upon being awarded the Alfred Bader Scholarship in Modern Jewish History and Culture. Her research project at Sussex investigates postwar exhibition policies in West Germany, focusing on the first of the series of exhibitions held under the title *documenta*. Founded in 1955 in the provincial town of Kassel – then but thirty kilometers west of the Iron

Curtain—the exhibition, subtitled 'Art of the Twentieth Century,' was intended to be a survey of modern art that was part of the 'free world'. And yet a significant proportion of the avant-garde was absent from *documenta*'s display of modernism: namely, its Jewish pioneers.

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Art of the Twentieth Century and the Jewish Pioneers *continued*

Combining provenance research with memory studies, Liza will trace both the trajectory and living memory of Jewish modernism in Germany, from its official confiscation as 'Degenerate Art' under the National Socialist regime through to its supposed postwar rehabilitation at that first *documenta*. Her dissertation questions whether that modernist exhibition project was in fact the nation's 'answer to the trauma that resulted from the Nazis original anti-modernist smear campaign', to quote an article on "'Degenerate Art' and Documenta I' by Walter Grasskamp; or whether it was a partial perpetuation of the trauma that the quinquennial exhibition is still trying to bring to light.

Liza Weber read BA (Hons) English Language & Literature at King's College London, after which she studied under the Association



of Research into Crimes Against Art (ARCA) for their postgraduate certificate programme in 'Art Crime and Cultural Heritage Protection'. She then went onto read 'Critical Writing in Art & Design' for her Master's degree at the Royal College of Art, during which she trained in Provenance Research under the European Shoah Legacy Institute (ESLI) and the *Zentralinstitut für Kunstgeschichte* respectively.

Forthcoming events

Tuesday 5 December 2017

19:45 New North London Synagogue, 80 East End Road, London, N3 2SY

Centre for German-Jewish Studies Annual Lecture

'Consumer Culture and the Making of Modern Jewish Identity' by Gideon Reuveni.

Gideon will be in conversation with Rabbi Jonathan Wittenberg about his recent publication.

To book:

sussex.ac.uk/cgjs/consumer-culture

Monday 11 December 2017

19:00 Austrian Cultural Forum London, 28 Rutland Gate, London SW7 1PQ

Hella Pick will deliver the fourth **Evi Wohlgenuth Memorial Lecture**

'Cultural identity: A unifying or divisive factor in Europe – or both?'

To book:

sussex.ac.uk/cgjs/wohlgenuth

Thursday 14 December 2017

'Jews and Quakers: On the borders of acceptability', a joint one-day conference to be held at the University of Sussex organised by the Centre for German-Jewish Studies and the Woodbrooke Centre for Postgraduate Quaker Studies, Birmingham, UK.

To register: jewsandquakers.conference@gmail.com

Holocaust Memorial Day at the University of Sussex

Wednesday 7 February 2018, 13:30-17:30

Philippe Sands, Professor of Law at University College London and barrister will speak about his prize-winning book *East West Street: A Personal History of Genocide and Crimes Against Humanity*

Susan Pollack, survivor of Auschwitz, Gubben slave labour camp and Bergen Belsen will speak about her experiences during the Holocaust

Film: *'Not Idly By – Peter Bergson, America and the Holocaust'* A documentary by Pierre Sauvage (Winner, documentary award, Toronto Jewish Film Festival)

To book:

sussex.ac.uk/cgjs/hmd

For further information and all booking details please see our website:
www.sussex.ac.uk/cgjs

Writing German-Jewish Lives

The German-Jewish Family Archives Project hosted a workshop at The Keep on the 12 September 2017, bringing together scholars from different disciplines to discuss working with archival collections. Throughout the day, scholars from different academic disciplines spoke about using German-Jewish archives in various ways. Some had used their own family archives, while others had researched the German-Jewish collections at the Keep and elsewhere.

After Gideon Reuveni's opening remarks, Samira Teuteberg gave a brief introduction to the German-Jewish Family Archives held at the Keep and a website she is working on, which shows selected digitised materials from the collections and is available at www.sussex.ac.uk/affiliates/gjfa

Post-doctoral Research Fellow, Rose Holmes spoke about using oral history interviews and how she addressed common concerns in her research, including objectivity and reliability. Andrea Hammel outlined the current landscape of Kindertransport research and the different strands of current thinking. She juxtaposed this with the public discourse about refugee children arriving in the UK today and demonstrated the lasting impact the Kindertransport has had on the political debate.

From a more personal point of view, Rabbi Jonathan Wittenberg talked about his journey into his family history after he discovered a suitcase containing letters from the 1930s. He illustrated how small pieces of information started to build up the story, which he eventually published under the title 'My Dear Ones'.

Professor Edward Timms focused on the literary works of two refugee writers whose papers are held at The Keep. Both Eva Ehrenberg and Ludwig Marx were authors of poetry, who had re-established themselves by translating their own poetry after they escaped to the UK.

Again, from a more personal angle, Julia Winckler showed how her academic background in photography helped her to explore her own family history. After inheriting a trunk containing photographs among other items, she found a way of analysing and processing the images, which gave

her a deeper understanding of her family's history.

Deborah Schultz gave an insight into the difficulties of looking after and researching an art collection as vast and varied as that of Arnold Daghani. With formats ranging from traditional works of art on paper to three-dimensional objects, such as painted coffee grinders, the physical arrangement of the collection can be as challenging as the content.

Shivaun Woolfson spoke about her research on the Holocaust in Lithuania where many witnesses had not spoken about their trauma for a long time. For this reason objects and space became a crucial catalyst for the interviews she conducted.

Last but by no means least, Kathleen Rome-Julie née Fein reflected on the experience of donating her family papers to the University of Sussex. She expressed relief that the Fein Family collection, which had been personal and private, is now accessible to researchers and educators.

Apart from the speakers, the audience also played a very active part throughout the day. Many spoke about their own family archives and the overwhelming prospect of writing a family history for posterity.

For such projects, this workshop on Writing German-Jewish Lives, which was coordinated by Samira Teuteberg, provided invaluable encouragement.

For further information about the Centre for German-Jewish Studies and joining the Friends, please contact:

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