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Max H K a S S F a 2011



Students and faculty members of the Max and Hilde Kochmann Summer School for PhD Students in European Jewish History and Culture, Frankfurt, July 2011.

Since the first Max and Hilde Kochmann Summer School for PhD Students in European Jewish History and Culture was held in July 2009 in Oxford, 70 young scholars from ten European countries as well as Israel and the USA have been given the opportunity to present and discuss their research in an interdisciplinary setting. Several members of this growing network of historians, philosophers and literary scholars have now finished their doctoral projects, others are presenting their work at international conferences – a young generation of talented scholars for whom the Centre for German-Jewish Studies at Sussex has become an important place on the map of Jewish Studies in Europe.

Created by Christian Wiese and generously funded by Dr Kurt Hellman, this tradition of young scholars' conferences will be continued in the coming years, with meetings being held alternately at Sussex and at other European universities. In July 2011 the meeting took place at the Goethe University in Frankfurt and brought together twenty PhD students whose projects are devoted either to German-Jewish or European-Jewish history. The senior scholars who had been invited to respond to their presentations – Prof Christian Wiese (Frankfurt), Prof Andreas Gotzmann (University of Erfurt) and Prof Stefanie Schüler Springorum (Zentrum für Antisemitismusforschung, Berlin) – were impressed by the diversity and quality of the research that is currently being done in the field.

Research on a variety of facets of modern Jewish history in Central and Eastern Europe, particularly in Poland, seems to be increasingly flourishing, with projects exploring new insights, for instance, on the history of the Reform Movement in Warsaw and Krakow, of the Jewish communities in Stettin, Gdansk and in Upper Silesia as well as the Polish Jewish experience from World War II to the present. Further new areas of research include the history of Scandinavian Jewry, the relationship between Soviet Russia and the World Zionist Organization, the interaction between Jews and non-Jews in different European contexts (including the question of intermarriage or the role of Jews in Freemasonry), Jewish nationalism as well as projects devoted to gender relations.

Students thoroughly enjoyed the opportunities they were offered during the week in Frankfurt – apart from discussing their projects they were invited to attend the international Haskalah conference

Rose Holmes

Rose Holmes has been continuing her research into the rescue work of British Quakers with refugees from fascism in the 1930s. She has been delighted with the information and support received from Friends of the Centre. Alongside her research, she will start work as an Associate Tutor in the History department in October.

Rose Laing : C Paper

'Hans Kohn's Importance for the Zionist Movement', paper given at the international workshop for doctoral students and post doctoral scholars on 'New Research on German and Central European Zionism' at the Ben Gurion University of the Negev, Beer Sheva, 31 May-2 June 2011

Lisa P

Cristina Pa

'Reconsidering Utopia. On the Entanglement of 'The Modern Loss of Subject Transcendental Structure. On the Law and Linguistic Critique in Fin-de-Siecle', paper given at the conference on 'The Letter of the Law/r6§aMatters

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M a 26 S 2011

Prof Stephen J. Whitfield (Brandeis University), 'American Jews in the Shaping of Black Culture' (in cooperation with the Marcus Cunliffe Centre for the Study of the American South)

In the struggle for racial justice that has come to be understood as central to the experience of the twentieth-century US, the radiant power of black culture helped to accelerate the realization among American whites of the talent and even the humanity of a despised minority. How this culture came to be showcased and projected, especially in the interwar period, was partly the achievement of some individual Jews who, however inadvertently, demonstrated how the civic, artistic and economic roles of these two groups should be appreciated as intertwined.

Stephen Whitfield holds the Max Richter Chair in American Civilization at Brandeis University. His most recent publications are *The Color of Water* and *Isaac's America: Jewish Culture*.

5pm, University of Sussex, Arts A 155
All welcome, booking not required

T a 3 N 2011

Dr Bernhard Rieger (University College London), 'From the Third Reich to Postmodernity: The Global History of the Volkswagen Beetle' (in cooperation with the History Department 'Work in Progress Seminar')

Bernhard Rieger is Senior Lecturer in History at University College London. His area of interest includes nineteenth and twentieth century Europe, especially the societies, economies and cultures of Britain and Germany. His publications include a comparative book on British and German attitudes to technology between 1870 and 1945 (2005) as well as a co-edited volume on British modernity during that period. At present, he is completing a global history of Volkswagen Beetle for Harvard University Press, a project that traces the car's journey from failed National Socialist prestige project to iconic prominence in Western Europe, the United States and Mexico.

4pm, University of Sussex, Arts A 155
All welcome, booking not required

M a 5 D 2011

Dr Shirli Gilbert (University of Southampton), 'Forgotten Letters: A Refugee from Nazism in Apartheid South Africa'

Rudolph Schwab was a Jewish refugee who fled Nazi Germany and came to South Africa in 1936. For the next 34 years, until his tragic death in 1971, he corresponded with friends and family across the world, including a close friend who became a Nazi official. His substantial archive of 2500+ letters, which was recently discovered in a garage in Johannesburg, is extraordinary not only for its wide scope but also because Schwab kept copies of his own letters in addition to those he received. His

correspondence offers rich insights into the experiences of Jewish victims and refugees, as well as relationships between Jews, 'ordinary' Germans, and Nazis. It also has much to tell us about Nazism's impact on perceptions of racism under apartheid.

Shirli Gilbert is Karten Lecturer in Jewish/non-Jewish relations at the University of Southampton. She obtained her D.Phil. in Modern History at the University of Oxford and was a Postdoctoral Fellow in the Society of Fellows at the University of Michigan. She is currently working on a book about Rudolph Schwab's letters, as part of a larger research project on Holocaust memory in apartheid and post-apartheid South Africa. Her book *Matters of the Heart: Colonial Legacies in Nigeria* (Oxford University Press, 2005) was a finalist for the 2005 National Jewish Book Award.

4.30pm, University of Sussex,

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Publications by researchers at the Centre for German-Jewish Studies may be purchased at a discount by Friends of the Centre.

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