

“Report of the International Workshop „Charlottengrad and Scheunenviertel: East-European Jewish migrants in the Berlin of the 1920/30’s“ - Freie Universität Berlin, 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> October 20008“

The conference took place at the Freie Universität Berlin on the 6/7<sup>th</sup> October 2008. The main task was to unite the international scholars of the different partial projects and to give the sub-project teams a chance to present their research and their progress. These presentations were discussed by all contributing members of the project to develop new ideas and questions for the sub-projects.

At the beginning of the conference everybody was invited to join a field trip to the “Scheunenviertel” today. The trip was titled “Scheunenviertel: Myth and reality.” The group visited spots such as the theatre “Volksbühne”, the New Synagogue at Oranienburger Straße and the museum “Blindenwerkstatt Otto Weidt”, where the German entrepreneur Otto Weidt gave several blind Jewish men and women work and later even shelter.



The participants of the field trip in Berlin. (Picture: Alina Bothe)

After the official opening by Prof. Gertrud Pickhan (FU Berlin) the panels of the sub-projects were started.

In Anne-Christin Saß and Gertrud Pickhan’s project, the scholars try to illuminate the aspects of Transnationality and Yiddishkeit in the Berlin-diaspora of the 1920s-1930s.

Professor Karl Schlögel and Dr. Markus Wolf (both European University Viadrina in Frankfurt/Oder) presented their so-far results of research on the impact of the Russian Revolution and the Jewish-Russian Berlin.

Aleksandra Polyak (MGU, Moscow State University) spoke in her panel about the Union of Russian Jews in Berlin in a context of difficult German-Russian relations.

On the field of literature Britta Korkowsky (Ernst-August University Göttingen) presented her research on Russian-Jewish emigration literature in Berlin. Professor Dr. Matthias Freise (Ernst-August University Göttingen) contributed with his biographical analysis of Boris Pasternak's life in Berlin 1929/1930.

Tamara Or (FU Berlin) will start her project concerning Berlin as a centre of Hebrew literature in the 1920s in the beginning of 2009.

In a conclusion of the day, which started with a tourist trip to the old Jewish quarter, Dr. Viktoria Hegner (Humboldt University Berlin) presented the revitalization and touristic acclamation of the old "Charlottengrad".

The second day was opened by Professor Dr. Vladimir Khazan (Hebrew University Jerusalem) and his research results on the Berlin diaries of Aaron Steinberg.

Professor Dr. Vitkor Kel'ner (European University St. Petersburg) expanded the spotlight on remarkable Jewish intellectuals in Berlin by talking about Simon Dubnow's Berlin years. His colleague Alexander Ivanov (European University St. Petersburg) introduced the audience to his work on the ORT in Berlin.

PD Dr. Verena Dohrn (FU Berlin) expanded that view on Jewish organizational life in Berlin by contributing to the Jüdische Telegraphische Agentur (Jewish Telegraph Agency).

After the sub-project panels two IT-experts of the Center for Digital Systems of the FU Berlin gave a short introduction into the new communication platform "Confluence", which will be used by the members of the project to evaluate and discuss their results. Another aim is to establish a digital biographical database to the Jewish Berlin in the 1920/1930s.

Verena Dohrn spoke very briefly about an own published series of the project and about the planned exhibition at the Jewish Museum Berlin which will be hosted in fall 2011 or spring 2012.

The last panel was the final discussion of the meeting, where Vladimir Khazan proposed his desire for a eastern-European-Jewish encyclopaedia for Berlin. Alexander Ivanov mentioned his concern that organisations should be mentioned on a similar level as individuals. Matthias Freise placed the academic research of the whole project in a context of literature and history. Gertrud Pickhan summarized the different research topics and created the term "Scheunengrad".

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