When I came back to university after the summer vacation, my students’ union had vanished. Soon thereafter, so had the Holocaust memorial that used to adorn its Malet Street façade.

Whilst it turned out that the memorial plaque would soon be returned (albeit in a different location), the University of London Students’ Union (ULU) is gone forever. University of London managers abolished it like an authoritarian government would abolish an independent trade union. This decision – described as an act of vandalism by the Union’s last President – was taken behind the backs of the millions of students who could have held a stake in running the organisation and along with ULU went The London Student – the long-running student newspaper, the largest in Europe.

To me, this is indisputable evidence of a university, and a higher education system gone wrong. This, I would argue, is the consequence of the profit-driven mentality that has gripped ever harder university bosses since the introduction of £9,000 tuition fees. Although there are numerous reasons for why tuition fees need to be abolished, this “cut and compete” agenda is one of the most surreptitious side effects of a society where education is commodified. Unions and departments are constantly under threat of being cut.

Here at the Department, our own UCL Union is under threat. For years, the College has refused to increase funding, despite an ever-increasing student body. Recently there was also a proposal to axe the Women’s Officer, the BME Officer and the Postgrad Officer. This proposal will be voted upon by students at a General Assembly on 9 December and it is crucial that we attend the meeting or we will lose UCLU’s capacity to fight for students’ rights. See http://uclu.org/blogs/hajera-begum/weekly-blog-save-liberation-officers for more.

On a more jovial note; Happy Hanukkah! And many thanks to all the contributors who have made this newsletter possible!

/David Dahlborn, Editor, London
The key to success is innovation. Although generations of students have praised the broad range of our courses, the accessibility of our lecturers, and the challenging academic standards of our teaching, we felt last year that the time had come for something new. This led to the redesign of our BA and MA programmes, effective from the beginning of this term. It is already making its mark on students, staff, and the whole department.

BA students in their first year now enjoy a range of options to choose from. Whilst Hebrew language remains the top priority, first-year students are no longer compelled to take on the whole sweep of Jewish history. Instead, or rather in addition to the history survey courses, there are new introductory courses on ‘Hebrew Literature: Medieval to Modern’ and ‘Israeli Culture, Society and Politics’; and further introductory courses will be made available for first-year students in coming years.

We have also launched a new BA degree in Ancient Languages, the brainchild of Dr Lily Kahn, in partnership with the UCL Department of Greek and Latin. It is proving already very successful, as the largest single cohort of our first-year students has taken it up. In this programme, students will be learning Greek, Latin, Hebrew, and a range of other ancient languages available at UCL. They will gain unique linguistic tools and an excellent grounding for further study and research in ancient cultures, literatures, and history.

Our Master’s programmes have also been restructured, around a single, self-standing MA degree in Jewish Studies. The highlight of this programme is its new core course, which exposes students to the cutting edge of
research in all the fields in Jewish Studies, including biblical and rabbinic studies, Jewish history in all periods, Jewish mysticism, Hebrew literature, Holocaust studies, Israel studies, and more. In this core course, MA students are also introduced to research theory and skills, academic networking, the art of publishing, and many other tricks of our trade – all in preparation for further research, study, and discovery. This course is eye-opening but also tremendously good fun, an opportunity for all staff and graduate students to get together and broaden their horizons.

Am I selling the Department? I guess so, but I have every good reason to do so – and not just because this is my job. I must extend my appreciation to all staff and students, including our administrators and the editors of this Newsletter, for contributing together to the wonderful atmosphere of our Department, to the student experience, and to the initiatives and innovations with which we are constantly moving forward.

A High Court ruling has deemed that the renowned Warburg Institute is not the property of the University of London (UoL) and that the University is obliged to continue its funding for the institution.

Since it was evacuated from Nazi Germany in 1933, when 60,000 books and other materials as well as staff were moved to London, the Institute has provided unique and first-class teaching and research facilities for scholars worldwide.

In recent years the UoL – which became the trustee of the Institute in 1944 – has attempted to use funds from the institution to subsidise its own corporate property. This behaviour “flies in the face” of the terms of the University’s Trust Deed, according to the High Court judge who made the ruling that has temporarily stopped this scheme.

The Acting Director of the Institute, Dr Raphaëlle Mouren has commented that “…I am very pleased that this judgment appears to mean that the intellectual resources of the Warburg Institute, including its world renowned library, will be preserved for future generations of scholars working in the humanities”, but is disappointed that the UoL is seeking to appeal the case.
News

Announcements and News From Around the Department

Announcements

Deaths

We announce with sadness the passing of the following people:

Mrs Zelda Bard

Mrs Zelda Bard passed away earlier in the year. She was a staunch supporter of the Department and set up the Samuel Bard Memorial Prize for undergraduate students in memory of her husband who was himself a student in the Department many years ago. Mrs Bard attended most departmental parties and prize-giving events, and was always very interested in and encouraging of students. We continue to welcome her daughters to the Department.

Mr Geoff Jacobs

One of our regular and lovely Continuing Education students who attended Upper Intermediate Yiddish for several years has died after a long and very courageous battle against cancer. Geoff always tried so hard to attend, sometimes after treatment on the same day. His Yiddish got better and better, and he would write all kinds of very interesting pieces (in Yiddish) on a range of fascinating topics.

Mr Roby Littman

Mr Roby Littman of the Littman Foundation, passed away earlier this year. The Littman Foundation has generously sponsored the teaching of Sephardic Studies in the Department for many years for which staff and students are very grateful.

They will all be greatly missed.
Awards

In 2013-14 these are the students that were awarded departmental prizes:

- **Raphael Loewe prize**: Anca Rujan
- **Hashimoto Rose Prize**: Kyoko Hirooka
- **Jews Commemoration Scholarship**: David Dahlborn
- **Hester Rothschild Scholarship**: Edouard Harari
- **Jews Commemoration Travelling Scholarship**: Lucy Jennings
- **Samuel Bard Memorial Prize**: Zeev Duckworth
- **Hollier Scholarship for Hebrew**: Maria Woncisz
- **Harris Prize for Effort**: Gabriella Smith
- **Margulies Yiddish Prize**: Maria Woncisz
- **Weitzman Prize**: Benjamin Whittle
- **Ben Yossef Prize**: Maryam Ismail (PG)
We are really proud to have achieved a Bronze Green Impact Award in 2013-14 especially as it was our first year of participation. The award ceremony took place in June 2014 in the Grant Museum of Zoology which was packed to the brim. It was attended by UCL President and Provost, Professor Michael Arthur.

We are already improving and one of the most significant changes we have made is that most of our meetings are now paperless. Agendas, minutes and any other documents are shown on computer screens (we hope to have saved a few trees). We have also moved to electronic submissions of essays and are continuously looking to find ways of increasing sustainability in the Department.
News

ULU Holocaust Memorial Removed

The memorial plaque that used to be displayed by the entrance to the ULU Building on Malet Street has been relocated.

News that the bronze Holocaust memorial plaque on the ULU building came soon after the abolition of the University of London Students’ Union (ULU) by the university managers.

The plaque, which bore a quote from former Chef Rabbi Jonathan Sacks was installed on Holocaust Memorial Day in 2005 to ‘remember the horrors of our past but also to celebrate the diversity and freedom of expression of our individual uniqueness’, vanished without explanation in October.

Although investigations showed that the Director of Property and Facilities Management was unaware of this, Student Central (as ULU is known after the take-over) managers later stated that the memorial would be polished and relocated to inside the entrance foyer.

Visitors entering the ULU Building can now see the plaque in its new location to the right of the main entrance.

Above, The memorial in its original location.

Right, The spot where the plaque used to be displayed (it now hangs inside the building).
Noemie recited poems in French in the multimedia production that sought to present a European perspective on World War One. The following pictures are from the show.

‘I Died In Hell: (They Called It Passchendaele)’ ran at the Bloomsbury Theatre on the 4th of November and featured our very own Noemie Duhaut, who is writing at PhD at the Department.

Left, Noemie delivering one of the poems during the performance at the Bloomsbury.
Above and below, The recitations were performed against contemporary images, depicting the life of those who lived through The Great War.
News

The John Klier Study, Open for Students

Refurbishments have been completed in the John Klier Study, adding some much needed study space to the Department.

By Belinda É. S.

Here we are, a year later. It was in last year’s Hanukah edition of the Departmental Newsletter that we announced the upcoming refurbishment of the John Klier Study (JKS) and we are pleased to announce that the refurbishment took place during the summer and autumn of 2013 and has been in use since the spring term of 2013-14! The JKS contains books that complement taught courses and research, journals, memoirs, monographs, and reference books. It covers early antiquity to modernity, Yiddish, Biblical Hebrew, Syriac, Aramaic and Modern Hebrew, literature, history, and much more in between.

With an increasing number of students at the university resulting in cramped library spaces, in addition to the main library, our students now have one more space where they can study or simply sit down in the quiet, away from the hustle-bustle that is the daily rhythm of UCL.

Left, The JKS is located at the south end of the Department corridor.
Above and below, New shiny desks and bookshelves crammed full of literature in the JKS.
In-depth

Departmental Display Cabinets

The revamp of the foyer outside the seminar room has given us our own exhibition space. Belinda takes us through how the transformation happened.

By Belinda É. S.

“Ding!” goes the lift as I step out onto the third floor of Foster Court (don’t judge me, I do take the stairs as well). I walk through the abysmal space that is the foyer – spacious with potential, but lifeless and a bit sad looking. After so many “dings!” I thought, ‘Enough of this, why not make it come alive?’

Aside from our Department, on the third floor are the Departments of Dutch, Italian, and Spanish & Latin American studies, and we all share this foyer space. So we thought: why not have display cabinets, one per Department, to share a little of who we are and what exactly it is we do in these corridors.

The wheels on the bus started going round and round (emails, proposals, budgets) and soon the sterile white walls became a fresh, deep green, as though they had grown a fuzzy layer of moss overnight. The space was already a little more cheerful and inviting.

Soon to follow were men who brought in boxes and began to install the glossy, beige cabinets and boy did they look grand. Slowly but surely the foyer was awakening with new life.

Recently published books, rare books, old photographs and various other items tiptoed into our office, all waiting their turn to be seen in the beautiful house of glass. After the wheels came to a halt as we made our selection of the first items that were to grace the cabinet and in they went.

If you were to take a look at what we currently have on display, you would see several interesting items. The oldest is a gem that lay buried in academic clutter, but after we dusted it off, a beautiful mid-century Hebrew typewriter emerged. The typewriter is accompanied with a selection of books in Hebrew from the John Klier Study (by S.Y. Agnon). This reflects the research and teaching of Hebrew literature in the Department, most notably by Dr Tsila Ratner, who wrote a wonderful text about the revival of the Hebrew language and the role of Eliezer Ben-Yehuda. Next we have two

Left, the Hebrew typewriter on display in the new cabinet.
published books, one on Brazil and Jewish refugees during WWII (Prof. Neill Lochery) and the other on Rabbis, Language and Translation in Late Antiquity (Dr Willem Smelik) - just an example of how varied the research is in the Department.

And finally, there is Dr Lily Kahn’s grammar of the Eastern European Hasidic Hebrew Tale. Alongside her book are comments on how she came to research this particular topic, and what the book is about. Dr Kahn teaches Yiddish and Biblical Hebrew, and as of this year she has also added Ugaritic to her repertoire and her class overflows with curious students.

“Ding!” goes the lift as I step out onto the third floor of Foster Court; a smile sweeps across my face and I sigh. Who knew so much beauty and life would bounce off these moss-like walls into the corridors? The once tired foyer now wriggles in delight. this project could not have been possible without the support and of my colleague Lia Kahn-Zajtmann and that of Prof. Sacha Stern If you are ever in our neighbourhood, do stop by and see us, and when you do, take a peek into our cabinet - who knows what it may hold!
Above and left, The foyer before, during and after the make-over. The Department’s display cabinet stands to the right in the bottom picture.
Moses Gaster, British Sephardi chief rabbi, Zionist, communal activist and scholar, left behind a vast archive of over 170,000 items, which his heirs deposited at UCL. It includes correspondence, diaries, notebooks, unpublished memoirs¹, photographs, press cuttings and more. There is also a large collection of ephemera, such as visiting cards, greeting cards, invitations and menus, which shed light not just on Gaster’s life, but on Anglo-Jewish life in general in the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

Moses Gaster was born in Bucharest, Romania in 1856, into a wealthy family (his father was a diplomat). The memoirs give fascinating details about Jewish life in Bucharest. For example, Gaster suffered from a weak back as a small child, and the treatment was as follows:

They used to bring from the slaughter house the maw and entrails of a cow that had just been slaughtered and hot as it was I was put into it to sit in it for an hour or so. That was going on for some time and it seems to have had the desired effect, for I never felt any weakness in my back all my life.²

He had an Orthodox upbringing, but not a narrow one, describing the religious life in Romania as ‘a kind of free, pleasant form of life, not too punctilious of the observance of those minute details which characterise for instance the rigorous observance of the German Jews’. He attended a non-Jewish school from around nine years of age, the universities of Bucharest and Leipzig and the Jewish Theological Seminary in Breslau. Although he was ordained as a rabbi in Breslau, he returned to Bucharest as a lecturer specializing in the history of Romanian literature and in comparative mythology.

¹ Extracts from the memoirs, edited by Bertha Gaster, were privately printed in 1990. A copy is available in the UCL Main Library.

² The mistakes in English grammar in the memoirs were probably due to the poor English of Gaster’s secretaries (who were refugees from Nazi Germany); they were corrected by Bertha Gaster in the printed edition, but have been left in this article as they appear in the original typescripts.
In 1885 he was expelled from Romania because of his activities on behalf of Romanian Jews. He settled in England and began teaching Slavonic literature at Oxford. However, in 1887, at the age of 31, his life took a different turn when he was appointed Haham (effectively chief rabbi) of the Spanish and Portuguese Jewish Community. He made the post of Haham very influential, but often clashed both with the Ashkenazi establishment and the leadership of his own community. In 1891 he was also appointed Principal of the Judith Lady Montefiore College in Ramsgate, which he tried to turn into a centre of scholarship, but this ended in a scandal, known as the ‘Ramsgate Affair’. In the words of his son, ‘his dream of being the head of a renowned College of Jewish learning had disappeared into thin air, owing to the action of those who, he considered, cared so little for learning, that they had stooped to the foulest means to attain their aim of “breaking” the College.’ 3 A further disagreement with the Spanish and Portuguese community’s leadership led to his resignation as Haham in 1918.

One of Gaster’s main contributions to Anglo-Jewry, and one that is often overlooked, was his involvement in the Zionist movement. Already active in Hovevei Zion in Romania, he became an early supporter of Herzl and helped to found the English Zionist Federation. He chaired a crucial meeting at his home as part of the

3 Extract from an unsigned memoir in the Gaster archive, probably written by Moses Gaster’s eldest son Vivian.
negotiations leading to the Balfour Declaration. However his stormy relationship with Chaim Weizmann, by whom he felt betrayed and sidelined, caused him to end his involvement with the Zionist movement. He was most disappointed with the final wording of the Declaration, which he described as ‘a mere shade, an elusive vague uncompromising will of the wisp, instead of any concrete substantial fact’.

Gaster was a prolific scholar and a great orator, but his personality could be problematic. According to Eugene Black, he ‘complained about everything and quarrelled with almost everyone. From an institutional perspective he proved at best a nuisance and at worst a major hazard to those causes into which he flung himself with such abandon’.

In his own words:

People have described me often as cantankerous or obstinate, just because I did not consider the view of these people coinciding with my own nor put value on their knowledge and understanding and often I could see the ambition being at the bottom of their action, not an unselfish desire of working for a higher cause. I stuck to my own ideas and I have every reason to look back upon my past with that satisfaction that I never swerved from what I considered to be the right path, that no one has been able to show that I have taken the wrong path, that I have often brought sacrifices for the cause which I had at heart, never benefitted from anything that I have been doing for the common weal, never coveted any honours, and I often stood firmly when abuse was raging round me.

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As well as a demanding professional and scholarly career, Gaster had a very busy family and social life. He married Lucy, only child of Michael Friedlander, the Principal of Jews’ College, in 1890. They had fourteen children, two of whom died in infancy. According to his son, Gaster was ‘the complete Victorian husband and father – affectionate but possessive and tyrannical’. The Gasters seem to have lived in a constant social whirl, as attested by the large number of visiting cards, invitations, menus and programmes in the Gaster archive. Moses Gaster moved easily in three different spheres: the established Anglicized Jewish community, the more recent Eastern European immigrants, and the non-Jewish world. Their son reminisces that the house in Maida Vale ‘was never free from visitors, of all sorts, of all nations, of all religions and of all classes – and at almost any meal except breakfast’.

Moses Gaster was a significant figure in the Anglo-Jewish community in the late 19th and early 20th century, about whom surprisingly little has been written in English. We are lucky at UCL to have the treasure trove of his archive.

Above, Menu card for centenary festival, Jews’ Hospital & Orphan Asylum (©UCL Special Collections).

Previous page, Carte de Visite style photograph of Moses Gaster (©UCL Special Collections).

To find out more about the archive visit: www.ucl.ac.uk/library/special-collections/a-z/gaster.
Genesis 11:1-9

The Tower of Babel: The Origins of Language

By Dr Lily Kahn
Penny Guggenheim in Lisbon

During the War, Lisbon was a city of spies and secret agents. It also provided a temporary refuge for many of those who had managed to get away from the Nazis, including Penny Guggenheim. In 1941 she attempted to make her escape Portugal for the US.

By Professor Neill Lockery

Thousands of refugees fled Nazi occupied Europe to Lisbon during WWII in the hope of securing a passage to the free world. Many of the refugees were artists and cultural icons who escaped with the help of the Emergency Rescue Committee through occupied France and across Spain to Portugal. One of the most famous travelling parties gathered in Lisbon in the spring of 1941 having been sent down the escape line to the city in smaller groups. The party contained the wealthy, scatty and eagle eyed art collector, Peggy Guggenheim along with the womanising artist Max Ernst, writer Kay Boyle, artist Leonara Carrington and various ex’s and children. Even in the best of times it would have constituted a difficult mix.

Both Peggy and Kay were keen observers of life in Lisbon during their stay in the city. Peggy could not bear the smells and noises of central Lisbon, so she relocated the party out to the more relaxed pace of life at Monte Estoril - a small hamlet along the Atlantic coastline of Lisbon. There the children were able to play, swim and go horse riding. The adults had plenty of time to play as well. Even while enjoying themselves, however, the emotion of fear was never far away. As Peggy recounted:

“One evening in Cascais [at the end of the Lisbon Coast] I went swimming naked. It was pretty dark, but Max [Ernst] was terrified. The Portuguese are Catholics and we were always being taken up by the police for wearing what they considered indecent bathing suits. As they could not speak French or English they used to measure the outstanding parts of our bodies, make scenes, and then proceed to fine us. We protested violently and went back to the shops that had sold us the suits. They exchanged them for others, but the police were never satisfied.”

Even for the wealthy Peggy Guggenheim things were not easy in Lisbon. Her travel companion, Kay Boyle described the scene at the Pan-Am ticket office in Lisbon. “Rich refugees literally pushed us aside - big rolls of money in their pockets.” Peggy and her party were
increasingly reliant on money wired by her uncle Solomon R. Guggenheim from New York to keep them going in Lisbon. As nobody else in her travel party of between ten to twelve companions (the number changed during the course of her stay in the city) Peggy agreed to foot the bill for all of them to travel together to New York on the transatlantic Pan-Am clipper service. The cost of getting a birth on the clipper was substantially higher than going by liner, but many refugees regarded it as a much safer option.

Lisbon was full of rumours (some true) of liners being shadowed by German U-Boats across the Atlantic. Other ships were forced to take zig-zag routes to avoid U-Boat packs and this added days, and sometimes weeks, to the crossing times. The journey time from Lisbon to New York on the clipper was twenty-four hours with stops in the Azores and Bermuda. It was by no means a perfect service and many passengers complained of severe sickness. When a Pan-Am clipper crashed into the River Tagus while trying to land in Lisbon on the evening of February 22, 1943, the planes previously near perfect safety record was brought to an abrupt end.

Peggy and her entourage were able to depart Lisbon on July 13, 1941 with nearly all her party of board. From the artist, Max Ernst’s perspective the most important item of cargo on board the plane was his artwork. Ernst had simply rolled up his paintings and carried them through France (where he hung in the trees to stretch them out), across Spain and into Portugal. The desire of artists to escape Europe with their artwork intact, and carried with them, became a major problem for several other artists.

While Peggy was in Lisbon she learnt the heartbreaking news that her own art collection, which had taken her a decade to put together and included several masterpieces, had been lost. It appeared to have gone to the bottom of the Atlantic Ocean when the ship on which it was being transported to the United States was sunk by a German U-Boat. As she got off the clipper in New York, a friend gave her the news that her collection was safe and had arrived in the United States on a different ship from the one it had originally been booked to travel on. A famous photograph of Peggy smiling wearing a wide brimmed hat, she had purchased in the Azores, appeared in the American media. However, for Max Ernst, his problems were far from over as he was hauled in for questioning by US immigration officials for being an enemy alien.

Previous page, Peggy Guggenhein (left) and Max Ernst (center) arriving in New York from Lisbon, 1941.

To learn more see Prof. Lochery’s Lisbon: War in the Shadows of the City of Light, 1939-1945.  
☞ http://www.neill-lochery.co.uk/blog/peggy-guggenheim-in-lisbon-in-wwii.html
Top Marks!

Shoshana Sharpe’s freshers in her Hebrew class have in six weeks surpassed all expectations! Not only have they submitted three short essays on the topic ‘Religious Holidays’ for the Newsletter, but their beginners’ language skills are superb. These contributors have studied Hebrew for less than two months:

By Three Beginners’ Hebrew Students
embedded text
3.

 Excellently

75
Since 1981, the European Association for Jewish Studies (EAJS) functions as the sole umbrella organization representing this field of university studies across the continent. The Tenth Congress, held in Paris earlier this year, was a hugely impressive event with hundreds of presentations, showcasing cutting-edge research and allowing colleagues from Europe, North America and Israel to mingle. Also, the Congress was the occasion to hold the association’s General Meeting, where the author of these lines had the honour to be elected secretary of the association, which means that colleagues and students in our Department will be harassed with information about EAJS even more often than usual.

Among the association’s activities are the organization of academic events, the publication of the bi-annual *European Journal of Jewish Studies* (EJJS), and the hosting of the Online Directory of Jewish Studies in Europe on its website (www.eurojewishstudies.org). Furthermore, the Funders Database (accessible only to members!) provides information about all kinds of funding resources in Jewish Studies. Each month, a newsflash is sent out to all members, arguably the most comprehensive and up to date listing of job adverts, academic events, call for papers, reviews, and project presentations.

A few weeks ago, the Stiftung "Erinnerung, Verantwortung, Zukunft" (based in Berlin) has agreed to fund an ambitious three year EAJS Programme in European Jewish Studies, allowing EAJS members to host two types of academic meetings: *EAJS Laboratories*, designed to bring together senior and junior scholars to discuss a specific topic, and *EAJS Roundtables*, which should allow established academics to reflect on disciplinary issues. The purpose of this programme, which is a huge boost for Jewish Studies in Europe, is to support early career academics as well deepening European academic networks. One of the hallmarks of this EAJS Programme in European Jewish Studies is to fund cooperation between members in different countries. Details will be published in December and circulated among members.

Most remarkably, all these services and opportunities are available free for Jewish Studies students! As long as you are a student, membership is free! Thus, the only conclusion can be: Become a Member! Immediately! 

Make Dr Guesnet happy and visit: http://eurojewishstudies.org/. (It’ll be worth it – DD)
On at least four occasions in the last several months I have had the opportunity to combine different kinds of academic experiences that are often thought of as discrete, if not mutually exclusive. Although it may not sound extraordinary, it is not typical for historians to combine research trips with conferences, invited lectures, and student-centred field trips. More often than not such things are compartmentalized, as most academic journeys are for a single purpose.

A part of my motivation is economic. If I am being invited somewhere, I frequently try to take advantage of research possibilities, or additional lecturing prospects in that particular place. Of course it’s wonderful to visit friends and colleagues. Allow me to use the forum of our departmental newsletter to provide a map of where my work has taken me, and how different aspects of it contribute to research and teaching in a more general sense.

In August I led a group of our MA students, Danielle Lucksted, Anna Lloyd, and Grace Idle, on a study-tour to Lithuania. We were based in Kaunas (Kovno) and visited sites relevant to the history of the Holocaust such as the Ninth Fort in Kaunas, and the remains of the Vilna ghetto in Vilnius. While I have led several similar trips, this was different: for the first time we ventured as far as Latvia, and spent several hours in Riga. Riga is one of the most beautiful and fascinating cities in Eastern Europe, and it provided richly diverse glimpses of Jewish and Holocaust history; we saw fabulous former homes of the Jewish

“I learned that Jewish photographers had been well-ensconced in their general communities, and recorded a great deal of the religious and 'national' lives of those in their midst.”
upper class (such as the residence of the family of Isaiah Berlin), and the forests on the city's outskirts where Jews from all over Europe were brutally murdered, in one of the early stages of the Holocaust.

I also shlepped the group to small museums and archives where I was able to pursue my research, in Kelme and Jurbarkas, with the help of my daughter Rachel as photographer. Although the visits were relatively brief, they were incredibly important in providing material for my ongoing research on Jews and photography. In my biased opinion, the research fit well with the teaching as the students were exposed to dimensions of Jewish and Lithuanian history that otherwise would have been inconceivable. In both small museums I learned that Jewish photographers had been well-ensconced in their general communities, and recorded a great deal of the religious and 'national' lives of those in their midst. A local Lithuanian newspaper got quite a kick out of the combined facts that I was doing research on photography, my own family had been involved in photography in Lithuania, and that my daughter is a professional photographer, taking photographs (from earlier Jewish photographers) of their photographs.

Shortly after that trip I went to Israel, mainly to present a paper at a conference on Israeli and Jewish film at the University of Haifa. Despite its small size it was an excellent conference. I heard papers from a number of young scholars who were totally new to me. I was treated to superb analyses of film and television shows, even a fabulous architectural tour of new campus buildings, and received helpful comments about my own paper. While in Israel I did a few (packed) days of research at the Yad Vashem archives in Jerusalem. The work at Yad Vashem was particularly crucial in light of the research I had just completed in Lithuania. In total it gave me a much better sense of Jews in the realm of photography, which was soon incorporated into an article I wrote for an edited volume about Roman Vishniac, arguably the most famous Jewish photographer of Jews. In Israel I pursued both a personal and professional project. I have been trying to recover the assets and legacy of my great-great grandfather, Wulf
Less than a week after the completion of the trip to Israel I went to the United States. I was fortunate to be awarded a fellowship from the Center for Creative Photography of the University of Arizona, in Tucson—in order to pursue different aspects of the Jews and photography project. Prior to the stay in Tucson, I visited Austin, Texas. A few years earlier I held a Schusterman/Dorot fellowship at the Ransom Center of the University of Texas, and the University of Texas Press is the publisher of my current book which is now in production, Jews and Photography in Britain. I met with the people at the press who will be handling the book. In Austin I did a few days of research at the Ransom Center, which holds the magnificent photographic collection of Helmut Gernsheim. (Gernsheim is a major subject of the book.)

I then began my stint as a Josef Breitenbach Fellow at the Center for Creative Photography. Much of my research was on Breitenbach himself—a colourful character, to say the least. What a wonderful place to work. In addition to indulging in tex-mex cuisine, after archive hours I enjoyed the company of colleagues, friends, and even family in Tucson. The weather was hot and sticky (even though it's supposedly the 'good' variety
of dry heat) and I got caught in a flash flood. I’ve never quite figured out how to go to such attractive places in the correct season.

Following Tucson I went to Wichita, Kansas. One of my former teaching assistants from the United States is now a professor and head of humanities at a small college, Newman University. He invited me to give a lecture on the Holocaust. It was a pleasure seeing him and meeting his colleagues. I also visited a class, again, a most enjoyable and enlightening experience.

The next break was not until reading week. Mainly due to an invitation for a conference at Boston University, on plunder and restitution during the Holocaust, I spent some time in New (versus Olde) England. While in Boston, at the front and back ends of the trip, I looked at papers in the Baker Library of Harvard Business School, on Edwin Land and the Polaroid Corporation. I also gave lectures at Bowdoin College in Brunswick, Maine, and Brown University, in Providence, Rhode Island. Maine is spectacularly beautiful, and Bowdoin deserves its reputation as one of the finest liberal arts colleges imaginable. Brown was also terrific to visit. The main event, the conference at Boston University, which was co-sponsored by the House of the Wannsee Conference, was tremendously informative. Some of the scholars and their work were known to me, but others offered totally new horizons. I almost immediately shared what I had learned with the students in my current Holocaust class.

My next excursion is to Rome, to present a paper at a history of photography conference. I’ll also seize the moment to visit my photographer daughter Rachel in Florence, who’s there for the fall term on the University of California program. No doubt, in the future, I’ll be scheming to give papers wherever my son Stephen ends up in university. ☐
Upcoming lectures from the IJS (Spring 2015)

The UCL Institute of Jewish Studies has a packed programme ready for next term. Below is the preliminary list of what diverse and intriguing topics will be on offer in the new year. Lectures are free and open to the public. To join the IJS mailing list, contact Sara Ben-Isaac at the Department.

January 15th
IPJS conference to launch Polin 27
The Jews in Congress Poland
Venue: Embassy of the Republic of Poland, London

Wednesday February 4th
Simon Wiesenthal lecture
Dan Michman, Bar-Ilan University
What exactly was the goal of the Nazi anti-Jewish enterprise?
Garden Room UCL: reception 6.30pm, lecture 7pm

Wednesday February 11th
Bezalel Porten, Hebrew University, Jerusalem
From Elephantine to Jerusalem and Back
Garden Room, UCL, reception 6.30pm, lecture 7pm

Thursday February 19th
With the Jewish Historical Society of England
Derek Penslar
Title t.b.a.
Garden Room, UCL, reception 6.30pm, lecture 7pm

Monday March 30th
With the Jewish Historical Society of England

All-day conference
Gustave Tuck lecture theatre

Monday May 11
Yuval Sinai, Yale University Law School
Title t.b.a.
Haldane Room, UCL, reception 6.30pm, lecture 7pm

Thursday May 21st
With the Jewish Historical Society of England
Speaker and title t.b.a.
Pearson lecture theatre, UCL, reception 6.30pm, lecture 7pm

Thursday May 28th
BOOK LAUNCH
Lily Kahn, UCL
Haldane Room, UCL, reception 6.30pm, lecture 7pm

Thursday June 25th
With the Jewish Historical Society of England
Anthony Grafton
Title t.b.a.
Garden Room, UCL, reception from 6.30pm, lecture 7pm

UCL Institute of Jewish Studies
3rd Floor Winter Party!
Departments of Dutch, Hebrew & Jewish Studies,
Italian, and Spanish, Portuguese & Latin American
Studies

Thursday 11th December
3pm-5pm
3rd Floor Common Room (FC307)

Festive refreshment provided
All staff and students welcome!