

Contributor/Presenter:

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Title:

Cultural heritage reconstructed –Compact Memory and the Frankfurt Digital Judaica Collection

Abstract:

Jews have become the symbol for modernity and are generally seen as agents of change who played a central role in the development of modern European society and culture since the French Revolution. Jewish historical newspapers are the invaluable sources that provide direct and detailed information of the transformation process of Jewry and offer new insights into German history.

The use of these historical sources however is extremely difficult. In addition to the fragile nature of newspapers, as a result of the losses during WW II and the deliberate destruction of great parts of Jewish newspapers by the Nazi regime, complete sets of periodicals are very rarely to be found. They are scattered all over the world in different libraries and archives and in different physical formats (paper, microfilm), forcing a researcher to invest special efforts in order to pursue his studies.

Financed by the German Research Foundation DFG and in cooperation with the Aachen Chair of German-Jewish Literary History and the Cologne library Germania Judaica, the Judaica Division of the University Library Frankfurt established Compact Memory, the Internet Archive of Jewish periodicals. It contains the 110 most important Jewish German newspapers and periodicals in Central Europe in the period from 1806-1938, covering the complete range of religious, political, social, cultural and academic aspects of Jewish life. 700.000 pages have been digitized and being made available partly as full-texts, processed by OCR, partly as graphic documents with corresponding index options. The database offers advanced search options, downloading and printing of articles. 81.000 essays of more than 10.000 individual contributors have been bibliographically indexed. Nearly 1 million hits a month prove the unique value of this archive for international research.

Since 2004 Compact Memory has been listed in the UNESCO Archival Portal.

<http://sammlungen.ub.uni-frankfurt.de/cm?lang=en>

Biography:

Born in Tel Aviv, Rachel Heuberger was educated in Frankfurt, Germany and studied History, Jewish Studies and Education at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem. She is a lecturer for Jewish Studies at the University of Frankfurt and has published extensively on the history of the Wissenschaft des Judentums, the Frankfurt Jewish Community and modern German-Jewish history.

In the library she initiated the digitization of the Jewish historic collections and the creations of several databases, well known to scholars, including Yiddish Prints, Compact Memory (a database of German-Jewish periodicals), the Freimann Collection and the Hebrew Manuscripts.

She contributed as a leading partner to JUDAICA EUROPEANA, the European Digital Library and serves as chairperson in the continuation of this project, the Judaica Europeana Consortium.