

Fellows

Mary Gluck

IFK_Senior Fellow

Duration of fellowship

01. October 2011 bis 31. January 2012

Mary Gluck

PROJECT TITLE

The Invisible Jewish Budapest: Assimilation and Urban Modernity in Central Europe

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The projected book from which my lecture is taken, attempts to recuperate the lost world of Jewish urban experience that flourished in Budapest between 1867 and 1914. It argues that Jewish assimilation needs to be seen not simply as a political event defined by legal emancipation, but also as a cultural process conditioned by an emerging urban culture. Jews became modern selves and national subjects by first reconstituting themselves as actors and spectators within the cultural public sphere of the metropolis. This hypothesis questions the ideology of assimilation, according to which Jews were “men like others on the street, but Jews at home.” It suggests that Jewish experience in the city was never polarized into inner and outer, public and domestic realms, but continuous with the popular institutions of urban life. In other words, urban Jews were, by definition, public selves, who found their true homes on the boulevards, in the coffee houses, the Orpheums, music halls, and cabarets of the city. For a number of interrelated reasons, this Jewish-identified popular urban culture has become erased from both Jewish and Hungarian historical memory, hence the title of the book: “The Invisible Jewish Budapest.”

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Mary Gluck is Professor of History and Comparative Literature at Brown University. Her areas of specialization are European intellectual and cultural history, Central European Jewish history, modernism and urban culture.

Publications

Publications (among others): *Popular Bohemia: Modernism and Urban Culture in Nineteenth-Century Paris*, Cambridge, MA, 2005; *Georg Lukacs and His Generation*, London 1985.