



## Karl Kraus Collection

1880-1962 (*Bulk:* 1930-1962)

2 boxes (1 linear ft.)

Call no.: MS 470

### Collection overview

Known for his biting satirical poetry, plays, and essays, the Austrian writer Karl Kraus was born in what is today Jičín, Czech Republic. At the age of three, Kraus and his family moved to Vienna, where he remained for the rest of his life. He is best known as editor of the literary journal *Die Fackel* (The Torch), which he founded in 1899 and to which he was the sole contributor from 1911 until his death in 1936.

Gabriel Rosenrauch, a lawyer from Chernivtsi, Ukraine, collected materials about Kraus and his career, including newspaper articles and essays in German, Yiddish, Hebrew, English, and French written between 1914 and 1962. A few of these were written by well-known authors such as Hermann Hesse and Werner Kraft. The collection features personal photographs of Kraus from throughout his life, as well as photographs of his apartment in Vienna. Also of note are the indexes to Kraus' journal *Die Fackel* that were composed by Rosenrauch, whose personal correspondence with Kraus archivist Helene Kann is part of the collection.

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## Background on Karl Kraus

Karl Kraus was born on April 28, 1874 in Gitschin, Bohemia (modern Jičín, Czech Republic), then part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. The son of Jakob Kraus, a wealthy Jewish papermaker and businessman, and his wife Ernestine Kantor, Karl moved with his family to Vienna in 1877. He began to study law at the University of Vienna in 1892, but after changing his major to philosophy and German studies, he decided to leave the university in 1896 without a degree in hand.

Still in his early twenties, Kraus launched himself into a career in literature, publishing the first issue of a new journal, *Die Fackel* ("The Torch"), in April 1899. Kraus attracted a number of well-known artists and writers to *Die Fackel* in its first decade, however, by 1911 Kraus had become virtually the



sole contributor. Despite the dearth of other writers, Kraus continued to edit and publish *Die Fackel* until his death in 1936.

*Karl Kraus*

Kraus is typically considered a key member of the fin de siècle literary and artistic culture in Vienna. This group included artists such as Gustav Klimt, a pioneer of the Art Nouveau movement, and a later the Expressionist painter Oskar Kokoschka, who painted a portrait of Kraus. Typically, the writers and painters associated with Kraus were immersed in the twin ideas of both cultural decadence and imminent change. *Die Fackel*, in fact, was intended to hold a "torch" to the hypocrisy of German and Austrian society and the Austro-Hungarian government. In his writing, Kraus criticized everything from psychoanalysis to the corruption of the Habsburg Empire, laissez-faire economic policies, and the nationalism of the pan-German (Großdeutschland) movement, among many other topics.

However, Kraus was not limited to biting essays on subjects of cultural concern, nor was he necessarily limited to these particular subjects in all of his writing. Kraus is known for using an array of literary vehicles to express himself, including essays, plays, poems, and aphorisms. His best-known work is the satirical play, *Die letzten Tage der Menschheit* ("The Last Days of Mankind"), a massive piece about World War I. Kraus also exhibited a lasting interest in language, about which he wrote regularly in *Die Fackel* as well as in books such as *Die Sprache* (Language). His linguistic interests also led him to re-translate Shakespeare's sonnets in 1932.

The fact that newspaper articles discussing Kraus and his work could still be found in German-language newspapers nearly 30 years after his death speaks to his strong influence in German literature and cultural studies. His last writing, an issue of *Die Fackel*, appeared in February 1936. He died in Vienna four months later on June 12, 1936, from a stroke and heart failure.

## Scope of collection

The Kraus Collection consists primarily of materials written about Karl Kraus, with few items by him. In total only three items can be attributed definitively to Kraus, and one unsigned letter from 1910 may be by Kraus.

Instead, the value of the collection is as a gauge for Kraus' cultural impact in Europe during his life and well after. Gabriel Rosenrauch, an avid Kraus fan and the individual responsible for compiling this collection, took care to preserve newspaper articles concerning Kraus from 1914-1962. This includes a large collection of articles and obituaries from 1936, which were clipped from newspapers printed in Austria, Switzerland, and Germany, a copy of a British newspaper that includes a review of a book written about Kraus, and articles written in Hebrew and Yiddish.

Not only did Rosenrauch save newspaper clippings, he saved flyers advertising plays and lectures by Kraus and pamphlets that include articles written about Kraus, many by Werner Kraft, a well-known German scholar of Kraus, author, and librarian. In addition, Rosenrauch collected two French-language items from La Société des Etudes Germanique (the Society of Germanic Studies). Rosenrauch also came into possession of a large collection of photographs of Kraus, depicting his life from adolescence to old age, up to and including his

apartment in Vienna and gravesite. Among the photographs is a view of an unidentified synagogue, which may be where Kraus' funeral service was held.

Also of importance are a set of extensive indexes compiled by Rosenrauch of articles in *Die Fackel*. While the script is difficult to read, it is clear that Rosenrauch took considerable care to document and catalog the subjects of the articles written by Kraus and other contributors to the journal. The care epitomized in these indexes extends throughout the collection. Several articles and essays are present as typed copies, presumably prepared by Rosenrauch, in particular the work by Hermann Hesse and several of the pieces by Werner Kraft.

Finally, since this collection was created by Rosenrauch, it includes some of his personal correspondence. These letters are mostly exchanged with Helene Kann, a Kraus archivist, whom he helped to escape from Vienna and then from Europe after the *Anschluss* of Austria in 1938. These letters do not necessarily provide insight into Kraus, but they do provide interesting details about the collector as he maneuvered around Europe during World War II, ultimately ending up in Israel until his death in the 1960s.

## Inventory

Altenberg, Peter: "Ein Gespräch" <a href="#">Contents</a> : English translation of article "A Conversation."	undated	Box 1: 1
Fackel, Die: Indexes	circa 1933	Box 1: 2
Fackel, Die: Indexes	circa 1933	Box 1: 3
Fackel, Die: Indexes	circa 1933	Box 1: 4
Fackel, Die: Indexes	circa 1933	Box 1: 5
Gruner, Franz: "Oskar Kokoschka"	circa 1961	Box 1: 6
Hesse, Hermann: "Nachtgedanken"	1938	Box 1: 7
Karl Kraus-Gesellschaft: Aufruf zur Gründug einer Karl Kraus Gesellschaft <a href="#">Contents</a> : An appeal for the formation of a Karl Kraus Society.	circa 1938	Box 1: 8
Kraft, Werner: "Das Leben" <a href="#">Contents</a> : English translation of article "The Life."	undated	Box 1: 9
Kraft, Werner: "Karl Kraus"	circa 1944	Box 1: 10
Kraft, Werner: "Karl Kraus und die Idee der Sprache" <a href="#">Contents</a> : English translation of article "Karl Kraus and the Idea of Language."	circa 1940s	Box 1: 11
Kraft, Werner: "Die letzten Tage der Menschheit" <a href="#">Contents</a> : English translation of article "The Last Day of Mankind."	1946	Box 1: 12
Kraft, Werner: Articles on Karl Kraus	circa 1960s	Box 1: 13
Kraus, Karl: Articles by	1910-1921	Box 1: 14
Kraus, Karl: Correspondence	1900-1929	Box 1: 15
Kraus, Kark: handbills	1933	Box 1: 16
Kraus, Karl: Kraus Hefte and Zirkular	circa 1990	Box 1: 17
Kraus, Karl: Lectures	1934	Box 1: 18
Kraus, Karl: Lectures and playbills	1935-1936	Box 1: 19
Kraus, Karl: Manuscripts	undated	Box 1: 20
Kraus, Karl: memorializations	1936	Box 1: 21
Kraus, Karl: Miscellaneous	1933-1958	Box 1: 22
Kraus, Karl: newspaper clippings	1914-1933	Box 1: 23
Kraus, Karl: newspaper clippings	1934-1935	Box 1: 24

Kraus, Karl: newspaper clippings	1936	Box 1: 25
Kraus, Karl: newspaper clippings	1937	Box 1: 26
Kraus, Karl: newspaper clippings	1938-1952	Box 1: 27
Kraus, Karl: newspaper clippings	1953-1954	Box 1: 28
Kraus, Karl: newspaper clippings	1955-1962	Box 1: 29
Kraus, Karl: newspaper clippings	undated	Box 1: 30
Kraus, Karl: "Rohübersetzung"	undated	Box 1: 31
Kraus, Karl: speech on his 50th birthday	1924	Box 2: 1
Krenek, Ernst: Correspondence	1940	Box 2: 2
Lasker-Schüler, Else	1952	Box 2: 3
Letter: unidentified	1917	Box 2: 4
<i>New Swiss Review</i> : In Memoriam Karl Kraus	1947	Box 2: 5
Photographs: Kraus, Karl	circa 1880-1905	Box 2: 6
Photographs: Kraus, Karl	circa 1906-1936	Box 2: 7
Photographs: Kraus, Karl, gravesite	circa 1940	Box 2: 8
Photographs: Kraus, Karl, Viennese apartment	circa 1930s	Box 2: 9
Photographs: Kraus, Karl, Viennese apartment	circa 1930s	Box 2: 10
Photographs: Synagogue	undated	Box 2: 11
Rosenkranz, Moses: Correspondence and poetry <i>Contents</i> : Includes poetical tributes to Krauss.	1936-1940	Box 2: 12
Rosenrauch, Gabriel: Correspondence	1934-1935	Box 2: 13
Rosenrauch, Gabriel: Correspondence	1936	Box 2: 14
Rosenrauch, Gabriel: Correspondence	1937-1938	Box 2: 15
Rosenrauch, Gabriel: Correspondence	1939	Box 2: 16
Rosenrauch, Gabriel: Correspondence	1940-1946	Box 2: 17
Rosenrauch, Gabriel: Correspondence	1947-1948	Box 2: 18
Rosenrauch, Gabriel: Correspondence	undated	Box 2: 19
Rubel, Maximilien: "La Prose de Karl Kraus"	1935	Box 2: 20
Samek, Oskar: Correspondence	1936-1945	Box 2: 21
Cercul Pentru Culture Sociala -- Bildungsgemeinschaft: Conferinta despre Karl Kraus [Romanian broadside]	undated ca.1936	Box 2: 22
La Société d'Etudes Germanique : "On Karl Kraus"	circa 1949	Box 2: 23
Society of Germanic Studies: Trimester Review	1950	Box 2: 24
Yiddish and Hebrew printed materials	undated	Box 2: 25

## Administrative information

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### Access

The collection is open for research.

### Provenance

Provenance unknown.

### Processing Information

Processed by Ryan Lafond, March 2008.

### Related Material

The following is a list of works by Karl Kraus collected by Gabriel Rosenrauch housed with the Rare Books in the

## Special Collections and University Archives.

- *Die Fackel*. Wien : Verlag "Die Fackel", 1899-1936. (AP30 .F15)
- Kraus, Karl. *Epigramme*. Wien ; Leipzig : Verlag "Die Fackel", 1927. (PT2621.R27 E8 1927)
- Kraus, Karl. *Literatur, oder Man wird doch da Sehn. Magische Operette in zwei Teilen*. Wien : Verlag "Die Fackel", 1921. (PT2621.R27 L48 1921)
- Kraus, Karl. *Literatur und Lüge*. Wien : Die Fackel, 1929. (PT2621.R27 L5 1929)
- Kraus, Karl. *Die chinesische Mauer*. Wien : Die Fackel, 1930. (PT2621.R27 C5 1930)
- Kraus, Karl. *Nachts*. Wien : Die Fackel, 1924. (PT2621.R27 N3 1924)
- Kraus, Karl. *Sittlichkeit und Kriminalität*. Wien : Die Fackel, 1923. (PT2621.R27 S5 1923)
- Kraus, Karl. *Die Sprache*. Wien, Verlag "Die Fackel", 1937. (PT2621.R27 S83 1937)
- Kraus, Karl. *Sprüche und Widersprüche*. Wien : Die Fackel, 1924. (PT2621.R27 S88 1924)
- Kraus, Karl. *Die letzten Tage der Menschheit : Tragödie in fünf Akten mit Vorspiel und Epilog*. Wien : Die Fackel, 1922. (PT2621.R27 L42 1922)
- Kraus, Karl. *Traumstück*. Wien ; Leipzig : Verlag "Die Fackel", [1923] (PT2621.R27 T85 1922)
- Kraus, Karl. *Traumtheater: Spiel in einem Akt*. Wien : Die Fackel, 1924. (PT2621.R27 T86 1924)
- Kraus, Karl. *Untergang der Welt durch schwarze Magie*. Wien : Die Fackel, 1925. (PT2621.R27 U5 1925)
- Kraus, Karl. *Die Unüberwindlichen, Nachkriegsdrama in vier Akten*. Wien, Leipzig, Verlag "Die Fackel," 1928. (PT2621.R27 U54 1928)
- Kraus, Karl. *Wolkenkuckucksheim : phantastisches Versspiel in drei Akten auf Grundlage der "Vogel" von Aristophanes (mit Beibehaltung einiger Stellen der Chöre in der Schinck'schen Übersetzung)*. Wien ; Leipzig : Verlag "Die Fackel", 1923. (PT2621.R27 W58 1923)
- Kraus, Karl. *Worte in Versen*. München, Kösel-Verlag, [1959] (PT2621.R27 W6)
- Kraus, Karl. *Zeitstrophen*. Wien : Die Fackel, 1931. (PT2621.R27 Z2 1931)

### Language:

English

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## Search terms

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### Subjects

- Kraus, Karl, 1874-1936.
- Vienna (Austria)--History--20th century.

- World War, 1939-1945.

### Contributors

- Kraus, Karl, 1874-1936 **[main entry]**
- Kokoschka, Oskar, 1886-1980.
- Kraft, Werner, 1896-1991.
- Rosenkranz, Moses.
- Rosenrauch, Gabriel.

### Genres and formats

- Letters (Correspondence).

### Link to similar SCUA collections

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