

Centre for German-Jewish Studies Dinner at the House of Lords

The tenth anniversary of the Centre for German-Jewish Studies was marked in March 2004 by a dinner at the House of Lords, hosted by Lord Attenborough, Chancellor of the University, and Lord Moser, Chair of the British Museum Development Trust. It was attended by eighty of the Centre's friends and supporters, who took the opportunity to bid farewell to the retiring Director, Professor Edward Timms, and to welcome his successor, Dr Raphael Gross, who will hold his new appointment jointly with the Directorship of the London Leo Baeck Institute.

The guest of honour, Rabbi Dame Julia Neuberger, spoke eloquently about the achievements of German-speaking Jews in the 19th and early 20th century, which she compared to the Golden Age of Jewish culture in Spain. She emphasized that there are lessons for the future to be learnt both from the successes of the so-called 'German-Jewish symbiosis' and from an in-depth study of the political prejudices that undermined it, culminating in the Holocaust. This programme of teaching and research should include the study of Christian-Jewish relations in other European countries.

The dinner was attended by the Vice-Chancellor, Professor Alasdair Smith, who was congratulated on the award of an Honorary Doctorate by the University



Lord Attenborough in conversation with Lord Moser

of Warsaw for his work on European economic integration. The guests included both leading academics and representatives of the refugee generation of the 1930s, whose achievements form one of the focal points of research at Sussex. Lord Attenborough, after recalling how actively his parents were involved in the rescue of refugees from National Socialism, made an appeal for further financial support for the work of the Centre, while Dr Gross outlined an ambitious programme of teaching and research, including the new MA programme on Modern European Jewish History, Culture and Thought, which will be taught in London.

Database of Refugee Archives

In proportion to its size, Britain received more refugees from Nazi-occupied Europe than any other country, the majority of whom were German-speaking and from Jewish backgrounds. The Centre has received substantial funding from the Arts and Humanities Research Board to create a Database of British Archival Resources Relating to German-speaking Refugees. This project, led by Edward Timms in conjunction with Professor J. M. Ritchie of the London Centre for German and Austrian Exile Studies, will inaugurate a new era in migration research by recording the variety of archival resources relating to German-speaking refugees who arrived in Britain between 1933 and 1950 and whose papers are located in British public and private collections.

The three-year project, which began on 1 March 2004, will be undertaken by Dr Andrea Hammel and Ms Samira Teuteberg, assisted by a Steering Committee. The rich holdings of institutional archives and personal collections are widely scattered through the British Isles, and there is currently no research tool that can be consulted.

Both German and English-language resources will be included to provide access to the cross-cultural influences of the refugees and the cross-fertilizations between continental and British culture. To reflect the growing interest in Life History and Oral History, the database will include information on collections of audio and audiovisual autobiographical narratives. It will record the names of individuals and the location of their papers along with brief biographical descriptions, making these archival materials globally accessible to researchers via the Internet.

For information about the progress of the project, please contact one of the following at the Centre for German-Jewish Studies, University of Sussex, Brighton BN1 9QN
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Holocaust Memorial Day

On Wednesday 28 January the Centre organised its fourth annual public event to mark Holocaust Memorial Day. The principal speaker in the early afternoon session was Janina Fischler-Martinho, who spoke movingly of the sufferings of the Jewish community in Krakow under the Nazi occupation and of her own escape and survival as a teenage girl. Her presentation was introduced by Chana Moshenska, the Centre's Director of Educational Programmes, who has been supporting Janina's efforts to have a new Galician Jewish Museum established in Poland.

The second session focused on the genocide in Rwanda in 1994, which was analysed by two Sussex political scientists, James Fairhead and Michael Collier. Most genocides, we were reminded, are motivated by rivalry for political power, and in this sense the Jewish Holocaust was untypical.

However, the international community must be held responsible for failing to intervene when genocidal crimes are being committed, in Rwanda in the 1990s as in the Germany of the 1930s.

The programme concluded with early evening workshops on Holocaust Education through Art, led by Akiva Segan; and on local responses to a planned hostel for asylum seekers in the Brighton suburb of Saltdean, which included protest demonstrations filmed by students from Sussex. This final workshop showed that the overall theme of the day's events, 'Lessons still to be learnt', remains apposite in Britain today.

Obituary: Hilde Kochmann

It is with great sorrow that we record the death on 25 December 2003 of one of the Centre's most loyal supporters, Mrs Hilde Kochmann (née Kohn), the widow of Max Kochmann, first chairman of our Support Group. Born in 1918 in Gleiwitz (now Gliwice in Poland), she came to Britain as a refugee in 1939 with a visa to be trained as a nurse in Birmingham. After the work permits for refugee nurses were revoked, she was obliged to find employment in domestic service. She and Max were married in 1944, and they later settled in Basildon, where she assisted him with the running of Pafra Ltd, a successful industrial adhesives company founded in 1959 with the assistance of another refugee, Paul Frankfurter. During their long and rewarding marriage, Hilde treasured the memory of her parents, who remained behind with the Jewish community in Gleiwitz and were deported to their deaths. She and Max succeeded in ensuring that the community was properly commemorated, and in October 2003 she travelled to Gleiwitz for the unveiling of a memorial sculpture.

The Centre's first volume of conference papers; *The German-Jewish Dilemma from the Enlightenment to the Shoah*, was dedicated jointly to Max and Hilde Kochmann, and their contribution to the work of the Centre was formally recognized by the University in January 2000, when Max was awarded an honorary doctorate. The first Kochmann Memorial Lecture was delivered in London by Professor Sander Gilman in October 2002, when a plaque in memory of Max was unveiled at the Wiener Library in Hilde's presence (see photograph). One of her last public appearances was in October 2003, when she was accompanied by her daughter Irene to the Second Kochmann Memorial Lecture, delivered at the Austrian Embassy by Professor Robert Wistrich.

Hilde was a member of the Centre's London-based Support Group from its inception, making characteristically quiet but precise contributions to debates about development strategy. She was blessed with exceptional culinary skills, and the fact that academics based in Brighton were so keen to attend Support Group meetings at

the Belsize Square Synagogue may partly be attributable to her mouth-watering Apfelstrudel and Mohntorte. Visiting academics also had opportunities to enjoy her hospitality at the B'nai B'rith London Lodge, and she will be affectionately remembered by a large circle of friends.



Jan Herman Brinks, Chana Moshenska, Raphael Gross (the newly appointed Director) and Franziska Augstein



Nationalist Myths and Modern Media

An international conference on this theme was held in London from 22-23 October 2003, organised by the Centre with the support of the Arts and Humanities Research Board. A total of sixty papers were presented, exploring a wide range of topical and controversial questions. Why are the media taking the British National Party so seriously? Has democratic America become the ultimate imperial nation? How does the gender of Palestinian suicide bombers influence the press coverage they receive? Since the historical convergence of antisemitic myths in Germany and Russia forms a focal point of our research, the notorious 'Protocols of the Elders of Zion' featured in one of the most fascinating sessions. The role of religion in the formation of national identity formed a further leitmotif, especially when combined with the recycling of ancient myths and stereotypes through modern technologies of communication.

Academics, journalists and policy makers from over twenty different countries explored the recycling of age-old racial and religious prejudices in an age of globalisation and mass media. The conference included panels on historical revisionism, Holocaust denial, antisemitic conspiracy theories and racist rhetoric, as transmitted through the media of newsprint, film, television, radio and the internet. Keynote speakers included Gerry Gable, founder of the anti-fascist journal *Searchlight*; former *New York Times* correspondent David Binder; Franziska Augstein, editor of the *Süddeutsche Zeitung*; and Tanya Lokshina, executive director of the Moscow Helsinki Group.

The conference marked the mid-point of a two-year project funded by the AHRB and headed by Professor Edward Timms. The programme was organized by the Centre's Research Fellows, Dr Stella Rock and Dr Jan Herman Brinks, assisted by the Conference Organizer, Dr Tiziana Tonna. Selected proceedings are being edited for publication by I. B. Tauris, and the three main sections will focus on Myth-Making in the Media: Global, National and Local; Political and Media Discourses in Germany and Austria; and Myth and Media in Post-Soviet Russia. The book should be published in Spring 2005.

Remembering to Forget

Processes of commemoration have become a fashionable subject for research, but the illustrated lecture delivered by Edward Timms on Sunday 25 April at the Leo Baeck (London) Lodge explored the more elusive theme of 'Remembering to Forget: German and Jewish Modes of Memory'. The focus was on two shiploads of refugees lost at sea during the Second World War: the *Struma*, carrying Jewish refugees from Romania, which sank under mysterious circumstances in the Black Sea in February 1942 with the loss of over seven

hundred lives; and the *Wilhelm Gustloff*, which was carrying approximately nine thousand German refugees fleeing from the advancing Red Army, when it was sunk in the Baltic in January 1945 by a Soviet submarine. Attempting to explain why these momentous events were so soon forgotten, Professor Timms cited passages from Exodus and Deuteronomy about the defeat of Amalek, which provide a paradigm for cultural memory. Events associated with a particular place and a notorious perpetrator are readily remembered, especially if they fit into a national historiography. But both German and Jewish national identities are linked to the land, and this may be the reason why the two refugee ships were forgotten for so long.

News in Brief

In March 2004, Andrea Hammel attended a conference in Bologna on 'Kinder und Jugendliche im Exil', which focused on the experiences of refugee children during the Second World War with special reference to those who were rescued and hidden in Italy. She spoke about her research on 'Kindertransport' children and how this will be linked with our Database project.

In April 2004, Petru Weber attended a conference in Budapest on 'The Deportation of the Hungarian Jews', participating in a session devoted to events in Romania. His research has earned him a Fellowship at the Institute for European History in Mainz, which he will take up in August 2005.

The third 'Religion and Extremism Seminar', organised at Sussex on 6 May by Chana Moshenska, Stella Rock and Father Rob Esdaile, focused on *Violence in God's Name: Religion in an Age of Conflict*, a book by Oliver McTernan, introduced by the author. The panel discussion was led by Dr David Goldberg (Rabbi Emeritus of the London Liberal Jewish Synagogue), Sheikh Musa Admani (Imam of London Metropolitan University) and Canon Paul Oestreicher (Quaker Chaplain to the University of Sussex). McTernan's book challenges the orthodoxy that religion is marginal in world affairs, and argues that religions must take responsibility for the traditions and texts used to justify or to encourage violent acts. Issues covered in the lively discussion included non-violent responses to terror, the term 'tolerance' and its impact, the role of military chaplains, and whether we should be optimistic in the current world situation. This seminar, which filled the Meeting House to capacity, marks the end of a project headed by Dr Rock. She recently guest edited a special issue of *Patterns of Prejudice* on this theme, to be published in June 2004.

Publications and Forthcoming Events

Research by Dr Ernest Stock, partly supported by a Visiting Fellowship at the Centre, forms the basis for the forthcoming publication of German diaries and letters relating to his experiences as a child growing up in Frankfurt and as a refugee on the run in France. This illustrated volume will be published by Metropol Verlag under the title *Jugend auf der Flucht*.

A Romanian version of Arnold Daghani's slave labour camp diary, edited by Lya Benjamin, will be published in summer 2004, accompanied by a television programme about the artist's career. Deborah Schultz and Edward Timms are preparing a revised English version of his diary, to be published by Vallentine Mitchell. A series of exhibitions of Daghani's work, based on items from the Sussex collection, opens in Zurich in August 2004, later touring Germany and Romania.

Between April and July 2004 the Centre is hosting a visit from a volunteer from the Technical University in Berlin, Ms Susann Seyfert, who has a special interest in History of Art. She will be assisting with the cataloguing of our collection and the compilation of a database of 'Kindertransport' papers and other archival materials relating to the refugees of the 1930s.

Research on the 'Kindertransport' has benefited from contributions by a series of visiting speakers, including Charles Hannam, Susi Bechhöfer, Martha Blend and Sally McNichol. On Tuesday 22 June at 4.30 p.m. in Arts B 127 there will be a talk by Inga Joseph entitled 'My Darling Diary', based on the diary she kept as a child in Vienna and as a refugee in England.

From May until October there will be an exhibition at the Jewish Museum in Vienna on 'Vienna, City of Jews', focusing on the interwar period. The exhibition catalogue includes a contribution by Edward Timms entitled 'Haifische in der Donau' ('Sharks in the Danube').

A new research seminar at the University, entitled the 'Arendt Colloquium' has been initiated by the Centre and will commence during the Summer Term. The seminar is aimed at an interdisciplinary audience of academics from Sussex University. Amongst others, papers and responses will be given by Nicolas Berg (Simon Dubnow Institute, Leipzig), Raphael Gross (Leo Baeck Institute and University of Sussex), Nils Roemer (Southampton), Ben Barkow (Wiener Library) and Marcel Stoetzler (Goldsmiths College, London).

The Leo Baeck Institute will be organising a workshop at the University of Sussex on 4-5 October 2004 on 'Research Practices of Jewish Scientists and Scholars in the 19th and 20th Centuries', coordinated by Ulrich Charpa and Ute Deichmann.

From 12-14 December an international workshop will be held at Sussex on 'Russian Jews in Germany in the 20th and 21st Century', jointly organised by the Bucerius Institute, the Leo Baeck Institute and the Centre for German-Jewish Studies.

MA in Modern European Jewish History, Culture and Thought commencing October 2004

This MA programme offers an introduction to modern European Jewish political, cultural and intellectual history from the 18th to the 21st centuries, from the Enlightenment to the destruction of Jewish life during the Holocaust and its subsequent partial renewal in recent decades.

Courses include Modern European Jewish History and Culture, Jewish Intellectual History, Jews in the Sciences and the Humanities, Modern European Jewish Literature and Antisemitism and the Holocaust. Courses will be taught by international scholars including Ben Barkow, Ulrich Charpa, Ute Deichmann, Sander Gilman, Raphael Gross, Uffa Jensen and Lisa Silverman. Teaching will take place at the Leo Baeck Institute/Wiener Library in central London.

Two full or part-time student bursaries (£4,500) are available for this programme.

For further information please contact: r.gross@sussex.co.uk

For further information about the Centre, forthcoming events and joining the Friends please contact:

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