

Holocaust Memorial Day, February 2021



George and Peter Summerfield (left to right)

Lockdown, due to the Covid-19 pandemic, forced Sussex University's Centre for German-Jewish Studies to change the usual on-campus format of Holocaust Memorial Day and to hold the event online, split over two days. Prior to the online event, a film of the Summerfield brothers narrating their memoirs to Bea Lewkowicz (Director, AJR Refugee Voices Testimony Archive) was circulated.

The first webinar session, held on Wednesday 5 February was based on the national theme: 'Be the Light in The Darkness.' The focus was on the memories of twin brothers, George and Peter Summerfield, who spoke movingly about their experiences as small children living in Berlin under the Nazis and their escape, aged six, in 1939, just before the Nazis closed the borders.

They described in compelling detail the way in which their lives deteriorated in Germany, such as the worry of their father losing his job because he was a Jew; the ban on mixing with their non-Jewish friends and being forced to leave their school. During their flight from Germany, they had to abandon all their luggage and money, other than hand luggage, which held their teddies. Arriving in England, these losses meant that it took the family some time to rebuild their lives. The difficulties they encountered might have suggested that they saw only darkness, but their comments indicated otherwise.

Paying close attention to the webinar's theme, they preferred to reflect on their good fortune. They were able to leave Germany as a family unit as they were all included on a family passport and they described their luck in receiving advice to leave immediately and not wait for desired visas to the US, so that they boarded the last train allowed to leave Berlin in 1939. They touched on the kindness of some Germans who helped them until they could leave, as well as that of some Dutch during their escape. Later, upon arriving in England as penniless refugees they were shown much kindness by Jewish charities and by the headmistress of a private school near their boarding house, who offered the twins a free education leading, much later, to their winning scholarships to Oxford.

Their memories were particularly moving as they articulated clearly the feelings of the small children they were. As George said, even at the age of five they understood that life was no longer normal but, in spite of their experiences, they felt that they had been lucky, and that all those who helped the family through many acts of kindness showed that there was light in the darkness. Peter's eighty-year-old teddy bear, introduced on the webinar, surely agreed.

After listening to George and Peter's talk, a question-and-answer webinar was held. Chaired by Diana Franklin, it featured many pertinent questions from

schoolchildren. It was exciting to see over one hundred questions appear in the online chat, demonstrating the interest engendered by the talk. Due to time constraints, only a few of these could be discussed during the session.

Peter Summerfield is a long-standing member of the Advisory Board of the Centre for German-Jewish Studies/Weidenfeld Institute and its Honorary Solicitor.

The second session, held on Friday 7 February, was a webinar dedicated to examining 'The Future of Holocaust Memory.' To discuss the topic, a panel of four internationally renowned experts was assembled and mediated by Dr Victoria Walden, senior lecturer in Media at the University of Sussex and member of the Weidenfeld Institute.

Dr Tobias Ebbrecht Hartmann, (Lecturer in Visual Culture, Film and German Studies at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem), Michael Haley Goldman, (Director of Future Projects at the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington), John Glancy, (Executive Producer for Schools and Families at the Imperial War Museums in the UK) and Iris Groschek, (Director of Press and Public Relations at the Gedenkstaette Neuengamme in Hamburg) comprised the panel.

After thought-provoking presentations from each speaker, followed by an intense question and answer session, a series of themes emerged. They all agreed that the pandemic has had a transformative effect on global Holocaust memory.

The most relevant question was the importance of preserving authenticity of Holocaust memory going forward, especially once there are no more survivors. The preservation of victims' recollections, as well as archive information such as letters and journals and material culture, objects like shoes or jewellery, can be enhanced by using digital technology. It was important, Michael Haley Goldman suggested, to explore the use of new technology such as interactive holograms of survivors' testimonies; but he warned that it was imperative to work with audiences to ensure that the memory

Holocaust Memorial Day *continued*

of the victims of the Holocaust was not desecrated and that the debt of memory owed to them was respected.

Dr Hartmann, in his research on the changes in the use of digital during the pandemic, noted that data showed that its use had intensified both online and in social media and that there had been an increase in the move from analogue to digital preservation and presentation of Holocaust memory by institutions.

He cautioned that the continued importance of physical sites should not be forgotten or overlooked and concluded that the future of Holocaust memory lies in developing a hybrid culture embracing both sorts of commemoration.

His views were amplified by other speakers. Iris Groschek mentioned that it was already possible to use simple, readily available digital resources such as Twitter to create connections in easy to digest snackable form using hashtags to develop information. Her organisation has already been successful in attracting and encouraging a younger generation accustomed to accessing information in this digital form. She also believes that such platforms enable networks to be created between institutions through collaborative work and, even more importantly, dialogue between the generations could be strengthened.

The importance of narrative was also considered by the panel. John Glancy believes that storytelling is the most effective method of preserving memory; working collaboratively with audiences to raise awareness. It is particularly effective as an educational tool, but care is needed to consider the sensitivity and emotions of the target audience when developing narrative material.

Although the panel was optimistic over the opportunities offered by digital, the speakers sounded notes of caution over assuming that this way of preserving Holocaust memory will be once the pandemic subsides. There is a need to avoid the desecration of memory, and to preserve physical presence in museums and sites of remembrance. Nor is digital always a benign tool; care has to be taken over the growth of Holocaust denial on digital platforms and there is a necessity to develop digital methods to combat its presence.

In her brilliant and insightful summing up of the views of the panel, Dr Walden highlighted the foregrounding of storytelling, authenticity, participation and education. She recognises that using digital during the pandemic has forced all those involved in preserving memory of the Holocaust to evaluate current approaches to such work; to be imaginative in developing new ideas and to conserve those that retain meaning.

Some responses to the presentations:

'Thank you for inviting me to take part in the discussion. I find it reassuring that there are knowledgeable people throughout the world who care about the Holocaust and will continue educating about the subject after the survivors are no longer with us to tell their story. This really is so important.'

'It was an inspired idea to run a webinar on the theme of memory and how to collect, store, present, disseminate and use it to educate everyone etc. All the speakers were fascinating, and one learnt so much....'

'When an event runs as smoothly as both 3/2 and 5/2 did, it means that there must have been a huge amount of work done behind the scenes!! Congratulations to you and everyone else. A truly fantastic achievement.'

'We both found the session today most interesting and illuminating. Do congratulate the chairperson when you see her. Terrific!'

The Centre for German-Jewish Studies thanks the AJR once again for their valuable support for our Holocaust Memorial Day events.

Updates on PhD projects

Florian Zabransky

Between Love and Sexualised Violence: Male Jewish Intimacy during the Holocaust



My thesis examines male Jewish intimacy during the Holocaust. In examining emotions, relationships, bodily experiences and the masculinity of persecuted Jews, the research excavates social dynamics, gender roles and identities and power relations. The four chapters of the thesis focus on the ghettos, camps, resistance fighters/partisans and displaced persons' (DP) camps in the aftermath of the Holocaust. These intimate experiences add a new perspective to the study of the Holocaust. In particular, they provide novel information on specific male Jewish experiences and male conduct during persecution. My thesis investigates love and romantic relationships, sexual barter, family planning/reproduction and marriage in the ghettos and the child boom and the revival of the Jewish family in DP camps.

During recent months I have secured several fellowships and funding. From September to December 2020, I completed the Joseph Wulf Fellowship at the House of the Wannsee Conference in Berlin, and at the Institute for Contemporary History in Munich. From March 2021 I am a virtual resident and Fellow at the Center for Advanced Genocide Research at the University of Southern California Shoah Foundation, where I access oral-history interviews for my thesis. Additionally, I have secured two further prestigious grants: The 2021 Hadassah-Brandeis Institute Research Award and a Fellowship at the Leibniz Institute for European History in Mainz for research between April - September 2021.

I remain eternally grateful to the family of Clemens Nathan for enabling me to carry out this research at the Centre for German-Jewish Studies.

Stefan Boberg

People from Paper. German Jews through the prism of registration and census-taking 1812-1943

We congratulate Stefan Boberg for passing his PhD viva voce with flying colours. Stefan has worked on his thesis at the Centre for German-Jewish Studies since September 2016. The focus of the project is on the role of registration and statistics in the identification and localisation of German Jews prior to the deportations in the 1940s. Stefan explores how processes of inclusion and exclusion were mediated by devices of oversight. He analyses the role of registration and statistics in the formation of a German state collective from the emancipation of Prussian



Joseph Parry-Jones

Britain's Wartime Internment of Jewish Refugees: New Social and Cultural Perspectives

We are delighted to welcome Joseph Parry-Jones as our first Morris and Bessie Emanuel PhD Fellow in Modern Jewish History and Culture. Before commencing his PhD at Sussex, Joseph studied for an MA in European Jewish History at the Leo Baeck Institute, Queen Mary, University of London. What initially sparked his wish to study Jewish history is an interest in the various ideological forms of antisemitism. For his research essay assignment, he produced original work on areas related to Holocaust history including denial; Jewish refugees in Britain; the colonial paradigm and gender Holocaust studies. The subject of Joseph's MA thesis was Jewish women's death march experiences.

Joseph's PhD thesis is a social and cultural history of Britain's wartime

internment of Jewish refugees. The main objective is to address current limitations in the study of Jewish internment that are manifest in the wider Jewish refugee historiography. These limitations are an insufficient effort to contextualise the Jewish refugee experience within the wider history of Nazi racial persecution and the Holocaust; a narrow focus on the Kindertransportees and talented refugees who contributed towards the arts, sciences and academia, and lastly a lack of attention given to method, referred to here as the design of a study, the selection of sources and how they are analysed.

If readers possess visual and English language materials related to internment that they would be willing to share, or if they would like to give their own personal recollections as first or second-generation refugees, please contact Joseph at [E: j.parry-jones@sussex.ac.uk](mailto:j.parry-jones@sussex.ac.uk)

Joseph is greatly indebted to Bader Philanthropies who are generously supporting the Morris and Bessie Emanuel Fellowships.

Jews to the deportations. He argues that National Socialist policy regarding concepts of state membership and devices of oversight accelerated existing trends in German nation building.

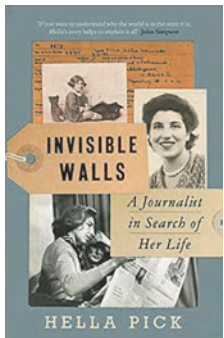
Stefan remains extremely grateful for the award of the Alfred Bader Scholarship that permitted him to pursue this research at Sussex.

New Publications

'Invisible Walls'

by Hella Pick

Published by Weidenfeld and Nicolson



Invisible Walls is a book of great power and honesty, packed with vivid detail of Hella's reporting adventures from the newly independent African states of the late 1950s, through the US of the turbulent 60s and on, through

the cold war and into this uncertain age of populist promise-makers, all told with a keen intelligence and relentless dedication to the facts.

It is no accident that Hella became a diplomatic correspondent, one whose finest work concerned the efforts of the United Nations, often doomed, to avert conflict in various parts of the world. She brought to the job the intellectual hunger and moral purpose of one who had escaped the great catastrophe that descended on Europe in the 1930s. Her childhood was torn apart by the rise of fascism and the catastrophic failure of diplomacy. Pick arrived in Britain from Austria as an 11-year-old child – number 4672 – on the Kindertransport that brought around 10,000 Jewish children to

safety after the Kristallnacht attacks in 1938. She lost a country – Austria – and her maternal grandmother perished in a concentration camp.

Together with her mother – who constantly feared she would lose Pick as she had lost so much else – she experienced the struggles of life as a Jewish refugee. It left her with a sense of being an outsider, which never ameliorated despite numerous awards and friendships that included some of the most influential people in the land.

With great honesty and poignancy, she recalls the failed love affairs with men who would not make themselves available for a family life with her. But the more I read, the greater my conviction that coming from where she did and being who she was, Hella Pick could never have settled for quiet domesticity, and certainly not as the wife in the background of some eminent man. At a time when precious few women were allowed into senior ranks of foreign reporting, she was a trailblazer for a generation. I commend her book to the widest audience possible but particularly those setting out in journalism. Pick is testament to the necessity of having a broad intellectual hinterland and an open mind, the value of cultivating sources and finding things out.

Hella is a long-standing member of the Advisory Board of the Centre for German-Jewish Studies/Weidenfeld Institute.

The above is an abridged version of Fergal Keane's review of Hella's book which appeared in the Observer in March 2021 and is reprinted by kind permission of The Observer.

'The Making of an Alliance: The Origins and Development of the US-Israel Relationship' by Professor David Tal

This book, due to be published by Cambridge University Press towards the end of this year, discusses the sources and development of the special relationship between Israel and the United States. Employing an integrative approach, the book suggests that the relations between the two nations were based on idealism, political culture and strategic ties. Suggesting that Zionist, and later Israeli – American relations resemble a tangled web consisting of multiple threads woven together, and based on primary sources collected in multiple archives in Israel and the United States, David Tal's book discusses the development of relations built through the contact between peoples and ideas. It shows how Presidents and Prime Ministers, state officials and ordinary people from both countries impacted each other. This influx was possible as the relationships between Israel and the United States were based on constants over which the ephemeral was negotiated. The constants were religion, values, and history, serving the bedrock of the relations between the two countries, and, more importantly, between the two peoples. The ephemeral, which was the American interests, was negotiated against those constants.

Julius Carlebach: Neither Break nor Abyss

by Winston Pickett



Carlebach (right) with his mother and eight siblings (circa 1931)

In June 2000, over the course of two days, social anthropologist Bea Lewkowicz spent more than 12 hours interviewing Professor Julius Carlebach in his book-fortified study at his home on Dyke Road in Brighton.

A post-doctoral research fellow at the Centre for German-Jewish Studies at the University of Sussex, where Carlebach had taught since 1976, Lewkowicz wanted to hear first-hand the distinguished scholar's reflections on his life. She sought to record his own account of growing up in Germany, as a member of the first Kindertransport from Hamburg in 1938 and a life-journey in England that took him from Stamford Hill to the Royal Navy, the Norwood orphanage, Nairobi, Cambridge University, Israel, Hillel House in Brighton and as the founding director of the College for Jewish Studies in Heidelberg.

At the time, Lewkowicz explains in 'This is the Story of My Life', recently published by the Centre for German-Jewish Studies/Weidenfeld Institute, the chronicling of Kindertransport refugees was still in its infancy. The Association for Jewish Refugees had only begun to explore the possibility of taking oral histories. Twenty years later, more than sixty-five 'Kinder' interviews have been compiled by the AJR's Refugee Voices Testimony Archive and knowledge of the Kindertransport has risen to a level of familiarity in the public consciousness.

This makes the publication of this volume both timely and all the more revealing – not only for

students of the Kindertransport but also for every one of the institutions with which Carlebach became involved; the academic accomplishments he achieved and the lives he touched in at least four continents but especially in Brighton and Hove, where he made his home, raised his family, and became an engaging and erudite fixture on the Jewish communal scene.

A compact, anecdote-rich 120 pages in length, Lewkowicz's interview with Carlebach is a window into multiple worlds with textured resonances of a bygone era. Carlebach's grandson, Efraim, in an opening chapter, calls it 'a 20th Century life (with) 19th Century traces.'

Born in 1922 in Hamburg in the wake of WW1 and against the backdrop of the tempestuous Weimar Republic and the rise of National Socialism, Carlebach's world was informed by the memories and milieu of both parents, a rabbinic and academic lineage that extended back multiple generations and an intellectual reach that spanned and informed both centuries simultaneously.

Carlebach's memories are richest when he speaks as an eyewitness to history, whether it is major events like Kristallnacht, or minor ones like 'everyday' encounters with Nazis, including the Gestapo, who used to sit at the back of the shul in Hamburg and take notes on his father's sermons. And yet, by his own admission, it is the gaps in his narrative which stand out for their poignancy: not being able to remember saying goodbye at the train station before starting

his journey to Britain or the loss of words when his mother returned to Germany after a two-week visit to the UK before the start of WW2. For both mother and son, he recalls: 'What had to be said couldn't be said.'

Such narrative gaps were frequently cited during a recent Zoom seminar for the launch of his memoir by the Centre for German-Jewish Studies and the AJR, during which Carlebach's granddaughter, Lotte, herself a child psychotherapist-in-training, spoke on his seminal study, *Caring for Children in Trouble*, which emerged from his work at Norwood. Other speakers focused on what Carlebach calls a 'break' and even an 'abyss' in his recollection, tying his lacunae to the consequence of trauma, familial separation, geographical dislocation, alienation and a loss of everything familiar, including one's own language.

Indeed, studied throughout his published interview readers can't help but wonder how Carlebach overcame the emotional upheavals that began as soon as he landed in the UK. They are left wondering how he coped with a wholesale abandonment by the family who sponsored the teenage refugee, leaving him homeless and at the improvised mercy of the Refugee Committee, through which he ultimately found work as a furrier, followed by a five-year stint in the Royal Navy.

Upon returning to his native Hamburg, Carlebach learned that his parents and three sisters had been deported from their home and murdered by the Nazis in a forest outside Riga, Latvia on March 26 1942. Five other members of his family managed to survive the war. Eventually finding work in London as a housemaster at Norwood, where he carried out pioneering work on refugee children, he embarked on an academic career that ultimately brought him to Sussex University, where he lectured in sociology and criminology from 1968-1988.

When I first read this deeply introspective memoir, I was struck by the sheer weight and sequence of the wrenching experiences Carlebach managed to push his way through, all while forging a professional and academic career that saw him do pioneering work in child development, criminology, sociology and Israel studies despite, paradoxically, an original disposition that once deemed 'all religions as divisive.'

And yet, upon second and even third readings, it's not the

trauma or the tales of resilience or accomplishments that shine through. It is the irony-steeped humour, the laughter, the colourful anecdotes (a delightful number of which focus on smoking), the storytelling detail and the ability to conjure up a lost zeitgeist of German-Jewish symbiosis and learning – all yielding a courageous analytical examination of one man's remarkable curriculum vitae through a uniquely self-critical lens.

Perhaps what struck me most in this interview, which Carlebach gave less than a year before he died, was just how much every decision he made in what the Germans call his *Lebenslauf*, became a trajectory of healing – the most emblematic of which is the former refugee child becoming a specialist in post-traumatic childhood rehabilitation. As we read, we watch as new, perhaps even buried, memories come to life in the same way neuroscientists have detected that nerves and muscles can regenerate following physical trauma.

Neither break nor abyss, then, Carlebach's account reveals to the reader a life of ruptures made whole by the catalyst of what our rabbinic sages call *zicharon*: the twin forces of memory and memorialisation.

The above is an abridged version of an article written by Winston Pickett in March 2021 and is reprinted by kind permission of Sussex Jewish News.

'This is the Story of my Life' – An Interview with Julius Carlebach

by Dr Bea Lewkowicz is now available for £12.50 (+ £2.50 postage and packing). To purchase a copy [E: d.franklin@sussex.ac.uk](mailto:d.franklin@sussex.ac.uk)

For further information about the Centre for German-Jewish Studies and joining the Friends, please contact:

Diana Franklin
Centre Manager
Centre for German-Jewish Studies
University of Sussex
Brighton BN1 9QN, UK

T: +44 (0)1273 678771
T: +44 (0)20 8455 4785
(London office)
E: d.franklin@sussex.ac.uk

Please see our website:
www.sussex.ac.uk/cgjs