

## Holocaust Memorial Day at the University of Sussex

The Power of Words was the theme for the 2018 Holocaust Memorial Day and this theme was well represented in the Centre's programme which took place on Wednesday 7 February on the University of Sussex campus. Once again, the event was generously sponsored by the Association of Jewish Refugees. The Vice-Chancellor, Adam Tickell, the president of the students' union, Frida Gustafsson and Gideon Reuveni, Director of the Centre for German-Jewish Studies were joined by Michael Newman, Executive Director of the AJR at the opening panel.

In the first talk entitled: 'East West Street: A personal history of genocide and crimes against humanity', Prof Philippe Sands explored how personal lives and history are interwoven. He connected his work on 'crimes against humanity' and 'genocide', the events that overwhelmed his family during the second world war and an untold story at the heart of the Nuremberg Trial that pitted lawyers Rafael Lemkin and Hersch Lauterpacht against Hans Frank, defendant number 7 and Adolf Hitler's former lawyer.

For the 2nd session, a packed Attenborough Centre heard the moving testimony of Holocaust survivor, Hungarian-born Susan Pollock. This sprightly 88-year-old told the audience how she remembered being packed into a cattle truck for six days and at the end of the journey watching her mother being taken away to be gassed.

'Not Idly By: Peter Bergson, America and the Holocaust' was the title of the thought-provoking and disturbing film that showed Hillel Kook, also known as Peter Bergson, attempting to mobilise American Jews to get the American government to act against the atrocities being perpetrated on the European Jews during the war. An interesting conversation with Astra Kook Temko, a daughter of Hillel Kook followed the film.



As a main aim of the event at Sussex is to make younger generations more aware of what happened during the Holocaust, the following are some reactions from local schoolchildren and students who attended:

*'That words have immense power over humanity and the way people live and express'*

*'My students were very affected by Susan's talk. They thought she was wonderful, and did not stop talking about her the whole way home'*

*'It offers a truly human insight into the experience of the Holocaust'*

*'As always to hear the testimony of survivors is very interesting in relation to testimony. We must never forget that this was a human tragedy committed by humans on other humans. We must ground our studies in this principle and not get lost in statistics.'*

*'That learning from the past is important to move forward. That it is up to people to raise awareness on the severity of events and allow others to understand. That talking is a way of coping and moving forward.'*

*'That Jewish children were often stopped from going to school and so after the Holocaust it was incredibly hard to get a job as they had no qualifications. We often forget that they still faced difficulties even when the war was over.'*

*'The importance of keeping the memory alive and to talk about these events to make sure we remember'*.

How was the event today different from lessons at school about the Holocaust?

*'More personal and more real life, more "real".'*

*'Really learnt about the important lessons the Holocaust taught us.'*

*'More eye-opening, makes you realise the extent of what happened.'*

To watch talks from our Holocaust Memorial Day programme, please visit <http://sussex.ac.uk/cgjs/hmd2018>



Philippe Sands speaking at Holocaust Memorial Day with Andrew Sanders, Professor of Criminal Law and Criminology (Sussex) chairing the session

# Jews and Quakers: on the Borders of Acceptability

Conference held at the University of Sussex, 14 December 2017

This event was conceived as an interdisciplinary one-day conference, to enable Jewish and Quaker experience to be comparatively explored. There was considerable interest in the conference and over 50 people attended. Of the two communities, there were representatives of 'Quakers with Jewish Connections' (QWJC) and representatives of Jewish community organisations as well as individual Quakers and Jews with a particular or personal interest.

The first paper of the day tackled relations between some Quakers and some sections of the Jewish communities. Dr Tony Stoller, Visiting Professor in Media and Communications at Bournemouth University identified a change in relations following an era of 'super-equivalence' in Jewish-Quaker relations that reached a highpoint during and immediately after the Second World War, when British Quakers distinguished themselves in humanitarian work in Germany, assisting refugees. He suggested this high-point was superseded by a decline, exacerbated by contemporary attitudes within British Quakerism to the Israeli government's policies towards Palestinians, and by what he identified as a shift to the political left within Quakerism. Quakers, critical of Israel's policies faced a defensive posture in the Jewish diaspora, producing mutual mistrust and antagonism that was reflected in letters in the journals and newspapers of each community. Perhaps unavoidably, elements of this conflict found expression at the conference and there were certainly some moments of painful tension during the day, over questions of antisemitism, and anti-Israeli sentiment.

The diversity of Jewish experience was reflected in the second panel. Dr Anne Kershner of Queen Mary University London described the origins of Reform Judaism in the UK. Her paper was paired with that of Esther Solomon, doctoral candidate from Bar Ilan University, who by internet link from Jerusalem spoke on Rabbi Dessler, a key figure in Orthodox Haredi Judaism.

Professor Emeritus of Modern Jewish History, at the University of Michigan, Todd M. Endelman, illustrated in his keynote address how comparisons within Jewish history proved that the reduction of Jewish experience to one paradigmatic example is misguided. Despite this, he suggested that making a broad comparison with an 'external' group such as Quakers offered insights. Taking the period from the 18th to early 20th centuries in Britain, Professor Endelman singled out three aspects for comparison: the separation of Jews and Quakers from wider communities; their methods of achieving social mobility and prosperity, and how, over time, their respective distinctiveness declined as assimilation increased.

In concluding remarks, Professor Dandelion of Birmingham University shared thoughts on the complexity of the patterns of social and theological developments in each community revealed over the course of the day. He also announced that in 2019 a follow-up conference would be held at the Woodbrooke Centre for Postgraduate Quaker Studies, Birmingham, where the conversations begun at this event could continue.

*The conference was conceived and organised by Valerie Whittington with the support of the Centre for German-Jewish Studies and the Woodbrooke Centre for Postgraduate Quaker Studies, Birmingham. It was funded by the Research-led Initiative Fund of the Doctoral School at the University of Sussex; the Gerald Hodgett award and the Spalding Trust.*

## Evi Wohlgenuth Lecture delivered by Hella Pick at the Austrian Cultural Forum



Hella Pick was welcomed by the Deputy Austrian Ambassador on Monday 11 December 2017 when she delivered the fourth Evi Wohlgenuth Lecture on 'Cultural Identity'. The speaker was influenced in her choice of theme by the memory of her close friend, in whose honour the lecture was being given, who was passionately interested in politics.

As introduction, Evi's niece, Nicola Glucksman, shared memories of her aunt as a highly intelligent woman, determined to live her life to the full and not be defined solely as a Holocaust survivor.

Hella Pick refocused the question of cultural identity towards politics, nativism and populism rather than its more usual connotations of art, music and literature. She felt that cultural identity was having a strong impact on western countries, causing deepening political divisions and the rise of nationalism.

She identified three main causes for the changes: a widening gap between globalists who are international in outlook and those, frightened by globalisation, who want to prevent its development and simultaneously be protected from its consequences. A growing alarm and increasing rejection of mass migration, more prevalent in recent years, which has helped fuel populism and nativism. The growing influence of religion, while benefitting social cohesion, is also capable of producing divisiveness.

Hella thought that an identifiable and significant retreat from a shared European or even global culture which had occurred at a surprisingly fast rate challenged the previously held consensus that national cultural identity would soon be subsumed by globalisation. As she said: 'The smaller cultural unit has been winning over the larger unit.'

Hella noted that Brexit was not unique, just a glaring example of the growing rise of popular parties espousing nationalist views throughout many parts of Europe, even countries usually more internationalist in outlook, such as France and Germany, as well as Poland, Hungary and Austria.

She expressed concern that within states, the conflict in cultural identity was divisive, leading to a possible fracturing of states as currently constituted, such as Catalonia's secessionist movement within Spain, as well as the growth of separatist movements in other European countries. In her view this could lead to the breakup of European nation states so that Europe comprised a multiplicity of mini-states instead making Europe more vulnerable to interference by powerful non-European countries.

She concluded her talk by saying that if worries over cultural identity caused the dissolution of the European Union, it would increase global political instability and claimed bleakly that we are living in dangerous times. After the talk, Gideon Reuveni chaired a question and answer session which produced a lively discussion on the crisis in cultural identity.

## The National Jewish Book Award

On 6 March 2018, in New York, Gideon Reuveni was awarded the Dorot Foundation Award in Memory of Joy Ungerleider Mayerson in the category of Modern Jewish Thought and Experience at the National Jewish Book Award. He received this for his study of *Consumer Culture and the Making of Modern Jewish Identity*. The National Jewish Book Awards programme began in 1950 when the American Jewish Book Council presented awards to authors of Jewish books at its annual meeting.

*Consumer Culture and the Making of Modern Jewish Identity* elucidates the role that consumption and economic change have played in the development of Jewish identity, Jewish politics and perceptions of Jews that increasingly became tied to their roles as both producers and consumers. In the National Jewish Book Council review the book was described as 'a well-written and incisive study'. It was further explained that 'this work fundamentally changes and enriches our perspective on the image of Jews, as well as their self-perception, in the modern world'.

We commend Gideon on this splendid achievement.



Gideon Reuveni receiving the National Jewish Book Award (image Ethan Segal)

## David Jünger and his first impressions of Sussex

David, who is to be congratulated on being appointed Deputy Director of the Centre for German-Jewish Studies as well as DAAD lecturer in History, writes as follows:

'Coming from Washington D.C., where I spent a few months as a visiting fellow at the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, to Brighton in early September 2017, I made a surprising discovery: things here are *lovely*, not *amazing*. After my first weeks, I realised that this is not just a linguistic idiosyncrasy, but an appropriate description: indeed, lovely it is.

Growing up in Leipzig in the 1980s and 1990s, I studied history and philosophy at Leipzig University. Between 2007 and 2012 I completed my PhD at the Simon Dubnow Institute for Jewish History and Culture with a work on German Jewry and the planning of emigration, published in 2016. From 2012 to 2017 I was a research fellow at the Free University Berlin and the Centre for Jewish Studies Berlin-Brandenburg. During this tenure, I also spent several months with various fellowships in Washington D.C., Jerusalem, New York City and Cincinnati.

My research interests are in Modern European, German-Jewish and American-Jewish history. Currently I am working on my second book about the life and times of the German-born American Rabbi Joachim Prinz (1902–1988) and his collaboration with Martin Luther King, Jr. and the Civil Rights Movement. Prinz was one of the most prominent personages of German Jewry in the inter-war period and after his emigration in 1937 one of the most important and influential representatives of American Jewry from the 1940s to the 1970s. His own experience of Nazi oppression and the lessons from the Holocaust, Prinz declared, were the primary reasons for his political activism in post-Holocaust America, especially regarding civil rights for the African-American community.

Since September, I have been walking in the footsteps of my predecessor Kim Wünschmann who was so admired by her colleagues and students. To the University of Sussex, I bring the passion to teach, to engage with the students, the faculty and the local public. I am eager to help the Centre for German-Jewish Studies flourish and to communicate its work to the academic and non-academic public'.

## Arnold Daghani and the Forgotten Story of the SS road

The work of the Holocaust survivor Arnold Daghani has long been one of the treasures of the German-Jewish archive at the University of Sussex. All his work, comprising over 6,000 works of art, can be viewed at the Keep archive, which is situated a short walk from the University campus.

On 21 February, the Keep was delighted to welcome Dr G. H. Bennett, author of 'The Nazi, The Painter and the Forgotten Story of the SS Road' as a guest speaker. Dr Bennett spoke about how his research had taken him from a showing of an amateur film in a church in Devon which portrayed scenes of rural life in Eastern Europe to a transit road in the Ukraine under the rule of the SS in the early 1940s. This in turn led him to use Daghani's testimony to shed light on the events in this seemingly remote part of the Nazi state.

In 1942 Arnold Daghani had been deported from his home in Romania to a forced labour camp in the Ukraine where he and his inmates had to fortify a road that would support the Nazi drive on Stalingrad. Eventually Daghani and his wife managed to escape from the camp, but the majority of the remaining inmates were executed as the camp was liquidated.

Bennett told the story of the building of the road; how the plans to reinforce it were part of the wider Nazi vision of empire and how these were put into practice with the help of German road building companies, local police and the SS. He used Daghani's testimony to root his talk in the personal fate of one child: Mucki Enzenberg. The little boy, and with him the hope of survival, had been kept alive by the camp population until the tragic liquidation of the camp.

## Research Paper

### **'Jewish Prisoners in the Concentration Camps: Instruments of Terror and Exclusion in Nazi Germany' by Kim Wünschmann**

Following the publication of the above research paper, Prof Vernon Reynolds asked if the authors of such papers realise the effect their works have on some readers.

#### **Response from Kim Wünschmann:**

*I am very sorry to hear that it causes pain and I do, of course, respect this reaction. Dealing with this particularly violent episode in history is hard for an academic, but it cannot compare to the experiences of those for whom my research is a personal history. I can only say that the responses I get from those who lived through the horrors of the camps and their families are very important to me and like anyone who writes scholarly works about this, I am aware of the agony and discomfort it may cause.*

#### **Response from Edward Timms:**

*We are very sorry that you found the contents of the research paper on Jewish Prisoners in the Concentration Camps so distressing (I too was shocked by the sadistic details). But may I emphasize that teaching and research at the Centre for German-Jewish Studies (unlike more narrowly focused Holocaust Studies programmes) tries to strike a balance by placing those terrible events in a broader historical context, also recalling the creative dimensions of the German-Jewish heritage.*

## Friend of the Centre recovers family painting

In June 2017, the City of Hanover and the Sprengel Museum restituted the watercolour painting *Marschlandschaft mit rotem Windrad* (Marsh landscape with red windmill) by the noted expressionist painter Karl Schmidt-Rottluff, to the descendants of Max Rüdénberg, who live in France, the U.S.A and Great Britain.

The entrepreneur Max Rüdénberg was co-founder of the Kestner-Gesellschaft in Hanover, which has played a decisive role in the promotion of modern art in Germany up to this day. As a collector and patron, Max Rüdénberg was deeply involved in the cultural life of Hanover in the 1920s. In addition, he was a member of the City council. In 1933, he lost all his political positions. He had to sell his business and his paintings, among them the watercolour by Schmidt-Rottluff. Following his and his wife's deportation to Theresienstadt in 1942, Max Rüdénberg's assets and his large unique East-Asian china collection were confiscated. Max and Margarete Rüdénberg perished in the concentration camp soon after their arrival. *Marschlandschaft mit rotem Windrad* was purchased by Dr Bernhard Sprengel in 1939. It came into the possession of the City of Hanover when Dr Sprengel subsequently donated his collection to his hometown.

For more than ten years the heirs of Max Rüdénberg endeavoured to recover the Schmidt-Rottluff painting on the initiative of grandson Professor Vernon Reynolds, a Friend of the Centre for German-Jewish Studies who arrived in Britain with his mother Eva in 1939. It was only after public pressure by the trade union



*Hannoversche Allgemeine Zeitung*, 28.6.2017 Isabella Reynolds (l-r), Hannover city mayor Stefan Schostok, Jake Reynolds and Vernon Reynolds with the painting

magazine *KUNSTUNDKULTUR* (Art and Culture), which had published an article by Anke and Prof Lutz Winckler, strongly supported by the dedicated editor Burkhard Baltzer, that the City of Hanover at last agreed to bring the matter before the Limbach-Kommission. This advisory commission on the return of cultural property seized because of Nazi Persecution, especially from Jewish possession, recommended the restitution of the Schmidt-Rottluff painting to the heirs.

An essay written by the Wincklers and detailing the research that led to this successful restitution was published as, 'Max Rüdénberg – Hiob. Neues aus den Archiven: Zur Geschichte der Enteignung Max Rüdénbergs 1939-1942'. In: *Kreativität und Charakter. Festschrift für Martin Vogel zum 70. Geburtstag*. Eds. Albrecht Götz von Olenhusen and Thomas Gergen. 2017, Hamburg, pp.449-479.

Text revised and translated by Julia Winckler, University of Brighton

**30 July 2018**, Anne Frank Center Berlin (as part of the International Youth Summer Camp), paper: 'The crucial year 1938 in context. From the Anschluss to the November Pogrom' (preliminary title)

**25-28 September 2018**, Historikertag, Muenster (Germany), paper: 'Historical Experience and Political Action. Rabbi Joachim Prinz, Martin Luther King, Jr., and the American Civil Rights Movement' (in German)

### Further activities

**Liza Weber** is a PhD candidate at the Centre for German-Jewish Studies. She was awarded the Alfred Bader Scholarship in Modern Jewish History and Culture and joined the Centre in May 2016.

On 8 February 2018, in the Gießhaus at the University of Kassel, Liza Weber delivered an illustrated lecture on behalf of the documenta Archiv and their series 'From the Archive'. Entitled 'documenta and its Double: The Case of Emy Roeder's 'Die Schwangere'', the lecture sought to test the well-worn hypothesis of the first documenta exhibition of 1955 as a rehabilitation of modern art once deemed 'degenerate' under the National Socialist regime.

In March 2018, following an invitation from Dr Christian Fuhrmeister, Liza delivered a workshop at the Zentralinstitut für Kunstgeschichte in Munich.

**Florian Zabransky** was awarded the Clemens N. Nathan Scholarship and has been working at the Centre for German-Jewish Studies since September 2017.

We congratulate him upon the award of an EHRI (European Holocaust Research Infrastructure) Fellowship 2016-2018 to conduct research at Yad Vashem, Jerusalem. He will spend two weeks in June 2018 at their archives to conduct research on his thesis on male Jewish intimacy during the Holocaust. The Fellowship is financed by the European Union to support Holocaust-related research in archives.

## News and forthcoming events

### Sussex in the Western Galilee, Researchers' Workshop: 'The Second World War, the Holocaust and their Repercussions'

**2-7 September 2018**

The Holocaust Studies Programme at the Western Galilee College has invited the Centre for German-Jewish Studies at Sussex University for a 4 day researchers' workshop. The event will bring together scholars from the two centres as well as scholars from other academic institutes in Israel. The workshop will focus on the influence of the Second World War and the Holocaust on various aspects of the post-war world from personal coping mechanisms through national memory issues to present geo-political and diplomatic influence of the war.

### Forthcoming talks

#### David Jünger

**8 May 2018**, 7.45pm Jewish Historical Society, Sussex Branch, Ralli Hall, Denmark Villas, Hove BN3 3TH 'Beyond flight and rescue. Emigration Planning of German Jews, 1933 Free for students and members. Visitors: £5. Further information: Michael Crook: [amcrook321@gmail.com](mailto:amcrook321@gmail.com)  
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**4 July 2018**, Munich University (Germany), Oberseminar (Postgraduate Seminar), paper: 'From a German Zionist to an American Jew. The Life and Times of Rabbi Joachim Prinz, 1902-1988' (in German)

**15-19 July 2018**, 11th Congress of the European Association of Jewish Studies, Cracow, Poland, paper: 'Antisemitism as a Universal Threat. Theoretical foundations of Black-Jewish collaboration in post-World War II America'

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

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