

**Issue 45, November 2017**

# Refugees Then and Now

World Refugee Day was marked at Sussex on 20 Jun 2017 by a seminar jointly hosted by the Centre and the University Chaplaincy. Introducing the event Edward Timm compared the anti-Jewish rhetoric of the 1930s with the 'Islamic' anti-refugee attitudes of people now clamouring 'We want our country back'.

In the opening paper Dr Paul Richter who fled as a child with his parents from Nazi Germany to New Zealand highlighted the resonance of his patriotic father as a Jewish-born paediatrician who had served in the German army. The number of refugees accepted by New Zealand was very restricted and although Paul enjoyed a good education he recalled being targeted by a playground game called 'Hunt the Hun' following vulnerability in a schoolmaster's call out: 'He's a Jew!'

Fortunately Paul's musical gift to mother smoothed the process of resettlement and his parents subsequently joined the Quaker group that most actively supported refugees. Paul himself became a leading figure in the Anglican Church Chair of Ministry International UK and Vice-President of the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament.

In a concluding paper introduced by Barbara Einhorn, Prof Naomi Lili author of *Iraqi Women: Untold Stories from 1948 to the Present* recalled her upbringing in the Federal Republic as the child of an Iraqi father and a German mother. She then highlighted the findings of research project showing how refugees from countries like Bosnia and Iraq have coped with differing forms of Islamophobia. The difficulty of drawing a distinction between political refugees and economic migrant was also illustrated.

Naomi Lili who is a woman's rights activist and a Professor of Gender Studies at City School in the University of London concluded that it is increasingly difficult to influence public policy on behalf of refugees. Becoming 'British' presents a particular obstacle especially for Muslim women but there was a more positive note in her voice when she added: 'I am a Londoner'.

# Weidenfeld Institute

Building from over 20 years of focus on studying the experience of German Jews in Spain, Latin America, Africa, Asia, the Middle East and the Caribbean, the Weidenfeld Institute was also created.

# Congratulations and Farewell to Kim Wünschmann

After moving on from Sussex to her new appointment in Munich Dr Wünschmann has shared with us the following reflection :

It was with mixed feelings that I said goodbye to Brighton this last summer. Whilst greatly looking forward to new tasks at Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität München (LMU), it was not at all a yearning to leave my post as DDL Lecturer at the University of Sussex. During my past years I have enjoyed the atmosphere of the Brighton campus and the support of my colleagues. I got to know many inspiring people and experienced meaningful exchanges of ideas in Sussex and at other places around the country.

Thank you to the affiliation with the Centre for German-Jewish Studies, the position appointing me as DDL Lecturer, and the unique position which allows him or her to combine academic work with a wide range of cultural activities. I particularly value the opportunity to contribute to the 'German-Jewish Britain' JWIH community and various generations of families with German-Jewish roots. It was moving to participate in important memorial initiatives like the annual Holocaust Memorial Day organised by the Centre in collaboration with the Association of Jewish Refugees. Public education of the future of Holocaust education in schools and universities

# Writing German-Jewish Lives

The German-Jewish Family  
Archival Project hosts a  
workshop at The Keep on the  
12 September 2017 bringing  
together scholars from different  
disciplines to discuss working with  
archival collection. Throughout  
the day scholars from different  
academic disciplines will discuss  
using German-Jewish archival in  
various ways. Some have used their  
own family archive while others  
have researched the German-  
Jewish collection at The Keep and  
I will be.

After Gordon Ruvinsky's opening  
remarks Samira Tuttleberg gave a  
brief introduction to the German-  
Jewish Family Archive held at The  
Keep and a while later I was working  
on which how I collected digital  
material from the collection and  
is available at [www.sussex.ac.uk/affiliates/gjfa](http://www.sussex.ac.uk/affiliates/gjfa)

Postdoctoral Research Fellow  
Rochelle Holm will discuss using  
oral history interviews and how her  
archive is common concern in  
her research including objectivity  
and reliability. Next Hannah  
outlined the current landscape  
of Kinship research and  
the different types of current  
thinking. She juxtaposed this with  
the public discourse about refugee  
children arriving in the UK today  
and demonstrated the lasting  
impact the Kinship research has  
had on the political debate.

From a more personal point of  
view Rabbi Jonathan Witt narrated  
his story about his journey into his  
family history after his conversion  
and a booklet containing letters from  
the 1930s. He illustrated how  
small pieces of information started  
to build up the story which he  
eventually published under the  
title 'My Daughters'.

Professor Edward Timms focused  
on the literary work of two  
refugee writers who appear