

i

C

J

i

i

i

The module entitled 'History of Now', which is designed for first year students and also taught by members of the Centre, raises fundamental questions on the relation between the past and present. Through the lenses of three different thematic approaches (protest, economics and China) the students are encouraged to question

order to attempt to prevent similar crimes in the future. Since then the term has become widely used in public and in academic scholarship describing mass murders as far back as the Assyrian Empire. But the practice did not come to an end with the Shoah, thus turning the concept of genocide into a pivotal analytical tool in understanding the violent history of the 20th century.

The course combines an in-depth analysis of various genocides with an investigation of genocide as a generic concept. In the first part, the course examines the international discussion leading up to the adoption of the Genocide Convention and the Shoah as the event which not only shaped the specific content of the convention but also guaranteed the necessary support at the General Assembly. In the second part case studies ranging from the killing of the Herero and Nama in German South-West Africa to Darfur are analysed, focussing mainly but not exclusively on the social dynamics that lead to the mass killings, the motivation of the perpetrators and the construction of the victim groups. In the last part, the course examines and contrasts various recent definitions of what constitutes genocide exploring merits and limitations and discusses alternative concepts.

1938: i ..

During the night of the 9th of November 1938, SS and SA forces launched an assault on German Jews; on their property, their synagogues, and their businesses. This so-called 'Kristallnacht' can be seen as a violent rehearsal for the Holocaust which Nazi Germany proceeded to implement three years later. It also marks the end of over a century of a prolific and (mostly) peaceful co-existence between Jews and Christian non-Jews.

This module concerns the relationship between Jews and non-Jews from the early 19th century. It focuses on the complex processes of political emancipation, of social integration, and of cultural adaptation through which Jews became an integral part of the German political, social and cultural life. At the same time, these processes changed Jewish religious, economic, social and cultural life.

The main focus is on the period from the mid-19th century to the beginning of the Holocaust, examining Jewish life in imperial and Weimar Germany as well as under Nazism. Issues of Jewish identity are discussed along with aspects of modern anti-Semitism. An understanding of this history of Jewish/non-Jewish relations is studied in all its richness, alongside its problematic aspects leading up to 1938 and the Holocaust.

1929: i j

1929 marks the year of the stock market crash and the further de-stabilisation of the fragile Weimar Republic. But it is also the year of the publication of Alfred Doeblin's 'Berlin Alexanderplatz', one of the great works of modernist literature. This course looks at the history, politics, art and philosophy of the Weimar Republic (1918-1933). In addition to reading excerpts from 'Berlin Alexanderplatz'

Before a packed house at the Sternberg Centre, in north-west London, Professor John Röhl delivered the inaugural Peter Straus Memorial Lecture. The audience included members of Peter's family, many of his good friends and members of the congregation of the New North London Synagogue.

For many years Peter Straus was a keen supporter of the Centre for German-Jewish Studies and this event provided an opportunity for the Centre to express its appreciation of Peter's unique contribution to our work. In her opening comments, Marion Godfrey, vice-chair of the Centre's London-based Support group, described Peter's special interest and commitment to the study of the German-Jewish experience. Rabbi Jonathan Wittenberg introduced

U

On 24 March, at a seminar hosted by the Sussex University Centre for Life History and Life Writing Research, the experience of 'Being German but not Jewish' was discussed by four German-born speakers now living in the UK. The picture that emerged was of a gradual normalization, with the anti-German attitudes of the Second World War (experienced by Sybil Oldfield while growing up as the child of a German mother and British father) giving way to the acceptance and indeed respect that Germans enjoy today in the eyes of a younger generation, not least for being so 'efficient and punctual'. The art historian Alexandra Loske, who migrated to Britain in 1997, represented a middle position. While feeling completely at home in England, knowing that her father strongly approved of her move, she was aware that members of an older generation could never forgive or forget the bombing by the RAF of non-military targets like Dresden. A year researching the testimonies of Nazi perpetrators proved so stressful that she switched to a more rewarding subject (she has been awarded a doctorate at Sussex for her art-historical study of the Brighton Royal Pavilion).

Art History is also the field of the youngest speaker, Alexandra Fliege, who confirmed

that there are fewer problems for members of her generation. But her sense of identity, too, is linked with the work she is doing on the restitution of artworks looted in the Nazi period. During the lively discussion that followed, one member of the audience asked whether Germans have any more to apologise for than British or Americans or South Africans whose nations have persecuted other peoples. Sybil Oldfield's response was that the unique wickedness of Nazi crimes has left an indelible mark on her teaching and research. Presiding over the seminar was Andrea Hammel, warmly remembered as a former Research Fellow at the Centre for German-Jewish Studies, who is now Reader in German at the University of Aberystwyth. Andrea's research has foregrounded the experiences of Jewish refugees, the ones fortunate enough to get away.

19-22J 2015, U i i

The Centre for German-Jewish Studies at the University of Sussex in cooperation with the Martin Buber Chair in Jewish Thought and Philosophy at the Goethe University Frankfurt a.M. and the Pears Institute for the study of Antisemitism at Birkbeck, University of London is pleased to announce the bi-annual Max and Hilde Kochmann Summer School in European-Jewish History and Culture 2015.

The workshop aims to bring together young researchers who are currently working on topics in Jewish history, Jewish religion and inner life, literature, culture, ideological movements, inter-religious and inter-cultural relations as well as everyday life, and give them the opportunity to present and discuss their

projects in a friendly, informal atmosphere with leading scholars in the field. In doing so, the workshop wishes to build on the achievements of previous workshops and create an interdisciplinary network of younger scholars engaged in the study of areas of European-Jewish history, thought, and culture from the early modern to modern periods.

Over 35 PhD candidates from Europe, the US and Israel applied for this year's workshop and 21 students have been invited to present their work at Sussex.

The summer school programme will be announced on the Centre website and the event will be open to the public free of charge.



'An Austrian army awfully arrayed': the jacket design for the first complete translation of Karl Kraus's drama of the First World War, 'The Last Days of Mankind', to be published by Yale University Press in autumn 2015. The translators, Fred Bridgham and Edward Timms, define the play as the tragedy of an era bent on self-destruction by the methods of modern warfare, while still clinging to outdated ideals. Interwoven with the action are a multitude of satirical strands including bungled Austrian diplomacy, aggressive German expansionism, and the equivocal position of semi-assimilated Jews.

Copies of 'The Bird World of Auschwitz', A novella by Arno Surminski translated by Stephen C J Nicholls, are available for £5 from the Centre. Contact details below.

Publications by researchers at the Centre for German-Jewish Studies may be purchased at a discount by Friends of the Centre.

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

+44 (0)1273 678771 / +44 (0)20 8455 4785 (London office)
E . i @ . . :// . . . /