

# ANNUAL REPORT

1 July 2010 – 31 July 2011



RESEARCH

EDUCATE

ENGAGE

**PEARS INSTITUTE FOR THE STUDY OF ANTISEMITISM**

**ANNUAL REPORT**

**1 July 2010 – 31 July 2011**

**Professor David Feldman, Director  
24 October 2011**

<b>CONTENTS</b>	<b>Page</b>
Introduction	2
Objectives	2
Thematic priorities	3
Report on activities	
o Teaching	4
o Research	4
o Public engagement and events	6
o Policy engagement	7
Report on thematic priorities	9
Appendix	
o Pears Institute Associates: Publications and Activities	11

## INTRODUCTION

This report is in two sections. The first provides an overview of the Institute's activities in its first year set against the objectives in the Five Year Strategic Plan. The second presents a summary of how this activity supports the Institute's thematic priorities.

## OBJECTIVES

The Five Year Strategic Plan sets out the following objectives for the Pears Institute:

- To create a hub for teaching at Birkbeck on antisemitism and racism. The Institute's expertise will be integrated into programmes at all levels: certificate, BA, MA and research degree
- To establish an internationally recognised centre of research excellence. This will be reflected and measured in terms of publications, grant income, and a population of postdoctoral researchers, research students and visiting scholars as well as regular workshops and conferences
- To provide lectures, exhibitions and other events that engage and educate a broad public on the subject of antisemitism
- To act as an acknowledged source of independent advice and dialogue for organisations and individuals engaged in forming and reflecting on public policy

## THEMATIC PRIORITIES

Building on the Strategic Plan, three key areas have been identified in which the Institute seeks to make a significant contribution:

### Interdisciplinary study

We are committed to the interdisciplinary study of antisemitism. Being part of Birkbeck enables us to draw on an unparalleled combination of expertise in the study of multiculturalism, ethnicity, antisemitism and racial and religious intolerance, across the widest range of disciplines: politics, psychosocial studies, history, literary studies and law. It is this breadth of understanding that provides the foundation for our research and teaching and enables us to contribute to public policy and debate.

### Connecting racism and antisemitism

Fifty years ago scholars with interests in studying and combating racism and antisemitism were closely aligned, intellectually and politically. Today these connections are less evident. The effect has been to impoverish our understanding of both phenomena. Our task is to help re-establish these connections and encourage intellectual dialogue between scholars interested in antisemitism and other forms of intolerance. It is our aim to examine antisemitism in the context of other forms of exclusion and concepts of race in particular.

### Interrogating 'the new antisemitism'

'The new antisemitism' is a term used by some to refer to criticism of Israel and/or criticism of the policies of its government, that they consider antisemitic. This is an important area of public and scholarly debate in which there is no consensus. There is a pressing need to engage with these issues in ways that are intellectually and politically inclusive. This we aim to do, working closely with colleagues in Israel, Europe and the US.

## REPORT ON ACTIVITIES

### Teaching

Effort has focused on two main areas: extending opportunities to study antisemitism at Birkbeck; and the promotion of interdisciplinary study of antisemitism and racism, highlighting Birkbeck's expertise in the research and teaching of religious and racial intolerance across a range of Departments and Schools. A start has also been made on enrolling PhD students and attracting visiting students to study at the Institute.

Two new MA modules have been devised this year. *Victorians and the Jews*, taught by the Director, is a compulsory module for MA Victorian Studies which is taught in the School of Arts. It was introduced in April 2011 and taken by 21 students.

Approval was also given for a new MA History module, *Jews and Antisemitism in Modern Europe: Histories and Approaches*, to be taught by the Director and offered as an option across nine courses, including two interdisciplinary MAs:

Psychoanalysis, History and Culture; and Culture, Diaspora and Ethnicity - also available as a postgraduate diploma/certificate course. (The new MA History module commenced in October 2011 with 21 students enrolled).

In 2010/11, 76 students took modules relating specifically to the study of Jews and antisemitism; these included: MA History modules *Roads to Genocide 1914-1945* and *The Holocaust*; BA History, *Vichy France 1940-44* and the Certificate of Higher Education course, *The Holocaust: Propaganda, Experiences, Memory*. Similar student numbers are expected for 2011/12.

The roster of Birkbeck teaching modules which deal with antisemitism, racism, xenophobia and religious or racial intolerance was compiled through the spring of 2011 and went live on the Institute's website in July. Twenty-eight modules are listed, featuring courses offered in History, Politics, Psychosocial Studies, Social Policy and Education, English and Humanities, Linguistics and Law. Each listing includes an outline of the module with links to departmental courses, full module details and individual lecturers. In parallel to this development, 15 colleagues across three Schools, representing a range of disciplines, have become Associates of the Institute. All are engaged, through teaching or research, with the broader remit of the Institute. A summary of some of their related work is given in the Appendix.

### Research

Research development and output are critical to the Institute in establishing and maintaining its credibility and reputation. In this respect there have been some early and notable successes.

The Institute made two successful bids for research funding in 2011. The Rothschild Foundation granted the Institute two Research Fellowships with a combined value of £26,955, commencing October 2011. These grants enable the Institute to extend its research base. Madelyn Travis joins the Institute as a Postdoctoral Fellow for one year (October 2011-September 2012), exploring 'Anglo-Jewish Childhood. A Cultural

History, 1860 to 1930'. Joanna Michlic, from the Hadassah-Brandeis Institute, Brandeis University, Boston, has a four month Visiting Fellowship (January-April 2012), to explore 'Polish-Jewish Children in Britain during and after the Holocaust'.

Since the Institute's launch it has played a central role in initiating and developing two international research projects on antisemitism - one historical, the other contemporary and policy orientated - both of which will give rise to published outputs.

The **International Consortium for Research on Antisemitism and Racism** (ICRAR) comprises a core group of nine institutions committed to reshaping and revitalising the study of antisemitism. The Director of the Pears Institute and Professor Scott Ury, Director of Stephen Roth Institute for the Study of Contemporary Antisemitism and Racism, Tel-Aviv University, jointly conceived and co-chair this project. Through a series of meetings in 2010/11 and on-going dialogue, they decided to establish a group to actively promote rigorous, independent historical enquiry on antisemitism which would also engage with other disciplines. They identified a number of individuals with whom to collaborate. The following scholars agreed to join the Consortium: François Guesnet, University College London; Jonathan Judaken, Rhodes College, Memphis; Veronika Lipphardt, Max Planck Institute for the History of Science and Friedrich Meinecke Institute, Free University, Berlin; Michael Miller, Central European University, Hungary; Amos Morris-Reich, University of Haifa and Bucerius Institute for Research of Contemporary German History and Society, Haifa; Maurice Samuels, Yale Program for the Study of Antisemitism; and Stefanie Schüler-Springorum, Center for Research on Antisemitism, Technical University, Berlin. (The Pears Institute hosted a workshop in September 2011 which led to the founding of the Consortium. It also provides ongoing communications and secretariat support.)

A new initiative, '**Muslims and Jews: Citizenship, Identity and Prejudice in Europe, U.S. and Israel**', has been devised in collaboration with Professor Arie Kochavi, Herzl Institute for the Research and Study of Zionism, University of Haifa. Three other research centres have also joined the project: the Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique, Paris; Center for Research on Antisemitism, Technical University, Berlin; and the Taub Center for Israel Studies, New York University. A planning meeting for the project was held in Haifa in May 2011, at which it was agreed that a series of peripatetic workshops would be held in each of the participating countries. These will be interdisciplinary in approach and aim to explore attitudes to Israel and antisemitism in the context of multiculturalism, Islamophobia and racism today. (The Pears Institute will host the first international workshop in February 2012).

With respect to the Director's own research, January 2011 saw the publication of *Structures and Transformations in British History*, Cambridge University Press (co-edited with J. Lawrence). This includes an essay by the Director: 'Why the English like Turbans: A History of Multiculturalism in One Country', which has been well received, including an excellent review in the London Review of Books (September 2011). Forthcoming publications include: 'Two cheers for ambivalence: understanding East End Jews in texts and politics', *19: Interdisciplinary Studies in the Long Nineteenth Century* (Autumn 2011).

## **Public engagement and events**

The Institute established a varied and regular programme of events in its first year. These were designed to demonstrate commitment to the interdisciplinary study of antisemitism and generate wide interest – both from the public and the academic community.

From November 2010 to June 2011 the Institute hosted 11 events – a mixture of public lectures, round-table discussions, film screenings, and academic events. Several of these were generated by two thematic series: 'Disciplining Antisemitism' gave rise to two round-table discussions that invited contributions from several disciplines – literary studies, law and history; while 'Making History: Archives, Artefacts and Interpreting the Past' was used as the 'badge' for two public lectures. All the public events were well attended. Following the large attendance (c.400 people) at the Director's inaugural lecture, the Institute's other public lectures have attracted between 60-80 people per lecture and the round-table events (intended to be smaller and more intimate) about 40. In all, around 1,000 people attended the Pears Institute's public events in 2010/11, although this figure does include an element of double counting as some attended more than one event.

For some of the public events the Institute collaborated with other organisations: the Anne Frank Trust (for its first public lecture given by Simon Schama), Institute of Historical Research (Holocaust Memorial Day) and the Wiener Library (for the second lecture in the 'Making History' series). These partnerships will continue in 2011/12.

Public feedback to the events has been very positive:

"I would just like to thank you for holding the lecture with Freddie Knoller who told a fascinating and extraordinary tale, it was a really interesting, engaging and moving evening... I would love to join your mailing list if there are any future events happening." Member of the public

"Would you kindly express my appreciation for the wonderful events this last week - the lecture by Daniel Pick and especially the round-table debate with Anthony Bale. Both were extremely stimulating and I hope further such occasions will be held in the near future." Member of the public

"I just wanted to say thank you. I very much enjoyed Professor Schama's lecture - so informative, stimulating and thought-provoking. It was wonderful to have the opportunity to be there." MA History student, Birkbeck

The Institute's first academic symposium, 'The Politics of Demonization', took the controversial issue of the demonization of Israel as its starting point, inviting speakers and attendees from a wide range of disciplines and political viewpoints. The aim was to explore and confront the challenges surrounding the idea of "demonization" and within this context, to understand better contemporary debate on Israel and the claim that there is a 'new antisemitism' at work. Twenty-eight scholars and others attended the symposium. As anticipated, the event generated disagreement and controversy but also engendered constructive debate. A second symposium exploring 'Definitions of Antisemitism' will be held early in 2012.

In addition to Pears Institute events, the Director spoke at nine other events between October 2010 and June 2011. These included public lectures, at the invitation of various community organisations and institutions, and participation in a number of academic seminars and symposia. Themes covered included: Anglo-Jewry, multiculturalism, secularism, racism and citizenship.

## **Policy Engagement**

The Institute's standing as an attractive partner for organisations engaged in forming and commenting on public policy depends on its reputation. Consequently, a great deal of time has been spent in this first year (nine months since the Institute's official launch in November 2010) raising its profile and seeking to establish its credibility.

This has involved several strands of activity. The rollout of a series of events, for both academics and the general public, has raised awareness of the Institute and its role. Similarly, extensive networking, speaker engagements and a series of on-going meetings with key groups and individuals, both in the UK and abroad, has firmly established the Institute as a major presence which seeks to understand antisemitism and make a contribution to the struggle to overcome it. This work has given rise to a number of tangible and important initiatives.

The creation of a very clear position statement for the Institute, together with a strong and distinctive identity – manifest in its website – has also been a high priority. The website in particular has helped to build the profile of the Institute and its role, elevating its reputation and international standing. The Institute's stated aim of being both independent and inclusive has proved an extremely effective way to establish credibility - having a resonance across the academic world and in the wider community:

"Another significant development that will be increasingly important in the future is the establishment, for the first time, of an Institute for the Study of Contemporary Antisemitism at Birkbeck College. I estimate that 400 people attended the inaugural lecture by Professor David Feldman, which is a significant number. The intellectual interrogation that is needed to draw on and analyse lessons from around the world is already of huge value to us, and we look forward to working closely with that institute. It is a landmark for this country."

John Mann MP, Hansard, 20 January 2011

"...historians of antisemitism, such as Professor David Feldman, who heads the new Pears Institute for the study of Antisemitism at Birkbeck University of London... have developed a body of work that sets antisemitism within a wider context of Jewish-non-Jewish relations and does not see attitudes to Jews exclusively through the prism of prejudice."

Antony Lerman, OpenDEMOCRACY.net, 10 March 2011



“The Pears Institute has been cited as a model by a lot of people and I've been very impressed by what I see on your website. So I wanted to reach out. If you'd be willing to give some advice or suggestions, I would be very grateful.”

Maurice Samuels, Director, Yale Program for the Study of Antisemitism,  
22 June 2011

The growing international profile and reputation of the Institute has led to it playing a key role in establishing two international research projects in 2011: the International Consortium for Research on Antisemitism and Racism and the 'Muslims and Jews: Citizenship, Identity and Prejudice in Europe, U.S. and Israel' project, both described above. This latter initiative, which will hold its first seminar in February 2012, hosted by the Institute, will give rise to a report which will engage with policy makers both in Israel and in the Jewish diaspora.

The Institute's high profile in academic circles has also led to a number of international speaking opportunities for the Director in 2011/12. These include invitations to: lecture on *Race, Equality and the Jews* at Yale; speak at a cross-disciplinary conference on *Jews, Christians and Muslims*, hosted by the University of Hong Kong; participate in the Council for European Studies Conference in Boston, Massachusetts.

In the UK, work to raise awareness of the Institute and build its reputation has focused on government and key organisations concerned with multiculturalism and racism. The Director established links with the Department for Communities and Local Government early on, being invited to attend the launch of the *Department's response to All-Party Parliamentary Enquiry into Antisemitism, 2006* (December 2010); and to attend a meeting on '*Communities and Integration*' (February 2011). In January 2011 he spoke at a conference on *Secularism, Racism and the Politics of Belonging* organised by the Centre for Research on Migration, Refugees and Belonging (CMRB) and the Runnymede Trust. (This work continues to build. In September 2011 the Director was invited to brief a delegation from China's Bureau of Exit and Entry Administration of the Ministry of Public Security, on the history of British border control and immigration policy.)

Crucially, the growing reputation of the Institute, with its commitment to independent, rigorous enquiry, has also facilitated constructive dialogue with the All-Party Parliamentary Group Against Antisemitism. These early discussions will come to fruition in 2011/12 with a joint initiative to improve MPs' awareness and understanding of antisemitism through a series of lectures and briefings.

## REPORT ON THEMATIC PRIORITIES

How the various activities of the Institute support its three key areas of engagement is summarised below. Inevitably there is a degree of overlap, but this in itself demonstrates the strength of several of the initiatives developed through the course of the year.

### **Promoting interdisciplinary study**

#### Teaching

- Roster of 28 teaching modules offered at Birkbeck relating to antisemitism, racism and intolerance
- Summer Term Reading Project *Victorians and the Jews* for MA Victorian Studies students in the School of Arts
- MA History module *Jews and Antisemitism in Modern Europe: Histories and Approaches* also offered as option in two interdisciplinary MAs: Psychoanalysis, History and Culture; and Culture, Diaspora and Ethnicity in the School of Social Sciences, History and Philosophy
- Fifteen Associates, representing a range of disciplines, drawn from the School of Social Sciences, History and Philosophy, School of Arts and School of Law

#### Public engagement

- 'Disciplining Antisemitism' round-table events: *Interpreting Imaginary Jews* (literary criticism and history) *Antisemitism and the Law* (law)
- Public lectures and seminars: Daniel Pick, *In Pursuit of the Nazi Mind* (psychosocial studies); Tim McNamara, *Subjectivity as a Site of Struggle* (linguistics)
- *Genocide in Film* series
- Institute symposium 'The Politics of Demonization'

#### Research

- International Consortium for Research on Antisemitism and Racism
- 'Muslims and Jews: Citizenship, Identity and Prejudice in Europe, U.S. and Israel'

### **Connecting racism and antisemitism**

#### Teaching

- MA module *Race and the Victorians* taught by the Director

#### Public engagement

- Public lectures: David Feldman, *Equality, Race and the Jewish Problem*; Simon Schama, *The Fate of the Idea of Toleration*
- Institute symposium 'The Politics of Demonization'
- Director's public lectures series: *Multiculturalism and the Jews*; *The History of Multiculturalism*
- Director's involvement as speaker/panel member at the following conferences: *Turbulent Times - The British Jewish Community Today*, Institute of Education; *Secularism, Racism and the Politics of Belonging*, The Centre for Research on Migration, Refugees and Belonging (CMRB), University of East London and Runnymede Trust; *Immigration and Citizenship in Post-War Britain*, World History Seminar, Cambridge

#### Research

- Director's essays and publications: 'Why the English like Turbans: A History of Multiculturalism in One Country' in D Feldman and J Lawrence (eds) *Structures and Transformations in British History*, Cambridge University Press, January 2011; 'Two cheers for ambivalence: understanding East End Jews in texts and politics', *19: Interdisciplinary Studies in the Long Nineteenth Century*, Autumn 2011
- International Consortium for Research on Antisemitism and Racism
- 'Muslims and Jews: Citizenship, Identity and Prejudice in Europe, U.S. and Israel'

#### **Interrogating Antisemitism/'the new Antisemitism'**

##### Teaching

- MA history module *Jews and Antisemitism in Modern Europe: Histories and Approaches*

##### Public engagement

- 'Disciplining Antisemitism' round-table event: *Antisemitism and the Law*
- Public lectures: David Feldman, *Equality, Race and the Jewish Problem*; Daniel Pick, *In Pursuit of the Nazi Mind*; Jonathan Steinberg, *Bismarck and Antisemitism*
- Institute symposium 'The Politics of Demonization'

##### Research

- International Consortium for Research on Antisemitism and Racism
- 'Muslims and Jews: Citizenship, Identity and Prejudice in Europe, U.S. and Israel'

## APPENDIX

### PEARS INSTITUTE ASSOCIATES: PUBLICATIONS AND ACTIVITIES

#### **Stephen Frosh**

##### Publications

- 'The Relational Ethics of Conflict and Identity'. *Psychoanalysis, Culture and Society*, 16, 2011, pp. 225–243
- 'Psychoanalysis, Antisemitism and the Miser'. *New Formations*, 72, 2011, pp. 94-106
- 'Psychosocial Textuality: Religious Identities and Textual Constructions'. *Subjectivity*, 3, 2010, 426–441
- 'Foreignness is the quality which the Jews and one's own instincts have in common: Antisemitism, Identity and the Other'. In L. Aron and L. Henik (eds) *Answering a Question with a Question: Contemporary Psychoanalysis and Jewish Thought*. Boston: Academic Studies Press, 2010

#### **Christian Goeschel**

##### Publications

- *Before Auschwitz: New Approaches to the Nazi Concentration Camps, 1933-1939*, special issue of the *Journal of Contemporary History*, 45 (3), 2010 (co-edited with Nikolaus Wachsmann). Part of the Birkbeck AHRC project 'Before the Holocaust: Concentration Camps in Nazi Germany, 1933-1939'

##### Public engagement

- Organiser of international conference: *Towards a History of Fascist Entanglement*, March 2011, British School, Rome

#### **Eric Kaufmann**

##### Publications

- 'The Demography of Ethnic Conflict', *Journal of Ethnopolitics* (and editor of special section on: 'The Politics of Ethnic Demography') vol.3, no. 4, September 2011, pp. 367-368
- *Shall the Religious Inherit the Earth: Religion, Demography and Politics in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*, Profile Books, 2010 (UK), May 2011 (US)
- 'Ethno-national conflict and its Management' (with Eric Woods and Robert Schertzer), *Commonwealth and Comparative Politics*, 49.2, April 2011, pp. 153-161
- 'Sacralisation by Stealth: the Demography of De-Secularisation', in Stillwell, John et. al (eds.), *Spatial and Social Disparities*, Springer, 2010, pp. 217-232

##### Reports

- Contributor to Europe section of 'The Future of the Global Muslim Population', Washington, DC: Pew Forum on Religion & Public Life, 2011
- 'Uncompromising Demography in a Promised Land: The Growth of Dissonant Minorities and the Escalation of Demographic Politics in Israel' (co-authored with Richard Cincotta), National Intelligence Council (NIC) Special Report, July 2010 (Washington, DC: NIC)

#### **Daniel Pick**

##### Public engagement

- *Nazism and Pschoanalysis in the 1940s and beyond* - part of round-table discussion *Pschoanalysis and Politics*, Freud Museum, 4 May 2011
- *In Pursuit of the Nazi Mind, Rudolf Hess and his Doctors 1941-1946*, public lecture, Pears Institute for the Study of Antisemitism, 16 February 2011

**Jessica Reinisch**

## Public engagement

- Joint-organiser of international conference: *The Forty Years Crisis: Refugees in Europe, 1919-1959*, Birkbeck, University of London, September 2010

**Nikolaus Wachsmann**

## Publications

- *Before Auschwitz: New Approaches to the Nazi Concentration Camps, 1933-1939*, special issue of the *Journal of Contemporary History*, 45 (3), 2010 (co-edited with Christian Goeschel). Part of the Birkbeck AHRC project 'Before the Holocaust: Concentration Camps in Nazi Germany, 1933-1939'

## Other

- Leverhulme Fellowship to work on forthcoming publication, *Comprehensive History of the SS Concentration Camps*