

Impact case study (REF3b)

<p>Institution: University of Wolverhampton</p>
<p>Unit of Assessment: History</p>
<p>Title of case study: Forced Labour & Survivors of Nazi Persecution</p>
<p>1. Summary of the impact (indicative maximum 100 words)</p> <p>This case study demonstrates the impact of historical research on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the third sector (Imperial War Museum, London) Impact: education, public discourse, public services. • international organisations (UN Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict) Impact: public discourse, public services. • public sector agencies (Stowarzyszenie Dzieci Wojny w Polsce / Polish Association of Children of the War) Impact: policy making. <p>The case study is based on Johannes-Dieter Steinert’s research on ‘Forced Labour’ and ‘Survivors of Nazi Persecution’ with special emphasis on displaced persons, British humanitarian assistance in post-war Germany, and Polish and Soviet child forced labourers.</p>
<p>2. Underpinning research (indicative maximum 500 words)</p> <p>The research has been carried out by Johannes-Dieter Steinert (Professor of Modern European History and Migration Studies, who joined the University of Wolverhampton in 1999), in three research projects:</p> <p>(a) British humanitarian assistance for Germany after the Second World War, supported by the British Academy.</p> <p>The project examined the interrelations between British humanitarian assistance and British occupation policy. It focused in particular on the survivors of the Holocaust and on displaced persons in Germany, and the various national and international attempts to solve some of the main post-war problems in Europe by humanitarian assistance, repatriation and migration to third countries. The research was a starting point for preliminary discussions with the Imperial War Museum, London that were followed by ongoing collaboration.</p> <p>(b) Child forced labourers in National Socialist Germany and German occupied Eastern Europe, 1939-1945, supported by the Gerda Henkel Stiftung Düsseldorf, the British Academy and the Arts and Humanities Research Council.</p> <p>The research project has provided the first comprehensive study of Polish and Soviet child forced labour by drawing on a wide range of archival documents and testimonies. It focused on both the perpetrators, their ideology and policy, and on the young victims' experiences. The research has identified the political, economic and ideological background which led to the deportation of children during the Second World War. It also examined the extent to which the forced labour of children was linked with National Socialist racist ideology, the Holocaust and the Germanization programme and it evaluated the participation of civil authorities, police and military units in the deportation process. Special consideration has been given to the working and living conditions of these children, their treatment by employers and colleagues, and their social contacts with the civil</p>

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population and other forced labourers. The research project has led to co-operation which is ongoing with the UN Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict in New York.

(c) Child forced labourers in occupied Poland: Experiences, resilience and post-war discourses (together with Prof Dariusz Galasiński, Professor of Discourse and Cultural Studies, and Dr Olga Kozłowska, post-doctoral researcher), supported by the Stiftung ‘Erinnerung, Verantwortung, Zukunft’, Berlin.

The ongoing project focuses on Polish children forced to work in German occupied Poland. Based on interviews and written sources, it examines children’s experiences as forced labourers during the war, their treatment in post-war Poland until the present day, and the long-term perceived consequences of forced labour. It analyses how former child forced labourers look back at the experience of forced labour, transition and (re-)integration into Polish post-war society, and how they constructed their lives afterwards. Special consideration is being given to the location of the forced labour experience in the life-stories of former child forced labourers, the long-term process of coping with trauma, the social perceptions of forced labour in their narratives, and their resilience. Research has involved co-operation with the Polish ‘Association of Children of the War’, and it began to have an impact on the political work of this NGO even before initial research results had been published.

3. References to the research (indicative maximum of six references)

All publications have been subject to a rigorous peer-review process. Publications 1-2 were submitted to the RAE 2008, publications 3-5 have been submitted to this REF.

Research on British humanitarian assistance in Germany (see section 2a above)

Key research grant: British Academy (2001-2002): £4990.

Publications:

- (1) Johannes-Dieter Steinert, ‘British Relief Teams in Belsen Concentration Camp: Emergency Relief and the Perception of Survivors’, *Holocaust Studies*, vol. 12, 2006, no. 1-2, pp. 62-78.
- (2) Johannes-Dieter Steinert, *Nach Holocaust und Zwangsarbeit. Britische humanitäre Hilfe in Deutschland. Die Helfer, die Befreiten und die Deutschen*, Osnabrück: Secolo 2007.
- (3) Johannes-Dieter Steinert, ‘British Humanitarian Assistance: Wartime Planning and Postwar Realities’, *Journal of Contemporary History*, vol. 43, 2008, no. 3, pp. 421-435.
- (4) Johannes-Dieter Steinert, ‘Jewish survivors, DPs and Germans in British Eyes’, in David Cesarani, Suzanne Bardgett, Jessica Reinisch and Johannes-Dieter Steinert (eds), *Survivors of Nazi Persecution in Europe after the Second World War. Landscapes after Battle*, 2 vols., London: Vallentine Mitchell, 2010 and 2011, vol. 1, pp. 15-34.

Research on child forced labourers (see section 2b and 2c above)

Key research grants: Gerda Henkel Stiftung Düsseldorf (2007-2009): EUR 10,000. British Academy (2007-2009): £43,481. Stiftung ‘Erinnerung, Verantwortung, Zukunft’, Berlin (2008-2010): EUR 119,971. AHRC (2012): £35,611.

Publication:

- (5) Johannes-Dieter Steinert, *Deportation und Zwangsarbeit. Polnische und sowjetische Kinderzwangsarbeiter im nationalsozialistischen Deutschland und im besetzten Osteuropa, 1939-1945*, Essen: Klartext 2013.

4. Details of the impact (indicative maximum 750 words)

Steinert's work has had impact on education, public discourse, public services and policy making.

(a) Co-operation with the Imperial War Museum, London (education, public discourse, public services)

Dissemination of the research results on displaced persons and British humanitarian assistance in Germany led to a co-operation with the Imperial War Museum, London and the joint organisation of the first international multidisciplinary conference on 'Beyond camps and forced labour: Current international research on survivors of Nazi persecution', held at the Imperial War Museum January 2003. Further conferences followed in 2006, 2009 and 2012.

Participation in this conference series has been highly selective, and the submission of a total of more than 400 proposals for the 2009 and 2012 conferences alone underlines that 'Beyond camps' has become *the* international platform for communication and collaboration between academics and third sector agencies engaged in the field. Among the 217 speakers in 2009 and 2012 were delegates from the US Holocaust Memorial Museum Washington/DC, Yad Vashem Jerusalem, the museums/memorial sites in Auschwitz, Bergen-Belsen, Dachau, and Ravenbrück as well as representatives of organisations like Memorial (Moscow), KARTA (Warsaw), Falstad (Norway), the Association of Jewish Refugees (London), the Former Internees of Bergen-Belsen Association (France), the Institute of National Remembrance (Poland), The Centre for Dialogue in Oświęcim (Poland), and the UK Holocaust Memorial Day Trust. Additionally, both conferences attracted around 90 other participants, including delegates from organisations, associations and memorials.

Impact can be seen in the conference series' contribution to 'commemoration, memorialisation and reconciliation' as well as its influence on the work of the Imperial War Museum. According to Suzanne Bardgett (Holocaust Exhibition), 'Beyond camps' was "an inspiring model" for the museum, which "will do more conferences with our fresh drive on research".

(b) Co-operation with the UN Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict (public discourse, public services)

Steinert has initiated and – together with colleagues from the universities of Salzburg and Wolverhampton (Prof Buckley / History and Prof Galasiński / Cultural Studies) – co-organized two international multidisciplinary conferences 'Children and War: Past and Present', held in Salzburg in 2010 and 2013.

Shortly after the 2010 conference (with 133 speakers from both academia and NGOs), the organisers were asked by the UN Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict to develop a conference series on this particular topic in association with the Office. According to a 'Concept Note' received, the UN regards the conference as "an opportunity for a closer and continued engagement with a broad spectrum of researchers". In January 2012 Ms Radhika Coomaraswamy, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General (2006-2012), wrote to Steinert that "we must work closely together to develop new ideas and approaches to enhance the protection of children during armed conflict". This commitment was reinforced by her successor, Ms Leila Zerrougui, who underlined during the opening of the 2013 conference that "strengthening this partnership" was a UN aim. Besides this, Steinert has accepted a request to contribute his research experience to the deliberations of a UN Academic Advisory Board that will "contribute guidance, based on academic research, to the objectives of the Office".

The Call for Papers for both Salzburg conferences attracted a total of nearly 500 proposals and a final number of 276 speakers, among them representatives of leading international humanitarian and human rights organisations (such as Save the Children, Watch List for Children and Armed Conflict, War Child Holland) as well as field workers engaged in Africa, Asia and South America. Eamonn Hanson (Global Advocacy Coordinator, War Child Holland) summarized the feedback received from many NGO representatives: "It was a great learning experience and a good platform for us to get feedback on our work."

(c) Co-operation with Stowarzyszenie Dzieci Wojny w Polsce (policy making)

Most recently, Steinert's research on Child Forced Labour has had impact on the political work of the 'Association of Children of the War', Łódź, Poland. This organisation advocates the rights of former child forced labourers, including those who stayed at home while forced to work for German military or civilian authorities. As both the German and the Polish government have denied these children any form of compensation and also the social and economic benefits granted to officially recognized forced labourers, the Association regards Steinert's research of "great importance in getting the same national and international rights and privileges as enjoyed by forced labourers deported to Germany". In 2010, the Association honoured Steinert, Galasiński and Kozłowska with its Golden Cross, followed by the highest decoration, the Blue Cross of Merit, in 2012.

5. Sources to corroborate the impact (indicative maximum of 10 references)

- 1) E-mail, Dr Suzanne Bardgett, Head of Research, Imperial War Museum, London, to Steinert, 5 December 2011.
- 2) E-mails, Laurent Dutordoir, Associate Expert in Political Affairs, Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict for Children and Armed Conflict, to Steinert, 2010 onwards.
- 3) Letter, Radhika Coomaraswamy, Under-Secretary-General, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict, to Steinert, 6 January 2012.
- 4) Allocution by Leila Zerrougui, SRSG for Children and Armed Conflict, Second International Multidisciplinary Conference Children and War: Past and Present, University of Salzburg 2013.
- 5) Concept note of the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict for Children and Armed Conflict on the establishment of an Academic Advisory Committee, December 2010.
- 6) Email Eamonn Hanson, Global Advocacy Coordinator, War Child Holland to Steinert, 24 July 2013.
- 7) Letter, Stowarzyszenie Dzieci Wojny w Polsce to Prof Caroline Gipps, Vice-Chancellor, University of Wolverhampton, 19 April 2010.