



# MANNHEIM SEMINAR

**“Comparative perspectives on commemorating 20th Century Jewish History” – A three-day seminar for 20 Ukrainian, Moldovan, and German educators and NGO representatives**

September 8–11, 2017 in Mannheim, Germany

Underwritten by the German Foreign Office

A Centropa seminar in partnership with the Youth Academy Mannheim, NGO “Society Initiatives Institute (SII), NGO “Mnemonics”, and International Center for Training and Professional Development (ICTPD)

With additional support by the City of Mannheim, the Bureau for European and International Affairs of the City of Mannheim, the Jewish Community Mannheim, the TSG Hoffenheim 1899 Youth Academy, Anpfiß ins Leben e.V., ABB STOTZ-KONTAKT GmbH



## Take away quotes from participants

"Trans.History is very meaningful and useful. It inspires young people to become active citizens, and it allows students to explore their country's history and enhance their knowledge and practical skills. Students like to conduct research work (interviewing, doing research on family and local history), revealing unknown pages of the history of the Jewish community."

— **TETYANA DUBOK**

"Centropa provides a unique opportunity for my professional development, and for my students to learn more about the Holocaust and Jewish History of the 20th Century."

— **VIKTOR DAMIAN, CHISINAU, MOLDOVA**

"I love how Centropa connects teachers from different parts of the world to boost cooperation. Trans.History provides new, useful ideas that can be incorporated into our work with students."

— **NATALYA POROKHNYAK, TERNOPIL, UKRAINE**

"A remarkable project aimed not only at preserving memory and continuing the development of Jewish culture, but also a project that develops tolerance among adolescents, moral principles, and the development of one's own civic position."

— **TATIANA GONCHAROVA, CHISINAU, MOLDOVA**

*Although our German participants were not obliged to fill out the survey, Michael Heitz shared this thought with us:*

"This is a very inspiring and unique project, enabling teachers from different countries learning from each other. Connecting Germans with their Ukrainian and Moldovan colleagues allows us to exchange ideas and best practice examples, and widens our cultural horizons, too."

— **MICHAEL HEITZ, SINSHEIM, GERMANY**

## Executive summary

From September 8–11, 2017, Centropa conducted its fifth international Trans.History seminar for Ukrainian, Moldovan, and German educators and civil society activists. The three-day seminar “Comparative perspectives on commemorating 20th Century Jewish History” brought together 20 educators working in schools, museums and NGOs. During the seminar, the participants visited various places of German-Jewish life in the Rhine-Neckar region and discussed and shared their best practices on commemorating Jewish history and promoting active citizenship.

Unlike for our regular seminars, we did not have a call for applications for the Mannheim seminar; instead we selected the participants from Moldova and Ukraine since the idea was to bring together our partners from Ukraine (SII and Mnemonics) and Moldova (ICTPD) and some of the most active members of our Trans.History educator’s network and have them meet with our German partners as well as German educators who are actively involved with Centropa. Naturally, there were many more people suitable in joining this advanced seminar for multipliers, but we had to work within a tight budget and therefore limited the number of participants from Ukraine and Moldova to 15.

Seminar highlights included:

- > Traditional Shabbat service in the Mannheim Synagogue
- > Walking tour of Jewish Mannheim conducted by local historian Dr. Esther Graf
- > Workshop on “How to impart Jewish culture creatively”, led by local expert and Jewish community activist Manja Altenburg
- > Presentation on how digital technology can be used in smart ways in educational settings by Prof. Peter Vorderer
- > Presentations of Jewish history projects by educators and students from Ukraine, Moldova, and Germany
- > Walking tour of Heidelberg by Gottfried Becker of the Youth Academy Mannheim
- > Guided tour of Jewish Worms including visits to the medieval synagogue and cemetery by local historian Albrecht Lohrbächer
- > Guided tour by Alan Götz and Michael Heitz: “Traces of Jewish Eppingen” with a visit of the medieval mikve
- > Visit of the old synagogue in Sinsheim-Steinsfurt with an introduction by Jutta Stier
- > Workshop organized at the Youth Academy of the German Bundesliga soccer club TSG Hoffenheim 1899, including a Jewish geocaching tour of “The Menachem and Fred Trail” by Michael Winter of Erlebniszentrum Mühle Kolb, Zuzenhausen

The seminar was led by Fabian Rühle, Director of Education in Europe for Centropa and Gottfried Becker, Director of the Youth Academy Mannheim. Seminar logistics were coordinated by Esther Cotoarba with additional support by Maximilian von Schoeler. We also thank our partners SII and Mnemonics from Ukraine, and ICTPD from Moldova for their assistance in organizing the seminar, and our wonderful interpreter Olha Tyshkovets.

Since we believe no one can teach a teacher better than another teacher, a large part of our seminars was spent exchanging best practice examples, brainstorming in small groups about how teachers can use Centropa materials in their classes and educational institutions and develop own projects.

By investing in educators in this way we build sustainability. When they feel empowered, they become stakeholders and will carry the projects through. After every seminar, we conduct online surveys, and here is what we learned from this survey:

(Note: This survey was only sent to the Ukrainian and Moldovan participants).

- > 100% of the respondents found the presentation of Prof. Peter Vorderer on how digital technology can be used in smart ways in educational settings very useful
- > 92% of the respondents indicated they will use Centropa's films on German and Ukrainian Jewish History and the Holocaust in educational settings (Moldovan participants explicitly asked for Russian subtitles, though)
- > 92% of the respondents found the lectures and excursions on Jewish life and culture (Shabbat Service, Jewish walking tours) powerful
- > 86% of the respondents found the project presentations by three German educators, Gottfried Becker, Jutta Stier, and Michael Heitz, useful

Thank you for reading this report.

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