

Join BEKI Sisterhood for a Shabbat presentation commemorating Yom HaShoah (Yom Hazikaron)

Saturday 11 May 2019 - Iyar 6, 5779
after Kiddush

With Guest Speaker

Dr. David Pettigrew

“Theresienstadt Camp-Ghetto: A Strategy of Deception”

This talk will reflect, primarily, on the extent to which the Theresienstadt Camp-Ghetto was part of a comprehensive strategy to hide the Nazi plan for the “final solution,” while at the same time accomplishing its goals. Theresienstadt is also known for its architectural design as a star fortification constructed to house a cavalry at the end of the 18th century by the Austro Hungarian Empire. Its broad moat and thick walls securely entrapped approximately 140,000 Czech Jews who were imprisoned there from 1941-1945. Theresienstadt was falsely publicised as a “spa town” where elderly Jews could retire in safety. But in reality, it was a place where approximately 33,000 died of disease and approximately 90,000 were to be deported to extermination camps. The Nazi deception included the “beautification” of the town prior to an arranged visit by the International Committee of the Red Cross in 1944, and a propaganda film. In spite of the devastating conditions of the camp-ghetto, the community resisted, in a sense, with cultural, education and religious activities.



David Pettigrew is a Professor of Philosophy at Southern Connecticut State University, where he also created and teaches a class devoted to Holocaust and Genocide Studies. In June 2018, he was appointed as a member of the Connecticut Department of Education Holocaust and Genocide Education Advisory Committee. In this capacity, he supports Connecticut Public School Districts as they respond to the new State mandate (Public Act 18-24) requiring the inclusion of Holocaust and Genocide Education and Awareness in the Social Studies Curriculum. He is a member of the Steering Committee of the Yale University Genocide Studies Program and serves as the Vice President of the Connecticut Academic of Arts and Sciences, the third oldest academic society in the United States. He has co-edited or co-translated twelve books bearing on French philosophy and psychoanalysis. He is co-editor of the book series *Contemporary French Thought*, published by SUNY Press.