

Erzbischof Dr. Rowan Williams

Archbishop's Holocaust Memorial Day Statement 2011: Untold Stories

Der Erzbischof von Canterbury, Dr. Rowan Williams, weist in seiner Ansprache zum Holocaust Gedenktag 2011 auf die Wichtigkeit von Erinnerung hin. Es müssen die „Unerzählten Geschichten“ jüdischer Menschen weiter erzählt werden. Geschichten von Menschen, die von mittelalterlichen Verfolgungen geprägt sind, genauso wie Geschichten des Holocaust und anderer genozidaler Tragödien. Die Erinnerung an solche Gräueltat mithilfe von Gedichten, Ausstellungen, Erzählungen ist wichtig, um den Verlust von Menschlichkeit in der Gegenwart zu erkennen und dagegen vorzugehen.

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On this national Holocaust Memorial Day we are asked to remember the 'Untold Stories' from other genocides that have occurred since the Holocaust. The poems of Paul Celan attempt to express the inexpressible: to tell the 'Untold Story' that chronicles each detail of human degradation and loss during the Holocaust. Although other poets have spoken for those killed in Armenia, Cambodia and Darfur, many stories from these and other genocidal events remain untold. They do not lessen or relativise the unique horror of the Holocaust, but rather serve to remind us of the loss of humanity that remains present in our midst to this day.

Testimony, poetry and autobiography allow us to attend to the distinct stories of individuals rather than trying to comprehend the statistics of different genocides of recent history. Writers like Paul Celan and Etty Hillesum create the most vivid remembrance because their voices are so distinct and their suffering can be felt in every detail of their work.

Sometimes objects and mementos themselves can carry a story and the recently launched Jewish Museum in Camden displays hand-crafted sacred objects alongside small items carried by Jewish children on the Kindertransport as they escaped from Germany. The crafted objects, such as a roll of scripture in a silver fish case, reveal something of the soul of the craftsman. The children's toys likewise still carry the marks of the soul of their owner. But there at least are the memorials of survivors. It is impossible ever to forget the sight at Auschwitz of children's toys taken from those killed in the camp. Who can speak of what they signify of pain and degradation?

The Jewish Museum presents an overview of Jewish life in Britain starting with immigrations first recorded in 1066. There is no Paul Celan or Etty Hillesum telling the story of medieval Jews in Britain. However, the timeline on the wall preserves an important memorial of events now almost completely lost to public awareness - who can now tell the full story of the blood libel case surrounding William of Norwich in the 12th century or of King Edward's expulsion of all Jews from England? If the stories are not told over and over again, we lose the memory of those who suffered and we risk losing something that protects our humanity.

On this 2011 Holocaust Memorial Day I commend for our remembrance the untold stories of Jewish people living in Britain during the medieval era, those of the Holocaust and the stories from the genocidal tragedies of many other contexts in our deeply damaged world today.

Quelle:

<http://rowanwilliams.archbishopofcanterbury.org/articles.php/906/archbishops-holocaust-memorial-day-statement-2011-untold-stories.html> (2024-05).