

## **PANEL DISCUSSIONS**

### **The Position of Women Rabbis in Europe**

#### **In cooperation with the Heinrich Böll Stiftung e.V.**

In the opening session we will explore some of the current themes affecting Jewish women in Europe and around the world. Three accomplished and experienced rabbis will talk about their challenges, successes, and burning issues that affect the future of their communities and the Jewish people. We will also touch upon the role that Tikkun Olam, leadership and activism play in the life of each of the three rabbis.

### **Ambivalent Success: Women Activists in Jewish Communities**

#### **In cooperation with the Heinrich Böll Stiftung e.V.**

The panelists will reflect on their longstanding experience as activists in the Jewish world. They have doubtless achieved successes – but have there also been negative consequences? Do they have to deal with backlash?

### **Starting over, after the Shoah**

All three podium participants were born in Vienna, and experienced – as children and teens – the "Anschluss" of Austria to the National Socialist German Reich. They survived in exile in England, or hidden in Holland, or in the Theresienstadt concentration camp. After the Shoah, they raised families and pursued careers that made a contribution to improving the world: Dr. Dorothea Simon became director of the Sozialakademie in Vienna; Dr. Helga Feldner-Busztin became a doctor in the same city; and Dr. Eveline Goodman-Thau became a philosopher and rabbi in Israel.

### **Tikkun Olam in the works of Jewish women artists**

This panel brings together three Jewish women artists who work in different media, live their Judaism in diverse ways, and whose biographies have taken different trajectories. They will discuss their work in relation to the concept of Tikkun Olam. The panel seeks to explore the meaning of Judaism in their lives and creativity.

### **Six Young Viennese Jewish Women Talk**

The panel is composed of young women of Jewish origin, representing the wide spectrum of groups and ethnicities within the Viennese Jewish community. It attempts to crystallize cultural and social aspects of the Community based on first-hand testimony of the young generation of women. We will discuss questions of identity; the role of Jewish education in shaping their views; the influence of Jewish community life and tradition on their lives; their attitude, aspirations, responsibilities, and commitment within the Jewish world and toward society in general.

### **Jewish Women's Organizations in Europe and the US Today**

Following the four panelists' presentations, they will gather on a panel to draw conclusions for the work and the functions of Jewish women's organizations today and in the future. What do we expect of Jewish women's organizations? Has their development been one of steady progress? What can we learn from the experiences of Jewish women's organizations in different historical periods and in different countries?

**Difficult survival as a “Mischling” in Berlin and Vienna (1933/1938 – 1945). Long-term psychosocial effects of Nazi persecution in women of “half-Jewish” background**

This panel will shed light on experiences of persecution and the psychosocial late effects thereof, through the examples of two women who survived the Nazi period as children in Berlin and Vienna, protected by virtue of having one non-Jewish parent. To date, very little public attention has been given to the fate of those to whom “nothing happened” yet whose daily life was marked by disenfranchisement, persecution, and perseverance in the face of constant mortal danger. Also on the table will be regional differences arising from the various conditions of the National Socialist seizure of power, which impacted the two women at different points in their lives. In addition to looking at normal, everyday life and the experience of persecution, pressure on the family structure and ambivalence between inclusion and exclusion, the panel will focus on the impact of these experiences on post-war life.

**Between Utopia and Reality: Austrian Emigrées Speak About Leftist Politics and Other Paths to a Better World.**

**Future Perspectives for Bet Debora**

During the closing panel of the conference, we will look ahead to the future: to the 7th conference, to Bet Debora’s new projects and publications, to developing Bet Debora's organizational structure. What tasks lie ahead? And what opportunities?