

University of Southampton meeting.

The University of Southampton holds the archives of the Basque Children's Association and on the 14th December, the University hosted a discussion about the history of refugees in Britain. The main speakers were Professor Tony Kushner and Dr Jennifer Craig-Norton from the Parkes Institute of the University of Southampton.

The experiences of the Basque children were compared to the stories of the Kindertransport of Jewish children, and in many ways the remarkable way in which the Basque children episode unfolded proved to be something of a practice run for the Kindertransport.

The discussion also highlighted the differences between the two groups although in both cases the lifelong trauma caused by separation was clearly enormous.

There was mention too of the current situation with regard to refugees and asylum seekers and the current 'hostile environment' which they face.

As we commemorate 85 years since the arrival of the Ninos, it's hard not to draw a comparison between a broadly sympathetic and supportive populace and an indifferent/hostile Government!

Steve Bowles. 12/12/2022