



SURVIVORS' TOIL
The First Decade of Documenting
and Studying the Holocaust

2.-4.11.2022

Vienna Wiesenthal Institute for
Holocaust Studies (VWI)
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SIMON WIESENTHAL CONFERENCE

WIENER WIESENTHAL INSTITUT
FÜR HOLOCAUST-STUDIEN (VWI)



Simon Wiesenthal Conference 2022

Abstracts & CVs

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Welcome

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Jochen Böhler is the Director of the Vienna Wiesenthal Institute for Holocaust Studies. He has studied modern history at Cologne University. From 2000 to 2010, he built the department “War and Foreign Rule in the Century of Extremes” at the German Historical Institute in Warsaw where he wrote his PhD thesis on Wehrmacht crimes in Poland in 1939. From 2010 to 2019, he was a senior researcher at the Imre Kertész Kolleg in Jena, where he habilitated with a monograph on the violent aftermath of the First World War in Central and Eastern Europe. Between 2017 and 2022, he taught Eastern European History at Sorbonne University, Paris, and the Friedrich Schiller University in Jena. He was a fellow at the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, Washington/DC and at Yad Vashem, Jerusalem.

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Éva Kovács is the Deputy Director for Academic Affairs at the VWI. She studied sociology and economics at the Corvinus University in Budapest. She received her PhD in 1994 and her habilitation in 2009. She is a Research Professor at the Centre for Social Sciences/Hungarian Academy of Sciences Centre of Excellence in Budapest. Her research focuses on the history of the Holocaust in Eastern Europe, memory and remembrance, and Jewish identity in Hungary and Slovakia. She has authored five monographs, edited ten volumes, published numerous articles in peer-reviewed journals, co-curated exhibitions in Budapest, Berlin, Bratislava, Krems, Prague, Vienna and Warsaw. She was a member of the VWI's International Academic Advisory Board from 2010 to 2012 and Academic Programme Director between 2012 and 2020.

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Natalia Aleksion is the Harry Rich Professor of Holocaust Studies at the University of Florida, Gainesville. She holds doctoral degrees from Warsaw University, Poland, and NYU, U.S. She has written extensively on the history of Polish Jews and the Holocaust. In addition to her 2021 book *Conscious History: Polish Jewish Historians before the Holocaust* (Littman Library of Jewish Civilization), she is the author of *Dokąd dalej? Ruch syjonistyczny w Polsce 1944–1950* (Warsaw, 2002) and editor of *Gershon Taffet's Zagłada Żydów żółkiewskich* (Warsaw, 2019). She co-edited several volumes, including *Polin: Studies in Polish Jewry*, vol. 29: *Writing Jewish History in Eastern Europe* (2017) and *European Holocaust Studies*, vol. 3: *Places, Spaces and Voids in the Holocaust* (2021). She serves as editor of *East European Jewish Affairs*.

Keynote:

Survivors' Toil and Aftermath Histories: Taking Stock and Looking Ahead

This lecture reflects on the development of a vast and rapidly growing international research field invested in unearthing, analysing, and contextualising the multifaceted efforts of Holocaust survivors in the aftermath of the Second World War. Indeed, as the meticulous research over the past two decades has demonstrated, survivors have shaped Holocaust documentation and history writing, commemoration, and post-war justice among other things. Scholars have rightfully credited social, political, cultural and communal activism of survivors and highlighted their pioneering roles in building the (Jewish) post-war world. Beyond assessing the state of the field of “aftermath studies”, this lecture examines the many ways in which the historiographical focus on the early post-war period and specifically on survivors as agents, activists, founders and builders has broadened and enriched our historical understanding of the Holocaust itself. It will show how the “survivors’ toil” has opened up new archival sources, historical perspectives, and methodological approaches to the study and teaching the Holocaust.

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Laura Jockusch is Albert Abramson Associate Professor of Holocaust Studies at Brandeis University. She is the author of *Collect and Record! Jewish Holocaust Documentation in Early Postwar Europe* (New York 2012); she edited *Khurbn-Forshung: Documents on Early Holocaust Research in Postwar Poland* (Göttingen 2022); and coedited (with Gabriel Finder) *Jewish Honor Courts: Revenge, Retribution and Reconciliation in Europe and Israel after the Holocaust* (Detroit 2015) and (with Andreas Kraft and Kim Wünschmann) *Revenge, Retribution, Reconciliation: Justice and Emotions between Conflict and Mediation* (Jerusalem 2016). Her current research explores Jewish conceptions of post-Holocaust justice; the trials of Stella Goldschlag (aka Kübler-Isaaksohn) in post-war Germany; and revenge during and after the Holocaust.

Chair:

Jochen Böhler (Vienna Wiesenthal Institute for Holocaust Studies – VWI)

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Jochen Böhler is the Director of the Vienna Wiesenthal Institute for Holocaust Studies. He has studied modern history at Cologne University. From 2000 to 2010, he built the department “War and Foreign Rule in the Century of Extremes” at the German Historical Institute in Warsaw where he wrote his PHD thesis on Wehrmacht crimes in Poland in 1939. From 2010 to 2019, he was a senior researcher at the Imre Kertész Kolleg in Jena, where he habilitated with a monograph on the violent aftermath of the First World War in Central and Eastern Europe. Between 2017 and 2022, he taught Eastern European History at Sorbonne University, Paris, and the Friedrich Schiller University in Jena. He was a fellow at the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, Washington/DC and at Yad Vashem, Jerusalem.



Panel I: The Ethics of Documenting

Wednesday, 2 November 2022

14:30 – 16:30

Chair: Éva Kovács (Vienna Wiesenthal Institute for Holocaust-Studies – VWI)

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Éva Kovács is the Deputy Director for Academic Affairs at the VWI. She studied sociology and economics at the Corvinus University in Budapest. She received her PhD in 1994 and her habilitation in 2009. She is a Research Professor at the Centre for Social Sciences/Hungarian Academy of Sciences Centre of Excellence in Budapest. Her research focuses on the history of the Holocaust in Eastern Europe, memory and remembrance, and Jewish identity in Hungary and Slovakia. She has authored five monographs, edited ten volumes, published numerous articles in peer-reviewed journals, co-curated exhibitions in Budapest, Berlin, Bratislava, Krems, Prague, Vienna and Warsaw. She was a member of the VWI's International Academic Advisory Board from 2010 to 2012 and Academic Programme Director between 2012 and 2020.

Survival through Stupor: Eddy de Wind and Early-Postwar Psychoanalytic Studies of the Nazi Concentration Camps

Until 2020, Eddy de Wind's *Eindstation Auschwitz* was known only to Dutch speakers. The book, written in a few weeks while de Wind was working as a survivor-physician with Soviet medics in post-liberation Auschwitz, is regarded to be the only book completed in Auschwitz. The book, as well as de Wind's subsequent prolific output in psychiatry journals, merit analysis not only because he adumbrated what later became known as PTSD and much of the underpinnings of trauma theory in his professional writing. He also advocated a theory of survival that offers a compelling contrast to well-known "self-help" theories put forward by Bruno Bettelheim and especially Viktor Frankl. Like other Dutch survivor-physicians such as Louis Micheels and Elie Cohen, de Wind proposed a more sober analysis of survival, which in his case focused on the concept of "stupor".

In his essay "Confrontation with Death" (1949), de Wind argues that in order to survive the concentration camp, the inmate must neither "surrender completely" nor "resist with all his vitality". Rather, he proposed "the paradox that reconciling oneself to death was a vital condition for the prisoner" and that what he called the "death principle", which in ordinary life should be kept at bay, was "a necessity" in the camp. The inmate, in other words, had to develop a "camp psyche", a state of stupor that did not completely dominate but was characterised by a "form of inner acceptance" of death, tempered by the preservation of just enough vitality "to give the right answer at critical moments." If readers did not want to hear such an analysis, it was not only because of the changed political circumstances of emerging Cold War Europe but also because, as de Wind pointed out, even "years after the war [...] we regularly see how difficult it is to reverse the far-reaching alteration of personality that took place in the camps." This paper traces the ways in which de Wind's theory of survival challenged the simplistic narratives that were already emerging about the Nazi crimes in the late 1940s; compares his theories with those of Micheels, Cohen and the female doctors of Block 10; explains how his writing informed the changing field of psychiatry after the war; and considers the relevance of his work for the historiography of the Holocaust today.

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Dan Stone is Professor of Modern History and Director of the Holocaust Research Institute at Royal Holloway, University of London. He is the author of over 80 scholarly articles and author or editor of 20 books, including: *Histories of the Holocaust* (Oxford, 2010), *Goodbye to All That? The Story of Europe since 1945* (Oxford, 2014), *The Liberation of the Camps: The End of the Holocaust and its Aftermath* (Yale, 2015), *Concentration Camps: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford, 2019), and two forthcoming books, *The Holocaust: An Unfinished History* (Penguin, 2023) and *Fate Unknown: Tracing the Missing after the Holocaust and World War II* (Oxford, 2023). He is also co-editor, with Mark Roseman, of volume 1 of the forthcoming *Cambridge History of the Holocaust*.

Christine Schmidt (*The Wiener Holocaust Library, London*)
 Victoria Martínez (*Linköping University, Sweden*)

Survivor-Interviewers as Companions of Misery: A Comparative View from Post-war Sweden and England

In this joint paper, we compare our respective research into two distinct collections of early post-war survivor testimonies gathered through interviews: The Wiener Library's Eyewitness Accounts Collection in London, England, gathered in the mid-1950s, and the collection of The Polish Research Institute (PIZ) in Lund, Sweden, gathered in 1945 and 1946. Both initiatives grew out of work begun by their respective institutions before and during the Second World War by male scholars in exile – one a German-Jewish refugee-survivor (Dr Alfred Wiener), the other a Polish émigré (Dr Zygmunt Lakociński) – then living in other countries – England and Sweden respectively – who focused on collecting documentation of Nazi crimes. At different times following the war, the initiatives turned to collecting eyewitness accounts from Jewish and non-Jewish survivors through interviews. These efforts were led predominantly by female survivor interviewers from intellectual backgrounds, and in the case of the Wiener Library's collection, the project was also led by a woman, Eva Reichmann. In these ways, the two survivor historical commissions we examine are not unlike many others documenting the Holocaust in the first decade after the end of the Second World War.

What makes both our respective research and our collaboration in this paper distinctive is that we analyse not only the testimonies produced, but also the archival traces left behind by the interviewers from which we will draw our central argument. In their commentary about the testimonies, in correspondence with others involved in both projects, in minutes from organisational meetings, etc., we find evidence of how survivor-interviewers balanced academic objectivity and 'fact extraction' with empathy, and subjectivity with rationality. Key to our approach is how gender shaped the practices and methodology used in the interviews and the dynamics between the survivor interviewers and witnesses. Finally, the initiatives at both the PIZ and the Wiener Library demonstrate the intellectual, cultural and social networks and constellations in which the survivor scholars and interviewers operated. We will argue that these two corpora offer opportunities to explore emerging notions of survivorship and trauma among those who co-created these early accounts, as well as the role of women in post-war archives creation.

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Christine Schmidt is Deputy Director and Head of Research at The Wiener Holocaust Library. Her recent research has focused on post-war search and collecting initiatives. She is currently writing a social history and archival biography of survivor accounts recorded led by Eva Reichmann in the 1950s. Recent publications include "Those Left Behind: Early Search Efforts in Wartime and Postwar Britain" in *Tracing and Documenting Victims of Nazi Persecution* edited by H. Borggräfe, et al (2020) and "We are all Witnesses': Eva Reichmann and the Wiener Library's Eyewitness Accounts Collection," in *Agency and the Holocaust: Essays in Honor of Debórah Dwork*, edited by MJ Rein and T Kühne (2020).

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Victoria (Tori) Martínez is a PhD candidate in history at Linköping University in Sweden. Her doctoral dissertation is an analysis of how survivors of Nazi persecution who came to Sweden as refugees were involved in various socio-historical processes during the post-war period, with a focus on women and the role of gender and other differences. Recent publications include "Witnessing against a divide? An analysis of early Holocaust testimonies constructed in interviews between Jewish and non-Jewish Poles" in *Holocaust Studies: A Journal of Culture and History*, 2021, and "Shaping ongoing survival in a Swedish refugee camp" in *Nordisk judaistik/Scandinavian Jewish Studies*, 2022.

“And yet they did not all perish”: Isaac Matarasso and the Early Accounts of the Shoah in Greece

In early 1945 the Salonican Jewish doctor Isaac A. Matarasso completed his account of the Shoah in his native city. Written in the learned French of the author's class and generation, this nineteen-page account, entitled “L'Occupation allemande de Salonique et les Juifs” constitutes, together with similar accounts by Marco Nahon, Albert Menasche and others, one of the first histories of the destruction of Salonican Jewry. Although the original text was never published, it was translated into Greek and appeared on a number of occasions in a modified form in the post-war Greek-Jewish press. Furthermore, this original account formed a basis upon which Matarasso would, in the years that followed, write a larger work, once again in French. This enlarged work would in turn receive a subvention from the Central Board of Jewish Communities of Greece (KIS) and appeared in Greek translation in 1948. Given its publication in Greek, Matarasso's opus attracted very limited attention outside of Greece and only reappeared as a primary source in the 1990s, when scholarly interest in Greek-Jewish history began to flourish. Indeed, in recent years, a new Greek edition has appeared (2018) as well as a complete English translation (2020). Yet despite substantial developments in the field of Greek-Jewish history and especially the publication of a number of important works on the Holocaust and its aftermath in Greece, the significant contributions of survivor scholars, such as Matarasso, have not yet been fully studied. This paper attempts to address this lacuna by focusing on the development and reception of Matarasso's writings from the end of the war until his death in 1958. Through a detailed analysis of both the relevant published material containing his texts and analogue records and documents held in the archive of KIS, this paper will track the chronological sequence of these texts and seek to place them within the wider contexts of their publication, their reception and the creation of the early post-war corpus of accounts of the Shoah.

In contrast to the established narrative that regards the period after 1950 as one of silence, this paper will argue that the continued publication and use of Matarasso's works during his lifetime (and indeed after his death) suggests that the post-war period was not one of silence, but of the reconfiguration of the small corpus of pertinent historical accounts created in the aftermath of the Shoah.

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Dimitrios Varvaritis is a historian and currently an Adjunct Lecturer in the Department of Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies, University of Vienna. His research interests focus on antisemitism in Greece as well as on aspects of the broader history of Greek Jewry. His latest publication, a study of a set of photographs of the Austrian scholar Felix von Luschan, was included in the exhibition catalogue *Überleben im Bild “Rettungsanthropologie” in der fotografischen Sammlung Emma und Felix von Luschan* (Fotograf 2021).

Daniel Schuch
(Friedrich Schiller University Jena)

“A man-made holocaust”: David P. Boder’s 1946 Audio Recordings as Pioneering Research on Trauma

In the broad field of early Holocaust research, the Latvian-American psychologist David P. Boder (1886–1961) is still widely considered a lone wolf or an outsider. Although recent publications consider Boder’s 1946 interview project with Displaced Persons (DPs) in post-war Europe legendary and visionary, they portray him as an American outsider in the first decade of witnessing, documenting, and studying the Nazi mass murder of the Jews.

In distinction to the groundbreaking work of the manifold survivor scholars, Boder – a Jewish emigrant from tsarist Russia – was neither a survivor nor a historian. Consequently, his research agenda does not fit with the historically oriented ‘Khurbn-Forshung’ by the Historical Commissions. Rather, Boder must be regarded as a social scientist with idiosyncratic research interests who employed an unconventional interview technique. Therefore, this talk will first compare his 1946 audio interviews with early written testimonies from post-war Europe.

In the second part of the presentation, Boder’s experimental psychological interview methods and his fragmented theory of trauma will be introduced. Surprisingly, his concept of trauma is strikingly different from the well-known notion of the Holocaust as an ‘event without a witness’ (Dori Laub). Boder had a special interest in the language and narratives of the DPs. According to the psychologist, the traumatic effects of the survivor’s experiences could be studied in ‘their own words’ (Boder 1949). The collected audio interviews formed a basis to evaluate the narratives as ‘personal documents’. However, the social scientist’s interest was not limited to the events of WWII and the Holocaust but encompassed other forms of trauma caused by catastrophic events such as floods, earthquakes, or bombardments. In this talk his research in the field of US disaster studies after WWII will be contextualised.

The conclusion will touch upon the different meanings used by Boder, the network of disaster researchers, and different survivor scholars in post-war Europe of the terms: catastrophe/disaster and destruction/khurbn. Boder’s research becomes accessible only within the variety of pioneering interpretations of the Holocaust *avant la lettre*.

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Daniel Schuch is a historian and Research Assistant at the Historical Institute of Jena University. He earned his doctoral degree with an analysis on the cultural transformations of Holocaust testimony, which was published in 2021 (*Transformationen der Zeugenschaft. Von David P. Boders frühen Audiointerviews zur Wiederbefragung als Holocaust Testimony*). In his PostDoc project, he is working on Holocaust memory at memorial sites during the Cold War. Latest publication: *Organisiertes Gedächtnis. Kollektive Aktivitäten von Überlebenden der nationalsozialistischen Verbrechen*, 2022 (edited with Philipp Neumann-Thein and Markus Wegewitz).

Panel II: Building Documentation Networks

Wednesday, 2 November 2022
17:00 – 19:00

Chair: Michael L. Miller (Central European University – CEU)

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Michael L. Miller is head of the Nationalism Studies programme at Central European University in Vienna, and co-founder of its Jewish Studies programme. He received his B.A. from Brown University, where he specialised in European History and Old World Archaeology and Art. He received his PhD in History from Columbia University, where he specialised in Jewish and Central European History. His research focuses on the impact of nationality conflicts on the religious, cultural, and political development of Central European Jewry in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

Ewa Koźmińska-Frejłak

(The International Institute for Holocaust Research, Yad Vashem)

Who Were They? Employees and Associates of the Jewish Historical Commissions in Poland: A Collective Portrait

During the three years of the existence of the Jewish Historical Commission in Poland (CŻKH) (1941-1947), several hundred people were involved in its work, of whom more than two hundred found permanent employment in the Commission, usually for a short period of time. The majority of the Commission's employees and associates – both in terms of their education and research experience – were not included in the CŻKH's circle by chance. The talk tries to comprehend the motivation that led them to work for the Commission.

The lecture will draw a collective portrait of this group, namely determine who its members were – to describe demographics as well as their social and family genealogy, to answer the question which generations they belonged to, what percentage of them were men and what percentage were women, characterise their education and earlier professional experience as well as their social situation – where did they live before the war, what is known about their families, social milieus they represented, their national identity, their pre- and post-war ideological choices, their political beliefs, and their organisational affiliations. The talk focuses on where and how they survived the war and whether and how that influenced their motivation for becoming CŻKH's employees/associates, also considering their preparation – both formal and practical – to work for the Commission. Furthermore, their relations will be discussed – before and after the war – not only with Jewish community but also with Polish majority. The goal is to highlight their interrelationships: those rooted in the past, including the wartime past, and the contacts established after the German occupation. The talk will also point to their shared characteristics as well as their main differences.

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Ewa Koźmińska-Frejłak, PhD, sociologist, a research fellow at the Jewish Historical Institute in Warsaw. Currently she is working on the book on Central Jewish Historical Commission in Poland. Author of articles and book chapters on Jewish life in Poland during and after the Holocaust; editor of several books, including *Finkesztejn Family Correspondence* (1939-1941), that has recently been published in English. Since 2014 she manages the Editorial Committee of Critical Re-edition of the Central Jewish Historical Commission's at Poland Publications. Her PhD dissertation on assimilation practices of survivors as strategies of adaptation in Poland is going to be published this year.

The First Historical Studies about the Holocaust in Hungary Prepared by The National Relief Committee for Deportees

Philip Friedman, the leading historian of She'arit Hapletah (The Surviving Remnant), listed the National Relief Committee for Deportees in Hungary (DEGOB) among the “Jewish institutes of research in Europe.” In my previous study, I approached the activities of DEGOB as an integral part of the somewhat unified horizon of interrelated Jewish survivor cultures in the liberated European countries and in the DP camps.

This study proposes the historiographical theories and methodologies underlying DEGOB's large-scale documentation project through analysing the descriptions of the various concentration camps [lágerekészmetsetek], which the staff of DEGOB compiled by extracting information from the testimonial protocols taken down by DEGOB.

These concentration camp descriptions (kept in the Hungarian Jewish Archives, Budapest, XX-P, Tábor kereszmetsetek, see also: www.holocaust-hungary.hu) are one of the first scientific products that are based on the DEGOB testimonies. They have not been studied so far, even though analysing them will reveal the theoretical aims and assumptions of the creators of the monumental testimony collecting project of the DEGOB.

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Rita Horváth, literary scholar and historian, has been a member of the Academic Advisory Committee of the Hadassah-Brandeis Institute, Brandeis University, Waltham, since 2010. In 2003, she received her PhD from Bar-Ilan University (Israel). She was a research fellow at, among others, the International Institute for Holocaust Research in Yad Vashem, Jerusalem, the Vienna Wiesenthal Institute for Holocaust Studies and the Hadassah-Brandeis Institute. She has taught at McDaniel College Budapest, Bar-Ilan University and Eötvös Loránd University (Budapest, Hungary). Her publications include *The History of the National Relief Committee for Deportees, 1944–1952; Previously Unexplored Sources on the Holocaust in Hungary* (coauthored with Anna Szalai and Gábor Balázs); “*Never Asking Why Build—Only Asking Which Tools.*” *Confessional Poetry and the Construction of the Self*.

Sara Buda

(Jewish Contemporary Documentation Center Foundation – CDEC, Milan)

Massimo Adolfo Vitale and the Research Committee on Jewish Deportees Contribution to Historiography

The lecture aims to present the figure of Massimo Adolfo Vitale, president of the Research Committee on Jewish Deportees (CRDE) and protagonist of the first impulses to the history of anti-Semitic persecutions in Italy.

After the liberation of Rome on 4 June 1944, the Jewish institutions of the capital mobilised to retrieve information on those who had disappeared since the roundup of 16 October 1943. At the same time, the Union of Italian Israelite Communities (UCII) expressed the need to start the study and drafting of a history of Judaism in Italy during Fascism.

In the chaos of the division of the Italian territory between the Nazi occupier and the Allies, a special commission was created in Rome to organise the rescue of the survivors on the way back to Italy and to support the families of the deportees. In December 1944, UCII officially founded the CRDE and in May 1945 the management was entrusted to Vitale, former Colonel of the Italian army. Following the path of the initiatives undertaken by Vitale to obtain the first news about the deportees, we can shed light on the history of documentary research on the Shoah in Italy, as the historiographical work that derives from it. Vitale's effort, which would soon have to clash with the low number of survivors of the extermination camps, increasingly focused on research and dissemination of data on the genocide. Italian post-war context, marked by a strong will to "draw a curtain" on the war period, left the Colonel a unique and isolated figure for a long time. Even the UCII, which later entrusted the Colonel with the compilation of the history of anti-Jewish persecutions in Italy in 1949, was unable to provide him with the necessary support. As the information in its possession increased, expanding its reconstruction, also thanks to the implementation of an international network, Vitale felt the urge to disseminate its results. After participating in the trial against Rudolf Hoess in 1947 and having had the opportunity to interview him, Vitale wrote a text that he presented at several conferences around Italy. His involvement in documentation and reconstruction work led him to organise, together with the CDJC in Paris, the first European conference of historical commissions and Jewish documentation centres, held in Paris in December of the same year. It is precisely from the comparison between his activity on an international and national level that emerges the loneliness and the issues that characterise the toil of the first researchers on the history of the – further called – Shoah, making Vitale's work extremely close to that of his colleagues around the world and of crucial importance within the Italian context.

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Sara Buda is a researcher at the department of Historical Researches of the Jewish Contemporary Documentation Center Foundation in Milan. She is a PhD candidate at the University of Genoa and Université Paris 8, with a comparative research on the Jewish documentation centres in France and Italy. Her main interests revolve around the history of historiography of the 20th Century, the elaboration processes of collective memory, and particularly the role of historical institutes founded after the Second World War from outside the University.

“This mystery will be hard to solve.” – Hungarian Holocaust Survivors, Diplomacy, and the Transnational Aspects of Raoul Wallenberg’s Early Memory

Having saved thousands of Hungarian Jews as Sweden’s diplomatic representative in Budapest during the last months of WWII, Raoul Wallenberg is one of the most well-known names of all the Righteous Among the Nations. Uncertainties about Wallenberg’s whereabouts following his mysterious disappearance from Budapest in January 1945 and the sporadic reports about him being alive somewhere in the vast Soviet prison system helped define the memory of him as we know it today.

Yet during the first few years after the war, this mystery was just beginning to unfold. The early producers of Wallenberg’s memory were those who knew him well, mostly colleagues and family members, and the Jewish survivors he had saved. Hungary’s first post-war ambassador to Sweden with personal connections to Wallenberg, Vilmos Böhm, actively sought out Jewish survivors both in Hungary and in Sweden to record their personal memories of the diplomat. Hungarian Jewish survivors living in the Scandinavian country recounted his efforts and these accounts began to appear in newspapers. Meanwhile in Budapest, the Hungarian journalist and historian Jenő Lévai, who had himself survived the war in one of Wallenberg’s protected houses, prepared the first book on the Swedish diplomat. He gathered materials and support for the publication from both Hungary and Sweden, partly with help of Böhm, but under the watchful eyes of Hungarian authorities. A book on Wallenberg by Rudolph Philipp, a Swedish-Jewish survivor, was published in Sweden in 1946 and Lévai’s book appeared in Hungary in 1948 and, albeit in a shortened version, in Sweden as well.

While the most important agents of early Holocaust memory formation were Jewish survivors, the role of their web of personal connections and the political restraints they operated within shaped the process. The secret diplomatic activities between Sweden, the USSR and, to a smaller extent, Hungary aiming to (un)cover Wallenberg’s location influenced what could be said about him. Furthermore, then-forming narratives of the war acted as frameworks to interpret his role during those months when the majority of Hungary’s Jewish population was deported and exterminated. This presentation will map this transnational process of politically negotiated memory production. It will identify the ways personal accounts and official news of both Wallenberg’s actions and his fate crossed borders and entered the public spheres in Hungary, Sweden, and ultimately, the rest of the world.

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Kata Bohus earned her PhD from Central European University in 2014 with a dissertation on state policies towards Jews in socialist Hungary. From 2014 to 2016, she was a postdoctoral researcher in the Anne Frank research group at the Lichtenberg Kolleg, Georg August University of Göttingen. Consequently, she worked at the Jewish Museum Frankfurt/Simon Dubnow Institute as lead-curator of the exhibit *Our Courage. Jews in Europe 1945-48*. She is currently senior research advisor at the University of Tromsø. Her most recent publication is, edited with Peter Hallama and Stephan Stach, *Growing in the Shadow of Antifascism. Holocaust Memory in State-Socialist Eastern Europe* (Budapest: CEU Press, 2022).

“Simon Wiesenthal in Linz” – A Guided Tour of the VWI Archives

Thursday, 3 November 2022
9:00 – 10:00

Kinga Frojimovics & Sandra Weiss
(Vienna Wiesenthal Institute für Holocaust-Studies – VWI)

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Sandra B. Weiss, historian, is the leading archivist of the Vienna Wiesenthal Institute for Holocaust Studies, where she is responsible for the administration and supervision of all archival holdings stored at the institute, related issues and their preservation, processing and making them accessible to all interested parties.

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Kinga Frojimovics, an archivist and historian, is responsible for cataloguing in the Simon Wiesenthal Archive, and a project leader of “The History of Hungarian Jewish Forced Labour in Vienna, 1944/45” (project I 4666-G of the Austrian Science Fund) at The Vienna Wiesenthal Institute for Holocaust Studies. Field of research: the history of the Jews in Hungary in the nineteenth and in the twentieth centuries with a focus on the history of the Jewish religious trends in Hungary, and on the Holocaust.

Panel III: Politics of Holocaust Documentation and Research

Thursday, 3 November 2022
10:00 – 12:00

Chair: Philipp Rohrbach (Vienna Wiesenthal Institute für Holocaust-Studies – VWI)

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Philipp Rohrbach studied history, Slavic studies, and contemporary history at the University of Vienna. Since 2010 he has been a research associate at the Vienna Wiesenthal Institute for Holocaust Studies (VWI), where he is the coordinator of Public History. He collaborated on numerous projects and curated various exhibitions, including *Goldscheider* (Leo Beck Institute NY, 2009) and *SchwarzÖsterreich. Die Kinder afroamerikanischer Besatzungssoldaten* (Austrian Museum of Folk Life and Folk Art, Vienna, 2016). He currently heads the project *Austrian Heritage Archive* (Verein Gedenkdienst/VWI) together with Adina Seeger und Tom Juncker. His research interests include Jewish Austrian emigration to the USA and to Palestine/Israel, oral history, children of war, racism after 1945 and adoption studies.

Máté Zombory
(ELTE University, Budapest)

The Crucial Fifties: Jenő Lévai in the International (Political) Field of Holocaust Documentation

Hungarian journalist Jenő Lévai (1892-1983) is rightfully considered the most important figure of early post-war documentation of the Holocaust in Hungary. Until the publication of Randolph Brahm's *The Politics of Genocide* in 1981, Lévai's 1948 *The Black Book on the Martyrdom of Hungarian Jewry* had served as the only internationally available monographic account of the Jewish genocide. Yet the retrospective picture of Lévai as Holocaust historian relies exclusively on a tiny part of Lévai's work published between 1945 and 1948.

This paper will focus on aspects of Lévai's public activity of historical documentation, which hitherto remained outside of the scholarly interest. First, it will pay special attention to the period between 1948 and 1957. This periodisation poses the following paradoxical question: What conditions made possible for Lévai to resume the work of historical documentation in the mid-fifties? While he was nearly re-settled from Budapest in 1951 and his name came up in the context of the anti-Zionist purges in the Ministry of the Interior in 1953, four years later, already in 1957, he conducted documentary research in Switzerland and France, and contributed to the criminal investigation against Eichmann et al. at the Hessen state prosecutor's office in Frankfurt am Main. Secondly, the talk will shift the focus from historiography to politics when arguing that those conditions of possibility to work were primarily political, including Lévai's personal interests. This shift of emphasis leads to the insight that Lévai's interest in Holocaust documentation was primarily political embedded into the broad anti-fascist framework. In other words, the paper will argue that his comeback in the mid-fifties was due not to a Faustian deal with the communist leadership, a compromise for the possibility of work, but to the existence of some commonly shared ideological interests on which a practical cooperation could be founded. Third, consequently, by looking at the international institutional and personal network, the talk will focus on Lévai's access to historical sources (documents and witnesses) which made him valuable for communist Cold War politics in the first place.

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Máté Zombory, sociologist, is Associate Professor at Eötvös Loránd University, and senior research fellow at the Centre for Social Sciences in Budapest. His field of interest is the historical sociology of transnational and cultural memory with particular emphasis to antifascism. He is author of *Traumatársadalom. Az emlékezetpolitika történeti-szociológiai kritikája* [Trauma Society. A Historical-Sociological Critique of the Politics of Memory] (2019) and *Maps of Remembrance. Space, Belonging and Politics of Memory in Eastern Europe* (2012). His current research, supported by the Fondation pour la Mémoire de la Shoah, Paris, deals with the Cold War history of Holocaust documentation with particular attention to the activities of the Hungarian journalist and author Jenő Lévai.

Fighters and Documenters: Former Jewish Partisans' Activity in the Immediate War Years

The presentation focuses on a specific group of Holocaust survivors, who took part in the Soviet partisan movement in the forests of Lithuania and Belarus during World War II. Over the course of the war the members of those groups shared a collective experience in the same geographical areas. Some of them began to organise themselves in clandestine groups and underground within the ghettos as early as 1941 to resist the Germans, and escaped from the ghettos, reached the forests, joined the partisan units and fought for their survival. In July 1944 the Red Army liberated Lithuania and the Jewish partisans returned to their former cities and towns, where in most cases they found devastation. The immediate war years were also one of settling accounts with traitors and people who had collaborated with the Germans, and there were executions and acts of revenge were carried out by former partisans.

During this period, they had to begin organising their “new” lives as free people, and after having spent the past three years in ghettos and forests, they had to figure out what their next moves should be. Former partisans were among the initiators and leaders of the “Escape” [Bericha] organisation, whose goal it was to lead Jews out of the “Bloodlands” and the “Soviet Hell” and bring them to Eretz-Israel. Another organisation that is rather unknown in the historiography and collective memory, was Pachach. The name is an acronym in Hebrew for “Partisans, Soldiers, Pioneers”, which operated among the survivors in Poland and Germany from 1946. This was an attempt to establish a partisan organisation already in Europe to provide support and comfort to the surviving partisans and ghetto fighters. They also established a “historical committee” and began to gather testimonies from survivors and publish a newspaper. Such testimonies from the summer of 1944 (mostly in Hebrew and Yiddish), describing the experience of the Jewish partisans, are preserved in archives and have hardly been used in historical research. The lecture will also discuss survivors’ video testimonies and how they talk about this post-war period.

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Daniela Ozacky-Stern is a lecturer at the Holocaust Studies Program, Western Galilee College, Israel, and a researcher for the Institute of Holocaust Research at Bar-Ilan University, Israel. She conducted a Post-doctorate at Yad Vashem's International Institute for Holocaust Research and was an EHRI Fellow at USHMM. Her main research focus is Jewish resistance, the history of Jewish partisans in Eastern Europe, Holocaust documentation, and the Vilna Ghetto. For over a decade, Daniela Ozacky-Stern was the Director of the Moreshet Holocaust Archive in Givat Haviva, Israel. Her recent publications include a book on Nazi propaganda led by Joseph Goebbels, and articles on Jewish resistance in Lithuania, Belarus, and Slovakia.

Sabina Ferhadbegović
(Friedrich Schiller University Jena)

Albert Vajs, the State Commission, and the Documentation of the Holocaust in Yugoslavia

The Yugoslav State Commission to Investigate War Crimes Committed by the Occupiers and their Accomplices was constituted in November 1943 shortly after the establishment of the United Nations War Crimes Commission (UNWCC) in London. The State Commission's main responsibility was to investigate war crimes, record available testimony, name and identify those responsible and bring them to justice. By the time the State Commission was dissolved in 1948, more than a million claims and testimonies of war crimes had been collected from victims, their families, or survivors. The documentation of the Holocaust was the focus of the State Commission from the beginning, primarily thanks to the efforts of Albert Vajs, the later president of the Federation of Jewish Communities in Yugoslavia. As the Yugoslav envoy at the International Military Tribunal (IMT), Vajs played a key role in the circulation of legal knowledge and expertise about the Holocaust between the IMT and the State Commission. It was mainly thanks to Vajs that the first major publication on crimes against Jews in Yugoslavia was published in 1952. This article highlights his extraordinary attempts to document the Holocaust in Yugoslavia systematically by collecting records and testimonies and to publish and present this knowledge to the public. It analyses under which circumstances Vajs became a key figure behind the Yugoslav efforts to come to terms with the Holocaust in the aftermath of the Second World War and examines the impact of these early representations of the Holocaust on historiography in general.

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Sabina Ferhadbegović is a historian, specialising in the history of Southeastern Europe, especially post-WWII war crimes trials and civil wars. She holds a PhD from the Albert Ludwigs University in Freiburg. From 2007 to 2010 she coordinated the Civil War research area at the Center of Excellence "Cultural Foundations of Social Integration" at the University of Konstanz, from 2010 to 2016 she was a research associate at the Imre Kertész Kolleg Jena with responsibility for the Statehood research area. From 2016 to 2021 she was the DFG Fellow at the University of Jena and Principal Investigator of the DFG-funded project "Tribunals. War crime trials in the socialist Yugoslavia".

An Early Attempt of an Integrated History? Helmut Eschwege and Holocaust Research in the GDR

For some 30 years, it was mostly argued in academia, especially in historiography, that the Holocaust had hardly played a role in the GDR. Historians, so the overall claim, refrained from addressing this issue as well. When analysing the publications of East German historians, this notion seems to be true initially. Yet, there was one crucial exception: the self-trained Jewish historian Helmut Eschwege. Although he lacked proper training and was never accepted within academia, he became the first historian of the GDR to extensively investigate the persecution of the Jewish population under Nazi rule already in the 1950s and early 1960s.

The paper will focus on Eschwege's working techniques and his research network. Although he could never publish his manuscript, which itself fell short of the quality of related works by other historians at the time, Eschwege's book project stands out due to its juxtaposition of different sources. He contrasted the victim and perpetrator perspectives by quoting from an array of sources available to him. His text might therefore be seen as a first attempt of what Saul Friedländer later called an "integrated history".

The talk will also show how Eschwege utilised a network of early Holocaust research on both sides of the Iron Curtain, thereby partially overcoming the lack of sources and secondary literature he was facing. Drawing upon his contacts at ŻIH in Warsaw or in West-Berlin, London or Paris, he managed to gain access to this "invisible network" (Natalia Aleksion) of early Holocaust researchers. Although Eschwege only gained a minor influence in this group, his correspondence shows just how well connected these pioneers and how widely distributed their writings were.

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Alexander Walther is a PhD candidate at the Friedrich Schiller University Jena and a project coordinator at the research group "Diktaturerfahrung und Transformation" at Erfurt University. He studied history and English in a teacher's training programme at Jena University and has been working on his dissertation on Shoah memory in East Germany (1945-1990) since 2015.

Panel IV: The Making of Holocaust Research Institutions

Thursday, 3 November 2022
13:00 – 15:00

*Chair: Stephen Naron (Fortunoff Video Archive for Holocaust Testimonies,
Yale University/Vienna Wiesenthal Institute for Holocaust-Studies – VWI)*

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Stephen Naron has worked as an archivist/librarian since 2003, when he received his MSIS from the University of Texas, Austin. He has worked with the Fortunoff Archive for more than 12 years, as archivist, consultant, and now Director. Stephen Naron pursued a Magister in Jewish studies at the Free University of Berlin and history at the Center for Research on Antisemitism, TU, and has a BA in History from the University of Kansas. He is currently a PhD student in Judaic Studies at Brandeis University. As the director of the Fortunoff Archive, Stephen Naron works within the wider research community to share access to the collection, and presents about the Archive at conferences, symposiums and sessions of Yale University classes. He is responsible for encouraging innovative use of the collection, including documentary films, podcasts and digital humanities projects. His research interests include the history of Holocaust testimony, archives and “archivalism,” and memory studies.

“Tell This to the Living” – Isaac A. Matarasso

When Philip Friedman examined the status of historical research about the Holocaust in 1948, he mentioned some “useful” historical publications prepared by individuals in Greece. He referred specifically to *In Memoriam* (in French) by M. Molho and J. Nehama and to *And Yet, Not all of them Died* (in Greek) by I. Matarasso. The first work is a comprehensive study of the Salonikan Community before, during and after the Holocaust. The second is an account based on the author’s personal experience and on the testimonies he heard. The purpose of this paper is to examine this early historical production by Jewish survivors in Greece, comparing it to Friedman’s work and reflections. They aimed at providing the future historians with “the full size picture of the catastrophe” (Friedman), collecting and examining testimonies and documents about the Holocaust in Greece. Their publications can be considered both as a source and a subject for historical research, and may deepen our understanding of early Holocaust historiography and its methodological issues. Like the members of historical commissions, the Greek historians felt the moral duty to bear witness and remember (the key words in the introductions to their works are ‘duty’ and ‘memory’), as well as understand the importance of a collective work to which people coming from different backgrounds could collaborate. They all needed to elaborate a methodology, a language, a strategy to analyse and write about the material they were collecting, considering the burden of the recent traumatic experiences and their possible biasing effects on testimonies. They underlined the importance of accuracy and objectivity despite their dealing with extremely difficult issues such as the Jewish Councils. On this subject, it is interesting to identify in this early production an anticipation of later reflections and discussions. Friedman’s purpose was to establish a scientific methodology for collecting and examining the material, likewise Molho insisted on the importance of collecting and publishing only “strictly controlled facts”. Since they had to face the destruction of their world, they devoted particular attention to the situation of their communities even before the Holocaust, an attitude which depended on the ethnographic trend of early 1900’s socio-historical studies. Molho and Nehama, experts on Sephardi culture and history, therefore focused also on the Salonikan Community’s features before the Holocaust and on the destruction of the Jewish Cemetery as a memento of the catastrophe.

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Stefania Zezza is a Holocaust researcher, currently a PhD student in History and Social Sciences, Subject Expert and Teaching Assistant in Sociology and Sociology of Communication at University of Roma Tor Vergata. Her PhD project concerns the epistemological value and interpretation of Holocaust testimonies. She graduated the international master’s programme on Holocaust Studies at Roma Tre University, where she collaborated as a tutor. Her research interests include the relation between memory, trauma, language, and the hermeneutics of testimonies. She has been studying the Holocaust, in particular in Salonika, for many years, has published several articles and participated in international conferences. She was president of Etnhos (European Teachers Network on Holocaust Studies). Her book *Tria Corda: David Boder’s interviews with Salonikan Jews* will be published in November 2022.

Malena Chinski

(Fondation pour la Mémoire de la Shoah, Paris)

Shmerke Kacerginski (1908–1954), Independent Researcher and Collector of Holocaust Songs

The former partisan and Yiddish songwriter Shmerke Kacerginski's activities across the globe throughout the last decade of his life were extremely varied in nature. They include his initiative to establish the Vilna Museum of Jewish Art and Culture after the liberation of this city (1944-1945), his contribution to the Central Jewish Historical Commission (1946), his leading role at the home for refugee artists and writers at 9, rue Guy-Patin in Paris (1947-1950) while he also toured twenty DP-camps in the American zone of occupied Germany (November-December 1947); finally, his settling in Buenos Aires in 1950 as a staff member of the World Congress for Jewish Culture, and his further travels to several cities and towns in South and North America. These abundant pursuits show eloquently that Kacerginski, born on 28 October 1908 in Vilna, remained an itinerant intellectual and Yiddish cultural activist up until his sudden death in an airplane crash on 23 April 1954.

Kacerginski's name should be inscribed in the history of *khurban-forshung* [Holocaust research] mainly due to his work as a *zamlar* [collector], both throughout and in the aftermath of the war. The practice of collecting folklore, made popular by the YIVO Institute in the interwar years, remains a central element in Kacerginski's work. Without a scholarly background, it is quite likely that his contact with Jewish intellectuals in Vilna before the war had a long-lasting influence on his later trajectory, to the point of his becoming the most important collector of songs composed by Jewish victims in the ghettos and camps, which he referred to as "bloody folklore" in the preface to *Lider fun di getos un di lagern* [Songs of the Ghettos and Camps] (New York 1948). The presentation will focus on the history of the composition of this volume, which came to light during Kacerginski's time in Paris, while he remained an independent researcher (not affiliated to any Jewish historical commission). The talk will explore to what extent the local Parisian survivors' milieu, as well as Kacerginski's broad transnational relations, are embedded in the volume. Through the examination of the paratexts, the presentation will also seek to deploy the variety of actors who contributed to this major Holocaust song anthology. Indeed, writers, composers, singers, activists, photographers, and ordinary people who transmitted information to Kacerginski, remain invisible behind the author-title schema.

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Malena Chinski completed a PhD in Social Sciences at the National University of General Sarmiento, Argentina, in 2017. In her doctoral thesis she investigated the first practices of Holocaust memory in Buenos Aires. She continued her postdoctoral training at the École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales (EHESS), Paris, as a member of a collective project on early Holocaust historiography. She was also granted a postdoctoral fellowship from the Fondation pour la mémoire de la Shoah to conduct new research on the surviving poet Shmerke Kacerginski. In collaboration with Alan Astro, she has co-edited *Splendor, Decline, and Rediscovery of Yiddish in Latin America* (Leiden, Brill, 2018).

The Ringelblum Archive from 1940 until Today

In 1940, simultaneously to the sealing of the Warsaw Ghetto, a Jewish historian Dr Emanuel Ringelblum established an underground archive documenting the fate of the Jews in occupied Poland. His initiative called Oneg Shabbat became a scientific institute that conducted sociological research on the ghetto community. Following the research methods developed by YIVO before the war, the archivists gathered data concerning various social groups of the ghetto: women, intellectuals, children, Jewish police and youth as well as hairdressers or refugees, to name a few. The final result, a book entitled “Two and a Half Years of War”, was never fully completed as the researchers’ work was suddenly interrupted with the liquidation of the Warsaw Ghetto.

People perished, but their work survived. After the war, three survivors of the Oneg Shabbat, Rachel Auerbach, Bluma and Hersch Wasser, rushed, not without obstacles, to find the hidden documents now known as the Ringelblum Archive. The search and excavation of the Ringelblum Archive (1946, 1950) coincided with the period when the survivors struggling with the dilemma whether they should stay in Poland or leave. Immediate post-war Warsaw and Poland were not an easy place to life. Since the late 1940s, Stalinism put an end to pluralism in Jewish circles, the communist authorities took over or dissolved all independent organisations, local pogroms maintained the state of insecurity.

Using the documents stored in the Archive of the Jewish Historical Institute, this paper firstly reconstructs the course of the hiding as well the post-war search for the Oneg Shabbat archive, conducted by the Central Committee of Polish Jews and the Central Jewish Historical Commission. Secondly, it discusses the first long-term plans for the Ringelblum Archive, and how it was set within general research guidelines and plans for publications formulated by the Central Jewish Historical Commission. Finally, it presents how the materials from the Ringelblum Archive are researched now.

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Justyna Majewska is PhD candidate at the Polish Academy of Sciences where she submitted the doctoral dissertation *Warsaw Ghetto in perspective of sociology of space and time*. She works in the Research Department of the Jewish Historical Institute and runs secretary of the editorial board of the Polish annual *Zagłada Żydów. Studia i materiały* (Holocaust Studies and Materials). In addition, she was awarded fellowships from the EHRI and VWI. She has published in *Zagłada Żydów. Studia i materiały* and *East European Jewish Affairs*. Her forthcoming article is entitled „In einem der Höfe wuchsen mehrere große Bäume und einige Sträucher. Grünflächen im Warschauer Ghetto“, in: Philipp Nielsen, et al. (eds), *Ein jüdischer Garten in den Gärten der Welt – Historische Recherche* (Berlin: 2022).

Olga Kartashova
(New York University)

The International Networks and Polish Jews' Efforts to Prosecute Nazi Criminals

This project explores Jewish voices in the post-war trials of Holocaust perpetrators in Poland. It builds upon existing research on Nazi and collaborator trials (Finder and Prusin 2018, Kornbluth 2021) and contributes with a novel study of what surviving Jews understood as justice, how they approached the Polish government in the search for it, and how they supported investigations and trials. The talk claims that Polish Jews made efforts towards achieving justice and that they saw Jewish institutions as legitimate representatives of the victims and their families. This and the widespread international networks used for information exchange among survivors, domestic and foreign Jewish communities, and national and international legal bodies developing international criminal law ensured the abundance of sources and witness accounts for the Holocaust-related trials and increased the chances for sentencing the perpetrators.

The paper is based on Olga Kartashova's early dissertation research. The talk will elaborate on the legal side of collecting testimonies as well as evidence and will demonstrate the collective efforts of Jews beyond temporal and geographical limits. The goal is to look for the Jewish voices expressed publicly in courtrooms, in the press, and privately in correspondence between individuals, Jewish, Polish, and international institutions. In the scope of the study are Jewish lawyers active before, during, and after the war, the legal department of the Central Committee of Polish Jews, historical commissions in Poland and other liberated countries, particularly in the Allied-controlled territories. However, the focus will lie on individual survivors carrying on their shoulders the mission of bringing criminals to justice as an opportunity to avenge crimes, honor the memory of the dead, and bring knowledge of the catastrophe to the world. Careful examination of their efforts and issues will allow to build a comprehensive image of the active part of the survivors and their understanding of the legal aftermath of the Holocaust.

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Olga Kartashova is a PhD candidate in Hebrew and Judaic studies at New York University. Kartashova specialises in the Holocaust history, memory, historiography, and trials. She holds MA degrees in Comparative History from Central European University and Holocaust Studies from Haifa University. In 2020, Olga Kartashova worked as a researcher at the USHMM on a project broadly devoted to genocides and justice. She leads a monthly research seminar "The Forgotten Roots of International Law" in cooperation with Tel Aviv University where she was a fellow during 2021-2022. In 2022, she was a Junior Fellow at the Center for Holocaust Studies at the Leibniz Institute for Contemporary History in Munich. Currently, she is a Claims Conference Saul Kagan Fellow in Advanced Shoah Studies.

Panel V: The Culture of Testimonies

Thursday, 3 November 2022
15:30 – 17:30

Chair: Marianne Windsperger
(Vienna Wiesenthal Institute for Holocaust-Studies – VWI)

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Marianne Windsperger works as a research coordinator at the VWI. She studied Comparative Literature and Romance Languages at the University of Vienna. Since 2018 she is a member of the executive board of the Theodor Kramer Society for Exile Studies in Vienna. Research interests: literary representations of the Holocaust, Yiddish literature, and memory studies. Most recent publications: (together Olaf Terpitz, Ed.) *Places and Media of Encounter. Transfer, Mediality and Situativity of Jewish Literatures* (2021); *Preserving Lived Contexts. Yizker bikher as Portable Archives from Transgenerational Perspective* (2021).

Eleni Beze
(University of Thessaly, Greece)

Early Female Voices on the Shoah in Greece

The dominant view within Greek historiography of the Shoah is that for decades, at least until the 1980s, a certain silence prevailed on the part of survivors and the society at large. However, recent research, part of which is Eleni Beze's doctoral thesis (Greek Jews after the Shoah. Issues of Memory and Identity, University of Thessaly, June 2021) has demonstrated that the survivors themselves undertook significant initiatives to document the events of the Shoah, inform the broader Greek public about it as well as promote and maintain its memory. This research has also demonstrated that women in particular have played an active role in these initiatives, the details of which have not yet been fully studied. The paper aims to address this gap by focusing on the activities and contribution of a number of Jewish women in the documentation and commemoration of the Shoah in Greece. The main questions are: What initiatives were taken by female Jewish survivors, such as the Polish Miriam Novitch and the Greeks Berry Nachmias, Lisa Pinhas and Erika Amariglio, regarding the documentation and commemoration of the Shoah in Greece? What are the characteristics of the discourses adopted by well-known women within the Jewish community and "anonymous" women in different circumstances (press releases, interviews, memoirs, testimonies in the trials of the Greek-Jewish traitors and Eichmann)? Finally, how are gender roles and relations between the sexes and the different generations erased, through the same sources?

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Eleni Beze is a Post-Doctoral Fellow at the Department of History, Archaeology and Social Anthropology at the University of Thessaly, where she is conducting research on the experience of the Shoah in the formation of a female Jewishness in Greece. Her PhD examines issues of memory and identity of the Jews of Greece in the immediate aftermath of the Shoah (University of Thessaly). She holds an MA in Philosophy and a BA in Philosophy and Social Sciences (both University of Crete). She has worked in secondary education and, since 2010, she collaborates with the Jewish Museum of Greece. She has also published articles on various topics related to Greek-Jewish history, such as Greek Zionism and Greek-Jewish leftist ideology.

Linking Memorial Books, the Holocaust and Post-war Communities: the Case of Lubartów

This paper intends to analyse memorial books as a source on the Holocaust and as an entry point to study the community of survivors. It will focus on the case of the Lubartów Memorial Book published in Paris in 1947 in Yiddish. *The Destruction of Lubartów* is one of the first memorial book precociously published after the war and one of the first attempts to document the local Jewish life in Poland before and during the Holocaust.

This paper will analyse the context of production of this publication and the composition of the *landsmannschaft* “Les Amis de Lubartów” (The Friends of Lubartów). How was it formed, and why in Paris? Who emerged in the community as a legitimate voice to document the life before the war and the wartime experience of the Lubartów Jews? What were the different pre-war/war/post-war logics that may have partially shaped the collective volume, its organisation and its content? This presentation will emphasise how dependent early Holocaust scholarship of the networks of survivors was and how it reflected a collective effort. Combining a quantitative approach of the content and a qualitative approach of the texts and pictures the book contains, this research will link in a second time the individuals represented in the pictures or mentioned in the lists, with one another and with the survivors and the authors. As such, it seeks to offer a new perspective on this material by mobilising a plurality of methods, an exhaustive approach of the document and mobilising additional sources to contextualise it, such as interviews with survivors and descendants.

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Claire Zalc is a senior research fellow at the French National Centre for Scientific Research (CNRS) and professor at the School for Advanced Studies in the Social Sciences (EHESS), as well as PI for the Lubartworld project supported by the ERC. Recent publications include: (ed.), *Microhistories of the Holocaust* (2016); *Denaturalized. How Thousands Lost Their Citizenship and Lives in Vichy France* (2020).

Thomas Chopard is deputy-director of the French Russian Studies Centre in Moscow (CEFR) and postdoctoral fellow at the National Institute for Oriental Languages and Civilizations (CREE/INALCO).

Natalia Aleksion
(University of Florida)

Pages of Jewish History as a Testimony: The Making of *Bleter far geszichte*

In January 1948, a new Jewish scholarly journal titled *Bleter far geszichte* (Pages for history) began to appear in Warsaw, under the auspices of the recently established Jewish Historical Institute. In the introduction to the first issue of this Yiddish language periodical, its editors underscored their sense of uneasiness about starting this enterprise “on the ruins”, without Jewish masses or Jewish institutions that had thrived in Poland before the Holocaust. The editors sought to formulate their mission while eulogising their murdered colleagues and teachers. They positioned themselves between the past of the Polish Jewry and the future of Jewish history writing. In order to underscore the connection with the past, they chose to use the title of the journal published in Warsaw ten years earlier by a group of young Jewish historians. What was then their vision of navigating between a sense of loss, publishing the work of murdered Jewish historians and creating a living journal of Polish Jewish history. This paper will discuss the making of the journal through the lens of the initial declaration that equated the pages of the journal with the (collective) testimony of Polish Jewry.

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Natalia Aleksion is the Harry Rich Professor of Holocaust Studies at the University of Florida, Gainesville. She holds doctoral degrees from Warsaw University, Poland, and NYU, U.S. She has written extensively on the history of Polish Jews and the Holocaust. In addition to her 2021 book *Conscious History: Polish Jewish Historians before the Holocaust* (Littman Library of Jewish Civilization), she is the author of *Dokąd dalej? Ruch syjonistyczny w Polsce 1944–1950* (Warsaw, 2002) and editor of *Gershon Taffet's Zagłada Żydów żółkiewskich* (Warsaw, 2019). She co-edited several volumes, including *Polin: Studies in Polish Jewry*, vol. 29: *Writing Jewish History in Eastern Europe* (2017) and *European Holocaust Studies*, vol. 3: *Places, Spaces and Voids in the Holocaust* (2021). She serves as editor of *East European Jewish Affairs*.

Marriage and Emigration in the Early Post-Shoah Correspondence of Greek Jewish Survivors

The starting point of this study is the methodological assumption that post-war years are an integral part of the Holocaust. The fate of the Jews of Greece during the first post-war years represents a mosaic of cases and collective or personal trajectories whose history is poorly known. A series of letters dating back to the first few months and years after liberation allows us to focus on the level of individuals and families in order to better understand the difficulties, the dilemmas and the choices of the Greek survivors.

This presentation deals with the themes of marriage and emigration. Correspondence as an event in itself participates in the maintenance, creation and reconstruction of bonds and emotions. It testifies to the mobility and to the great fluidity of the choices experienced by the survivors. Their letters follow the paths of Jewish movement, chart a new geography of the family, community and professional diaspora, reveal the crises and reconstruction of a collective Jewish post-Shoah identity. The letters of the sender and the recipient, who exchange roles, reflect the perceptions, concerns and expectations of their families and the wider society. The private meets the public sphere and Jewish history meets transnational history. The letters of the survivors introduce us to the protagonists' sense of time, a factor we sometimes tend to underestimate because we know the "end of the story". Moreover, the correspondence makes us reflect on the individual paths of Holocaust survivors as the paths of active subjects who take life in their own hands and participate in the construction of the world born after the war, in a period marked by turmoil and economic devastation. If we want to imagine a comprehensive history of the Holocaust, we have to pay attention to the fluid lives of a young generation of survivors and the construction of a new Jewish identity.

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Henriette Rika Benveniste was born in Thessaloniki. She studied History at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem and completed her doctoral studies at the Université de Sorbonne. She is a Professor of European Medieval History at the University of Thessaly, Volos Greece. Her research in medieval history includes issues of law and society, religiosity and conversion and Jewish history. She has also researched and published widely on the Holocaust. Her most recent monographs, which have received numerous awards, include *Those who survived: Deportation, Resistance, Return* (Athens: Polis, 2014) (Berlin: Romiosini, 2016, in German) (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2022 in English) and *Luna. An Essay in Historical Biography* (Athens: Polis 2017) (Paris: Signes et Balises, 2023, forthcoming in French).

My Father Szymon Datner – An Evening Talk with Helena Datner (Jewish Historical Institute, Warsaw)

Thursday, 3 November 2022
18:00 – 19:00

Chair: Natalia Aleksiu (University of Florida)

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Natalia Aleksiu is the Harry Rich Professor of Holocaust Studies at the University of Florida, Gainesville. She holds doctoral degrees from Warsaw University, Poland, and NYU, U.S. She has written extensively on the history of Polish Jews and the Holocaust. In addition to her 2021 book *Conscious History: Polish Jewish Historians before the Holocaust* (Littman Library of Jewish Civilization), she is the author of *Dokąd dalej? Ruch syjonistyczny w Polsce 1944–1950* (Warsaw, 2002) and editor of *Gershon Taffet's Zagłada Żydów żółkiewskich* (Warsaw, 2019). She co-edited several volumes, including *Polin: Studies in Polish Jewry*, vol. 29: *Writing Jewish History in Eastern Europe* (2017) and *European Holocaust Studies*, vol. 3: *Places, Spaces and Voids in the Holocaust* (2021). She serves as editor of *East European Jewish Affairs*.

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Helena Datner, PhD, sociologist and historian and researcher at the Jewish Historical Institute. In the years 1997-2001 she was the head of the Warsaw Jewish Community, 2006-2014 she held co-responsibility for building the Post-War Gallery at the Polin Museum in Warsaw. Field of research: Antisemitism in Poland, history of Jewish intelligentsia in Poland, social history of Jews after WWII; recently the Jewish historian of the Holocaust in Poland – their way and its change.

Panel VI: The Challenges of Methodology and Terminology

Friday 4 November 2022

9:00 – 10:30

Chair: Julie Dawson (Fondation pour la Mémoire de la Shoah, Paris)

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Julie Dawson is a PhD candidate at the University of Vienna's Institute for Contemporary History, her dissertation examines post-war Jewish life in Romania through the lens of diaries of a Transnistrian survivor. Dawson led the Leo Baeck Institute's archival survey of Transylvania and Bukovina from 2012 to 2019. From 2020 to 2021 she held a Fortunoff Fellowship at the Vienna Wiesenthal Institute. Currently she is a doctoral grantee with the Fondation pour la Mémoire de la Shoah. She has published in, amongst others, *European Holocaust Studies Vol. 3: Places, Spaces and Voids in the Holocaust* and *Quest. Issues in Contemporary Jewish History* (forthcoming). Jewish History. Research interests include Jewish Bukovina, communist Romania, Transylvania, women's history, trauma and memory studies.

Philip Schwartz
(Polish Academy of Sciences)

Elye Spivak's 1946 Study about the Soviet Yiddish Discourse on War and Holocaust

In the 1940s and 1950s, a number of scholars pioneered the study of Holocaust-era language. One of them, the Soviet linguist Elye Spivak (1890–1950), studied the impact of the war on Yiddish literary language in Soviet publications. His research, which he began as early as 1942, eventually resulted in the monograph *Language in the Days of the Great Patriotic War* (1946). Unlike the work of other researchers studying war-time Yiddish, Spivak's research does not focus on the spoken language of Holocaust victims. Rather, he analysed central metaphors and figures of speech in literature (especially poetry) and in reports of the newspaper *Eynikayt*. Moreover, he does not exclusively work on texts that concern the Holocaust, but on literature relating more broadly to the struggle against Nazi Germany. In the monograph's last chapter, however, he zooms in on “words of pain and courage” and uses this as an opportunity to speak indirectly about the Jewish people's national tragedy.

Methodologically, Spivak belongs to the school of Soviet philologists studying literary language. He groups words in semantic fields, discusses shifts of meaning, and describes the implications of usage based on an analysis of the context in which certain important metaphors and concepts (such as “homeland” or “hatred”) are used.

His work is not only descriptive, but also communicates a normative – and apologetic – vision of the place of Jews within Soviet society. Nevertheless, Spivak's study offers insights into the war-time and early post-war discourse on the Holocaust in Yiddish, including in contemporary reports about Nazi atrocities which were sometimes based on survivors' testimonies.

This paper will also trace the evolution of Spivak's monograph based on files from the archives of the Jewish Anti-fascist Committee in the Soviet Union (JAC). Finally, the paper will determine its place within the field of early Holocaust research conducted by Soviet Jewish scholars.

Philip Schwartz holds degrees in History, Rhetoric, and Slavic studies from Tübingen University, as well as a MA degree in Jewish studies from the University of Wrocław. He has written on Soviet cultural history and Neo-Hasidism. Currently, he is a PhD candidate in Intellectual History at the Polish Academy of Sciences. His research focuses on the Yiddish intelligentsia in Poland and the Soviet Union.

Documentary Truth: Nachman Blumental's in situ Study of "Vernichtungswissenschaft" in Poland, 1944–1950

In Poland, the place of production of Holocaust historiography is commonly associated with the establishment of the Polish Center for Holocaust Research at the Polish Academy of Sciences in Warsaw in 2003. This centre would not have been founded, had it not been for the publication of Jan Tomasz Gross' book *Neighbors* published in 2000 and 2001 respectively. However, to view the matter from this perspective is to obscure the beginnings of historiography in Poland written by Jewish survivors after liberation from German occupation. The political, socio-economic, and cultural constellation that shaped the activities of Polish-Jewish survivors working in post-war Poland can be understood as a constant negotiation between the pressure exerted on them by Polish society and their own sense of obligation towards the Jewish community and those who had been murdered.

What were the methods for the pursuit of documentary truth established in situ by survivor researchers? One of them was the collection of documents, most importantly German and Jewish sources, as well as the production of evidence in trials of perpetrators. This involved visits to the site of the crimes. Another method was the publication of documents.

What is the status of documentary truth established by survivor researchers? Which cognitive categories did they use for the description of the event? Which terms and concepts coined by them have been used in contemporary scholarly discourse and which were discarded by Holocaust scholars and why?

This paper seeks to address these questions by drawing on unknown material from the archive of Nachman Blumental (1902–1983), who survived the Shoah in the Soviet Union. For decades, the philologist, linguist, literary scholar and historian Nachman Blumental was at the centre of the collection of archival materials pertaining to the persecution and murder of European Jewry by Nazi Germany, as well as at the centre of the production of studies and compendia of documents: In liberated Poland from 1944 onwards in his function as co-founder and vice-director of the Central Jewish Historical Commission (Centralna Żydowska Komisja Historyczna, CŻKH) and as the first director of its successor organisation, the Jewish Historical Institute (ŻIH) in Warsaw, and after his emigration to Israel in 1950 as a member of the Ghetto Fighter's Museum and as an employee at Yad Vashem.

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Katrin Stoll is a Holocaust researcher and historian at the Imre Kertész Kolleg, Friedrich-Schiller-Universität Jena. She is the author of *Die Herstellung der Wahrheit. Strafverfahren gegen ehemalige Angehörige der Sicherheitspolizei für den Bezirk Bialystok* (2012). As a member of the PREMEC research team led by Aurélie Kalisky (Berlin) and Judith Lyon-Caen (Paris), she went to Vancouver twice in 2018 to review the Nachman Blumental Archive and to organise its shipment to New York City. Miron Blumental donated his father's archive to the YIVO Institute for Jewish Research. Katrin Stoll's research interests include Holocaust historiography, testimony, and the landscape of the geographical centre of the murder of European Jewry by Nazi Germany, i.e. Poland.

Aurélia Kalisky
(Centre Marc Bloch, Berlin)

At the Crossroads of Disciplines: Unclassifiable Knowledge and Pioneer Methodologies

In the wake of the catastrophe, some survivors became historians of the event they had just gone through without having had any historical training. It is therefore not surprising that the historiography they practiced mixed genres and disciplines. It is both their pre-war life as journalists, writers, lawyers, teachers or scholars of other disciplines than history, and their experience as survivors and witnesses, that informed their transdisciplinary methodologies and the textual forms they chose. They also inherited scholarly gestures and memorial practices of the Jewish tradition, such as the writing of memorial books or ethnographic and historiographical approaches developed since the end of the 19th century, conferring to testimonial knowledge not only a political significance but also an epistemological value. They defended a form of “multidimensional” historiography integrating various aspects of the historical experience, where history and documentation were a prerequisite to establish the truth and to claim justice, but also became an instrument of mourning and memory. In any case, the survivor scholars broadened the historiographical field by taking an interest in the forms of resistance through cultural life at large, herewith anticipating the recent “cultural history of the Holocaust”.

This paper will closely examine three examples of their methodological innovations. First, drawing on HG Adler, Michel Borwicz and Joseph Wulf, the singular form of document collections and question the characteristics of a “documentary historiography” will be looked at. The talk will then show how Joseph Wulf developed a kind of ethnography of the perpetrator society, applying the methodologies developed in the interwar period to document Jewish-Eastern life to the Germanic “culture of genocide”. Finally, the focus will lie on the philological approaches of Adler, Borwicz and Nachman Blumental.

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Aurélia Kalisky is a literary scholar, currently writing a book on early Holocaust research entitled *How to write our History? The Writings of Jewish survivor scholars in the wake of the Shoah*, which is the result of a project completed in 2021 on “Early Modes of Writing the Shoah” (ZfL Berlin/Simon Dubnow Institute Leipzig/EHESS Paris, <http://savoirs-inclassables.ehess.fr>). She published an anthology on children during the Holocaust (*L'Enfant et le génocide* with Catherine Coquio, 2007) and articles on testimonial literature, memory politics and historiography related to genocides and political violence. She recently edited the German translation of the handwritings of Zalmen Gradowski (*Die Zertrennung*, 2019).

Panel VII: Material Culture of Documentation

Friday, 4 November 2022

11:00 – 13:00

Chair: Zuzanna Dziuban (Austrian Academy of Science - ÖAW)

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Zuzanna Dziuban is a senior postdoctoral researcher at the Institute of Culture Studies and Theatre History of the Austrian Academy of Sciences within the ERC project Globalized Memorial Museums. She is the author of *Foreignness, Homelessness, Loss: Dimensions of Atopia of the Contemporary Cultural Experience* (2009, in Polish), the editor of *The 'Spectral Turn': Jewish Ghosts in the Polish Post-Holocaust Imaginaire* (2019), of *The 'Forensic Turn': Engaging Materialities of Mass Death in Holocaust Studies and Beyond* (2017), and co-editor of two special issues: "Forensik" in *Zeitschrift für Kulturwissenschaften* (2019, with Gudrun Rath and Kirsten Mahlke) and "The Surviving Thing: Personal Objects in the Aftermath of Violence", in: *Journal of Material Culture* (2020, with Ewa Stańczyk).

Dóra Pataricza
(Szeged Jewish Community, Hungary)

The Return to Szeged (Hungary) in the Lights of the Survivors' Report Cards of the Szeged Jewish Archives

The Jewish Community of Szeged (Hungary) has a rich cultural and historical heritage dating back over two centuries. Like most Jewish cities in Europe, much of the Szeged Jewish population was destroyed in the Holocaust. Szeged was the main deportation centre for Csongrád County (southern Hungarian villages) and parts of current Northern Serbia (Bačka region). At the end of June 1944, three trains departed from Szeged with the Jewish population from Szeged and the surrounding villages. The first train went to Auschwitz, where most of the Szeged Jews were killed upon arrival. The second train was uncoupled and one half went to Auschwitz. The second half of the second transport and the third train ended up at the Strasshof Labor Camp near Vienna, where most people survived. The setup of the three transports resulted in Szeged's Jewry having an exceptionally high rate of survival (an estimated 50%), including children and the elderly.

Much of the Szeged Jewish Community's Archive (SzJCA) stayed intact. Recently the documents of this archive were catalogued, indexed, and partly digitised, including deportation lists and lists of survivors. Currently, in an international project funded by Claims Conference, all available records are compiled to build a database and to identify all the ca. 10,500 Jews who were deported from Szeged.

Several sources can be regarded as suitable for the reconstruction of the list of survivors from Szeged. The recently discovered returning survivors' report cards kept at the SzJCA consist of 1760 cards and were transcribed. The information on returning survivors was recorded in the summer of 1945 upon arrival. The transformation of the individual report cards of the SzJCA into a unified excel sheet included several challenges: the details of the relatives of the returning individuals were listed on the same cards; children did not have their own report cards, but their data was often listed on several documents; the birthdate of listed relatives was not indicated, only their age; and the date of the creation of these cards is missing. The cards function as a catalogue of people returning to Szeged, but it is not clear from the text if they were also deported from Szeged.

The proposed paper aims to present these report cards, the circumstance under which they were created in 1945, how data consistency was improved with the help of a data cleaning desktop app, and how these cards can fill in gaps where there is missing information.

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Dóra Pataricza, PhD, is a post-doctoral researcher in History who worked at the Szeged and Helsinki Jewish Communities on projects aiming to index, catalogue and digitise their archives. Currently, she is working as a part-time post-doctoral researcher at Åbo Akademi University in Turku, Finland, in a project entitled "Boundaries of Jewish Identities in Contemporary Finland". Since January 2020, she has also been a project manager in the Jewish community in Szeged, financed by the Claims Conference and IHRA, to reconstruct the fate of Holocaust victims from the Szeged region. Dóra Pataricza is the author of 32 articles and a monograph and has given 62 conference papers so far. In 2021, she received the Immanuel Löw Award of the Szeged Jewish Community.

The Parchments of Remembrance: Megillot for the Tomb of the Unknown Jewish Martyr in Paris, 1956

The foundation stone of the Paris Mémorial was laid in 1953 and the monument was inaugurated on 30 October 1956. Despite the divisions of the Cold War, its aim was the establishment of the institutional framework for a transnational remembrance of the genocide of the Jews in Europe. In the summer of 1956, Isaac Schneersohn, on behalf of the World Commission for the Mémorial, wrote a letter to the Jewish communities of Europe who had suffered Nazi persecution, asking them to write on a parchment scroll a Megillah summarising “the main stages of the tragedy of the Jews of their respective countries and the number of victims”. The scrolls were placed in a symbolic urn in the crypt of the Mémorial. In addition to the scrolls of parchment containing the “history of suffering”, photographs, martyrs’ names, archival documents and other memorabilia were also expected to be added to the collection.

To our knowledge, these commemorative texts, written 11 years after the end of the war, have never been examined. This paper will focus on the Hebrew-language commemoration, Megillat Horthy, written on behalf of the Jewish community in Hungary, with the specific intention of initiating an international collaboration for a comparative analysis of texts written across Europe.

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Viktória Bányai is a senior research fellow at the Institute for Minority Studies, Center for Social Sciences, and an assistant professor at the Hebrew Studies Department, Eötvös University, Budapest. Her research field is Hungarian Jewish history and culture in the pre-modern and modern times. Her publications include *History of Jewish Education in Hungary, 1780-1850* (in Hungarian) and she co-authored *Jewish Budapest: Monuments, Rites, History*. Her current project, on which she has published several articles, examines the experiences of Jewish children in the immediate post-war period Hungary.

Rachel E. Perry

(University of Haifa, Weiss Livnat Graduate Program in Holocaust Studies)

Not by Word Alone: The Graphic Album as Medium of Holocaust Memory

In the immediate post-war period, dozens of graphic albums were created by survivors—both amateur and professional artists, men and women from all nationalities. As opposed to the photographic images taken by the Soviet and Allied Signal Corps that flooded the public sphere, these modest albums were mobilised as democratic multiples that could circulate across national and linguistic borders as “museums without walls.” Unlike large-scale oil paintings, which are costly to make and exhibit in public venues like museums and galleries, albums offered accessibility and ownership. Small in size, weight and print-runs, they were published in multiple languages and funded by Jewish organisations like the Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, the World Jewish Congress, ORT, or Zionist groups like Hechalutz.

Largely neglected by both Holocaust studies (which privileges textual, oral and video testimonies over artistic accounts) and art history (which privileges unique paintings), these graphic albums belie the persistent “myth of silence” that art history maintains of the early post-war years. They rightfully belong to the early post-war initiatives that sought to write the history of Jewish suffering from the perspective of the victims. Like Yizkor books, they were bought and displayed as both testimonial and commemorative objects recounting an individual and collective history that had not been able to be documented in real time by its victims. Rarely exhibited or reproduced in their entirety, these cross-discursive image-texts constitute a short-lived but widespread transnational phenomenon to create a portable memorial culture.

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Rachel E. Perry received her PhD in Art History from Harvard University. She currently teaches in the Weiss Livnat Graduate Program in Holocaust Studies at the University of Haifa. She is the recipient of several EHRI Fellowships, a Sharon Abramson Research Grant, a Getty Postdoctoral Fellowship, a Senior Fellowship at CASVA and a Senior Research Fellowship at Yad Vashem's Institute for Holocaust Research. Her articles have appeared in *October*, *History and Memory*, *French Cultural Studies*, *RIHA*, *Art Bulletin*, *Ars Judaica*, *Images: A Journal of Jewish Art and Visual Culture*, *Holocaust Studies: A Journal of Culture and History*, and *Holocaust and Genocide Studies*. Her most recent project is entitled *Exhibiting the Holocaust: Histories, Practices and Politics in the Immediate Postwar Period, 1944-1949*, for which she is editing a special issue of the *Journal of Holocaust Research* (Spring 2023).

Saving Pictures – The Last Seen Project

The series became iconic from the 1960s onwards. The photos of a German policeman arresting Jews in Amsterdam on 14 February 1941, published by Jaques Presser in his groundbreaking analysis *De Ondergang*, have been handed down because the photo lab secretly made a copy. Although the majority of photos of deportation were taken by police officers, such a history of transmission is not known for the German Reich.

Far more typical of the German example is Isaac Wahler. When he arrived in his hometown of Würzburg as a GI, he found the Gestapo's archive almost by accident – including an extensive collection of photos in the form of an album that the Gestapo's recognition service had created (and a secretary had labelled). On 15 August 1945, Wahler had been asked by Robert Kempner in the "Interrogation Camp" Oberursel to familiarise himself with the contents of the numerous suitcases kept there. The former Würzburg resident immediately recognised the value of the photo album. Knowing that it was material that was as extraordinary as it was incriminating, he immediately had a photocopy of the album made, which he was able to hand over to the House of the Wannsee Conference in 2008. In fact, he was able to stop the fragmentation of the collection (and the loss of the photos).

The project "Last Seen" by Arolsen Archive and partner organisations aims to open up and contextualise the entire corpus of photographs of the deportations from Nazi Germany. In the meantime, photos have been collected from almost 50 locations. Many of the photos were handed over to archives in the 1970s or 1980s. For many of them, it still needs to be researched exactly what happened in the meantime and how the photos were handed down. As far as we know - as in Brandenburg, Ludwigshafen or Würzburg - it is surprisingly often Jews who have taken the photos later handed them over to archives. These are usually not trained historians, but simply survivors who recognised the value of the photos (perhaps even more than the value of written sources) and wanted to save the pictorial evidence from destruction. Often the survivors also added the names of the deportees they had identified. Thus the photos became an invaluable source.

The talk will honour and analyse this central contribution of Jews to the pictorial memory of the Holocaust.

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Alina Bothe, Centre for Research on Antisemitism, Berlin. Numerous publications on the history of the Holocaust, and numerous scholarships. Since 2021 she is head of the new project #LastSeen: Pictures of Nazi Deportations.

Christoph Kreutzmüller, Gedenk- und Bildungsstätte Haus der Wannsee-Konferenz. Numerous, award-winning publications; among others (with Julia Werner): *Fixiert. Fotografische Quellen zur Verfolgung und Ermordung der Juden in Europa. Eine pädagogische Handreichung* (Bonn 2016), and (with Tal Bruttman and Stefan Hördler) *Die fotografische Inszenierung des Verbrechens. Ein Fotoalbum aus Auschwitz* (Darmstadt 2019).

Closing Remarks

Friday, 4 November 2022

13:00 – 13:30

Éva Kovács (Vienna Wiesenthal Institute for Holocaust-Studies – VWI)
Natalia Aleksion (University of Florida)

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Éva Kovács is the Deputy Director for Academic Affairs at the VWI. She studied sociology and economics at the Corvinus University in Budapest. She received her PhD in 1994 and her habilitation in 2009. She is a Research Professor at the Centre for Social Sciences/Hungarian Academy of Sciences Centre of Excellence in Budapest. Her research focuses on the history of the Holocaust in Eastern Europe, memory and remembrance, and Jewish identity in Hungary and Slovakia. She has authored five monographs, edited ten volumes, published numerous articles in peer-reviewed journals, co-curated exhibitions in Budapest, Berlin, Bratislava, Krems, Prague, Vienna and Warsaw. She was a member of the VWI's International Academic Advisory Board from 2010 to 2012 and Academic Programme Director between 2012 and 2020.

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Natalia Aleksion is the Harry Rich Professor of Holocaust Studies at the University of Florida, Gainesville. She holds doctoral degrees from Warsaw University, Poland, and NYU, U.S. She has written extensively on the history of Polish Jews and the Holocaust. In addition to her 2021 book *Conscious History: Polish Jewish Historians before the Holocaust* (Littman Library of Jewish Civilization), she is the author of *Dokąd dalej? Ruch syjonistyczny w Polsce 1944–1950* (Warsaw, 2002) and editor of *Gershon Taffet's Zagłada Żydów żółkiewskich* (Warsaw, 2019). She co-edited several volumes, including *Polin: Studies in Polish Jewry*, vol. 29: *Writing Jewish History in Eastern Europe* (2017) and *European Holocaust Studies*, vol. 3: *Places, Spaces and Voids in the Holocaust* (2021). She serves as editor of *East European Jewish Affairs*.

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