

“VWI goes to Research Center for the History of Transformation (RECET), University of Vienna“

Wednesday, 3 May 2023 4:00 pm

Hörsaal des Instituts für Osteuropäische Geschichte (IOG)
1090 Vienna, Spitalgasse 2, Hof 3, Eingang 3.2 (Campus)

Lilia TOMCHUK

SHADES OF AGENCY

CHOICE, SURVIVAL, AND RESISTANCE OF JEWISH WOMEN DURING THE HOLOCAUST IN TRANSNISTRIA

The Holocaust profoundly shaped the experiences of Jewish women, requiring them to respond to changing situations and threats, to make unusual choices, and to employ varying survival strategies. Lilia Tomchuk's PhD project examines the facets of Jewish women's agency in different contexts during the Holocaust in Transnistria, where Jews and Roma from Bessarabia and Bukovina were deported by Romanian authorities in 1941 and 1942 and where local Ukrainian Jews were brought from neighbouring localities. Prevailing research depicts Transnistria as a “dumping ground” with widely varying and changing conditions. This presentation will focus on one aspect of Tomchuk's research, namely the agency of Jewish women in medical settings. It will address typhus and (forced) labor in medical care inside and outside of camps and ghettos, the activities of female practitioners in the underground and in military service, and suicide decisions in medical context. Identifying and analysing women's decisions and actions illuminate these Jewish women as historical subjects, shifting away from traditional narratives and allowing for a more human and subjective understanding of the Holocaust.



Commented by Magdalena Baran-Szołtys

Lilia Tomchuk is a PhD candidate in History at Goethe University Frankfurt, working on her dissertation project on the agency of Jewish women during the Holocaust in Transnistria. From 2020 to 2022, she held the Jürg Breuninger Doctoral Scholarship at the Fritz Bauer Institute. Lilia Tomchuk also received fellowships from the German-Ukrainian Historians' Commission, the USC Dornsife Center for Advanced Genocide Research, the Jack, Joseph and Morton Mandel Center for Advanced Holocaust Studies (USHMM), and the Yad Vashem Grant for Doctoral Students and Young Scholars.

Magdalena Baran-Szołtys is a scholar of literature and culture with a background in German and Slavic Studies working as a postdoctoral researcher (Hertha-Firnberg-fellow, FWF) within the Research Center for the History of Transformations (RECET) and at the Department of Contemporary History at the University of Vienna. Her research interests include German, Polish, and Ukrainian literature; (narratives of) inequality and transformation; travels; memory cultures; women's and feminist' movements; Austrian Galicia; and the social and cultural history of East Central Europe. In 2021, her monograph *Galizien als Archiv. Reisen im postgalizischen Raum in der Gegenwartsliteratur* was published with Vienna University Press (v&r unipress).

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Please register at anmeldung@vwi.ac.at by latest 2 May, 12.00 am and bring your ID.
By attending, you consent to the publication of photographs, video and audio recordings made during the event.

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