

THE HOLOCAUST AND ITS AFTERMATH

Ines Koeltzsch

JEWS5021

AY 2025/26, fall term, 2 credits

time: Thursdays, 8:50-10:30

room: A-103

Course description

For a long time, the historiography of the Holocaust focused on the perpetrators and the Nazi state. The analytical perspectives have fundamentally changed in recent decades and transnational, regional and local approaches with a focus on Jewish and other victim groups and thus on other source genres have brought new knowledge in terms of time and space of the Holocaust. With this shift, early Holocaust scholarship carried out by survivors themselves also came to the fore as well as the question of why it was neglected for so long. In the seminar, we will deal with these newer approaches and topics (e. g. geographies of the Holocaust, Jewish responses, the Holocaust of Sinti and Roma, queer Holocaust studies, Holocaust literature and testimonies) and methods (e. g. digital humanities, oral history). In addition to regular readings, we will have several excursions to visit places, institutions, researchers and curators in Vienna dealing with the history and memory of the Holocaust.

Learning outcomes

- Participants will be familiar with interdisciplinary and inclusive approaches to the history and memory of the Holocaust.
- They will be able to identify, analyze and compare different research perspectives on persecution, genocide, and survival and apply them for their own analyses in accordance with the scholarly conventions of historical writing and oral presentations.

Course Requirements

- regular participation (two absences), active participation in class discussions, required reading (25 %)
 - class presentation, 15-20 minutes (25%)
 - book review essay (1,500 words), due date: December 20 (25%)
- (New!) You can choose between:*
- three response papers of required reading (500 words each), *due to the respective session, or*

- a reflection essay about a field trip (1,500 words), due one week after the field trip (25%)

Extension/late submission: Students can only be granted an extension if they contact the professor before the original deadline. Extensions can be given only in the case of a) documented health issues, b) reasonable technical difficulties (vis major in organizing empirical research, not being able to obtain literature, etc.). Late submissions will be marked down by half of a letter grade every three days (e.g. from A to A-).

Session 1 (Sept 18): Introduction

Required:

Jean Améry. "My Jewishness (1978)." In *Essays on Antisemitism, Anti-Zionism, and the Left*. Bloomington, Indiana: Indiana University Press, 2021, 77–86. Tbc: Ilse Aichinger. "The Fourth Gate" (short story)

Session 2 (Sept 25): From *Khurbn-Forshung* to 'Integrated' Holocaust Studies

Required:

Pendas, Devin O. "'Final Solution,' Holocaust, Shoah, or Genocide? From Separate to Integrated Histories." In *A Companion to the Holocaust*. Chichester, UK: John Wiley & Sons, Ltd, 2020, 21–44.

Stone, Dan. "The Historiography of the Holocaust: The Years of Diversification and Integration." In *The Cambridge History of the Holocaust*, vol. 1, Cambridge University Press, 2025, 40–61.

In class: Examples from the Ringelblum Archive (<https://cbj.jhi.pl/collections/1382908>), and Jockusch. *Khurbn-Forshung* (2021)

Session 3 (Oct 2): "Perpetrators – Victims – Bystanders" Revisited

Required:

Morina, Christina. "Bystanders, Collaboration, and Complicity." In *The Cambridge History of the Holocaust*, vol. 2, Cambridge University Press, 2025, 72–92.

Bothe, Alina, and Markus Nesselrodt. "Survivor: Towards a Conceptual History." *LBI Year Book* 61, no. 1 (2016): 57–82.

In class: Excerpts from Hilberg's "Perpetrators, Victims, Bystanders. The Jewish Catastrophe, 1933-1945"

Session 4 (Oct 9): Queer(ing) Holocaust History

Required:

Spurlin, William J. "Queering Holocaust Studies." In *A Companion to the Holocaust*, Chichester: John Wiley & Sons, Ltd, 2020, 75–93.

Hájková, Anna. "Between Love and Coercion: Queer Desire, Sexual Barter and the Holocaust." *German History* 39, no. 1 (2021): 112–33

In class: excerpts from "Ostatni etap/The Last Stage" (by Wanda Jakubowska, film 1948; with subtitles)

Session 5 (Oct 16): Roma Holocaust

Guest: Mirjam Karoly (VWI)

Required:

Weiss-Wendt, Anton. "Roma." In *The Cambridge History of the Holocaust*, vol. 3, Cambridge University Press, 2025, 414–32.

Karoly, Mirjam-Angela. "DIKH HE NA BISTER! LOOK AND DON'T FORGET! The struggle for recognition of the Roma Holocaust – a process of involvement and empowerment." In *The Third Generation. The Holocaust in Family Memory*, exhibition catalogue of the Jewish Museum Vienna, ed. by Sabine Apostolo et al., Leipzig: Hentrich & Hentrich 2024, 142–59.

Bartash, Volha. "Resistance or Survival? Roma in the Soviet Partisan Units: Memories and Archival Evidence." In Donert, Celia, and Eve Rosenhaft. *The Legacies of the Roma Genocide in Europe since 1945*. Abingdon, Oxon New York, NY: Routledge, 2022, 107–24.

In class: excerpts from Ceija Stojka's Memoirs, further tba

Session 6 (Oct 23): No class. Make up class, date tba : Field trip : Steinhof Memorial

Required:

Isabell Heinemann. "Euthanasia," "Germanization," and the Beginnings of Organized Mass Murder, 1939–1941. In: *The Cambridge History of the Holocaust*, vol. 2, Cambridge University Press, 2025, 238–261.

Paul Weindling. "Mentally and Physically Disabled Persons as Victims of Nazism." In *The Cambridge History of the Holocaust*, vol. 3, Cambridge University Press, 2025, 382–397.

October 30: No class. Reading week

Session 7 (Nov 6): Field Trip 2 – VWI Museum and Archive

Required:

Lebow, Katherine. "Letter from Linz - An Archive Story." S: *I.M.O.N* 4, no. 1 (2017): 4–20. <https://simon-previous-issues.vwi.ac.at/index.php/47-issues/2017-1/articles/152-letter-from-linz-an-archive-story>

Excerpts from Segev, and Wiesenthal, tbc

Session 8 (Nov 13): The Era of the Witness – Survivor Testimonies

Required:

Wieviorka, Annette. "From Survivor to Witness: Voices from the Shoah." In *War and Remembrance in the Twentieth Century*, ed. by J. M. Winter, and Emmanuel Sivan, Cambridge University Press, 1999, 125–41.

Joskowicz, Ari. "The Age of the Witness and the Age of Surveillance: Romani Holocaust Testimony and the Perils of Digital Scholarship." *The American Historical Review* 125, no. 4 (2020): 1205–31.

<https://doi.org/10.1093/ahr/rhaa379>. or:

Shenker, Noah. "Through the Lens of the Shoah: The Holocaust as a Paradigm for Documenting Genocide Testimonies." *History and Memory* 28, no. 1 (2016): 141–75.

Recommended:

Keilbach, Judith. "Microphone, Videotape, Database: Reflections on a Media History of the Historical Witness." In Nicolas Apostolopoulos, Michele Barricelli & Gertrud Koch (Eds.), *Preserving Survivors' Memories – Digital Testimony Collections about Nazi Persecution: History, Education and Media*. Berlin: EVZ, 2017, 204–226.

In class: excerpts from Arendt and Gourit on Eichmann Trial; excerpts from Lanzmann's "Shoah"

Session 9 (Nov 20): Postmemory

Guest: Marianne Windsperger (VWI)

Required:

Hirsch, Marianne. "The Generation of Postmemory." *Poetics Today* 29, no. 1 (2008): 103–28.

Weissman, Gary. "Against Generational Thinking in Holocaust Studies." In Aarons, Victoria, and Bloomsbury. *Third-Generation Holocaust Narratives: Memory in Memoir and Fiction*. Lanham Boulder New York London: Lexington Books, 2016, 159–184.

Recommended:

Kovács, Éva. "The Sensual Memory of Shoah: The Meaning of Sound, Touch and Taste in the Culture of Testimonies." In *The Palgrave Handbook of Testimony and Culture*, 259–78.

In class: excerpts from Art Spiegelman's "*Maus*" and Katja Petrovskaja's "*Maybe Esther*" (2014), tbc.

Session 10 (Nov 27): Digital Humanities

Guest: Wolfgang Schellenbacher (DÖW)

Required:

Todd Samuel Presner. "The Holocaust and Digital Humanities." In *The Cambridge History of the Holocaust*, vol. 3, Cambridge University Press, 2025, vol. 4, 398–420.

Anne Knowles. "How can we map the Holocaust?" In Fubel, Janine, Alexandra Klei, and Annika Wienert. *Space in Holocaust Research. A Transdisciplinary Approach to Spatial Thinking*. 1st ed.

Basel/Berlin/Boston: de Gruyter, 2024, 89–110.

In class: EHRI-tools (e. g. document blog on Holocaust Geographies); further tba

Session 11 (Dec 4): Field Trip 3 – Wien Museum

Required:

Embacher, Helga. "Controversies over Austria's Nazi Past: Generational Changes and Grassroots Awakenings Following the Waldheim Affair and the 'Wehrmacht Exhibitions.'" *Nationalities Papers* 51, no. 3 (2023): 644–64.

Rásky, Béla. "No Silence, but Whispers: Postwar Exhibitions on Nazi Crimes and the Shoah in Austria, 1945-1949." *The Journal of Holocaust Research* 37,4 (2023): 1–32.

Recommended: Uhl

Session 12 (Dec 11): The Future of Holocaust Studies

Required: Klein, Shira. "The Growing Rift between Holocaust Scholars over Israel/Palestine." *Journal of Genocide Research*, 2025, 1–21.

In class: Texts from the Genocide and Holocaust Crisis Network <https://www.ghscn.org/>