VWI Im Fokus

2025/26

01 Editorial
02 Survivor Testimony over Time
07 Inklusives Museum
08 Holocaust Studies & Digital Humanities
10 Zu Wiesenthals 20. Todestag
12 Spurensuche nach Raul Hilberg
13 Life Writing and Exile
14 Kalender 2025/26
16 The Trifa Case
17 Exile Without Destination
18 Schülerbriefe als Holocaust-Literatur
19 Ausschreibung Fellowships
20 VWI Fellows
24 Publications
25 Rückblick
27 Archiv/Bibliothek/Museum
28 Impressum

Vienna Wiesenthal Institute

Editorial

Ego-Dokumente als Schwerpunkt

„Wie wird es für zukünftige Historiker:innen sein, über die Shoah zu schreiben, ohne jemals Überlebende getroffen zu haben?“, fragt sich Sharon Kangisser Cohen in ihrem Essay „Survivor Testimony Over Time“. Diese Frage, die aus ihrer Reflexion auf unsere CEU Summer School 2025 in Budapest hervorgeht, betrifft unsere gegenwärtige Arbeit unmittelbar.

Die Geschichten von Überlebenden wurden nicht nur in der Rückschau aufgezeichnet, sondern sind oftmals zeitgenössische Quellen. Die Briefe von ins Exil geflohenen jüdischen Schülern als kollektive Selbstzeugnisse analysiert Jacqueline Vansant – und spricht damit ein Thema an, das im Zuge seit Jahren andauernder Kriege wieder an trauriger Aktualität gewonnen hat. Die Befassung mit Ego-Dokumenten gehört zu unseren Schwerpunkten im neuen akademischen Jahr.

Die Geschichte des Holocaust ist in Millionen von Quellen dokumentiert. Die European Holocaust Research Infrastructure (EHRI), an der das VWI seit über einem Jahrzehnt maßgeblich beteiligt ist, hat es sich zur Aufgabe gemacht, dieses weltweite Konvolut besser verfügbar zu machen. Dabei kommt schon heute Künstliche Intelligenz (KI) zum Einsatz. Unser neues Beiratsmitglied Tim Cole ist führender Experte für Digital Humanities in den Holocaust and Genocide Studies. Im Gespräch mit dem VWI geht er darauf ein, wie KI unser Forschungsfeld verändert, und welche Möglichkeiten und Risiken sie birgt.

Wir haben es uns zur Aufgabe gemacht, die vielfältige Arbeit des VWI noch besser zu vermitteln, die Themen, die uns beschäftigen, noch besser darzustellen. Mit einem neuen Logo, einem neuen Webauftritt und dem Relaunch von *VWI im Fokus* laden wir dazu ein, das Institut noch näher – vielleicht sogar neu – kennenzulernen. Ein weiteres Ziel ist, den Namensgeber unseres Instituts und die Arbeit seiner Organisation noch stärker sichtbar zu machen. Zwanzig Jahre sind seit Simon Wiesenthals Tod vergangen. Ein Blick auf Nachrufe und Beileidsbekundungen aus dem Jahr 2005 zeigt, wie sein jahrzehntelanger Einsatz für die Ergreifung von NS-Täter:innen und gegen das Vergessen in der Welt wahrgenommen wurde.

Die Neuerungen sollen neugierig auf unsere Forschungsthemen machen und die internationale Ausrichtung des Instituts noch mehr unterstreichen. Gleich geblieben sind unsere Motivation und die Freude an der Forschung, der Dokumentation und der Vermittlung.

VWI im Fokus kann nur einen Ausschnitt aus unserer vielseitigen Institutstätigkeit vermitteln. Wir laden Sie herzlich ein, sich selbst ein Bild davon zu machen!

Wien im September 2025,

Coverfoto: Simon Wiesenthal auf dem Flughafen Amsterdam Schiphol, 1965. Foto: Joop van Bilsen/Anefo © Nationaal Archief, Public Domain

Essay

Taping of Pierre T. (HVT-836) in 1987 © Fortunoff Video Archive for Holocaust Testimonies/Yale

Survivor Testimony over Time

Reflections from the CEU SUN summer course “Holocaust Testimonies and their Afterlife”

Sharon Kangisser Cohen

In June 2025, I was fortunate enough to participate in a summer course hosted by Central European University, the Fortunoff Video Archive for Holocaust Testimonies, and the Vienna Wiesenthal Institute for Holocaust Studies (VWI). The workshop brought together students from around the world who were interested in deepening their knowledge of survivor testimonies and their use in research. The seminar also featured scholars who shared their expertise on a wide range of subjects. Many of the issues they raised serve as points of departure for this article, which aims to provide insights into some of the discussions relating to testimonial collections.

In a lecture on the infamous Oneg Shabbat archive and the work of Emmanuel Ringelblum, Sam Kassow spoke about the importance of the archival project that sought to document the catastrophic reality of nearly 500,000 Jews imprisoned in the Warsaw Ghetto. One of the project’s aims was to capture the reality of ghetto life in all its suffering and complexity. He emphasized the importance of these contemporaneous sources as windows into the daily life of Jews under Nazi occupation.

Post-war collections were often initiated by survivors themselves and had various goals: to bring perpetrators to justice, to provide the names of the murdered and the circumstances of their deaths, to document material losses, and to give witness accounts of survival. In her lecture, Laura Jockush discussed the establishment and workings of the Jewish Historical Commissions and their testimonial projects, based on her book *Collect and Record! Jewish Holocaust Documentation in Early Postwar*

Europe.[1] Post-war collections were also initiated by individuals who had escaped Nazi persecution. For example, the Wiener Library, under the leadership of head of research Eva Reichmann, conducted testimonies with over 1,000 individuals between 1954 and 1960.

The imperative to record continued as survivors rebuilt their lives in new and old lands. Some collections, notably the Oral Testimonies Department founded by Rachel Auerbach at Yad Vashem in 1954, continue to grow. To date, the Yad Vashem collection contains over 40,000 interviews. These testimonies gave survivors who made their way to Palestine—and later the newly established state of Israel—a platform to speak about the years of persecution, becoming documents of their contemporary lives and circumstances. The Oral History Division at the Harman Institute for Contemporary Jewry at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem also began developing collections, forming one of the earliest archives in Israel. Established in 1959 for historical research, the archive collected over 4,000 interviews with Holocaust survivors.

In his seminar lectures, Michael L. Miller traced the origins of these testimonial collections within a larger Jewish memorial tradition. In his book *Zachor*,[2] Haim Yosef Yerushalmi discussed traditional Jewish responses to tragedies using ritual but also noted responses including testimonial accounts—from Nathan of Hanover's account of the Khmelnitsky massacres to Chaim Nachman Bialik's epic poem *To the City of Slaughter*, based on oral accounts collected from survivors of the Kishinev pogrom. The imperative to "remember" is part of a larger Jewish tradition—not only a commandment but also a response to events and tragedies. Miller posits that these testimonial projects during and after the war continue this Jewish cultural tradition while reflecting a scientific turn that values "ego documents" as important to understanding individual experiences in history. This response to historical events continues today, as seen in numerous interview projects begun days after the Hamas invasion of Israel on October 7, 2023.[3]

The Eichmann Trial in Jerusalem in 1961 marked a turning point in survivor testimony. Annette Wieviorka argued that this curated the image of the witness as "bearer of history."[4] Furthermore, it inaugurated a new era as she explains: "For the first time, a trial explicitly set out to provide a lesson in history. For the first time, the Holocaust was linked to the themes of pedagogy and transmission."[5] From the 1970s, Wieviorka contends, we entered the "era of the witness,"[6] triggered by audio-visual collections of survivor testimony. Since then, various collections have been created—including the Fortunoff Video Archive (1979), Spielberg Video Archive (1994), and Austrian Heritage Archive (1996)—continuing the testimonial tradition by recording individual Jewish experiences.

Survivors of the Shoah, particularly child survivors, were not always included to speak about their experiences. However, with time and the changing perception of survivor testimony, many began to record their experiences. One example is my interview with Shalom Eilati, a child survivor from Lithuania who was sent out of the Kovno ghetto by his mother and hidden by a Lithuanian for the duration of the war. Eilati explained that after the war—and especially after moving to Eretz Yisrael—he would not speak about his past; rather, he wanted to focus on becoming a *sabra* and fitting in. Later in life, he began to have traumatic flashbacks—one occurred while he was standing in line waiting to visit Capitol Hill in Washington, D.C. The lines reminded him of the selection lines in "Democracy Square" in the ghetto. Flooded with memories, Eilati realized he could not escape the past and soon began to write his memoirs. This interview revealed how survivors negotiate memories of their past and their identity as survivors throughout their lives. These later collections demonstrate how individuals live with the "then" and the "now," providing a mosaic of experience and meaning-making.

These later collections demonstrate how individuals live with the "then" and the "now"

Over the past eight decades, and particularly since the 1990s, survivor testimony has been recorded at an astounding rate, driven by a deep need to capture each and every story. There is a strong push from survivors' families, communities, museums, and educational institutions to reach survivors and encourage them to give formal accounts that will be preserved and made accessible to future generations. One of the main motivations is the awareness that survivor testimony is the most effective way to teach about the Holocaust, alongside a keen understanding that, with the passage of time, our ability to record, converse, and interact with survivors is fading. Holocaust survivor testimony became a model for remembrance, inspiring other groups to document their experiences of victimhood. In recent years, the Spielberg Video Archive helped initiate interview projects with other groups and also serves as a repository for collections documenting other genocides.

Each interview project has its own approach, reflecting the various groups' and institutions' aims and agendas, as well as developments in the field of qualitative research. This phenomenon was examined by Noah Shenker in his work[7] on the interface between institutional prerogative and its impact on personal memory. However, an underexplored issue concerns numerous observations by early recorders regarding interviewing techniques and the establishment of research on the "European Jewish Catastrophe." The third volume of *Yad Vashem Studies* (1959) published a series of articles addressing issues related to best practices in documentation and interviews. This publication demonstrates that as early collections were being developed, they were also evaluated and studied, as scholars were determined to have interviews conducted in a professional and thoughtful manner.

The issue of if and how collections were edited is an important discussion, insufficiently addressed in the field, yet vital if we are to understand the texts and what survivors wanted to communicate. However, it is highly unlikely that researchers will be able to trace this issue, as notes pertaining to these instructions do not exist, especially regarding the earlier collections. This phenomenon does caution us to preserve notes and protocols which will be archived alongside collections so as to give a more comprehensive understanding of the collections themselves.

The CEU-SUN summer course in Budapest, June 2025
© VWI

Éva Kovács, in her lecture, highlighted an important point that has led to the birth of a new field of research—digital humanities and Holocaust testimony. In her talk, she raised the issue: "when collecting testimonies becomes massive," quoting Philip Friedman, who reflected on the surge of chronicling that occurred in the post-war period, arguing that "the chroniclers represented a mighty social phenomenon."[8] The impulse to record has a long tradition, and the amount of material collected is vast. Furthermore, testimonies are not only found in interviews but survival stories can also be traced in other collections. One example is the archives of the United Restitution Organization (URO), which include documentation relating to

Survivor Elisabeth Scheiderbauer giving an interview
© OeAD / APA-Fotoservice / Rastegar

initiatives to attain compensation and restitution of property confiscated and stolen during the war. These collections provide accounts of items stolen or destroyed, accompanied by a few lines of individual testimony. These summaries have not been researched, and considering the vast number of files created, there would be a vast number of accounts. Survivor testimonies and accounts are also found in a myriad of formats; yizker bikher, war crimes trials, perpetrator trials, and countless programs where survivors were interviewed, filmed lecturing and guiding, or posts on social media. It is difficult to think of another historical event so meticulously recorded during and after the event, and over many decades. The challenge, therefore, is how to access this material and manage such an enormous database of knowledge on the Holocaust and its aftermath.

While projects and centers have developed systems using computer technology for management and analysis—digital humanities—the first step would surely be unifying the catalogues of many of these collections (if not all) so that all materials could be matched up. This is a project that Stephen Naron, director of the Fortunoff Archive, has always advocated. It is not unusual for collections to be spread across multiple archives, yet the finding aids from each institution assist us in locating materials. We would be greatly assisted if there was a universal finding aid for survivors' testimonies.

Oral historians have pointed out that the context of the interview, specifically the individual's age and stage of life, needs to be considered when understanding an interview. Henry Greenspan's brilliant work on survivor testimony resulted from conversations he had with survivors over time—the same interviewer, the same people, different times.

Not many scholars have worked so closely with the same individuals over a significant period, but most of us working in the field have worked with survivors for many years. The personal connection has given us an advantage in our work; we can relate to them as people who we met and have known. This interaction has undoubtedly affected how we relate to the event. The presence of survivors also demanded a self-consciousness in relation to our ability to be accurate and worthy of our craft.

I recall how I was challenged by Yafe, a child survivor who wanted to "test" me before she agreed to be interviewed, or how nervous I was to teach about the Holocaust in front of a survivor. What if the way I am speaking does not reflect those times? What if I make a mistake or am not accurate? Their presence gave me pause to consider if I had represented their stories correctly. What would it be like for future historians to write about the Shoah without having met a survivor? How might this change the way Holocaust history is written? Yet, I have also learned that for many survivors, the fact that we are committed to researching and teaching the event gives them a huge sense of satisfaction and gratitude; we are continuing to remember those who were murdered and in it continuing to uphold their own commitment to commemorating those we have lost. On one of my trips to Poland with a group of students, the guide Michael reminded a survivor of a missing detail in his story, to which the survivor responded that Michael, who had often accompanied him to Poland, now knew his story better than he did.

What would it be like for future historians to write about the Shoah without having met a survivor?

In a recent article, I reflected on my years working with survivors of the Holocaust, particularly thinking about the conversations I have had "off the record."[9] One of the main lessons I learned is that while some survivors feel an urgent imperative to transmit memory, there is a gnawing self-consciousness about how their words will be received. I would argue that in this lies one of the most significant differences between early and later testimonies. During and immediately after the war, survivors were driven to let the world know what had happened and what had been lost. Later, when giving testimonies, they became acutely aware that these interviews would be archived and made available long after they had passed, without the opportunity to clarify or engage in discussion with the viewer—that these were their last words on the matter, preserved in an archive. As the opportunity to speak directly to survivors recedes, we grapple with the transition between witnessing and memory. In the future, our research sources will be those interviews archived worldwide. We will study materials constructed around questions relevant to a specific project or time and answered by survivors at a particular point in their lives. There will be no more side conversations or new questions asked.

Many interviewees share an increased sense of vulnerability and anxiety regarding the use and misuse of their accounts, their reticence about exposing their inner lives, and feelings of loyalty to those they remember. In our work with testimonies, we should always be reminded of these sentiments—that these texts are personal and were created in trust. As narrative scholar Ruthellen Josselson points out, "these are not aggregated peripheral variables we are studying, but the axes on which people's lives turn."[10] Our task as researchers is to be cognizant of that trust—and, as historians, to use the testimonies critically in order to advance our knowledge and understanding of the events of the Holocaust and its aftermath.

Sharon Kangisser Cohen is Director of the Eli and Diana Zborowski Centre for the Study of the Aftermath of the Holocaust at the International Institute for Holocaust Research at Yad Vashem.

1 Laura Jockusch, *Collect and record!: Jewish holocaust documentation in early postwar Europe* (Oxford University Press, 2012).
2 Haim Yosef Yerushalmi, *Zakhor: Jewish history and Jewish memory* (University of Washington Press, 2011).
3 For more information on this see: https://www.nli.org.il/en/at-your-service/who-we-are/projects/october-7
4 Annette Wieviorka, "The Witness in History," *Poetics Today* 27 (2) (2006): 387.
5 Wieviorka, 389.
6 Wieviorka, 386.
7 Noah Shenker, *Reframing holocaust testimony* (Indiana University Press, 2015).
8 Laura Jockusch, *Collect and Record! Jewish Holocaust Documentation in Early Postwar Europe* (Oxford University Press, 2012), p. 11.
9 Sharon Kangisser Cohen, "'Off the record': conversations with survivors of the Holocaust," *Holocaust Studies 30*, no. 4 (2024): 587-600.
10 Ruthellen Josselson, "Bet you think this song is about you": Whose narrative is it in narrative research? 1." *Narrative Matters* 1.1 (2011): 34.

Auf dem Weg zum inklusiven Museum

Barrierefreiheit und Sichtbarkeit in Die Zukunft des Erinnerns – Museum Simon Wiesenthal

Wieso Simon Wiesenthals Pistolenhalfter neben seinem Adressbuch in einer Vitrine liegt, erschließt sich den vielen Besucher:innen des Museums Simon Wiesenthal durch die erläuternde Beschilderung an den Wänden. Was Wiesenthal nach seiner Befreiung aus dem KZ Mauthausen geleistet hat, womit er zu kämpfen hatte und was ihn motivierte wird hier vermittelt – ist aber (noch) nicht allen Menschen gleichermaßen zugänglich. Während bei der Planung des Museums von Beginn an Rücksicht auf Rollstuhlnutzer:innen genommen wurde, gibt es noch Aufholbedarf in der Präsentation für blinde oder sehbeinträchtige Menschen. Auch für gehörlose Personen ist der Museumsbesuch noch nicht barrierefrei. Um zentrale Werte wie Inklusion und Zugänglichkeit in der Vermittlungsarbeit ernst zu nehmen und zu verbessern, werden nun konkrete Schritte gesetzt. Mit der Auszeichnung des Österreichischen Museumsgütesiegels wurde 2024 nicht nur die bisherige Museumsarbeit gewürdigt, sondern auch die Voraussetzung zur Schaffung eines möglichst barrierearmen und inklusiven Museums gesetzt, großzügig unterstützt durch das Bundesministerium für Wohnen, Kunst, Kultur, Medien und Sport.

Das VWI versteht sein Museum als lebendigen Vermittlungsort, an dem Erinnerung, Forschung und Gesellschaft in Austausch treten. Um dieses Ziel für möglichst alle Menschen zugänglich zu machen, wurden drei zentrale Maßnahmen definiert: Ein barrierearmer Multimedia-Guide soll die zentralen Inhalte der Ausstellung einerseits in mehreren Sprachen (Deutsch, Englisch und Einfache Sprache) verfügbar machen. Der Guide ist als Website konzipiert und wird über Mobiltelefone und Tablets einfach nutzbar sein. Um das sogenannte Zwei-Sinne-Prinzip umzusetzen, werden ausgewählte Exponate und Inhalte künftig auch sprichwörtlich fühlbar sein. Dokumente und Kartenmaterial soll etwa auf Schwellpapier gedruckt und ertastbar werden, und so insbesondere blinden und sehbehinderten Menschen den Zugang erleichtern. Nicht zuletzt werden die bestehenden audiovisuellen Installationen – darunter TV-Material über und mit Simon Wiesenthal – durch Videoinserts in Gebärdensprache erweitert.

Von Beginn an wurden Fokusgruppen aus der Community in die Planung mit einbezogen, um fachliche Expertise dort einzuholen, wo es bereits entsprechende Erfahrung gibt. Um sicherzustellen, dass die entwickelten Angebote tatsächlich an den Bedürfnissen orientiert sind, wird von der Planungsbis in die kommenden Testphasen eng zusammengearbeitet. Denn nur durch partizipative Prozesse kann echte Inklusion gelingen.

Interview

“A Range of New Ways of Understanding the Holocaust at Scale”

An interview with Tim Cole on the latest developments in Digital Humanities

New member of the VWI’s Advisory Board Tim Cole © Tim Cole

The field of Digital Humanities (DH) is opening up new possibilities in Holocaust studies. At the VWI, we are at the forefront of integrating innovative digital methods to analyse and understand the Holocaust. As the coordinator of the Austrian hub of the European Holocaust Research Infrastructure (EHRI-AT), and a major digitisation project underway in our archive, we are showcasing how modern technologies help reconstruct historical narratives and develop new research questions. A prime example of this is the recent publication *Connected Histories. Memories and Narratives of the Holocaust in Digital Space* (2024), co-edited by Eva Pfanzelter, Dirk Rupnow, Éva Kovács and Marianne Windsperger.

In this interview, we spoke with Tim Cole (University of Bristol), a leading expert in DH for Holocaust studies and new member of the VWI’s Advisory Board, about how digital technologies are transforming the field and what innovations we can expect in the coming years.

During the last 10 years or so, DH has made enormous progress, not only technically, but also in developing new research tools and questions. In your opinion, where do Holocaust Studies benefit most from these developments?

Tim Cole: DH offers a range of new ways of understanding the Holocaust at scale. This is important because the Holocaust was an event that was multi-scalar and was enacted at everything from the scale of the entire European continent through to the intimate scale of the individual, gendered body of each victim. What DH offers is a chance to situate individual experiences within the wider patterns discoverable through new methods and tools that can range from digital mapping spatial patterns to distant reading very large quantities of textual sources.

How do you assess the role of EHRI’s European Research Infrastructure Consortium (EHRI-ERIC) as *the* DH platform in Holocaust Studies?

Cole: Interoperability is important in DH. EHRI-ERIC offers the opportunity to create a single, shared set of ways of working that means that data can be shared and teams of researchers can both build upon, and contribute to, a wider project of better understanding the Holocaust. DH encourages a generosity in sharing and collaboration in research that are also values that lie at the heart of EHRI-ERIC.

DH is also widely used in the archiving of records relevant to Holocaust Studies. Where do you see the opportunities and dangers of the use of AI in this area, which is made possible—via the digitisation of files and the provision of their metadata—in completely new dimensions?

Cole: This could be a discussion in and of itself. AI raises a larger set of both more technical as well as ethical questions. I’d recommend Todd Presner’s new book *The Ethics of the Algorithm* (2024) for a thoughtful discussion of the ethical questions raised in Holocaust studies. One thing that I think is useful to distinguish is generative AI (which is often what we first think of and many in creative industries or academia are worried about, which is what happens when our students use AI to write an essay for them) from hermeneutic AI. I think that hermeneutic AI (which is using AI in the work of interpretation of large bodies of sources) is something that has potential. It is something I’m exploring with a larger UK-US research group and, while it needs to be used critically and alongside more traditional close-reading and interpretation, is something that I think will change the way we work in the humanities.

The discussion about DH is often very theoretical and difficult for laypeople to understand. Can you please describe a recent Holocaust studies project that you consider particularly successful and that would not have been possible without the use of DH?

Cole: If you don’t mind me discussing some of my own work, there is a project recently with colleagues that sought to do something relatively ‘simple’ but which could not have been achieved without DH methods. In brief, we were interested in using a census created by Jewish organisations in 1945 of c. 70,000 survivors living in Budapest. Making sense of rich demographic data on that scale demands the use of computational methods. Mapping where Jews lived in the city, and more importantly which Jews were living where, can be done using digital methods. But what I was particularly struck by was the way that we could use DH methods to digitally read against the grain of the archive to unearth the names of those Jewish men—called up into wartime labour battalion service—who were missing from the record. We discovered close to 13,000 Jewish men who were neither officially recorded as being dead, nor living at their homes in Budapest. In short, we signal the need to consider a large, gendered group that lies somewhere between the categories of ‘victim’ and ‘survivor’ in the immediate post-war period, and the prevalence of the experience of ‘ambiguous loss’ among the Jewish community in Budapest.

To conclude—where will DH go in the next few years? What impetus and innovations do you expect for their use in Holocaust Studies?

Cole: New digital tools and methods will offer opportunities to ask new questions in Holocaust Studies, and in particular to understand this event at scale. One thing that characterises DH is that it demands interdisciplinary and international collaboration. That calls for a change in the way we tend to work as scholars and institutions in Holocaust Studies. This is where the collaborative approach of EHRI-ERIC is a good fit.

Kondolenz-Briefe aus aller Welt anlässlich des Todes von Simon Wiesenthal, 2005 © VWI

„A lion of a man“ –

Das internationale Echo auf den Tod Simon Wiesenthals vor 20 Jahren

Als Simon Wiesenthal am Dienstag, den 20. September 2005 verstarb, war der 1908 in der Habsburger Provinz geborene Sohn einer Hausfrau und eines Zuckergroßhändlers zu Weltruhm gelangt. Davon zeugen hunderte Nachrufe sowie Beileidbekundungen, die seine Organisation, das Dokumentationszentrum des Bundes jüdischer Verfolgter des Naziregimes (BJVN), nach seinem Tod erreichten und heute in dessen Simon Wiesenthal Archiv (SWA, als Dauerleihgabe zugänglich im Archiv des VWI) lagern.

Ein Blick in diese vielfältige Sammlung zeigt, wie Simon Wiesenthal nach jahrzehntelanger Arbeit von der Welt wahrgenommen wurde. Nahezu zwei Drittel seines Lebens hatte er, unterstützt durch seine Mitstreiter:innen des BJVN, der Suche nach NS-Verbrecher:innen und der Aufklärung von NS-Verbrechen gewidmet. Nach seiner Befreiung aus dem KZ Mauthausen im Jahr 1945 durch die US-Armee hatte er – zunächst noch wenig beachtet, aber mit einigem Erfolg – diese Tätigkeit vom nahegelegenen Linz aus begonnen. Anfang der 1960er Jahre führte er sie von Wien aus weiter. Der Prozess gegen den Organisator der „Endlösung“ Adolf Eichmann, der nahezu zeitgleich in Jerusalem stattfand, verschaffte der Fahndung nach untergetauchten Nazitäter:innen global mediale Aufmerksamkeit. Wiesenthal verstand es in der Folge, durch Buchpublikationen und öffentliche Auftritte der Arbeit seiner Organisation Gewicht und Gehör zu verschaffen. Mit wachsender Berühmtheit verselbständigte sich das Bild des Mannes, der nicht nur mit Hollywood-Größen verkehrte, sondern selbst zur Filmfigur in Dokumentationen, Bio-Pics *(Murderers Among Us*, 1989, mit Ben Kingsley als Wiesenthal-Darsteller) und trashigen Nazi-Hunter-Filmen (wie etwa *The Boys From Brazil* von 1978 mit Gregory Peck und Lawrence Olivier) wurde.

Dementsprechend bemüht auch gut ein Drittel der über 700 im SWA archivierten Nachrufe, die in US-amerikanischen Zeitungen erschienen, bereits im Titel die Assoziation Wiesenthals mit der „Jagd“ auf Nazis – eine Zuschreibung, der er zeitlebens distanziert gegenüberstand (auch wenn ihm der damit einhergehende Ruhm sicherlich schmeichelte). Zutreffend hielt der BJVN in seiner Stellungnahme an Wiesenthals Todestag fest: „Er war kein ‚Nazi-Jäger‘ (wie er bald von Freund und Feind genannt wurde); er bezeichnete sich selbst als Rechercheur“. Ein differenzierteres Bild zeichnete der US-amerikanische Holocaustforscher und Bestsellerautor Daniel Jonah Goldhagen in seinem Nachruf im *Lafayette Journal*, wo er Wiesenthal attestierte: „as an individual, he helped bring the murderers of more people to justice than any other private person in history.“ Ähnlich sah es der damalige Bügermeister von New York, Michael R. Bloomberg: „For as long as I remember, Simon Wiesenthal has epitomized for me the very essence of the phrase, ‘one man can make a difference.’“ Der Gouverneur von Kalifornien, Action-Schauspieler und gebürtige Österreicher Arnold Schwarzenegger, nannte Wiesenthal – ganz im Stil des Genres seiner Filme – „a lion of a man, a survivor and conquerer, a hero in every sense of the word.“

Auch die im SWA gesammelten Beileidsbekundungen zeugen von der internationalen Anerkennung, die Wiesenthals im Laufe seines langen Lebens erworben hatte. Aus den Niederlanden kondolierte Königin Beatrix, weiters gingen offizielle Schreiben aus Mazedonien, Australien, Chile, Israel, Ungarn, Slowenien, Italien, Frankreich, der Schweiz und vielen anderen Ländern ein. Wie sehr Wiesenthal in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland in den letzten Jahrzehnten seines Wirkens an Ansehen gewonnen hatte, lässt sich an der hochkarätigen Liste an Kondolierenden ablesen: Unter ihnen befanden sich neben Bundespräsident Horst Köhler und Bundeskanzler Gerhard Schröder auch Außenminister Joschka Fischer und Bundestagspräsident Wolfgang Thierse. Kurt Schrimm, Leiter der Zentralen Stelle der Landesjustizverwaltungen in Ludwigsburg, mit der Wiesenthal über Jahrzehnte zusammengearbeitet hatte, bekundete ebenfalls seine Anteilnahme. Gewohnt reißerisch, aber nicht ohne Respekt, titelte die *Bild-Zeitung*: „Der Jäger der Nazi-Monster ist tot“, nannte ihn einen „Jahrhundert-Mensch[en]“ und druckte mit dem Stempel „Gefaßt“ Porträts einiger seiner größten Fahndungserfolge – darunter Gestapo-Beamte Karl Silberbauer, der Anne Frank verhaftet hatte und die Aufseherin im KZ Majdanek Hermine Braunsteiner – ab.

Lange hatte Simon Wiesenthal in Österreich gegen antisemitische Anfeindungen und behördliche Widerstände kämpfen müssen. Besonders die Auseinandersetzung mit Bundeskanzler Bruno Kreisky in den 1970er Jahren hatte ihn tief erschüttert. Es spricht für seine späte Anerkennung hierzulande, dass Bundespräsident Heinz Fischer von einer Brasilienreise aus Wiesenthals Tochter Paulinka Kreisberg kondolierte und sich sichtlich erleichtert darüber zeigte, dass er Wiesenthal noch in dessen Todesjahr das Große Goldene Ehrenzeichen für Verdienste um die Republik Österreich verliehen hatte. Bundeskanzler Wolfgang Schüssel nannte Wiesenthal bei seiner Verabschiedung auf dem Zentralfriedhof einen „Menschen [...], dem unsere Bewunderung und unser Dank gelten“, und attestierte ihm Güte, Scharfsinnigkeit, Offenheit und einen feinen, weisen Humor. Für Bürgermeister Michael Häupl verlor Wien mit Wiesenthal „nicht nur einen Ehrenbürger, sondern [...] einen außergewöhnlichen Menschen, einen Aufklärer und Humanisten“. Neben der Berichterstattung in der österreichischen Presse widmete die *Gemeinde*, das Organ der Israelitischen Kultusgemeinde Wien, in seiner Oktoberausgabe Wiesenthal einen siebenseitigen Nachruf. Von langjährigen Weggefährt:innen in Österreich kondolierten im Namen der wissenschaftlichen Leitung des Dokumentationsarchivs des österreichischen Widerstandes Brigitte Bailer und Wolfgang Neugebauer. Zu der offiziellen Beisetzung Wiesenthals in Israel reisten als Vertreter unter anderem Staatssekretär Franz Morak (für Österreich) und Stadtrat Andreas Mailath-Pokorny (für die Stadt Wien). Das Büro des israelischen Premierministers entsandte einen Vertreter zu dem Familienbegräbnis, zu dem sich einige Hundert Trauernde in Herzliya bei Tel Aviv versammelt hatten.

Vielleicht noch anrührender als die offiziellen Kondolenzschreiben muten die privaten Beileidsbekundungen an, die ebenfalls aus aller Welt beim BJVN in der Salztorgasse 6 eingingen. Sie belegen eindrücklich, dass Simon Wiesenthal gegen Ende seines Lebens nicht nur im internationalen Jet-Set und auf den höchsten Ebenen der Politik, sondern auch in den Herzen unzähliger unbekannter Menschen angekommen war. „Simon Wiesenthal war ein ausgezeichneter Mensch. [...] Ich werde sein Lebenswerk immer in Erinnerung bewahren und versuchen es in seinem Sinne weiterzuführen“, schrieb eine Verehrerin aus den Niederlanden. Ein Paar aus Italien schrieb an Wiesenthals langjährige Mitarbeiterin Rose-Marie Austraat: „We heard the sad news on the radio (the worst way) and our hearts were broken. [...] We hope you could go on with his precious work“. Eine Stimme aus Florida nannte Wiesenthal “a torchbearer of life, for all the survivors of the Holocaust”, und aus Baden im Odenwald schrieb eine Bewunderin: „Simon Wiesenthal ist nicht wirklich tot, denn er lebt in uns, Menschen, die ihn liebten und verehrten, für immer weiter.“

Essay

Wallensteinstraße 9: Spurensuche nach Raul Hilberg

René Schlott

Als „geschichtsträchtig, geräumig und genial gelegen“ wird im Internet ein Apartmenthaus in der Wallensteinstraße 9 im 20. Bezirk beworben. Und „geschichtsträchtig“ ist das gelb strahlende Gründerzeithaus aus dem 19. Jahrhundert in der Tat. Hier, nur einen Steinwurf entfernt von Donaukanal und Friedensbrücke, wuchs der später weltberühmte Holocaustforscher Raul Hilberg auf, der 1961 mit *The Destruction of the European Jews* die erste systematische Analyse des nationalsozialistischen Judenmords vorlegte, die bis heute als Standardwerk gilt. Im zweiten Stock des Hauses lebte Hilberg mit seinen Eltern in einer Vierzimmerwohnung, aus der die Familie während des Novemberpogroms 1938 vertrieben wurde. Wenige Monate später verließen die Hilbergs Wien und flüchteten über Frankreich und Kuba zu Verwandten nach New York.
Hilbergs Vater Mechel, 1889 in Galizien geboren, kam laut seinem im Archiv der Israelitischen Kultusgemeinde überlieferten Auswanderungsfragebogen mit 18 Jahren nach Wien. Dort lernte er die sieben Jahre jüngere Gisela Schächter kennen, die ebenfalls aus Galizien in die damalige Hauptstadt der k. und k. Monarchie gekommen war. Die beiden heirateten 1923 und zogen im Jahr darauf in die gemeinsame Wohnung in der Wallensteinstraße 9, in der am 2. Juni 1926 Sohn Raul geboren wurde. Benannt wurde das einzige Kind der Familie nach dem seinerzeit populären Burgschauspieler Raoul Aslan.

Raul Hilberg erinnert sich in seiner 1994 erschienenen Autobiographie an eine recht unbeschwerte Kindheit in der Brigittenau, die sich im Umkreis von Augarten, Nordwestbahnhof, dem Chajes-Gymnasium in der Staudingergasse und der Synagoge in der Kluckygasse abspielte – auch wenn die Hilbergs nichts besonders religiös waren. Auf seinem täglichen kurzen Schulweg passierte der junge Hilberg das Haus in der Wallensteinstraße 20, in dem der Schriftsteller Joseph Roth in der Zeit des Ersten Weltkrieges gewohnt hatte und der Menschen wie seinen Eltern mit seinem Essay „Juden auf Wanderschaft“ (1927) ein literarisches Denkmal gesetzt hatte.

Doch mit dem 13. März 1938 war „meine Kindheit mit einem Schlag beendet“ schreibt Hilberg in

Raul Hilberg im Treppenhaus seines Elternhauses in der Wallensteinstraße 9 bei einem Besuch 1995
© Peter Rigaud

seiner Autobiographie. Im Erdgeschoss des Wohnhauses in der Wallensteinstraße 9 befand sich das Café „Treuhof“, das ein SA-Mann einen Tag nach dem „Anschluss“ überfiel, um die jüdischen Gäste abzuführen und in aller Öffentlichkeit zu demütigen. Vielleicht wurde Hilberg auch Augenzeuge der berüchtigten „Reibepartien“ auf den Straßen seiner Heimatstadt. Gut ein Jahr später, genauer am 2. April 1939, verließ die Familie Wien für immer. Raul Hilberg kehrte in der Nachkriegszeit immer wieder einmal in seine Geburtsstadt zurück, zuerst in den späten 1960er Jahren. Er kam aber stets nur für kurze Zeit, um in Archive zu gehen oder wissenschaftliche Konferenzen zu besuchen. Der Stadt gegenüber blieb er lebenslang auf Distanz, auch wenn ihm die Universität Wien zehn Jahre vor seinem Tod im August 2007 noch spät die Ehrendoktorwürde verlieh. „Ich habe hier nur eine alte Adresse und natürlich die verlorene Kindheit“, hatte er schon 1993 in einem Zeitungsinterview nüchtern bilanziert.

Bis heute, fast 100 Jahre nach seiner Geburt in Wien, erinnert keine Straße, nicht einmal eine Gedenktafel in der Stadt an Raul Hilberg.

René Schlott ist Historiker, Publizist und Assoziierter Wissenschaftler am Leibniz-Zentrum für Zeithistorische Forschung. 2025 war er Senior Fellow am VWI, wo er seine Forschungen zu Raul Hilberg vertiefte.

Essay

Life Writing and Exilic Geographies of the Persecuted Jews in Europe and the USSR

Atinati Mamatsashvili

In *The Storyteller* (1936), Walter Benjamin reflects on the gradual disappearance of “the art of storytelling”. This natural ability—“the ability to exchange experiences”, is currently lacking, as Benjamin writes. Telling a story, or narrating, is therefore immediately related to an experience: first, an experience of one’s life, and second, an experience in the plural, since it involves the exchange of experiences between interlocutors. Consequently, storytelling—or narrating—is understood here as an exchange of life experiences, a reciprocal movement in which the storyteller who tells the story does so by telling it to someone, to an interlocutor.

But who are the intended addressees of the diaries, letters, poems, drawings, and pieces of music composed and buried in camps, or near crematoria, or in interstices of walls? These pieces of life writing, in which writing is engaged at the same level as life itself—the life that Walter Benjamin refers to as the “tiny, fragile human body” (der winzige, gebrechliche Menschenkörper) and which Olga Freidenberg, another witness to another murderous regime—the Soviet regime—conceptualises few years later during WW2 as “the floundering human”? It is within this very sense that an interpretation of Charlotte Salomon’s graphic novel *Leben? oder Theater?* (Life? or Theatre?), produced between 1940 and 1942, before she was killed in Auschwitz, becomes possible. The work, created in urgency and driven by the eagerness to finish it, was brought to a close friend so that he could preserve it—both the story of her life and the story of what would happen and be called the Shoah.

The question that arises is how these different narratives, in various forms of expression, can be grasped through a temporality that is not necessarily post-Holocaust, but rather situated ‘at the moment of’, or ‘within’, the Holocaust; and through a (itinerant) geography that includes territories in the East. It is therefore always a matter of (re) asking questions: can the Holocaust be understood “as an array of event categories”, or in other terms as being broken down “into multiple, discrete episodes”[1]? Alternatively, can the Shoah be approached as a process that includes not only perpetrators, but also various actors (e.g. neighbours, observers), the fluctuating temporality (at different periods) and the spaces of persecution/murder, as well as the distance of these various actors from the places of persecution/killing sites, which plays on their disaccountability in their own eyes?

Atinati Mamatsashvili is a Professor of Comparative Literature at the Ilia State University in Tbilisi and was a Fellow at the VWI in 2023/24. She is guest editor of the Special Issue “Europe and the USSR. Literature in the face of the persecution and extermination of the Jews” of the VWI’s journal *S:I.M.O.N.*

1 Charles King, “Can—or should—there be a political science of the Holocaust”, in Jeffrey S. Kopstein, Jelena Subotic, and Susan Welch (eds.), *Politics, Violence, Memory. The New Social Science of the Holocaust* (Cornell University Press, 2023), p. 110.
2 Jeffrey S. Kopstein, “A common history of violence?”, in Kopstein / Subotic / Welch, *Politics, Violence, Memory*, p. 439.
3 Kelly Knowles, Tim Cole and Alberto Giordano, *Geographies of the Holocaust* (Indiana University Press, 2014).

ORF-Lange Nacht der Museen 4. Okt 25

In dem Gebäude am Rabensteig 3, wo heute das Museum Simon Wiesenthal beherbergt ist, befand sich bis 1938 die jüdische Buchhandlung BELF.
Im November 1938 wurde das Geschäft geplündert und der Inhaber Josef Belf ins KZ Dachau deportiert. Eine Lichtinstallation lässt die Buchhandlung auf der Fassade des VWI für eine Nacht wieder erscheinen.

Simon Wiesenthal Lecture 23. Okt 25

Götz Aly trägt im Jüdischen Museum über „Hitlerdeutschland – Wie konnte das geschehen?“ vor. In seinem neuesten Buch beschäftigt sich der preisgekrönte Historiker und Bestsellerautor mit den Bedingungen, die in autoritären Staaten zu gesellschaftlicher Ausgrenzung und Verfolgung von Minderheiten führen.

Simon Wiesenthal Lectures Research Lounge des VWI und/oder online			
23. Okt 25	Vortrag	Hitlerdeutschland – Wie konnte das geschehen? *Götz Aly (Historiker und Geschwister-Scholl-Preisträger)*	Jüdisches Museum Wien
29. Jan 26	Vortrag	„Die erste Zeit der Befreiung war mir das Leben fast unerträglich.“ Deutsche und österreichische deportierte Jüdinnen und Juden im Jahr 1945 *Andrea Löw (Zentrum für Holocaust-Studien München)*	VWI
VWI goes to ... / VWI invites ...			
10. Dez 25	Workshop	VWI invites... Research Center for the History of Transformations (RECET)	VWI
20. Mai 26	Workshop	VWI invites... Dokumentationsarchiv des österreichischen Widerstandes (DÖW)	VWI
Interventionen, Raesonanzen und Visuals			
25. Sept 25	rÆson_anzen	Eliot Nidam Orvieto: A Question of Agency—Roman Catholic Religious in France and the Decision to Hide Jews in Their Institutions	Jüdisches Institut für Erwachsenenbildung
4.Okt 25	Interventionen	ORF-Lange Nacht der Museen	VWI
5. Nov 25	Interventionen	„Der ferne Klang“ – Gedenkfeier zu den Novemberpogromen (in Kooperation mit VIVA LA CLASSICA!)	Theater Nestroyhof Hamakom
9. Nov 25	Interventionen	Gewalt 1938: Eine Spurensuche in Wien-Neubau (Kooperation mit dem Institut für Zeitgeschichte der Universität Wien)	Lokaltermin im 7. Bezirk tba
24. Apr 26	Interventionen	Lange Nacht der Forschung	VWI
2. Jun 26	Interventionen	Raul Hilberg zum 100. Geburtstag	VWI

Buch- und Projektpräsentationen			
6. Okt 25	Buchpräsentation	Éva Kovács, Raul Cârstocea and Gábor Egry (eds.): Ethnicizing Europe. Hate and Violence After Versailles	VWI
11. Nov 25	EHRI-AT-Buchpräsentation	Anders Otte Stensager: „Franz Stangl – Der Lagerkommandant von Sobibór und Treblinka“ und „Christian Wirth – Biografie eines NS-Täters“	Lern- u. Gedenkort Schloss Hartheim
Konferenzen, Tagungen, Workshops und Seminare			
11. Sept 25	Workshop	Antisemitismuskritik in der historisch-politischen Bildungsarbeit (Kooperation mit der Initiativgruppe Antisemitismuskritik im Museumsbund Österreich)	VWI
29.-30. Sept 25	EHRI-IP-Workshop	Internationalization and Partnerships (WP5) (Kooperation mit Yad Vashem)	VWI
19.-22. Okt 25	EHRI-IP-Workshop	From Day to Day? Collecting and Inventorying Diaries in Holocaust Research	Université de Caen/FR
25. und 27. Nov 25	Workshop	Memorise Project	VWI
27. Nov 25	Workshop	Gewalt in Österreich im Jahr 1938. Lokale Dynamiken und regionale Unterschiede (Kooperation mit dem Institut für Zeitgeschichte der Universität Wien)	IG Architektur Wien
9. Dez 25	International Workshop	Commemoration of the Srebrenica Massacre 30 Years Ago (Kooperation mit dem Srebrenica Memorial Center sowie dem Österreich-Bosnisch-Herzegowinischen Kulturverein - Frauenforum „Mimosen“)	VWI
7.-9. Jan 26	Konferenz	8. Internationale Multidisziplinäre Konferenz. Beyond Camps and Forced Labour (Kooperation mit Birkbeck Institute for the Study of Antisemitism / Imperial War Museum Institute / Holocaust Research Institute, Royal Holloway / The Wiener Holocaust Library / University of Wolverhampton / Fortunoff Video Archive / Leo Baeck Institute London / Center for Holocaust Studies at the Leibniz Institute for Contemporary History Munich), University of London und Wiener Library London	London

„Der ferne Klang“ 5. Nov 25

Ausgewählte Werke der von Nazis verfolgten Komponisten Franz Schreker, Erich Wolfgang Korngold und Alexander Zemlinsky bilden den musikalischen Rahmen der Gedenkveranstaltung. Bereits Ende der 1920er Jahre begannen die Nazis, Schrekers Aufführungen zu boykottieren und mit antisemitischen Drohungen zu unterbrechen. In Kooperation mit VIVA LA CLASSICA!

„Beyond Camps and Forced Labour“ 7.–9. Jan 26

Die Konferenzserie bringt regelmäßig Wissenschaftler:innen aus verschiedenen Disziplinen in London zusammen, die sich mit der Erforschung aller Gruppen von Überlebenden der nationalsozialistischen Verfolgung befassen. 2026 organisiert das VWI diese hochkarätige Veranstaltung mit und ist auch mit eigenen Vorträgen vertreten.

Essay

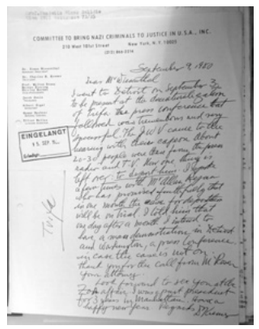
The Trifa Case

How Simon Wiesenthal Helped Charles Kremer Expose a Romanian War Criminal in Cold War America

Irina Nastasă-Matei

The case of Valerian Trifa—the Romanian Iron Guardist and pogromist who built a second life and a prominent career as Archbishop of the Romanian Orthodox Episcopate of America during the Cold War—gained significant public attention in the late 1970s and early 1980s, culminating in Trifa's denaturalisation and deportation to Portugal. By that time, his involvement with the Iron Guard and his leading role in the 1941 Bucharest Pogrom had been well documented through official records, witness testimonies, and even forensic evidence (a fingerprint provided by Romanian authorities).

Much less known is the story of Charles Kremer, a Romanian-born Jewish dentist from New York and president of the Roumanian Jewish Federation of America, Inc. who spent over three decades meticulously documenting Trifa's past and petitioning U.S. authorities to have him denaturalised and extradited—either to Romania or to Israel—to face trial for his crimes.



Letter from Charles Kremer to Simon Wiesenthal, 9 Sept 1980 © Simon Wiesenthal Archiv

For most of that time, Charles Kremer was ignored or ridiculed. U.S. authorities, driven by Cold War anti-communism, often overlooked former Nazis and fascists who had quietly rebuilt lives in the U.S., and in some cases even used them in anti-communist propaganda. International Jewish organisations also hesitated to support him, either because they did not view the Romanian case as significant, or out of concern that cooperating with Eastern Bloc regimes would compromise their credibility. In Simon Wiesenthal, however, Kremer found not only a role model, but also a key ally: one of the few public figures willing to support his long quest for justice against Archbishop Trifa.

The Simon Wiesenthal Archive, accessible at the Vienna Wiesenthal Institute for Holocaust Studies, houses several folders related to this case, the most important being the "Valerian Trifa File", composed of five dossiers. They document Wiesenthal's cooperation with Kremer beginning as early as 1951, just one year after Trifa arrived in the U.S. as a Displaced Person, claiming he had been a victim of Nazism. In truth, Trifa had been detained at Buchenwald and Dachau not as a prisoner, but as a member of the Iron Guard, enjoying privileged treatment.

The files reveal how Wiesenthal used his credibility and networks across Romania, West Germany, Israel, Italy, and the U.S. to help collect documentation and testimonies, confirm Trifa's true identity, and push U.S. authorities—repeatedly—to reopen the case. He also played a role in persuading the newly established Office of Special Investigations (OSI) to treat the case seriously and engaged in talks with Israeli officials in an effort (ultimately unsuccessful) to have Trifa deported there, where Kremer and Wiesenthal hoped to help stage a trial modeled after the Eichmann trial. They also collaborated on bringing the case to the media, applying public pressure that eventually forced U.S. authorities to act.

In the end, their efforts were only partially successful: Trifa renounced his U.S. citizenship in 1980 and moved to Portugal in 1982. He died there in 1987, while on trial to be deported again. He never served time for his crimes—not in Romania, where he had been convicted in absentia during the war to life in prison, nor in Israel, which ultimately declined to take on the case. But he did lose his privileged position, was forced to leave his adopted country, and had his criminal past exposed for the world to see.

Irina Nastasă-Matei is an Associate Professor at the University of Bucharest and author who was a 2025 VWI Fellow researching Jewish life in interwar Romania.

Essay

Exile Without Destination

The Disappearance of the City Character from Exhibits Devoted to Jewish Refugees in Shanghai

Markéta Bajgerová Verly

In 2020, two exhibitions devoted to Jewish refugees in Shanghai opened simultaneously in two very different locations: While the Shanghai Jewish Refugees History Museum reopened after a large-scale expansion with an inauguration of its new permanent exhibition, the Jewish Museum Vienna put on display a temporary exhibit titled "Little Vienna in Shanghai."

Although dealing with the same topic, the ways in which the exhibitions portrayed the history could not be more different. Whereas the first exhibit paints a utopian vision of Shanghai as a last safe haven and a city of peaceful Sino-Jewish cohabitation, the latter chooses to primarily frame exile through the lens of hardship of the refugees who have managed to build and nurture a rich cultural life despite the severely adverse conditions of Shanghai. Even though much could be said about the differences between these two exhibits, as well as about the politics that drive them, what is worth noting here instead is their common overlap—the shared disappearance of the authentic character of the city of Shanghai and its complex inter-war and wartime realities.

In the 1930s, Shanghai represented one of the most complex, cosmopolitan, and vibrant cities in the world. This was partially caused by its multicolonialised division, which brought in many international migrants looking for business opportunities. The city was one of the ports forcefully "opened" to the Western powers for trade following the First Opium War, and has been divided thereafter into the British and US-run International Settlement, the French concession, and the Chinese part of the city. However, in many ways, Shanghai was since then also a city of refugees—its unusual administrative status, port identity, and booming businesses designated it a destination for domestic refugees fleeing from the Taiping Rebellion, the Second Opium War, simultaneous warlord violence across different Chinese provinces, and the 1931 Japanese invasion of Manchuria, as well as for the international refugees, mostly from Russia, fleeing the Russo-Japanese War and the Russian Civil War. At the height of the different migration waves, there were around 50 nationalities represented in Shanghai. This demographic composition has crafted an extraordinarily rich cultural scene and vibrant diaspora communities, contributing to Shanghai's special identity to this day. However, it has also become an area of conflicts and tensions between different groups. In 1937, Shanghai also became a warzone. The Chinese-controlled part of the city turned into a brutal frontline as the Chinese troops resisted the invading Japanese Imperial Army for over three months, causing a wave of inter-city refugees. All these factors made Shanghai a unique space for the incoming wartime refugees from Europe and significantly shaped their experiences there.

The Shanghai Waterfront in the mid-1930s © Archiv ÖGCF/Sammlung Gerd Kaminski

Yet, the full complex picture of the city has been absent from both exhibitions. It is arguably not surprising that museums hardly ever opt for complexity over simplicity. Nonetheless, it is a precarious line to walk, as the full picture of the historical phenomenon at times risks become blurred—such as when exile loses its destination.

Markéta Bajgerová Verly holds a PhD from the University of Vienna and was a Fellow at the VWI 2024/25. Her research focuses on "War of Resistance against Japan" museums in contemporary China.

Essay

“[T]hey give such a good picture of the life and the worries of a present-day refugee”

Briefe österreichischer Schulkameraden jüdischer Herkunft als Holocaust-Literatur

Jacqueline Vansant

In einem Brief vom 20. Mai 1940 aus Kalifornien an seine ehemaligen Klassenkameraden, die wie er, aufgrund ihrer jüdischen Herkunft im Zuge nationalsozialistischer Maßnahmen von ihrem Wiener Gymnasium „ausgeschult“ wurden, führt Hans (John) Kautsky die Gründe an, warum ihre seit Frühling 1938 geführte Gruppenkorrespondenz als ein historisch wertvolles Dokument angesehen werden könnte. „Now to the individual treatment of your letters. I think in general and taken all together they are so interesting because they give such a good picture of the life and the worries of a present-day refugee. And that’s why I believe that our letters will one time—I hope very soon—be quite a valuable document, if properly collected.“ Zwischen historischem Dokument und persönlichem Zeugnis angesiedelt, ist der rege Austausch unter den Freunden ein wichtiger Nachweis individueller Perspektiven auf das Zeitgeschehen.

Die an der Korrespondenz beteiligten Jugendlichen verließen Wien zwischen April 1938 und April 1939 und sahen sich einer ungewissen Zukunft gegenüber, die von Gefahren und existenzieller Unsicherheit geprägt war. Trotz der grauenhaften Umstände oder vielleicht gerade deswegen war es ihnen wichtig, den Kontakt untereinander aufrechtzuerhalten. Um das zu erreichen, griffen Kautsky und seine Freunde zum Rundbrief. In diesem unter Schülern und Studenten beliebten System bestimmt einer der Korrespondenten die Route des Rundbriefs und schickt seinen Brief an einen Mitkorrespondenten, der seinerseits einen Brief hinzufügt und beide Schreiben gemeinsam an den nächsten Teilnehmer weiterleitet. Die Anzahl der Beteiligten bestimmt die Anzahl der Briefe.

In den Briefen spiegeln sich die vielfältigen Herausforderungen wider, denen die jüdischen Jugendlichen in den folgenden Jahren begegneten – von häufigen Wohnsitzwechseln über den Ausbruch des Zweiten Weltkriegs und die aggressive Expansionspolitik des nationalsozialistischen Deutschlands bis hin zu Verhaftungen und Abschiebungen. Angesichts dieser schwierigen Umstände wäre ein baldiger Abbruch der Korrespondenz verständlich gewesen. Doch gerade durch das Engagement und das Verantwortungsgefühl der Jugendlichen füreinander sowie durch ihre vorausschauenden Maßnahmen, um auf unvorhersehbare Ereignisse vorbereitet zu sein, entstand ein bemerkenswerter Briefwechsel, der mehr als zehn Jahre und drei Kontinente umspannte und heute den Leser:innen die Ängste, Hoffnungen, Erfahrungen und Reaktionen dieser Altersgruppe in diesen turbulenten Jahren näherbringt.

Jacqueline Vansant war 2017/18 Fellow am VWI, wo sie an einer Ausgabe der Briefe begann, die sie vor kurzem abschloss. Der hier abgedruckte Text ist angelehnt an ihren Beitrag im kommenden Band *Holocaust Literature and Ego Documents. Literary and Historiographical Approaches* (transcript Verlag, 2026).

Nach dem Ausbruch des Krieges wechselten die Jugendlichen zur englischen Sprache. Die Briefe befinden sich im Archiv für die Geschichte der Soziologie in Österreich. https://agso.uni-graz.at/

Fellowships 2026/27

At the Vienna Wiesenthal Institute for Holocaust Studies

The Vienna Wiesenthal Institute for Holocaust Studies (VWI) invites applications for its fellowships for the academic year 2026/2027.

The VWI is an academic institution dedicated to the research and documentation of antisemitism, racism, nationalism and the Holocaust. Conceived and established during Simon Wiesenthal’s lifetime, the VWI receives funding from the Austrian Federal Ministry of Women, Science and Research, the Federal Chancellery as well as the City of Vienna. Research at the institute focuses on the Holocaust in its European context, including its antecedents and its aftermath.

Research projects are to focus on a topic relevant to the research interests of the VWI. Within this parameter, applicants are free to choose their own topic, approach and methodology. Fellows will have access to the archives of the Institute. It is expected that fellows will make use of relevant resources from the collection in their research projects. Research results will be the subject of formal fellows’ discussions and will be presented to the wider public at regular intervals. We explicitly encourage researchers in the field of Digital Humanities with projects in Holocaust Studies to submit their applications.

Funding is available for
- two senior fellowships,
- two to four research fellowships and
- two to four junior fellowships

to work at the institute for a duration of five to six months (senior and research fellowships) and ten months (junior fellowships).

Senior fellowships will be awarded to qualified scholars who have completed their PhDs, have authored exceptional academic publications and have been working at a university or academic institution for several years.

Research fellowships will be awarded to scholars who have completed their PhDs and have published works in their research field.

Junior fellowships will be awarded to PhD-candidates.

With its fellowships, the VWI seeks to encourage communication and academic exchange among the fellows, providing an additional benefit beyond their research work. The fellows are expected to further the Institute’s academic work and provide each other with advice and support in their research projects. Fellows must be regularly present at the VWI.

Fellows will be selected by the International Academic Advisory Board of the VWI.

Please attach your application in electronic format (in one *.pdf-file) to an email and submit it by 16 January 2026 to:
fellowship@vwi.ac.at

Barnabas Balint

Research Fellow
03/2026–07/2026

Barnabas Balint completed his PhD in History at the University of Oxford. He has held fellowships at the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, University of London's Institute of Historical Research, European Holocaust Research Infrastructure (Yad Vashem), and USC Center for Advanced Genocide Research. He has published widely in various journals.

Reconceptualising Resistance: Zionist Networks of Rescue and Resistance in Wartime Hungary

This project explores the role played by the Hungarian Zionist Association in resistance and rescue during the Holocaust in Hungary and the relationship between Hungarian Jews and the occupying authorities. Thus, it reconceptualises resistance around pre-existing personal solidarities as opposed to political and national ideologies and reveals how resistance developed in response to and in tandem with persecution.

Rooted in archival research, this project approaches resistance from both a macro and a micro perspective. As a result, it combines the vast national and transnational networks of Zionist movements across Central and Eastern Europe, as well as the global flows of ideas and money. It also traces lesser-known German occupation figures in Hungary, revealing their role in persecution and combatting resistance and rescue efforts.

Elena Beletckaia

Junior Fellow
10/2025–07/2026

Elena Beletckaia is a PhD candidate at Heidelberg University, specialising in Jewish literature and Holocaust studies. Her research examines Holocaust testimonies and the sentimental value of home, focusing on post-war migration to Eastern Europe, Israel and the US. She has joined programs organised by e.g. Paideia, Yad Vashem, USHMM and INGOS, and she is an editor at *H-Judaic*.

The Notion of Home in the Holocaust Discourse: Post-war Migration in/to Eastern Europe, Israel, and the United States

This research project explores the concept of home and its sentimental value in Holocaust survivors' narratives through a comparative analysis of audiovisual testimonies. Focusing on survivors who migrated to North America, Israel, or returned to Eastern Europe during the post-war period (1945–1949), it employs a mixed-methods approach integrating thematic, narrative, phenomenological, and multimodal analyses. It examines how survivors articulate experiences of home, displacement, and identity reconstruction, using Noah Shenker's methodological framework to analyse how recording environments influence memory sharing, highlighting the emotional depth of recollections. It also applies assimilation and historical trauma theories to explore the lasting emotional and intergenerational impacts of the Holocaust on perceptions of home and identity.

Béla Bodó

Senior Fellow
10/2025–03/2026

Béla Bodó received his PhD from York University in Canada in 1998. He is a professor of history at the University of Bonn in Germany. His latest book, entitled *Black Humor and the White Terror,* was published by Routledge in 2023.

Edmund Veesenmayer in Budapest: The Final Phase of the Jewish Genocide

This project examines the private life and political career of Edmund Veesenmayer, Hitler's personal representative and Reich Plenipotentiary in Hungary from March to December 1944. As Nazi Germany's chief diplomat, he prevented Hungary from leaving the Axis alliance, deposed the conservative Kállay government, appointed ministers, arrested political opponents, and redirected Hungary's economy to serve German needs. He played a major role in the deportation of over 450,000 Hungarian Jews in spring to early summer of 1944, over two thirds of whom perished in the labor and death camps. The project highlights Veesenmayer's performance as an economist, academic, diplomat, and one of the architects of the Holocaust, and his appearances at the 1946 Endre-Baky-Jaross trial, his own Nuremberg trial (1948/49), and his later life as a businessman in Germany after 1951.

Bogdan Chiriac

Gerda Henkel Research Fellow
10/2025–03/2026

Bogdan Chiriac, an independent researcher from Romania, specialises in modern and contemporary Romanian history. He earned a BA in History (2005) from Alexandru Ioan Cuza University, Iași, and his MA in Nationalism Studies (2008) plus PhD in Comparative History (2017) from Central European University. His work covers Holocaust studies, post-war trials, and Roma history.

Petitioning against Injustice. Roma Resistance in Transnistria during the Holocaust

This project examines petitions by Roma deportees in response to state-sponsored violence and persecution in Romania between 1942 and 1944. It highlights the agency of ordinary Roma men and women, moving beyond narratives casting them solely as passive victims and reframes petitions as brave yet futile attempts to sway the Antonescu regime that deported them in 1942. Roma petitioners are seen as active agents, persecuted but not wholly disenfranchised, using entreaties to seek aid or protest against perceived injustices. Drawing on archival sources and Holocaust survivor testimonies, the project situates these petitions within wartime petition writing. It reassesses their value as a means for persecuted minorities to voice grievances and denounce abuses, despite the risks of opposing state policies in non-democratic regimes in the Second World War.

Jovana Cvetićanin

Junior Fellow
10/2025–07/2026

Jovana Cvetićanin, PhD candidate at the Ben Gurion University of the Negev, holds a BA in Law, from the University of Belgrade and an MA in Holocaust Studies from the University of Haifa's Weiss-Livnat International Programme. Author of *Yugoslavia and the Eichmann Trial*, she received the Yad Vashem Award (2019), Israel Gutman Prize (2023), Raab Centre Prize (2025), and a Claims Conference Saul Kagan Fellowship.

Yugoslavia and the Shoah 1944–1991

This project examines the evolution of Holocaust narrative and memory in Yugoslavia through survivor testimonies, the Yugoslav press, and the full case of Yugoslavia at the Eichmann trial. It focuses on the varied fates of Jews in different parts of occupied and partitioned Yugoslavia, exploring the early formation of Holocaust narratives, the emergence of survivor stories and media portrayals in the immediate post-war era, and changes over nearly five decades.

Drawing on unexamined archival records, unpublished personal accounts of Yugoslav Holocaust survivors, and newspaper articles, it reveals two key, but unexplored aspects of Holocaust memory in Yugoslavia. By presenting the full Yugoslav case at the highly publicised Eichmann trial, it deepens our understanding of the state's role and official stance towards the Holocaust and genocide.

Jan Elantkowski

Gerda Henkel Research Fellow
02/2026–07/2026

Jan Elantkowski is an art historian and curator based in Budapest, holds a PhD from Eötvös Loránd University and an MA in art history from Adam Mickiewicz University. He has published on Central-Eastern European contemporary art, trauma, and Holocaust representation, taught at Humboldt University (2015–18), and since 2018 has worked at Ludwig Múzeum Budapest.

The Circulation of Original Holocaust Photography and Photography as a Tool in Addressing Holocaust Trauma in the Works of Central-Eastern European Artists Over the Decades

This project examines the circulation of original Holocaust photography and its use as a tool for addressing Holocaust trauma in the works of Central-Eastern European artists. While engagement with such photography is a global issue, this study focuses on the region, analysing how artists integrate historical images and employ new strategies to confront trauma. Building on case studies of Boris Lurie, a Jewish artist from Eastern Europe who settled in the US after the war, it considers his 1950s–60s works blending Holocaust photographs with American post-war consumer culture. It also looks at earlier examples, such as Władysław Strzemiński's 1945 collage series.

Paul Hanebrink

Senior Fellow
02/2026–07/2026

Paul Hanebrink, Professor of History and Jewish Studies at Rutgers University – New Brunswick since 2001, is the author of *In Defense of Christian Hungary* (2006) and *A Specter Haunting Europe* (2018), also published in Italian and Romanian. He serves on the academic committee of the US Holocaust Memorial Museum since 2014.

Reconsidering the Memory of Antifascism

This projects targets antifascist memory culture in Austria, Hungary and Italy. Its purpose is not to revive dated tales of long-dead resistance heroes, but to place antifascist memory in a historical context—reconsidering the hopes in its creation, the disillusionment it bred, and its contradictions as sources of meaning. Above all the project aims to ask what legacy these ambiguities leave for societies in Europe and North America that are once again debating the link between past struggles against persecution and today's injustices. Key questions include: how did forms and institutions mediating antifascist *memory* circulate across borders? What role did Jewish leftists and the spectre of 'Jewish Communism' play? And how did such institutions adapt to the rise of Holocaust memory on both sides of the Atlantic?

Olga Kartashova

CEU-VWI Fellow
(funded by La Fodation pour la Mémoire de la Shoah)
10/2025-08/2026

Olga Kartashova, MA from Central European University and Haifa University, PhD candidate in the history of the Holocaust in Eastern Europe at New York University. Fellowships include the Claims Conference Saul Kagan Fellowship for Advanced Shoah Studies, the Centre for Holocaust Studies at the Leibniz Institute for Contemporary History in Munich, and the VWI.

The International Networks and Jewish Efforts to Prosecute Holocaust Perpetrators in Poland

This project delves into the efforts of Jewish lawyers, community leaders and individuals to promote human and minority rights in the interwar period, during World War II and in the post-war period as an organic development, rather than viewing them as isolated events. Jewish lobbyists played a pivotal role in advocating for minority rights, gathering evidence, and testifying in courts, representing the Jewish community in the evolving landscape of international criminal law. Utilising extensive survivor networks produced a wealth of sources and witness testimony for Holocaust-related trials, thereby enhancing the prospects of holding perpetrators accountable.

Hana Kubátová

Senior Fellow
02/2026–07/2026

Hana Kubátová, historian and political scholar at the Faculty of Social Sciences at Charles University, Prague, studies how ideologies take root, adapt, and persist during upheaval, focusing on mid-level actors in fascist and communist East Central Europe. Her work has appeared in leading journals. Her latest book, *Christian Nationalism, Nation-Building, and the Making of the Holocaust in Slovakia*, was published by Oxford University Press.

Fascists into Communists? Opportunism and Survival across Autocracies

This project examines how mid-level collaborators of the fascist Slovak state—teachers, clergy, lawyers, and local bureaucrats—moved into influential posts under the communist regime after 1948. Rather than seeing collaboration as a fixed label or purely ideological choice, it explores how survival, ambition, and pragmatism enabled adaptation across autocracies. While most scholarship treats fascism and communism as distinct, this research reveals striking continuities. Using archival sources, oral history, and personal records, it shows how "former people"—compromised by wartime roles—rebranded themselves as loyal citizens. Their reinvention highlights how autocracies rely not only on loyalists but on those adept at navigating power, offering new insight into political transitions in 20th-century Slovakia.

Jackie Olson

Junior Fellow
10/2025–07/2026

Jackie Olson, a PhD candidate in History at Stanford University, researches postwar memory and changing burial practices in Germany and Austria. She holds a BA in History and German from Vanderbilt, taught in Vienna on an Austrian Fulbright Grant, has held fellowships at the Thyssen foundation and the USHMM, and is research assistant on an NSF-funded Holocaust project.

The Politics of Death in Postwar Austria, 1945–1970

This project examines the politics of burial in postwar Austria, particularly its rural eastern regions, from 1945 to 1970. It investigates how local Austrians, Jewish expats, government officials, and religious bodies such as the Israelitische Kultusgemeinde Wien (IKG) engaged with graves of Jewish victims, eastern European forced labourers, and Soviet POWs. It explores their roles in mourning and how these relationships shaped early Austrian postwar memory, especially under Soviet occupation. This study considers what death meant to different generational, national, and confessional identities amid a volatile postwar Europe. Arguing that graves reveal personal mourning in a time of defeat and shame, it shifts focus from governments and geopolitics to small-scale rural actors.

Roman Shliakhtych

VWI Fortunoff Research Fellow
10/2025 – 07/2026

Roman Shliakhtych, lecturer at the State University of Economy and Technology, Kryvyi Rih, Ukraine, is a doctoral student at Oles Honchar Dnipro National University researching Ukrainian auxiliary police involvement in the Holocaust. Author of two monographs and 40+ studies, he has held fellowships at major Holocaust research centres.

Involvement of local policemen in the implementation of the Holocaust policy on the territory of the 'Reichskommissariat Ukraine'

The role of local police in the Holocaust has long been overlooked in Ukrainian historiography, which often attributed crimes in the occupied territories solely to the Nazis. This project examines the social history of the Holocaust, focusing on the behaviour, motives, and actions of auxiliary police and local authorities in the discrimination, exploitation, and extermination of Jews. Using methods of sociology and psychology, it reconstructs patterns of involvement and draws on eyewitness and survivor testimonies, particularly on video evidence from the Fortunoff Archive.

Nina Valbousquet

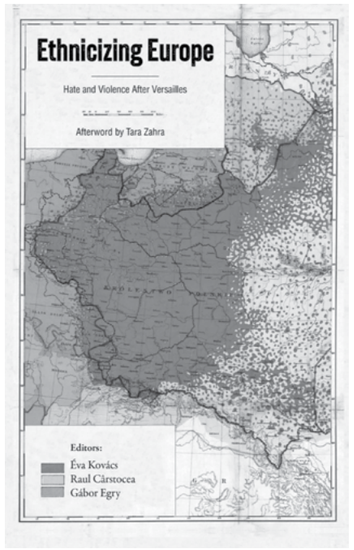
Research Fellow
05/2026 – 07/2026

Nina Valbousquet, an expert on Catholic antisemitism and Christian responses to the Holocaust, has authored two monographs and co-edited major works on the Vatican and Pius XII. She curated the Shoah Memorial's 'Churches and the Holocaust' exhibition and holds fellowships in Manchester, Yad Vashem, and Jerusalem.

Jewish-Catholic Odysseys: "Non-Aryan" Refugees, the Holocaust, and Pius XII's Vatican (1930s–1950s)

This project examines Shoah victims often overlooked in scholarship: Jewish-Catholic mixed families, converts, and Catholics of Jewish origin persecuted as 'non-Aryans' by Nazi Germany, Fascist Italy, and Vichy France. At the crossroads of Jewish, Holocaust, and Church history, it traces Jewish-Catholic refugees' migration from 1938 to 1950, using Vatican sources alongside European, American, and Israeli archives. It reconstructs their journeys and highlights the agency and negotiated identity of victims facing imposed racial, religious, and political categorisation. The project will especially make use of archive of the Jewish Community of Vienna and Holocaust testimonies on intermarriage, mixed families, and conversion from the Fortunoff Video Archive and Refugee Voices London project.

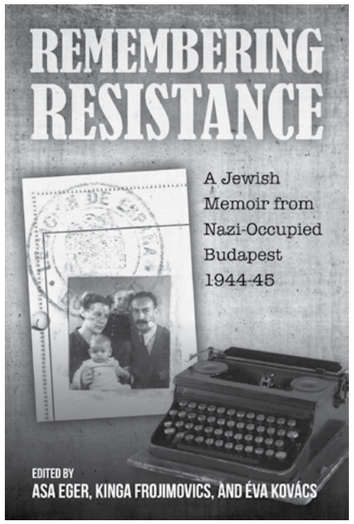
New Books



Ethnicizing Europe: Hate and Violence After Versailles

This volume focuses on the dynamics of interethnic violence in Europe between the two world wars. It opens with a discussion of the theoretical scholarship on ethnicity before proceeding to specific case studies investigating the different ways in which ethnicity was enacted and contested during a period of European transformation, focusing mostly on ethnically heterogeneous locales. Rather than concentrating on either political violence or ethnonationalism, this collection brings these two literatures together to show how ethnicization, the legal concepts of citizenship, and violence were intertwined in post-Versailles Europe, not only shaping the period between the wars, but also the Europe we know today. The book concludes with an afterword by Tara Zahra, which expands this perspective to the wider transatlantic region.

Editors: Éva Kovács, Raul Cârstocea and Gábor Egry
Publisher: Purdue University Press
Conference: Simon Wiesenthal Conference, Vienna, 24–26 March 2020
Book Launch in Vienna: **6. Oct 2025**



Remembering Resistance: A Jewish Memoir from Nazi-Occupied Budapest, 1944–45

The existence and achievements of Jewish "self-rescuers" within Nazi-occupied Hungary remains, in spite of their significance, historically underexplored. In this illuminating chronicle of the life and work of Jewish couple, László and Eugenia Szamosi, Remembering Resistance seeks to address this lacunae, offering an unique insight into a family's personal history of resistance under the Nazi regime. Combining oral testimony from fellow survivors, with a previously-unpublished translation of László's memoir, this book foregrounds the remarkable work of the Szamosis and their network, in rescuing Jews from the Death Marches and reuniting displaced families. Through doing so, this book offers a powerful framework for mediating how we remember Jewish experiences of the Holocaust.

Editors: Asa Eger, Kinga Frojimovics and Éva Kovács
Publisher: Berghahn Books
Publication date: **Feb 2026**

ORF-Lange Nacht der Museen 2024

Beiratssitzung 2024

Michaela Raggam-Blesch und Marianne Windsperger bei der Buchpräsentation „Deported", ÖBB Open Innovation Lab © Andreas Scheiblecker / ÖBB

Workshop mit Yad Vashem am VWI

Besucher:innen in der ORF-Langen Nacht der Museen

Teilnehmer:innen der SWC 25
© eSeL.at/Joanna Pianka

Simon Wiesenthal Lecture von Jan T. Gross

Die Einführung von EHRI-ERIC
© Maciek Jazwiecki

Intervention „Vom Wurstelprater ins Hamakom"

Gedenktafelenthüllung bei der Offenen Volksschule Konstanziagasse

Workshop „Teaching about the Roma Genocide"

Simon Wiesenthal Conference am HGM
© eSeL.at/Joanna Pianka

EHRI Newcomers Workshop in Riga

Buchpräsentation mit Jürgen Matthäus im Heeresgeschichtlichen Museum

Regina Fritz, Johanna Gehmacher und René Schlott

VWI Senior Fellow Kateřina Čapková und György Majtényi

Österr. Museumsgütesiegel für das Museum Simon Wiesenthal © Kollektiv Fischka

Star-Anwalt und Autor Philippe Sands bei seiner Simon Wiesenthal Lecture im Jüdischen Museum Wien

Buchpräsentation „Nazis and Nazi Sympathizers in Latin America after 1945“

Buchpräsentation mit Ljiljana Radonić, Jochen Böhler und Thomas Casagrande

Irina Scherbakowa und Éva Kovács

Simon Wiesenthal Lecture mit Hannah Pollin-Galay

Jan Volker Schlunk bei der Übergabe seines Vorlasses mit Sandra B. Weiss

VWI-Visual: Edward Serotta und Regisseur Asaf Galay

Archiv

Das Archiv des VWI betreut neben seinem institutseigenen Archiv auch das Simon Wiesenthal Archiv des Bundes jüdischer Verfolgter des Naziregimes sowie die holocaustbezogenen historischen Bestände des Archivs der Israelitischen Kultusgemeinde Wien. Daneben übernimmt es laufend Vor- oder Nachlässe sowie kleinere Sammlungen mit Bezug zum Holocaust. Vor Ort können die Videointerviews des Austrian Heritage Archive, des Fortunoff Video Archive for Holocaust Testimonies, des Archivs Final Account: Third Reich Testimonies, der USC Shoah Foundation sowie des Videoarchivs der Refugee Voices genutzt werden.

Öffnungszeiten: Montag 9-13 Uhr
Dienstag 9-13 Uhr
Mittwoch 11-15 Uhr

Bitte um Anmeldung: archiv@vwi.ac.at

Bibliothek

Die Sammlungen der Fachbibliothek umfassen ca. 17.500 Medien (ca. 16.500 Printmedien, 140 audiovisuelle Titeln, 700 digitale Ressourcen) zusammen. Monografien, Schriftenreihen und Periodika in gedruckter Form bilden das Gros des Bestands, welcher sich einerseits aus Neuerwerbungen, andererseits aus Dauerleihgaben des Bibliotheksbestands des Simon Wiesenthal Archivs und aus Schenkungen speist. Der sprachliche Fokus liegt auf englisch- und deutschsprachiger wissenschaftlicher Literatur. Die Recherche der Bestände erfolgt über die Online-Suchmaschine der Bibliothek.

Öffnungszeiten: Dienstag 13-17 Uhr
Donnerstag 10-14 Uhr

Kontakt: barbara.grzelak@vwi.ac.at

„Die Zukunft des Erinnerns“ – Museum Simon Wiesenthal

Als Überlebender widmete sich Simon Wiesenthal (1908–2005) der Aufklärung von NS-Verbrechen und dem Kampf gegen das Vergessen. Dazu nutzt er ein Netzwerk aus Überlebenden, Politiker:innen und Mitstreiter:innen. Neben persönlichen Objekten zeigt die Dauerausstellung die teils schwierigen Bedingungen, unter denen er und seine kleine NGO sechs Jahrzehnte lang arbeiteten. Ein Touchscreen stellt Dokumente aus Wiesenthals Archiv aus, filmisch werden sein charismatisches Auftreten als weltweit geschätzte und geachtete Persönlichkeit sowie seine Enttäuschung über die schleppende Nachkriegsjustiz und eine über viele Jahrzehnte desinteressierte bis feindselige österreichische Öffentlichkeit präsentiert.

Öffnungszeiten:

September bis Juni: Montag-Freitag 10-18 Uhr
Feiertags geschlossen

Juli und August: Montag-Freitag 10-16 Uhr
Feiertags geschlossen

Kontakt: museum@vwi.ac.at

Bitte bringen Sie für jeden Besuch am VWI einen gültigen Lichtbildausweis mit.

VWI-Vorstand

Vorsitzende:
Terezija Stoisits

Stv. Vorsitzender:
Andreas Kranebitter, Dokumentationsarchiv des österreichischen Widerstandes (DÖW)

Stv. Vorsitzende und Schriftführerin:
Claudia Prutscher, Israelitische Kultusgemeinde Wien

Kassier:
Hannes Leidinger, Universität Wien

Stv. Schriftführerin:
Joanna Nittenberg, Bund Jüdischer Verfolgter des Nazi-Regimes

Weitere Vorstandsmitglieder:
Regina Fritz, Universität Wien
Margit Reiter, Universität Salzburg
Patrick Siegele, OeAD ERINNERN:AT
Barbara Staudinger, Jüdisches Museum Wien
Juliane Wetzel, International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance

VWI-Mitarbeiter:innen

Direktion:
Jochen Böhler – Direktor, a.D.
Angelika Brechelmacher – Stv. Direktorin für Finanzen und Administration
Éva Kovács – Stv. Direktorin für Wissenschaft

Team:
Sandro Fasching – Referent für IT und Museum
Barbara Grzelak – Bibliothekarin
Mirjam-Angela Karoly – Office Managerin, Delegationsmitglied IHRA
Teresa Preis – Referentin für PR und Publikationen
Philipp Rohrbach – Koordinator für Public History – Bildung, Vermittlung, Museum
Sandra B. Weiss – Archivarin
Marianne Windsperger – Forschungskoordinatorin, Vice Chair EHRI National Coordinators Committee

Projektmitarbeiter:innen:
Kathrin Balatka – Projektmitarbeiterin im Archiv
Margit Craß – Projektmitarbeiterin im Archiv
Kinga Frojimovics – Projektmitarbeiterin, Archivarin
Ines Koeltzsch – Projektmitarbeiterin EHRI
Christa Leibrecht – Sachbearbeiterin Buchhaltung
Stephen Naron – Gastwissenschaftler, Direktor des Fortunoff Video Archive for Holocaust Testimonies
Johanna Prantz – Projektmitarbeiterin im Archiv
Lea Riener – Projektmitarbeiterin im Archiv
Fabio Rovigo – Projektmitarbeiter EHRI
Wolfgang Schellenbacher – Projektmitarbeiter EHRI
Fabian Wimmer – Projektmitarbeiter im Archiv

Trägerorganisationen des VWI

Trägerorganisation des VWI ist ein Verein, zu dem sich die Israelitische Kultusgemeinde Wien (IKG-Wien), das Dokumentationszentrum des Bundes Jüdischer Verfolgter des Naziregimes (BJVN), das Dokumentationsarchiv des österreichischen Widerstandes (DÖW), das Institut für Zeitgeschichte der Universität Wien, das Jüdische Museum Wien (JMW), die International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA), das Zentrum für jüdische Kulturgeschichte an der Universität Salzburg und der Verein OeAD ERINNERN:AT zusammengeschlossen haben. Die einzelnen Organisationen beschicken die VWI-Generalversammlung, die das Leitungsgremium des VWI, den Vorstand, wählt.

Internationaler Wissenschaftlicher Beirat des VWI

In allen wissenschaftlichen Fragen des VWI kommt dem Internationalen Wissenschaftlichen Beirat eine Schlüsselrolle zu. Dieser umfasst acht international anerkannte Expert:innen im Bereich der Holocaust-Forschung und der Nationalism and Genocide Studies:

Nanci Adler (Instituut voor Oorlogs-, Holocaust- en Genocidestudies, Amsterdam)
Natalia Aleksiun (University of Florida, Gainesville)
Tim C. Cole (University of Bristol)
Elisabeth Gallas (Leibniz-Institut für jüdische Geschichte und Kultur – Simon Dubnow, Leipzig)
Jürgen Matthäus (United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, Washington DC)
Nadège Ragaru (Sciences Po, Paris)
Dirk Rupnow (Universität Innsbruck)
David Silberklang (Yad Vashem – Internationale Holocaust-Gedenkstätte, Jerusalem)

Impressum

VWI im Fokus. Medieninhaber, Herausgeber und Verleger: Vienna Wiesenthal Institute for Holocaust Studies (VWI), Rabensteig 3, 1010 Wien. Telefon: +43 1 890 15 14. E-Mail: office@vwi.ac.at. Internet: www.vwi.ac.at. Redaktion: Jochen Böhler, Éva Kovács, Teresa Preis. Fotos: VWI (wenn nicht anders angegeben). Layout: Astrid Feldner. Druckerei: Thomas Resch KG, Rosinagasse 19, 1150 Wien. Lektorat: Teresa Preis. DVR-Nr.: 4002512.
OFFENLEGUNG NACH § 25 MEDIENGESETZ

Medieninhaber: Vienna Wiesenthal Institute for Holocaust Studies (VWI). Vereinszweck: Forschung, Dokumentation und Vermittlung zu allen Fragen, die Antisemitismus, Rassismus und den Holocaust einschließlich Vorgeschichte und Folgen betreffen. Vorstand: Terezija Stoisits. Direktor a.D.: Jochen Böhler. Stv. Direktorin (Finanzen/Administration): Angelika Brechelmacher. Stv. Direktorin (Wissenschaft): Éva Kovács. Blattlinie: *VWI im Fokus* informiert über Aktivitäten des Instituts in den Bereichen Forschung, Dokumentation und Vermittlung und erscheint jährlich.

Das VWI wird gefördert von:

Stadt Wien

Bundesministerium Frauen, Wissenschaft und Forschung

Bundeskanzleramt