

Course Overview

Holocaust Testimonies and Their Afterlives

Central European University, the Summer University, Budapest
Éva Kovács, Michael Miller, Stephen Naron, Avinoam Patt, Noah Shenker
10-day program (July 11-19, 2024)

READINGS:

See below

COMPLETION REQUIREMENTS:

For all students, class attendance is mandatory. Completion of the program and the awarding of a certificate requires a final group presentation. Students will work in a group with a single testimony relevant to their current research. The group will conduct a “deep reading/watching” and analysis of the testimony and produce an annotated critical edition that can be presented to the other students. In doing so, they will gain hands-on knowledge of sources and archives and work closely with complex textual and audiovisual testimonies, the significance of which they can unlock and elucidate.

A mandatory Zoom introduction section will occur before the course meets in person.

July 11 – INTRODUCTIONS, HISTORICAL BACKGROUND SEMINAR

Readings

Nathan Hanover, *Abyss of Despair (Yaven Metzulah)* (New Brunswick: Transaction Books, 1983), selections

H.N. Bialik, "The City of Slaughter" in *Complete Poetic Works of Hayyim Nahman Bialik*, Israel Efros, ed. (New York, 1948): 129-43

Eugene M. Avrutin and Elissa Bemporad, eds., *Pogroms: A Documentary History* (Oxford: OUP), Chapter 3.

9:00-10:00 CEU Introduction

Welcome, introduction to the summer course program at CEU, logistics, goals of the course, the syllabus, ancillary events.

10:00-12:30 Introduction to the Course

Éva Kovács, Michael L. Miller, Stephen Naron

Core faculty will present testimonies as sources and present key questions to be addressed when using such sources

12:30-14:00 Lunch

14:00-15:40 Lecture 1: Pogroms, Poetry, and Posterity

Michael L. Miller, CEU

This lecture will examine the gathering of eyewitness testimony and its role in historiographic, liturgical, poetic and publicistic responses to anti-Jewish catastrophes in the centuries before the Shoah, from the Khmelnytsky Massacres (1648-49) to the Kishinev Pogrom (1903). It will reflect on the ways in which the impulse to document – and canonize – massacres and martyrdom contributed to the approaches and practices of testimony during and after the Shoah.

15:40-16:00 **Break**

16:00-17:40 **Seminar 1: Pogroms, Poetry, and Posterity**

Michael L. Miller, CEU

This seminar will provide an opportunity for students to work hands on with eyewitness testimony from the Kishinev Pogrom (1903).

17:40-18:00 **Break**

18:00-19:40 **Keynote Lecture – Testimony in The Immediate Postwar**

Laura Jockusch

Recommended Reading

Jockusch, Laura. *Collect and Record! Jewish Holocaust Documentation in Early Postwar Europe*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012, Chapters 1-4, p. 19-159.

July 12 – STUDENT PRESENTATIONS

9:00-10:40 **Student Presentations on Their Sources and Research Part 1**

10:40-11:00 **Break**

11:00-12:40 **Student Presentations on Their Sources and Research Part 2**

12:40-14:00 **Lunch**

14:00-15:40 **Group Discussion on Student Research**

15:40-16:00 **Break**

16:00-18:00 **Office hours**

July 13-14 – WEEKEND PROGRAM

Saturday: Tour of Szabadság Square and joint dinner

Reading

[Éva Kovács, The Hungarian Holocaust Memorial Year 2014. Some Remarks. SIMON 2017/1](#)

Sunday: Visit to Hungarian Holocaust Memorial Center with András Lénárt

Readings

[János Gadó, The Splendour and the Misery of the House of Fates](#)

[Ljiljana Radonić: The Holocaust Template – Memorial Museums in Hungary, Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina](#)

July 15 – WARTIME TESTIMONIES

Readings

Kassow, Samuel. *Who Will Write Our History? Emanuel Ringelblum, the Warsaw Ghetto, and the Oneg Shabbes Archive*, Indiana University Press, 2007. (Excerpts in Peter Hayes, ed., *How Was It Possible?*) p. 371-385

Kassow, Samuel. “The Warsaw Ghetto in the Writings of Rachel Auerbach,” in *Warsaw: The Jewish Metropolis*, p. 495-514.

Roskies, David. *The Literature of Destruction: Jewish responses to catastrophe*, Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1988. (Zalman Gradowski, p. 548-564)

Marek Edelman, “The Ghetto Fights” (1945)

9:00-10:40 **Lecture 2: Ringelblum, Huberband, and the Oneg Shabbes Archive**

Avinoam Patt, New York University

The talk will analyze the role played by surviving ghetto fighters themselves in shaping a narrative of the revolt immediately in its aftermath, helping turn the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising into the prism through which Jews around the world would remember the Holocaust. Going beyond his lecture, Professor Patt will provide a graduate seminar discussion and analysis of the readings, with the goal of examining the Oneg Shabbes Archive.

10:40-11:00 **Break**

11:00-12:40 **Seminar 2: Testimonies of Ghetto Fighters**

Avinoam Patt, UConn/New York University

Close reading and discussion of original sources including the wartime testimonies of Marek Edelman and Zivia Lubetkin.

12:40-14:00 **Lunch**

14:00-15:40 **Group work**
Students will break into groups and be assigned testimonies for their final project
Éva Kovács, Michael L. Miller, Stephen Naron, Avinoam Patt, Noah Shenker

15:40-16:00 **Break**

16:00-17:40 **Diaries as Testimonies Collect and Record! Postwar Historical Commissions**
Helena Huhák

Reading:

[Helena Huhák: Place Attachment in a Concentration Camp: Bergen-Belsen](#)

18:00-19:40 **Public Lecture - Family, Children and the Holocaust**
Daniella Doron

Readings:

Sarah Maza, The Kids Aren't All Right: Historians and the Problem of Childhood, *The American Historical Review*, Volume 125, Issue 4, October 2020, Pages 1261–1285.

Joanna B. Michlic, "A Young Person's War: The Disrupted Lives of Children and Youth"
In Simone Gigliotti, Hilary Earl (eds.) *A Companion to the Holocaust*, 2020. pp. 295-310.

July 16 – ART AND TESTIMONY

Readings

Kovács, Éva. The Sensual Memory of Shoah. The Meaning of Sound, Touch and Taste in the Culture of Testimonies. Sara Jones, Roger Woods (eds): Palgrave Handbook of Testimony and Culture. London: Palgrave, 2022. 259-278.

Henry Greenspan, Sara R. Horowitz, Éva Kovács, Berel Lang, Dori Laub, Kenneth Waltzer & Annette Wieviorka: Engaging Survivors: Assessing 'Testimony' and 'Trauma' as Foundational Concepts. *Dapim: Studies on the Holocaust*, 28:3, 190-226.

9:00-10:40 **Lecture 3: Art as Testimony**
Éva Kovács, VWI
The Meaning of Sound, Touch and Taste in the Culture of Testimonies.

10:40-11:00 **Break**

11:00-12:40 **Seminar 3: The Role of Memory Studies in Understanding Testimony**
Éva Kovács, VWI
Session on memory theory and testimony

12:40-14:00 **Lunch**

14:00-15:40 **Group work**
Éva Kovács, Michael L. Miller, Stephen Naron, Avinoam Patt, Noah Shenker

15:40-16:00 **Break**

16:00-17:40 **Golem Theater presentation**

András Borgula and Szilvia Czingel

Reading

[Szilvia Czingel: Recipes for Survival. Survival Strategies in the Lichtenwörth Concentration Camp](#)

July 17 – BELATED TESTIMONY IN AUDIOVISUAL FORM

Readings

Naron, Stephen. [Archives, Ethics and Influence: How the Fortunoff Video Archive's Methodology Shapes Its Collection's Content](#). In Werner, Dreier; Angelika, Laumer; Moritz, Wein (eds.) *Interactions: Explorations of Good Practice in Educational Work with Video Testimonies of Victims of National Socialism*. Berlin: Books on Demand GmbH, 41-51.

Hartman, Geoffrey. *The Humanities of Testimony: An Introduction*. *Poetics Today*, 27:2 (Summer 2006). Available at: <http://read.dukeupress.edu/poetics-today/article-pdf/27/2/249/458723/PT027-02-02HartmanFpp.pdf>

9:00-10:40 **Lecture 4: The Fortunoff Video Archive and its Impact**

Stephen Naron, Yale

This session will include a discussion seminar based on the readings for the course, and provide deeper insight into the history, methodology, and impact of the FVAHT over time.

10:40-11:00 **Break**

11:00-12:40 **Seminar 4: Working with the FVAHT**

Stephen Naron, Yale

This session will be a hands-on workshop and tutorial on how to use the Fortunoff Archive's digital collection.

12:40-14:00 **Lunch**

14:00-15:40 **Group Work**

Éva Kovács, Michael L. Miller, Stephen Naron, Avinoam Patt, Noah Shenker

15:40-16:00 **Break**

16:00-17:40 **Romani Testimonies in Research, Art and Activism**

Maria Bogdan, VWI Fellow

Zsuzsi Flohr, artist

Reading

[Mária Bogdán: Voice of Color series](#)

[Zsuzsi Flohr: "How I realized I was Roma, How I realized I was a Jew"](#)

July 18 – THE DIGITAL TURN, NEW CHALLENGES AND METHODS

09:00-10:40 **Lecture 5: Beyond the Era of the Witness: The Digital Afterlives of Holocaust Testimony**

Noah Shenker, Colgate University

Noah Shenker's talk will explore how the "era of the witness" marked by a consolidation of survivor memory through film, testimonies, and other media, is giving way to a period when witnesses will no longer be present to anchor representations with their living, moral authority. The talk will focus on the USC Shoah Foundation's Dimensions in Testimony Project (DiT), which uses motion-capture technology, intensive interviewing, and database-structured artificial intelligence to create a collection of on-demand virtual, interactive witnesses.

Readings

Shenker, Noah. *Reframing Holocaust Testimony*. Bloomington, 2015; Preface and Introduction, pages ix-xii; and pages 1-18)

"Pinchas-DiT: Simulation and the Imagined Future of Holocaust Survivor Memory," in *Lessons & Legacies Volume XV*, edited by Avinoam Patt and Erin McGlothlin. Evanston: Northwestern University Press (Co-authored with Dan Leopard). Publication forthcoming in 2024 (proofs are in reader).

10:40-11:00 **Break**

10:00-12:40 **Seminar 5: The Mediations of Holocaust Testimonies**

Noah Shenker, Colgate University

Building on his public presentation, Noah Shenker will engage the class in discussion of how the future prospects of Holocaust testimonies are shaped by the longer history of collecting interviews and other ego documents with survivors. While many scholars focus on the digital dimensions of Holocaust survivor testimonies, this class will explore how those more contemporary practices are intertwined with older, analog forms of documentation. Noah will engage with recent DH projects related to testimony, such as the work of Laszlo Csoz.

12:40-14:00 **Lunch**

14:00-15:00 **OSA Tour**

Judit Hegedüs

15:00-15:10 **Break**

15:10-16:40 **Seminar 6. and Group Work at OSA Blinken Archive**

Judit Hegedüs, Rape in Wartimes – Women's Testimonies

July 19 – FINAL PRESENTATIONS

9:00-10:40 **Student presentations I.**

10:40-11:00 **Break**

11:00-12:40 **Student presentations I.**

12:40-14:00 **Lunch**

14:00-15:40 **Wrap-up, Closing remarks**

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