

Topic

Bearing witness to the Holocaust was integrally related to the prosecution of the perpetrators after 1945. Many survivors who testified to their experiences did so in conscious support of the prosecution of perpetrators. Lamentations for the dead and indictments of the crimes blended together, as did demands for justice, truth, and occasionally vengeance.

Later, the realms of prosecution of and bearing witness to the Holocaust increasingly diverged. The legal testimony of survivors became a controversial issue, characterized by contradictory expectations and demands. Federal German criminal lawyers as well as a part of the general public demanded by reference to constitutional principles that the trials against perpetrators of and collaborators in the state-organized mass murder be conducted as completely ordinary criminal trials. From this perspective, the survivors, with their deep traumas, were dubious witnesses, too biased and emotional. Witness credibility was assessed not least of all in the extent to which they exhibited signs of hatred or feelings of vengeance.

Former concentration camp inmates and Holocaust survivors continued using the trials to publicly proclaim their knowledge of the crimes within the frameworks enabled by criminal law. Their motives and concerns were manifold; their ability to make themselves understood in court varied. Legal testimony concerning the Holocaust was a transnational phenomenon; the origins of the witnesses in different, often shifting communities of remembrance and the languages that were spoken on the witness stand significantly shaped the contents and reception of the testimony. This workshop will discuss the legal testimony of Holocaust survivors from various disciplinary perspectives and with regard to different time periods and countries.

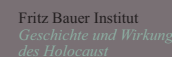
Venue

Leibniz Institute for Jewish History and Culture – Simon Dubnow
Goldschmidtstr. 28, 04103 Leipzig
Seminar Room

Contact and Registration (until 29 March)

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Cover Illustration: The Polish Jew Estera Raab in the first Sobibor trial against Erich Bauer in West Berlin on 8 May 1950, in: Die Neue Zeitung, 9 May 1950, 8 (Photo: UP).



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Dubnow



Juridical Testimonies after 1945 – Expectations, Contexts and Comparisons

Workshop

8–9 April 2019



Program

Monday, 8 April 2019

- 13.30** Registration
- 14.00** **Jörg Deventer/Elisabeth Gallas**
Welcome
Katharina Stengel/Dagi Knellessen
Introduction
- 14.30** **Early Testimonies – Early Trials**
Chair: Dominique Trimbur
- Natalia Aleksion**
Survivors and Witnesses – Early Jewish Testimonies at Collaboration Trials in Poland
- Axel Doßmann**
Testifying Outside the Courtroom – Accusation, Revenge and Reflections on Mankind by European DPs in David P. Boder's Interviews from 1946
- Anna Hájková**
Narrative Agency of Theresienstadt Survivors
- 16.00** Coffee Break
- 16.30** **Keynote Lecture**
Gabriel Finder
Jewish Witnesses and Postwar Justice in Communist Poland
- 18.00** Buffet
- 19.45** **Movie Screening**
Zeugin aus der Hölle/Witness Out of Hell
Germany/Yugoslavia, 1966,
Director: Zika Mitrović; Producers: Artur Brauner, Aleksandar Krstić; Actors: Irene Papas, Daniel Gélin, Heinz Drache.
83 min., German with English subtitles
Introduction: Katharina Stengel

Tuesday, 9 April 2019

- 09.30** **Multiple Expectations – Functions of Witnessing**
Chair: Nicolas Berg
- Achim Saupe**
Historical Method, Victim Testimonies, and Existential Authenticity
- Aurélia Kalisky**
Refusal to Testify – Testimony, Denial, and the Violence of the Law
- Yehudit Dori-Deston**
"The Podium of Law and the Podium of History"
The Multifunctional Position of the Survivors Testimonies in the Eichmann and the Demjanjuk Trials
- 11.00** Coffee Break
- 11.30** **Multiple Expectations – Justice and Revenge**
Chair: Werner Konitzer
- Katarzyna Person**
Reactions to Postwar Collaboration Trials in Transnational Perspective
- Katharina Stengel**
Revenge and Resentment in West German Nazi Trials
- 12.30** Lunch
- 14.00** **Transnational Witnessing**
Chair: Elisabeth Gallas
- Peter Davies**
Knowledge, Testimony, Translation – Interpreters at the First Frankfurt Auschwitz Trial
- Dagi Knellessen**
The Barriers of Transnational Witnessing – German Sobibor Trials in the 1960s
- 15.00** **Concluding Discussion**
- 16.00** End of Conference

Participants

Dr. Natalia Aleksion, Touro College, New York/Imre Kertész Kolleg, Jena | **Dr. Nicolas Berg**, Dubnow Institute, Leipzig | **Prof. Dr. Peter Davies**, University of Edinburgh | **Prof. Dr. Jörg Deventer**, Dubnow Institute, Leipzig | **Adv. Dr. Yehudit Dori-Deston**, Israeli Supreme Court, Jerusalem | **Dr. Axel Doßmann**, Friedrich Schiller University Jena | **Prof. Dr. Gabriel Finder**, University of Virginia, Charlottesville | **Dr. Elisabeth Gallas**, Dubnow Institute, Leipzig | **Dr. Anna Hájková**, University of Warwick | **Dr. Aurélia Kalisky**, Leibniz-Zentrum für Literatur- und Kulturforschung, Berlin | **Dagi Knellessen**, Dubnow Institute, Leipzig | **Prof. Dr. Werner Konitzer**, European University Viadrina Frankfurt (Oder) | **Dr. Katarzyna Person**, Jewish Historical Institute, Warsaw | **Dr. Achim Saupe**, Centre for Contemporary History, Potsdam | **Dr. Katharina Stengel**, Dubnow Institute, Leipzig | **Dr. Dominique Trimbur**, Foundation for the Memory of the Shoah, Paris