

EINLADUNG

SIMON WIESENTHAL LECTURE

CAROLYN J. DEAN
BEARING WITNESS TO GENOCIDE:
REVISITING THE EICHMANN TRIAL

Donnerstag, 24. Mai 2018, 18:30 Uhr
Dachfoyer des Haus-, Hof- und Staatsarchivs
1010 Wien, Minoritenplatz 1

WIENER WIESENTHAL INSTITUT
FÜR HOLOCAUST-STUDIEN (VWI)



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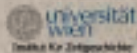
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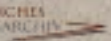
This lecture addresses how “bearing witness to genocide” became a central trope of contemporary Western moral culture. The 1960/61 trial of Adolf Eichmann in Jerusalem put victims of genocide centre-stage and affirmed the pre-eminence of the Jewish Holocaust survivor in European and especially American politics and culture. The lecture revisits the Eichmann trial to understand its contribution not simply to bringing the world’s attention to the Jewish dimension of the Holocaust, but also to understanding how the trial shaped the pervasive figure of the Jewish “witness” who marked the Holocaust as a caesura in human history. The Holocaust survivor remained the iconic witness even when, after the 1990s, the witness to genocide became a more generic symbol of suffering humanity in the shadow of all state-sponsored mass violence against persons and cultures. The lecture suggests that only by placing the witness to genocide in a longer historical trajectory can we understand why the Holocaust remains iconic in spite of the occurrence of many other genocides since.

Carolyn J. Dean is Charles J. Stille Professor of History and French at Yale University. She is a cultural and intellectual historian of modern Europe and the author of five books, including *The Fragility of Empathy after the Holocaust and Aversion and Erasure: The Fate of the Victim after the Holocaust*. Her forthcoming book, *From the Survivor to the Activist: Bearing Witness to Genocide in the Twentieth and Twenty-First Centuries*, will be published with Cornell University Press in early 2019. This lecture is a part of that work, which traces the emergence and transformation of the witness to genocide from inter-war trials in France and Germany, before the crime had a name, until the 1990s, when the witness to genocide appeared in the International Criminal Court and throughout various media.

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