

The 1952 German-Jewish Settlement and Beyond

New Perspectives on Reparations
During and After the Cold War

Workshop

Vienna, 9–10 October 2023

Vienna Wiesenthal Institute for Holocaust Studies (VWI)
Rabensteig 3, 1010 Vienna, Research Lounge, 3rd Floor



German Chancellor Konrad Adenauer and Israeli Foreign Minister Moshe Sharetz signing the Luxembourg Agreement regarding the provision of reparations and compensations on 10 September 1952.

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Simon Wiesenthal Workshop 2023

Abstracts & CVs

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Welcome Notes

Monday, 9 October 2023

12:00–12:15

Jochen Böhler (Vienna Wiesenthal Institute for Holocaust Studies, VWI)

Gideon Reuveni (Weidenfeld Institute of Jewish Studies, University of Sussex, US)

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Jochen Boehler is a historian and an expert on the history of violence in Eastern Europe in the 20th century. PhD at the University of Cologne (2006), Habilitation at the Friedrich Schiller University of Jena (2019), Director of the Vienna Wiesenthal Institute for Holocaust Studies (VWI) since 2022. He was a research associate at the German Historical Institute Warsaw (2000–2010), a senior researcher at the Imre Kertész Kolleg Jena (2010–2019), a fellow at the US Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington (2004) and Yad Vashem in Jerusalem (2007/08), a visiting professor at Sorbonne University in Paris (2017) and acting professor of Eastern European history at Friedrich Schiller University in Jena (2019–2022).

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Gideon Reuveni is Director of the Weidenfeld Institute of Jewish Studies at the University of Sussex. His main research and teaching interest is the cultural and social history of modern European and Jewish history. He is the author of the prize-winning book *Consumer Culture and the Making of Jewish Identity* (Cambridge University Press, 2018). He is currently working on a book-length publication on the history of German compensation payments to victims of National Socialism.

Elazar Barkan
(Columbia University)

Keynote: Atonement, Reparations and Historical Dialogue

The uniqueness of the Luxembourg Agreement stemmed from Germany's pursue of reparation as atonement and that it was not imposed on West Germany as retribution by the Allies. It was motivated by Adenauer's belief that the 'civilised world' requires German atonement. This monumental new policy, however, did not lead to the expansion of reparation policies to other post conflict cases until the 1980s. It was then that the reparation debate expanded. What is the scope of reparation today? Where is it going?

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Elazar Barkan is a Professor of International and Public Affairs and the Director of the Human Rights Concentration at Columbia's School of International and Public Affairs. He was the founding director of the Institute for Historical Justice and Reconciliation (IHJR) in The Hague. Barkan served on the ISHR's board of directors before becoming ISHR's co-director in 2007 and director in 2008. Previously, he served as chair of the History Department and the Cultural Studies Department at the Claremont Graduate University, where he was the founding director of the Humanities Center. Barkan is a historian and received his PhD from Brandeis University.

Chair: Éva Kovács (VWI)

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Éva Kovács is the Deputy Director (Academic Affairs) of the Vienna Wiesenthal Institute for Holocaust Studies. Kovács studied sociology and economics at the Corvinus University in Budapest, PhD 1994, Habilitation 2009. She is also a Research Professor at the Institute of Sociology at the Center for Social Sciences in Budapest. Her research fields are the history of the Holocaust in Eastern and Central Europe, research on memory and remembrance, and Jewish identity in Hungary and Slovakia. She has authored five monographs, edited ten volumes, published numerous articles in peer-reviewed journals, co-curated exhibitions in Budapest, Berlin, Bratislava, Krems, Prague, Vienna, and Warsaw. She is the founder of the digital audio-visual archive "Voices of the Twentieth Century" in Budapest. Her current research projects include the topography of the Hungarian Jewish forced labor in Vienna (1944/45).

Panel 1: Looking at the German-Jewish Settlement from the Cold War Perspective

Monday, 9 October 2023

13:15–14:15

Chair: Daniel Siemens (University of Newcastle)

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Daniel Siemens is Professor of European History at Newcastle University. He is interested in the political, cultural and social history of Europe and the United States in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. His latest publication is a special issue of the *Journal of Modern European History* on 'Reparations and the Historiography of the Holocaust: An Entangled History', co-edited with Regula Ludi in 2023. Siemens is currently working with Gideon Reuveni on a global history of the United Restitution Organisation (URO). In 23-24, will be one of the leaders of the international research group 'Paying for the Past? Reparations after the Holocaust in Global Context' at the Israel Institute for Advanced Studies (IIAS).

Lorena De Vita
(Utrecht University)

Criticising the *Wiedergutmachung*: East Germany's Narratives for National and International Audiences

In the afternoon of 4 November 1960, East German journalist Friedrich Wilhelm Heilmann had an interesting appointment – he was in Tel Aviv to meet with the foreign policy editor of *Kol HaAm*, Israel's Communist Party's newspaper. He had several questions to discuss. Most prominently, Heilmann wanted to talk with his Israeli counterpart, Caspi, about the upcoming Eichmann trial. There were several topics that the East German authorities were planning to insist on. Caspi gave him some good advice, namely not to try to portray the West German *Wiedergutmachung* negatively. After all, Caspi remarked, 'financial, material reparations do play a role among the masses whose life standard is not the highest'.

This presentation will explore the ways in which East German representatives and propaganda organs discussed, framed, and critiqued the *Wiedergutmachung* when dealing with audiences, both at home and abroad. What kind of themes did their propaganda focus on, and why? What kind of changes were in the message aimed at – for example – Arab and Israeli audiences, and to what extent did they differ? The talk will be based on multi-national archival research and oral history interviews, including with some former East German diplomats, and it will argue that the *Wiedergutmachung* formed a key focus of the East German propaganda, both at home and abroad.

Monday, 9 October 2023, 13:15
Panel 1: Looking at the German-Jewish Settlement from the Cold War Perspective

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Lorena De Vita is an Assistant Professor of the History of International Relations at Utrecht University. She held several competitive fellowships, including at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem and at the House of the Wannsee Conference in Berlin. She is the author of *Israelpolitik: German-Israeli Relations 1949-1969* (Manchester University Press, 2020). Her work has appeared in leading scholarly journals, such as *Chatham House's International Affairs and Cold War History*, as well as in public outlets such as *The Conversation and The Washington Post*. At Utrecht University, she is leading a five year research project funded by the Alfred Landecker Foundation entitled: "Holocaust Diplomacy: The Global Politics of Memory and Forgetting".

Maya Mark
(Ben Gurion University)

A Tale of Two Oppositions: The Liberal Right and the Socialist Left against the Reparations Agreement

The Israeli government's announcement regarding advanced negotiations with the German government for a reparation agreement ignited a vigorous public debate within Israel. It had set the spotlight on more than a few core questions concerning the post-Holocaust perception of Jewish sovereignty and Jewish nationalism. It also hurled Israel's position in the conflict between the Western block and the Eastern block to the forefront of public discourse.

Leading the opposition to the reparations agreement were two markedly distant parties: Herut, a right-wing national-liberal party, and Mapam, a socialist left-wing party. From the moment of the agreement's announcement, these two parties initiated determined and well-articulated public campaigns. However, despite both parties' resolute objections to the reparations agreement, their rationales diverged significantly.

A comparative analysis of the stances taken by the Israeli left and right reveals three foundational contrasts: Firstly, the profound Ideological differences between the liberal right-wing party and the socialist left-wing party. Secondly, whereas the left focused on the „communist world of tomorrow,“ thus emphasising the future, the right centered its focus entirely on the past. This differing focal point led the two parties to opposing conclusions: While Mapam demonstrated a willingness to compromise on the matter of German accountability, Herut staunchly refused any form of reconciliation. Thirdly, as Mapam directed its gaze outward to the international arena, Herut became invested in an internal Jewish discourse. Mapam perceived the reparations agreement as a pivotal moment in Israel's foreign policy and as a turning point in its stance on the Cold War. In contrast, Herut considered the reparations agreement primarily as a core element in the construction and shaping of the new Jewish nationalism.

The analysis of the perspectives expressed by these two ideologically distant parties yields profound insights that extend well beyond the boundaries of the campaign itself. It reflects diverse viewpoints regarding Israel's Cold War positioning, the ongoing ideological struggle between nationalism, liberalism, and socialism on both global and domestic scales, and the process of reconciliation between Germans and Jews.

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Maya Mark is an Assistant Professor at The Ben-Gurion Research Institute for the Study of Israel and Zionism, Ben-Gurion University of the Negev. She has been trained as a political and legal historian at Tel-Aviv University. Her doctoral thesis (and upcoming book) delves into Menachem Begin's perspective on democracy and governance. The study showcased in this workshop is a component of a larger project dedicated to examining the perception of nationalism within the Israeli right.

Panel 2: Money and Memory During the Cold War

Monday, 9 October 2023

15:00–16:00

Chair: Markus Feurstein (Claims Conference)

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Markus Feurstein is the representative of the Claims Conference in Austria. Based in Vienna he is coordinating negotiations and cooperations with the Austrian Government, representing the Claims Conference in different Austrian boards and institutions and, additionally, he is overseeing and coordinating extensive Social Welfare programs for Shoah survivors as well as memorial and educational projects in various CEE Countries (i.e. Czechia, Slovakia, Hungary, Croatia, Serbia and Bosnia). Feurstein holds a master's degree in laws and a master's degree in cultural sciences. Previous professional experience includes employment for JDC (www.jdc.org) and a volunteer service for the Fundación Memoria del Holocausto in Buenos Aires.

Iris Nachum
(The Hebrew University of Jerusalem)

Cold War and Compensation: Thoughts on the Nexus Between Memory and Property

The presentation discusses the epistemological relation between property and memory during the Cold War. This relation is explored through the lens of the West German Equalization of Burdens Law, which was enacted in 1952 to compensate ethnic Germans for property they had lost when they fled or were expelled from Central and Eastern Europe after the Second World War. The theoretical background of the presentation assumes that private property, in particular real estate, serves as a repository that stores individual and collective memories of its past and current owners. Based on this assumption, the presentation challenges the thesis that expropriation and nationalisation of private property in the Eastern bloc “neutralised” memories of the Second World War, its prehistories, and the Holocaust. Rather than analysing how the Cold War spread a “cloak of forgetting” (Dan Diner) over Central and Eastern Europe, the presentation shows how the very act of claiming compensation acted as a motor for recollection. This “deneutralisation” is illustrated by the case of German expellees who demanded compensation for their expulsion-related property damages under the Equalization of Burdens Law. Based on the analysis of several compensation files, the presentation addresses in particular the question of how the fact that the lost real estate was located behind the Iron Curtain created and shaped memories of the compensation claimants.

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Iris Nachum is Assistant Professor of Modern European History at The Hebrew University of Jerusalem where she also serves as Deputy Director of the Jacob Robinson Institute for the History of Individual and Collective Rights. Her research explores the interactions between demands, practices, and discourses of compensation in the intra-German, German-Israeli, and German-Jewish contexts. The topic of her current project is compensation under the West German Equalization of Burdens Law. Currently, she co-organises with Gideon Reuveni and Daniel Siemens a research group on “globalization of compensation” at the Israel Institute for Advanced Studies.

Daniel Siemens
(University of Newcastle)

Reparations and Oil: British Diplomats on the Geopolitical Dimension of the Luxembourg Agreement of 1952

This paper focuses on the British perspectives on the negotiations between the Federal Republic of Germany and Israel in 1952 by making use of the relevant archival holdings from the British Foreign Office, the considerable specialist literature available as well as general newspaper coverage from the time. While Dominique Trimbur and Michael Wolffsohn have analysed the US-American influence on the reparation negotiations and West Germany's nascent Israel policy in the early 1950s, no similar study on the British observations and policies has been undertaken so far. I will advance the argument that the British government, businessmen and journalists recognised the Luxembourg Agreement as a major step in the relationship of the two contracting states, but that short-term economic interests as well as mid-term geopolitical considerations mattered most when it came to assessing the consequences of this agreement. The British government welcomed German reparations to secure Israel's ability to pay for oil delivered by British companies but also perceived them as an economic and political risk to their ambitions in the Middle East. By examining a hitherto little-noticed chapter of British foreign policy in the Cold War, the paper contributes to a better understanding of how reparations and economic interests were intertwined during the Cold War.

Monday, 9 October 2023, 15:20
Panel 2: Money and Memory During the Cold War

Daniel.Siemens@newcastle.ac.uk

Daniel Siemens is Professor of European History at Newcastle University. He is interested in the political, cultural and social history of Europe and the United States in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. His latest publication is a special issue of the *Journal of Modern European History* on 'Reparations and the Historiography of the Holocaust: An Entangled History', co-edited with Regula Ludi in 2023. Siemens is currently working with Gideon Reuveni on a global history of the United Restitution Organisation (URO). In 23-24, will be one of the leaders of the international research group 'Paying for the Past? Reparations after the Holocaust in Global Context' at the Israel Institute for Advanced Studies (IIAS).

Panel 3: German Reparation and the Iron Curtain (I): The Case of Romania

Monday, 9 October 2023

16:15–17:15

Chair: Constantin Iordachi (Central European University / VWI)

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Constantin Iordachi is a Professor at the History Department of Central European University (CEU), President of the International Association for Comparative Fascist Studies (ComFas), and member of Academia Europaea-The Academy of Europe. He serves as a member of the Academic Committee of the House of European History, Brussels. Iordachi is editor-in-chief of the CEU Review of Books, co-editor-in-chief of the journal *East Central Europe*, and consultant editor of the journal *Fascism: Comparative Fascist Studies*.

Reparations for Survivors of the Camp of Death: Vapniarka as a Case Study

Vapniarka was a concentration camp in the region of Transnistria occupied from 1941-1944 by Romania under the fascist military dictatorship of Marshal Antonescu. In this region more than 400,000 local and Romanian Jews were killed by shootings, imposed hunger and cold. Vapniarka was one of only two official concentration camps in this region, the rest being ghettos and unofficial spaces of concentration. Categorized by the Antonescu regime as a political prisoners' camp in 1942, a lot of the 1,200 Jews from Bukowina, Bessarabia and Old Kingdom Romania were brought here, only 150 of them with clear political sentences. A regime of extermination was imposed in the early months of captivity through the poisoned grains distributed as food. More than half of the survivors remained either with paralysis or with other permanent aftereffects. The presentation will focus on the postwar efforts to receive adequate reparations for the hundreds of Vapniarka survivors that for the rest of their lives were no longer able to work. These efforts were unique because the victims did not fit within the existing categories initially defined by the German state starting in 1952. They had been considered political prisoners, and because they lived in a communist state, they did not qualify for compensation (the 1956 law did not recognise communist states as qualifying for compensation). Also unique was the organisational strategy of these survivors, who formed an association in order to support each other and lobby collectively, rather than individually, for these reparations. Throughout the years and over the course of the various new *Wiedergutmachung* laws, the Vapniarka survivors encountered challenges to their claims denying them their rightful compensations as Germany tried to place the blame at Romania's door and Romania blaming exclusively Germany, not recognising its own guilt. With the faithful support of the camp's doctors who kept detailed notes on the inmates' symptoms and illnesses during captivity and after, the survivors started to receive modest compensations only in the 1960s. Later, with the help of a German woman working for Christian-Jewish reconciliation, an aid committee was set up and the remaining survivors finally received a more just compensation for their sufferings in the 1980s.

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Olga Stefan is a doctoral student in Historical Sociology at Alexandru Ioan Cuza University of Iasi, Romania, with a thesis on Vapniarka. She is the founder of The Future of Memory, www.thefutureofmemory.ro, a transnational platform for Holocaust remembrance through art and media, a documentary filmmaker, curator and author of the books *The Future of Memory* and *Salva Viseu 1948: Then and Now*. Her chapter *Vapniarka: Personal Memory from the Camp of Death* is published in the volume *Memories of Terror*, CEEOL Press, Frankfurt and another chapter on Vapniarka is forthcoming in a volume published by Peter Lang

Ștefan Cristian Ionescu
(Northwestern University, IL, USA)

Compensations for Jewish Survivors in Early Post-Holocaust Romania

The few historians who examined the aftermath of the Holocaust in Romania have argued that because of the postwar economic difficulties, antisemitism and Romania's ideological commitments to build a Marxist non-capitalist society, the post-World War II communist governments were neither able nor willing to pay compensations to Jewish survivors. They were only partially right. In fact, the Romanian communist regime paid compensations to a limited number of Holocaust Jewish survivors - invalids, widows, and orphans - in the form of small pensions. These Jewish survivors were part of a broader category of recipients, including the country's "antifascist fighters" and other victims of the racial, anti-communist, and anti-minority policies implemented by the interwar and World War II capitalist, fascist, and militaristic governments, including the Antonescu regime (1940-1944).

The main law stipulating this social welfare program was adopted by Romania as a result of the Allies' pressure through the 1947 Peace Treaty. The communist authorities adopted, on 1 April 1948, Law no. 82 "Eligibility Criteria for Some Categories of Citizens' Benefits Under Law 794/1941." This law aimed to provide pensions to the people who became disabled, widowed, or orphaned, and to their descendants, as a result of any form of non-democratic, racial, religious persecutions. The law assimilated these people with the broader category of war invalids, veterans, and orphans. While apparently this was a very helpful law for the survivors, in practice the authorities proved very strict in assessing disabilities and other interwar and wartime persecutions and in issuing certificates.

Based on archival documents, legislation, press, and ego-documents this paper examines the political-social context for the emergence of this reparatory legislation in early post-WWII Romania, the stipulations and the problems of law no. 82, and several cases of Jewish survivors who applied for the pensions.

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Ștefan Cristian Ionescu is currently the Theodore Zev and Alice R. Weiss-Holocaust Educational Foundation Visiting Associate Professor in Holocaust Studies at Northwestern University, in Evanston, IL, USA. He is the author of several book chapters and articles in such journals as *Holocaust and Genocide Studies*; *Israel Journal of Foreign Policy*; *Nationalities Papers: The Journal of Ethnicity and Nationalism*; *Journal of Genocide Research*; *Holocaust Studies: A Journal of History and Culture*; *Yad Vashem Studies*. His book *Jewish Resistance to Romanianization: 1940-1944* was published by Palgrave Macmillan in 2015.

Reckonings, Director: Roberta Grossman

USA, 2022, 74 minutes, English/German/Hebrew, OV with English subtitles

Monday, 9 October 2023

17:30–19:30

CineCentre, Fleischmarkt 6, 1010 Vienna

It's been said that it felt as if the souls of the six million who were murdered during the Holocaust were in the room with them when the meetings began. They met in secret to negotiate the unthinkable – compensation for the survivors of the largest mass genocide the world had ever known. Survivors were in urgent need of help, but how could reparations be determined for the unprecedented destruction of a people and atrocities suffered by millions? *Reckonings* explores this fascinating true story set in the aftermath of the Holocaust and leading to the groundbreaking Luxembourg Agreements of 1952.

Directed by award-winning filmmaker Roberta Grossman (*Who Will Write Our History*) and commissioned by the German Ministry of Finance and the Claims Conference, the film is the first documentary feature to chronicle the harrowing process of negotiating German reparations for the Jewish people. It takes viewers from the halls of power in Bonn, West Germany, where fierce debate raged over how to pay wartime debts, to the streets of Jerusalem, where horror about any talks with Germany led to violent protests and a mob storming the Knesset. It profiles Jewish and German leaders who risked their lives to meet in a hidden castle near the Hague to negotiate the impossible. It captures the anger on one side, the shame on the other, and the anguish for all as talks broke down and failure seemed imminent. And it honors the behind-the-scenes figures who forged ahead to continue negotiations, knowing the compensation would never be enough but hoping it could at least be an acknowledgement, a recognition and a step toward healing.

Filmed in six countries and featuring new interviews with Holocaust survivors, world-renowned scholars and dignitaries and the last surviving member of the negotiating delegations, *Reckonings* powerfully illustrates how political will and a moral imperative can join forces to bridge an impossible divide.

Roberta Grossman speaks to students and communities about Jewish history and documentary filmmaking as a tool for social justice. Grossman received the

2018 Washington Jewish Film Festival's Annual Visionary Award, which recognises "creativity and insight in presenting the full diversity of the Jewish experience through the moving image." In the past ten years, she has directed and produced four feature documentaries about Jewish history and culture - *Blessed Is the Match: The Life and Death of Hannah Senesh* (2008); *Hava Nagila* (The Movie) (2012); *Above and Beyond* (2014) and *Who Will Write Our History* (2018). She received her undergraduate degree with honors in history at UC Berkeley and her M.A. in film from the American Film Institute.

Chair: Gideon Reuveni (Weidenfeld Institute of Jewish Studies, US)

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Gideon Reuveni is Director of the Weidenfeld Institute of Jewish Studies at the University of Sussex. His main research and teaching interest is the cultural and social history of modern European and Jewish history. He is the author of the prize-winning book *Consumer Culture and the Making of Jewish Identity* (Cambridge University Press, 2018). He is currently working on a book-length publication on the history of German compensation payments to victims of National Socialism.

Kinga Frojimovics
(VWI)

Guided Tour in the Simon Wiesenthal Archive: The Wiesenthal Correspondence on Reparation

In the 1950s, the Federal Republic of Germany, and later also Austria, agreed to provide partial financial compensation to those persecuted for racial, religious, and political reasons during the Holocaust. This happened mainly under pressure from the Allies and various international Jewish organisations. One of these organisations was the Jewish Restitution Successor Organization (JRSO), which was founded in 1948 by 13 international Jewish organisations to locate and retrieve heirless private and communal property in the U.S. occupation zone in Germany. The US military government had authorised the JSRO to use any recovered resources to help survivors and refugees in need. The archival holdings of the Simon Wiesenthal Archive testify that Simon Wiesenthal played a very active role in this process in Austria and throughout the second half of the 20th century remained very committed to a wide range of reparation issues. During the guided tour we will present the different stages of this process through typical archival documents.

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Kinga Frojimovics, Ph.D. archivist and historian. She is the former Director of the Hungarian Jewish Archives (Budapest) and former head of the Hungarian Section of the Yad Vashem Archives (Jerusalem). Currently she is an Archivist at the Vienna Wiesenthal Institute for Holocaust Studies, and project leader of “The History of Hungarian Jewish Forced Labour in Vienna, 1944/45” (project I 4666-G of the Austrian Science Fund).

Panel 4: German Reparation and the Iron Curtain (II): Hungary and Yugoslavia

Tuesday, 10 October 2023

10:00–11:20

Chair: Éva Kovács (VWI)

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Éva Kovács is the Deputy Director (Academic Affairs) of the Vienna Wiesenthal Institute for Holocaust Studies. Kovács studied sociology and economics at the Corvinus University in Budapest, PhD 1994, Habilitation 2009. She is also a Research Professor at the Institute of Sociology at the Center for Social Sciences in Budapest. Her research fields are the history of the Holocaust in Eastern and Central Europe, research on memory and remembrance, and Jewish identity in Hungary and Slovakia. She has authored five monographs, edited ten volumes, published numerous articles in peer-reviewed journals, co-curated exhibitions in Budapest, Berlin, Bratislava, Krems, Prague, Vienna, and Warsaw. She is the founder of the digital audio-visual archive “Voices of the Twentieth Century” in Budapest. Her current research projects include the topography of the Hungarian Jewish forced labor in Vienna (1944/45).

Borbála Klacsmann
(University College Dublin)

Squeezing Water from a Stone? West German Restitution for Hungarian Survivors

In 1957, 62,000 Hungarian Holocaust survivors applied for restitution. Since they had never received restitution from the Hungarian state, this was the first opportunity that they could hope for at least a partial settlement of the damages caused during the Holocaust. However, the state from which they required compensation was the Federal Republic of Germany, which had no diplomatic relations with Hungary at that time. Still, in the hope of the influx of foreign (Western) currency, Hungarian politicians and diplomats made efforts to force the FRG to at least acknowledge the right of Hungarian survivors to get restitution. For this purpose, the NÜÉSZ (Nácizmus Magyarországi Üldözötteinek Országos Érdekvédelmi Szervezete; Hungarian National Committee of Persons Persecuted by Nazism), a Jewish representative organisation was established.

The two governments reached an agreement in 1971, according to which the West German government provided DM 6.25 million to the Hungarian survivors. In the coming years, through the mediation of the NÜÉSZ, the restitution processes of those Jews who had applied fourteen years earlier, finally started. This already indicates a core problem: more than 25 years had passed since the Holocaust, and in the meantime, several survivors had passed away, and thousands of survivors had had to restart their lives from scratch, without that financial support, which an earlier restitution would have meant. Moreover, the socialist Hungarian state often profited on the restitution sums through the currency exchange, which was centrally controlled.

This presentation will explore the historical, political, and diplomatic context, the drawbacks and disadvantages, but also the historical and moral value of the West German restitution of Hungarian Holocaust survivors. Additionally, on the basis of a number of restitution cases, it will flesh out local characteristics too.

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Borbála Klacsmann is a Hungarian Holocaust historian. Her areas of expertise include the microhistory of the Hungarian Holocaust and the restitution and compensation of Holocaust survivors. She completed her doctoral studies at the Department of History at the University of Szeged in 2021. Previously she worked for the Holocaust Memorial Center in Budapest, the Anne Frank House, and the Yad Vashem Archives. Currently she is a postdoctoral researcher at the Centre for War Studies, University College Dublin, in the project entitled *When Nationalism Fails: A Comparative Study of Holocaust Museums*. She is also the editorial assistant of *Eastern European Holocaust Studies* and the owner and editor of the popular history Facebook page *Holokausztörténetek*.

Máté Zombory
(ELTE University, Budapest)

The Politics of Historical Documentation: The Cold War and the Hungarian Reparations Claims in West Germany

The history of German reparations to victims of National Socialism is inseparable from the context of the Cold War. Not only was the 1952 Luxembourg Agreement, the founding milestone of this history, embedded into the international relations of the Western system of alliance, but also its scope reflected the political engagement of the “free world” as residents in the Communist Bloc were not eligible. The West German reparations law in 1953 (*Bundesentschädigungsgesetz*, BEG) followed the same pattern of the Hallstein doctrine when it restricted eligibility to those claimants, who if not former residents of the Third Reich, had to live in countries maintaining official diplomatic relations with the Federal Republic. As a consequence, Hungarian claims at the end of the 1950s were submitted according to the 1957 Federal Restitution Act (*Bundesrückerstattungsgesetz*), which, though it also conditioned restitution payments to diplomatic relations, at least permitted to submit official demands of reparations.

This paper will focus on one important aspect of the political context of Cold War restitution processes: historical documentation. Both the Hungarian authorities as claimant and the German authorities as judge and reparations provider were compelled to prove their claims by historical documents. However, the two parties were differently, even oppositely interested in the historically accurate assessment of the Nazi occupation of Hungary. While the German side attempted to prove Hungarian responsibility in the looting of Jewish property, the Hungarian side pointed to the role of the occupying forces.

The paper will give a case study of this “politics of documentation” when dealing with the way the different actors relied on Hungarian journalist Jenő Lévai’s work of Holocaust documentation, and also the role he himself played as expert witness in various restitution processes in West Germany. Particular attention will be paid to the case of baron Ferenc Hatvany’s art collection between 1958 and 1974.

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Máté Zombory, Senior Research Fellow at the Centre for Social Sciences in Budapest. He obtained his PhD in 2010, his dissertation was published in Hungarian and English in 2011 and 2012 respectively. His field of interest is the historical sociology of transnational and cultural memory. Current research projects include the Cold War history of Holocaust documentation with particular attention to the work of Hungarian journalist and author Jenő Lévai, and the history and memory of international antifascism. His recent publications include *Traumatársadalom. Az emlékezetpolitika történeti-szociológiai kritikája* [Trauma Society. A Historical-Sociological Critique of the Politics of Memory] (2019) and various articles.

Ana Ćirić Pavlović
(ELTE University, Budapest)

Revisiting the Tito-Brandt Gentlemen's Agreement: *Kapitalhilfe* instead of Reparations to Yugoslavia and Israeli-Yugoslav Jews

Twenty years after the Luxembourg agreement between Israel and the Federal Republic of Germany, German negotiation position in the international arena changed significantly. West Germany regained its economic strength and owing to the diplomatic skillfulness of its chancellors, chances of concluding another similar reparation agreement decreased dramatically.

This essay aims to shed light on the German indemnifications to the Yugoslav state for the immense destruction and plunder of the local infrastructure, as well as for the enormous number of victims of the Nazi persecution in this country. Precisely the latter settlement regarding the reparations for the human casualties was the focus of the long, complex and arduous negotiations that were concluded only in 1973. The exact content of this agreement between Yugoslav president Josip Broz Tito and German chancellor Willy Brandt at the Brionian Islands was kept under the veil of secrecy and even nowadays it spurs controversy. Namely, it failed to provide direct financial compensation but allowed only for the *Kapitalhilfe* to Yugoslavia. In addition, the German side insisted on utilising the term “economic cooperation” instead of “war reparation” to avoid possible claims from other countries of the Eastern bloc.

Finally, drawing on unpublished archival material of Branko Grossman, a prominent lawyer and leader of Yugoslav Jewish community in Israel, this paper will include their experience with the compensations from the Luxembourg agreement as well as their reflections on Yugoslav-German settlement.

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Ana Ćirić Pavlović is the Claims Conference Fellow for researching the restitution of Jewish property in Bosnia and Hercegovina and a PhD Candidate at Atelier Department at ELTE University (Hungary). She is a recipient of the 2022 Gaon Dissertation Prize by the Moshe David Gaon Center for Ladino Culture (Israel). She holds MA degrees in Jewish History from CEU (Hungary) and in International Law and Human Rights from European Institute (Spain). She also was the Marie Skłodowska-Curie Fellow for researching antisemitism in East-Central Europe. Currently, she develops an online repository dedicated to digital preservation of Jewish heritage in South-East Europe.

Panel 5: Challenges and Legacies of the 1952 German-Jewish Settlement

Tuesday, 10 October 2023

11:40–12:40

Chair: Iris Nachum (The Hebrew University of Jerusalem)

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Iris Nachum is Assistant Professor of Modern European History at The Hebrew University of Jerusalem where she also serves as Deputy Director of the Jacob Robinson Institute for the History of Individual and Collective Rights. Her research explores the interactions between demands, practices, and discourses of compensation in the intra-German, German-Israeli, and German-Jewish contexts. The topic of her current project is compensation under the West German Equalization of Burdens Law. Currently, she co-organises with Gideon Reuveni and Daniel Siemens a research group on “globalization of compensation” at the Israel Institute for Advanced Studies.

Katrin Steffen
(US)

Never Ending Story: Poland and the Question(s) of Reparations during the 1950s and post 1989

Ever since the end of World War II, that caused unprecedented devastation in Poland, the question of reparations has not disappeared from the agenda of Polish politics – especially during the last 20 years. Immediately after the war, the Allies decided that injured parties would receive material, rather than financial, reparations – for Poland this meant that the Soviet Union collected and distributed the Polish share of reparations. In 1953, the People's Republic of Poland under the pressure of the Soviet Union announced that it would waive its right to further war reparations from East Germany. In 1970 Poland confirmed this during the negotiations leading to the normalisation treaty, in which West Germany recognised the Oder-Neisse border. Legally speaking, from then on, the question of reparations between Germany and Poland was closed, once more confirmed in the treaty on unification of Germany after 1989. Nevertheless, since 2004 there is an ongoing and highly politicised debate in Poland, if this historical chapter can really be seen as shut.

This talk will reconstruct some of the historical and legal procedures that led to today's situation with Poland's claims rejected by Germany. It will then concentrate on questions beyond the legal frame and ask, how this compensation claim is situated within the history of the Polish-German-Jewish triangle of relationship since 1945. It will further evaluate how this claim is to be interpreted against ongoing reparation claims globally, and, finally, where can we situate this claim (that most of Polish society supports) within the processes of transformation and transitional justice that took place in Poland after 1989, in which Polish-German as well as Polish-Jewish relations were re-ordered and Polish history re-framed. This will lead to an evaluation if today's claim is mainly an electoral strategy used by the ruling party, trying to activate once more anti-German resentments in parts of the Polish population, or if this is a more complex claim that tries to heal historical injustice.

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Katrin Steffen joined Sussex University in September 2020 as a DAAD Professor of European and Jewish History and Culture. Before coming to Sussex, she was a member of Faculty at the Nordost-Institut at the University of Hamburg, a Research Fellow at the German Historical Institute in Warsaw, and a Visiting Professor at the L'École des hautes études en sciences sociales in Paris. She has published widely on Polish-Jewish relations, on the history of Jews in Europe before, during and after the Holocaust, on Holocaust memory in Europe, on forced migrations, and on the transnational history of science, expert cultures and the circulation of knowledge.

Dani Kranz
(Ben Gurion University)

Unplanned Long-Term Effects of the Luxembourg Agreement: Jewish Migration to Germany, Israeli Migration, and Naturalisation

The Luxembourg Agreement mark the beginning of Israeli/Jewish/German relations in 'the after.' They enabled access to compensation for Jews collectively and individually; furthermore, they stand for the self-efficacy of the surviving (European) Jewry. This is not to say that compensation has been working smoothly, or without grievances. The Luxembourg Agreement also resulted in the unforeseen – and from Israeli and German sides – undesirable effect of Jews leaving Israel and migrating to Germany, to obtain compensation easier. Some of them stayed and became members of the re-established Jewish communities in Germany. Yet, the Luxembourg Agreement constituted the first of its kind; others followed, leading to the psychological effect of a reproachment, which in turn resulted in an increasing number of Israelis of the grandchildren generation (third generation) naturalising in the native countries of their grandparents.

This contribution will focus on the long-term effects of the Luxembourg Agreements, which reverberated well beyond Germany. It concentrates on the impact of the agreements/legal regulations in terms of constituting a means of rapprochement, and in creating what subsequently became a legally based 'meeting infrastructure', spanning sciences and youth exchange, and which has since outgrown the initial notion of reparations and restitutions. This has supported migration between Germany and Israel, and aspects of the naturalisation and migration of Israeli Jews of the third generation to Germany (and German non-Jews to Israel), including the general pattern of travelling to 'old homes.'

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Dani Kranz is the incumbent DAAD Humboldt chair at Colegio de Mexico, Mexico City, and an applied anthropologist and Director of Two Foxes Consulting, Germany and Israel. Her expertise covers migration, integration, ethnicity, law, state/stateliness, political life, organisations, as well as memory cultures and politics and cultural heritage. She is a consultant to the high commissioner of the German government for Jewish life and in the fight against antisemitism, member of the council for migration (Rat für Migration) and a range of other foundations, museums, and NGOs.

Panel 6: The Fall of the Iron Curtain and Austria's Way to the Washington Agreement

Tuesday, 10 October 2023

13:40–14:40

Chair: Philipp Rohrbach (VWI)

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Philipp Rohrbach studied history, Slavic studies, and contemporary history at the University of Vienna. Since 2010 he has been a Research Associate at the Vienna Wiesenthal Institute for Holocaust Studies (VWI), where he is the coordinator of Public History. He collaborated on numerous projects and curated various exhibitions, including “Goldscheider” (Leo Beck Institute NY, 2009) and “SchwarzÖsterreich. Die Kinder afroamerikanischer Besatzungssoldaten“ (Austrian Museum of Folk Life and Folk Art, Vienna, 2016). He currently heads the project Austrian Heritage Archive (Verein Gedenkdienst/VWI) together with Adina Seeger und Tom Juncker. His research interests include Jewish Austrian emigration to the USA and to Palestine/Israel, oral history, children of war, racism after 1945 and adoption studies.

Brigitte Bailer

(Documentation Center of Austrian Resistance / University of Vienna)

The Special Case of Austria: Only Last Measures of Restitution and Indemnification after 1989

Due to the Moscow Declaration on Austria, passed by the Allies in November 1943, Austria presented itself as a victim of National Socialist aggression and therefore not responsible for the regime's crimes although many Austrians had supported the regime, participated in its crimes, even in prominent leading positions, and profited from these crimes. The implementation of restitution on the one hand and social welfare measures for surviving victims of the Holocaust on the other hand only started and further developed mainly because of pressure of the Western Allies and in combination with Austria's desire for a State Treaty. After seven restitution laws, a Victims Social Welfare Act and numerous other measures restitution and indemnification came to an end in the first half of the 1960ies. Because there were various different laws and measures concerning different losses and harms it was quite difficult for the surviving victims to keep an overview of their possibility for claims. In the second half of the 1980ies the debate of the wartime past of the later Federal President Kurt Waldheim, former General Secretary of the UN, became the starting point for new historical research concerning the involvement of Austrians in the crimes of the National Socialist regime. From then on, pressure of survivors, new research, and international criticism of Austria led to new Austrian measures to close still existing gaps in restitution and indemnification. Especially the General Settlement Fund for Victims of National Socialism as well as the Fund for Reconciliation, Peace and Cooperation for compensation for Forced Labour were the result of far reaching international debates which began after 1989 due to the change of the international situation. Research done by the Historical Commission on Looting of property in the territory of the Republic of Austria in the Nazi era and acts of restitution and/or compensation by the Republic of Austria after 1945, established in 1998, supported the implementation of these new measures.

Panel 6: The Fall of the Iron Curtain and Austria's Way to the Washington Agreement

Tuesday, 10 October 2023, 13:40

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Brigitte Bailer, researcher at the and until 2014 Academic Director of the Documentation Center of Austrian Resistance, since 2003 lecturer at the Institute for Contemporary History, University of Vienna, 1998-2003 vice chair of the Austrian Historical Commission for research on looting of property in the territory of the Republic of Austria in the Nazi era and acts of restitution and/or compensation by the Republic of Austria after 1945. 2006-2022 member of the Austrian delegation to the IHRA. Central topics of research are the history of Austrian measures for victims of National Socialism and right wing extremism with focus on holocaust denial.

Nicole L. Immler
(Utrecht University)

The Afterlife of Restitution: A Perception Study of the General Settlement Funds' practices

From 2005-2009 I worked as historian at the General Settlement Fund for Victims of National Socialism (GSF), gaining insights into the legal, historical, bureaucratic, and administrative procedures of such a restitution and compensation process. The daily experiences raised many questions as the massive emotions we were confronted with, making us realise that we assume to do 'something good' while knowing little what constitutes 'good' practices. While many of the staff identified with the applicants, their needs and concerns, applicants associated us with the government we worked for. This mismatch between self-perception and perception of others was an important learning experience; and utmost relevant from/for a transgenerational perspective little was known so far. This led me to study the perception of those reparatory instruments with a three generation interview study aimed at analysing and evaluating those GSF practices from a family memory perspective (*The afterlife of restitution*, archived at the Mediathek Vienna; for results see Immler 2009, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2016). Interviewing claimants from different victim communities and their family members about their expectations and experiences with these recognition and compensation instruments, I explored the measures' implications on individual, family, community and societal level. I will present some results of this study, reflecting the broader social implications of the GSF; and then formulate some lessons learned for the field of transitional justice; for current questions such as 'how to address colonial injustices', and 'what constitutes transformative justice', thus to end with my current concern: How can we translate our gained knowledge into better reparatory practices?

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Nicole Immler, Professor of Historical Memory and Transformative Justice at the University of Humanistic Studies in Utrecht, The Netherlands. In *The Afterlife of Restitution*, she examined how former victims of National Socialism and their families experienced Austria's reparation practices; published in *Memory Studies*, *BIOS* and edited collections as 'Generationen. Nationalsozialismus und Shoah im Familiengedächtnis'. Followed by research on colonial reparations. Her current project *Dialogics of Justice* explores landmark civil court cases on historical injustice, the conditions under which people experience transformative justice.

Closing Remarks

Tuesday, 10 October 2023

14:40–15:20

Éva Kovács (VWI)

Gideon Reuveni (Weidenfeld Institute of Jewish Studies, US)

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Éva Kovács is the Deputy Director (Academic Affairs) of the Vienna Wiesenthal Institute for Holocaust Studies. Kovács studied sociology and economics at the Corvinus University in Budapest, PhD 1994, Habilitation 2009. She is also a Research Professor at the Institute of Sociology at the Center for Social Sciences in Budapest. Her research fields are the history of the Holocaust in Eastern and Central Europe, research on memory and remembrance, and Jewish identity in Hungary and Slovakia. She has authored five monographs, edited ten volumes, published numerous articles in peer-reviewed journals, co-curated exhibitions in Budapest, Berlin, Bratislava, Krems, Prague, Vienna, and Warsaw. She is the founder of the digital audio-visual archive “Voices of the Twentieth Century” in Budapest. Her current research projects include the topography of the Hungarian Jewish forced labor in Vienna (1944/45).

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Gideon Reuveni is Director of the Weidenfeld Institute of Jewish Studies at the University of Sussex. His main research and teaching interest is the cultural and social history of modern European and Jewish history. He is the author of the prize-winning book *Consumer Culture and the Making of Jewish Identity* (Cambridge University Press, 2018). He is currently working on a book-length publication on the history of German compensation payments to victims of National Socialism.