

# **WOMEN** IN THE **HOLOCAUST** International Scientific Conference **10–12 October 2023, Belgrade**

## **BOOK OF ABSTRACTS**

**ORGANIZED BY**



# **WOMEN IN THE HOLOCAUST**

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WHISC – Women in the Holocaust International Study Center

ShoahLab: Holocaust Studies Laboratory

Institute for Philosophy and Social Theory, University of Belgrade

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## WOMEN IN THE HOLOCAUST

The *Women in the Holocaust* is an inaugural conference of WHISC – Women in the Holocaust International Study Center of the The Moreshet Mordechai Anielevich Memorial Holocaust Study and Research Center – Givat Haviva, Israel, organized in partnership with the ShoahLab: Holocaust Studies Laboratory of the Institute for Philosophy and Social Theory University of Belgrade and NGO Haver Srbija in Belgrade, Serbia 10–12 October 2023. The conference seeks to foster scholarly discussion and debate on the various divides, connections, and intersections that can be found in Holocaust and gender studies about women in the Holocaust.

By holding the conference in Belgrade, organizers want to draw the attention of scholars to the East-Central Europe region in which German Nazi occupation and racial policies intersected with competing nationalisms, shifting borders, and the sovereignty of nation-states.

The history of the German Nazi persecution, expulsion, flight, deportation, and murder of Jewish and Roma women took place during the Holocaust on the broader map of ethnic and other rifts and conflicts in East-Central Europe, and beyond. The study of gender in the Holocaust confronts the question of how to fruitfully integrate the histories of occupation, antisemitism, and ethnic racism, as well as issues of competing victimhood in the various countries of East-Central Europe remain a research challenge and a point of contention in public and scholarly debate. There also are scholarly challenges involved when one considers the intersectionality of religious, ethnic, and gender identities and the impact, tensions, and traumas they have produced.

Participants will present diverse papers examining the connection of Holocaust Studies to a variety of other research fields and disciplines, including, but not limited to, the social sciences, culture, memory studies, the arts, and education. These authors challenge both established and new disciplinary approaches to the study of the Holocaust and bring to light the importance of the experiences, fate, memories, death, and fight of women in the Holocaust.



## PROGRAM

### TUESDAY 10. 10. 2023.

13:00 – 14:30 Coffee and registration

14:30 – 15:10 Conference opening

15:10 – 15:40 **Dr. Yehuda Bauer, keynote lecture** (video)

15:40 – 15:50 Short break

15:50 – 16:30 **Dr. Carol Rittner, keynote lecture** (video)

16:30 – 16:40 Short break

16:40 – 18:10 Parallel sessions: **Panel I Women's Body** (4. fl.) and **Panel II Faith** (1. fl.)

19:00 – 21:00 Evening Cocktail at the Gallery of Belgrade Jewish Community

### WEDNESDAY 11. 10. 2023.

9:00 – 10:00 Coffee and registration

10:00 – 10:40 **Dr. Krinka Vidaković Petrov, keynote lecture**

10:40 – 11:00 Short break

11:00 – 12:30 Parallel sessions: **Panel III Memories and Memoirs 1** (4. fl.) and **IV Memories and Memoirs 2** (1. fl.)

12:30 – 13:00 Coffee break

13:00 – 14:30 Parallel Sessions: **Panel V Resistance 1** (4. fl.) and **VI Resistance 2** (1. fl.)

14:30 – 16:30 Lunch break

16:30 – 18:00 **Panel VII Motherhood**

Free evening

### THURSDAY 12. 10. 2023.

9:00 – 10:00 Coffee and welcome (meeting at "Staro Sajmište" Memorial Center)

10:00 – 11:30 **Staro Sajmište tour**

11:30 Organised bus to the IFDT

12:00 – 12:30 Coffee break

12:30 – 14:00 **Panel VIII Victims and Perpetrators** (4. fl.)

14:00 – 16:00 Lunch break

16:00 – 17:30 Parallel Sessions: **Panel IX Art and the Holocaust** (4. fl.) and **X Narratives and Politics** (1. fl.)

17:30 – 18:00 **Final words and farewell**

# **WOMEN'S BODY**

## Manipulating Birth to Implement Genocide

Beverley Chalmers

The Nazis manipulated reproduction and sexuality to create an ideological “Master Race.” Holocaust literature gives exhaustive attention to “direct” means of exterminating Jews, by using gas chambers, torture, starvation, disease, and intolerable conditions, and by the Einsatzgruppen. Manipulating reproduction – as a less “direct” method of genocide – has not yet received the same attention. The Nazis prevented those that did not meet the idealized Nazi racial standards from bearing children through legal, social, psychological, and biological means, as well as by murder. In contrast, they promoted reproductive life and sexuality among those deemed sufficiently “Aryan.” As with other aspects of the Holocaust, science and scientists were involved in providing legitimacy for Nazi actions. Doctors played a central role in implementing the Nazi’s reproductive genocide of Jews. In contrast, the Nazi doctors promoted the reproduction of those deemed sufficiently “Aryan.” This presentation reveals a specter of brutality that is not often recognized and is contrary to the image of the “helping profession” of medicine, particularly, reproductive medicine. It is based on my multiple-award-winning book *Birth Sex and Abuse: Women’s Voices under Nazi Rule*.

*Keywords:* Nazism, birth, reproduction, doctors, racism.

**Beverley Chalmers** is an internationally renowned academic with over 280 publications, including a number of books, and over 450 conference presentations and addresses. She has two doctoral degrees: a Doctorate of Science in Medicine (DSc (Med)) and a Ph.D. in Psychology. Chalmers dedicated her life to examining pregnancy and birth in difficult social, political, economic, and religious settings. These include women giving birth under Apartheid in South Africa, women having babies in the former Soviet Union under Communism, women with prior experience of Female Genital Mutilation giving birth in Canada, women giving birth under Nazi rule, and women giving birth in highly medicalized settings. Beverley Chalmers published eleven books, two of which – *Birth, Sex, and Abuse: Women's Voices Under Nazi Rule* and *Betrayed: Child Sex Abuse in the Holocaust* have received 19 book awards.

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## Women in the Holocaust: The Abandonment of Medical Ethics

Sarah Valente and Coral Katave

Millions of Jews suffered inhumane conditions orchestrated by members of the Nazi Party during Hitler's Third Reich. Jewish women suffered severe abuse of medical practices at the hands of Nazi German physicians. Our research analyzes the first-hand narratives of women who experienced sterilization experiments at the Auschwitz-Birkenau concentration camps. Furthermore, this study evaluates the ethical implications of the healthcare values that were compromised during this arduous time.

Using the USC Shoah Foundation Visual History Archive, we collected personal testimonies of seven women who experienced sterilization experiments in the Auschwitz-Birkenau camps. These testimonies highlighted the painful procedures these women endured, such as "The womb [was made] shorter" so that women could not "expand and have children". We paired these testimonies with a systematic review of available literature to illustrate the historical background that led to the use of sterilization in the concentration camps.

These testimonies allow us to conclude that the Holocaust may not have occurred to such painful degrees had it not been for the collaboration of Nazi physicians. Our research encourages the medical community to reflect on the abuse of women during the Holocaust for the education of future and present healthcare professionals as a preventative measure.

*Keywords:* Nazism, medicine, ethics, sterilization, women testimonies.

**Sarah Valente** is co-director of Sandra Kahn Wasserman Jewish Studies Center at Baruch College at the City University of New York. She teaches literature and history courses related to Jewish Studies, Latin American Studies, and Holocaust memory. She served as the Marvin & Edward Kaplan Lecturer in Jewish Studies at The City College of New York and taught at the YIVO Institute for Jewish Research. Dr. Valente earned her doctorate degree in history of ideas from the University of Texas at Dallas, where she was a Belofsky Fellow at the Ackerman Center for Holocaust Studies for five years.

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**Coral Katave** is a third-year medical student at Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center. She attended the University of Texas at Dallas, where she graduated Magna cum laude with a Bachelor of Arts in Biology and completed an independent study on the experiences of women in the Holocaust under the mentorship of Dr. Sarah Valente. Coral is very passionate about furthering female education and gender equality. She is the president of Religious Women in Medicine and Science, an organization that provides women of diverse backgrounds with academic tools to pursue STEM-related careers. Coral intends to pursue reconstructive surgery with the goal of improving global access to care and providing equitable healthcare to minority populations. She is completing a dedicated research year at Harvard Medical School/Brigham and Women's Hospital with a focus on global health and reconstructive surgery.

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## **Sex for Life: Conditions that Necessitated Sexual Barter in the Holocaust**

Angela Ford

Two major topics that are notoriously difficult to discuss are the Holocaust and sexual abuse. What happens when they are combined, and a third component is introduced – sexual economy? To many, this inclusion justifies the opinion that since the sex was voluntary, the “victim” was complicit and was the one to blame for any harm incurred. This paper looks at current literature, fictional portrayals, and survivor testimonies of sexual barter by women in the Holocaust through a trauma-informed 21st-century lens that illuminates multiple facets of sexual trauma survival. Survivors who spoke out did so knowing the world might not approve of their actions, yet they risked judgment anyway so their story would be told. By approaching these stories with compassion rather than judgment, I seek to destigmatize sexual barter and put into perspective its use as the survival tactic that it is.

*Keywords:* Holocaust, sexual economy, sexual trauma, stigma, survivor testimony.

**Angela Ford** is a second-year Ph.D. student in Humanities at The University of Texas at Dallas where she works on women's history, especially as it pertains to sexual violence against women. She is also pursuing a Holocaust, Genocide, and Human Rights graduate certificate, focusing on women survivors of the Holocaust. She has a master's in Literature with a concentration in Creative writing, writes poetry and creative non-fiction, and is currently writing a memoir.

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**FAITH**

## **Eva Kor: From Transylvania to Tel Aviv to Terre Haute – A Journey of Hope, Healing, and Forgiveness**

Alex Kor

Forgiveness among Holocaust survivors and their descendants is a source of controversy, confusion, and debate. This paper will discuss various types of forgiveness and the legacy of forgiveness among the 2nd and 3rd generations. It will chronicle Eva Mozes Kor on her journey to forgiveness from Transylvania to Tel Aviv and onto Terre Haute. In order to better understand forgiveness, we will introduce terms such as absolute forgiveness vs. conditional forgiveness in addition to the reported health benefits of forgiveness vs. the ill effects of unforgiveness. To illustrate the benefits of forgiveness, we will present stories of the author's mother's forgiveness work and how she chose to forgive while also being exposed to what forgiveness is and is not (i.e. forgetting, condoning, excusing, denying anger, reconciling, being a doormat, etc.).

Lastly, the author's mother's simultaneous teaching of forgiveness and her work on creating a museum to remember the Holocaust while being a Zionist, serves to illustrate how she healed from her terrible past. The presentation will conclude with a conversation about forgiveness with the late Eva Mozes Kor via her hologram created by the USC Shoah Foundation.

*Keywords:* forgiveness, health, Holocaust survivors, Eva Mozes Kor.

**Alex Kor** is originally from Terre Haute, Indiana. He is the son of two Holocaust survivors (Michael and Eva Mozes Kor). He has a B.S. in Chemistry from Butler University and a M.S. in Exercise Physiology from Purdue University. He received his D.P.M. (Doctor of Podiatric Medicine) from the Scholl College of Podiatric Medicine in Chicago. Dr. Kor is a full-time podiatrist for Witham Health Services in Lebanon, IN, and is a Clinical Assistant Professor for Marian University College of Osteopathic Medicine. Knowing the importance of being the son of two Holocaust survivors who have both passed away in the last three and a half years, Alex feels an obligation to tell their stories. He has traveled to Auschwitz more than twenty times with his late mother since 1985. He is a member of the CANDLES Holocaust Museum and Educator Center Board of Directors and assisted in establishing an exhibit to honor his mother in downtown Indianapolis at the Indiana Historical Society.

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## **When Women Entered the Conversation: Post-Shoah Jewish-Christian Dialogue and the Religious Thought of Women**

Shannon Quigley

Following the Shoah, much work has been done on the bimillennial history of Christian antisemitism. The groundbreaking efforts of a few of the men involved in Jewish-Christian dialogue have been investigated yet little has been explored about the pioneering women involved. These women explored Christianity's anti-Jewish problem in hopes of helping the Church return to the God of Israel and the Jewish people. I will assess the work of two women whose lives encompassed this passion and whose religious thought was formed in the shadow of the Shoah.

The work of Charlotte Klein, a woman who grew up in an Orthodox Jewish family that fled Nazi Germany in the thirties is the first example that will be explored. Klein became a Catholic nun and worked to bring about Jewish-Christian reconciliation throughout her lifetime. Klein's dissertation will be examined alongside her many other writings. Eva Fleischner who grew up in Vienna with a Jewish father and Catholic mother and also fled the Nazis is another writer who will be discussed. Eva joined a Catholic women's movement, received her Ph.D., and wrote on Jewish-Christian theological issues and on the Shoah. An important aspect of this presentation is the illumination of the significance of both Klein's and Fleischner's contributions to ongoing Jewish-Christian dialogue.

*Keywords:* Post-Holocaust, Jewish-Christian Dialogue, women, anti-Judaism, Charlotte Klein, Eva Fleischner.

**Shannon Quigley** is a Ph.D. candidate in Weiss-Livnat Center for Holocaust Research and Education, University of Haifa where she focuses on the German churches in the Nazi era and their connection to the Holocaust, as well as post-Shoah reconciliation efforts between Jews and Christians. She is a research assistant at the Ackerman Center. She took part in several initiatives: the American Academy of Religion/Society of Biblical Literature's annual meeting (2019), the American Society of Church History's annual meeting (2020), and at the 50th Annual Scholar's Conference at UT Dallas (2020). She also virtually participated in the Institute for the Study of Global Antisemitism and Policy's 2020 Oxford Summer Institute for Curriculum Development in Critical Antisemitism Studies.

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# **MEMORIES AND MEMOIRS**

## Feminine Dilemmas in the Ghetto and Concentration Camp: The Testimonies of Ruth Bondy

Tal Bashan

Author and Holocaust researcher Ruth Bondy, born in Prague (1923) was sent to Terezin Ghetto and then transported to the “Family Camp” in Birkenau, where she served as a nanny to the young children who were later sent to the gas chambers with their mothers. Transported to labor in bombed Hamburg, she then arrived, with the march of death, to Bergen-Belsen. When she was freed, she weighed 32 kilos. Of her 25 family members, only two survived. “Lucky family,” she wrote, “someone had survived to tell their story.” Thirty years later, already a well-known author and columnist, Ruth Bondy began to research and write the story of the Czech Jewry in the Holocaust (*Edelstein Against Time*), as well as her personal story (*Whole Fragments*), emphasizing many dilemmas she and other women confronted in the camps.

Through research and her own experience, Bondy also deals with topics such as trying to keep a feminine identity and intimate relationships within the harsh reality of the Ghetto, and theories of inherent sexual exploitation of women in the Holocaust – claiming it was exaggerated by researchers, for their own reasons. Birkenau unfolds the worst dilemma of all: mothers of young children had to decide between leaving the camp and saving themselves, without the children, or staying with their children, facing a certain death together.

Tal Bashan, Ruth Bondy’s only daughter and editor of her writings, will present and discuss her mother’s testimonies and insights, and how these stories unfolded in their mother-daughter relationship.

**Keywords:** Holocaust, concentration camps, women, feminine dilemmas, Ruth Bondy.

**Tal Bashan** was born in Israel. She is the daughter of author and Holocaust survivor and researcher Ruth Bondy, and journalist Raphael Bashan. She served as an officer in the Israeli army, studied political science and international relations at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, and was editor of the university student newspaper. She has served for 35 years as a senior journalist and editor for the two major newspapers in Israel (Maariv, Yediot Ahronot), as Maariv's correspondent on the West Coast, USA, as well as a lecturer of feature writing at Tel Aviv University. Tal is a board member of "Beit Terezin", the Holocaust Remembrance Center for the Czech Jewry in Kibbutz Givat Haim Ichud, and in charge of special projects in the Department of Holocaust Remembrance of the World Zionist Organization. She is active as a speaker and moderator on the subjects of remembrance and the second generation of the Holocaust.

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## Reanalyzing Familiar Narratives: Representations of Queerness in Women's Published Testimonies of the Holocaust

Roseanna Ramsden

Using queer theory as a hermeneutic tool with which to re-read women's published, English-language Holocaust testimonies against the grain of heterosexist Holocaust discourses, this paper argues for and models the power of conducting the historical and literary analysis of survivor accounts in this radically new manner. It demonstrates that queering Holocaust studies can draw out elements of women's camp relationships and their representation that have thus far remained excluded from the written historical narrative. While, in most other scholarly literature on Holocaust testimonies, references to queerness and queer relationships are cursory and anecdotal, in this paper they are explicitly engaged with and given the space of analysis. The paper's aim, in doing so, is both to bring the footnotes of history into the main body of the text and to supply a fresh approach to reanalyzing familiar Holocaust narratives allowing new insights of historical significance to be gleaned.

Examining the memoirs of Austrian, German, Polish, and French women, both Jewish and non-Jewish, this paper explores how the authors use coded and ambiguous language, double meaning, and connotation in their memoirs to allude to and acknowledge their own sexualities, sexual anxieties, and sexual responses to queerness. It builds on the small body of secondary literature devoted to examining representations of eroticism and sexuality in Holocaust memoirs and seeks to demonstrate how, and in what ways, the women here studied conceptualize their sexuality through language. In its readings, this paper operates with a critical consciousness about the manner in which scholars' assumptions of heterosexuality exclude certain representations of Nazi institutions during the Holocaust from the traditional historical narrative; ultimately, it works to give voice to these silences.

*Keywords:* queerness, testimonies, Holocaust, representation, historical narratives.

**Roseanna Ramsden** is the Montague Burton Research and Teaching Fellow in Jewish Studies in the School of Fine Art, History of Art, and Cultural Studies at the University of Leeds. She was awarded her Ph.D. by Northumbria University in 2021. Her research interests include Holocaust testimony and representation, women's and queer history, and queer and feminist theory. She has published feminist ecocritical reflections on women's post-Holocaust identities and queerness in women's Holocaust memoirs. She is currently working on her first academic monograph entitled *Against the Grain: Rereading Women's Holocaust Testimonies*.

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## **“Since When Can’t a Virgin be a Whore?”: The Dynamics of Shame and Agency in Women’s Accounts of the Shoah**

Sara R. Horowitz

The title borrows from Ida Fink’s short story, “Aryan Papers”, which describes what might be termed transactional sex between a Jewish young woman and a man providing her with the false documents she hopes will keep her and her mother alive. Fink’s story helps to set up the focus of this presentation: the tension between shame and agency in memoirs by women survivors of the Shoah. In his essay “Shame”, Primo Levi situates shame as an emotion that surfaces in Shoah survivors “just as they felt they were again becoming men, that is, responsible...” and in a position to pronounce judgment upon their behavior – indeed, their very being – during the war. Levi’s formulation suggests that shame is in some measure a post-war retrospective phenomenon, connected to the memory of powerlessness and inaction, and interwoven with what it means to be a man. While one could argue that by “man” Levi means “human” (regardless of gender), I would like to examine the way narratives by women negotiate the gendered dynamics of shame and its relationship to agency in narratives by women, particularly with reference to sexual assault, sexual barter, and sexual relations.

*Keywords:* Holocaust, Holocaust memoirs, women, shame, agency, sex.

**Sara R. Horowitz** is Professor of Comparative Literature and Humanities and former Director of the Israel and Golda Koschitzky Centre for Jewish Studies at York University in Toronto. She is the author of *Voicing the Void: Muteness and Memory in Holocaust Fiction*, which received the Choice Award for Outstanding Academic Book and served as the senior founding editor of the *Azrieli Series of Holocaust Memoirs - Canada* (Series 1 and 2). She is the editor and co-editor of *Shadows in the City of Light: Paris in Post-War French Jewish Writing* (2021), *Hans Günther Adler: Life, Literature, Legacy* (2016) which received the Canadian Jewish Literary Award, and other books. In addition, she is the founding co-editor of the journal *KEREM: A Journal of Creative Explorations in Judaism*. She served for many years on the Academic Committee of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, DC, and was a Chair of the Academic Board of the Holocaust Education Foundation at Northwestern University. In 2022 she received the HEFNU Distinguished Achievement Award.

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## A Possible Approach to the Holocaust Experience and Memory Activism of the Yugoslav (Screen) Writer Frida Filipović

Stanislava Barać

This presentation focuses on the life and work of Frida Filipović (Greif), an Ashkenazi Jew born in Sarajevo in 1913 (in the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy), a Yugoslav writer who professionally developed in Belgrade during the 1930s (in the Kingdom of Yugoslavia), the survivor of the Holocaust who testified about it through various art forms (in Socialist Yugoslavia).

The first part of the presentation aims to show how the author's works on specific women's experiences in the Holocaust correspond with her pre-Holocaust established artistic (po)ethic(s) of transposing female tabooed experience. It includes interpretations of her short stories "Roses on Porcelain" (1951) and "Whatever Happens" (1973), and the co-produced Yugoslav-German film *Witness out of Hell* (1965/1967) based on Filipović's original screenplay. While the stories describe particular destinies of old and young Jewish women characters, the film exposes the gendered experience of women in Auschwitz, and the additional trauma resulting from the requirement to bear witness to the original trauma (The Frankfurt trials).

The second part of the presentation focuses on the author's interview/testimony to the USC Shoah Foundation (1998). It sheds new light on the autobiographical aspects of her previous fictional works, as well as on the unique position of some Jewish women in the conditions of the Nazi occupation of Serbia, which enabled their survival. One of the theses of the presentation is that the interview, together with ethnically and gender-motivated war crimes that happened during the wars over a Yugoslav heritage, encouraged Frida Filipović to publish a novel about the Holocaust (*The Bitter Grass*, 2000) transferring the screenplay and previous stories to the page. The aim of the presentation is to build the original methodological frame for the concrete subject and suggest its use in the further memory culture of the Holocaust in Europe, while intersecting literary, Holocaust, trauma, and gender studies.

**Keywords:** Holocaust, memory activism, Frida Filipović, female writing, Serbia.

**Stanislava Barać** is a Senior Research Associate at the Institute for Literature and Art in Belgrade (Research unit: Periodicals in the History of Serbian Literature and Culture). She has authored over fifty articles in scholarly journals and various edited collections; and published two monographs: *Avant-garde "Thought"* (2008), and *Feminist Counter-public: The Genre of Women's Portraiture in Serbian Periodicals 1920–1941* (2015). She also co-edited four collective volumes: *The Russian Archive Magazine 1928–1937 and the Culture of Russian Immigration in the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes/Yugoslavia* (2015) with V. Matović, *Children's Periodicals: the Yugoslav Heritage 1918–1991* (2019) with T. Tropin, *The First World War and Slavic Literatures* (2021) with B. Andonovska, and *The Magazine Woman Today (1936–1940): The Enlightenment for the Revolution* (2022).

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## Halina Olomucki: Art as Documentation

Batya Brutin

Halina Olomucki (1919–2007) was born in Warsaw and showed her artistic talent from an early age. She was eighteen years old when World War II broke. She was imprisoned in Warsaw Ghetto, Majdanek, Auschwitz-Birkenau, Ravensbrück, and Newschtadt-Glewe where she was liberated in 1945 by the Allies forces. She clandestinely portrayed the women who were imprisoned with her using some of the materials she officially received at the ghetto and camps for her own use. In 1957, she emigrated to France, and in 1972 the Olomucki family immigrated to Israel. Halina Olomucki passed away in 2007.

She left a large corpus of drawings and paintings from the Holocaust. It can be said that thanks to her artistic talent, Halina Olomucki managed to survive the Holocaust. Furthermore, thanks to her art from this period, we can learn about the events of the Holocaust in general and the fate of women in the Holocaust in particular. In my lecture, I wish to present two major subjects about women she depicted during the Holocaust in her first-hand testimony: the depiction of women in the ghetto and camps, and her self-portrait during the Holocaust.

*Keywords:* Concentration camp art, painting, documentation, Holocaust representation, female voice.

**Batya Brutin**, Ph.D., is an art historian and researcher of art during and after the Holocaust and Holocaust monuments in Israel and worldwide. From 2000 to September 2018, she was the director of the Holocaust Teaching in Israeli Society Program at Beit Berl Academic College in Israel. Dr. Brutin taught ten annual courses connected to Holocaust events and their impact on Israeli society to students studying to be educators (Jews and Arabs). In addition, Dr. Brutin conducted a student exchange program with The Pedagogical University and The Jagiellonian University in Krakow, Poland, and organized and guided an educational trip to Poland with her students. Dr. Brutin is a research associate and the Chair of the Abraham and Edita Spiegel for Holocaust research, at Bar-Ilan University. Dr. Brutin published academic books, essays, and educational materials on the subjects mentioned above and received the Yad Vashem Award for lifetime achievement in the field of Holocaust education in 2018.

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## **“My War Adventures: 1 September 1939 – ?”: Dora Schaul’s Autographic Diary in Rieucros French Women’s Camp**

Pnina Rosenberg

The Jewish-German Dora Schaul who lived and died in Berlin (1913–1999) sought refuge in France after the rise of the Nazis. Like thousands of stateless refugees of German and Austrian origin, she believed that the country of human rights would be a safe haven. Yet when France declared war on Germany the racial and political émigrés, ironically designated as undesirable “enemy aliens,” were interned. Dora Schaul was sent to the Rieucros women’s camp in Southern France.

While initially detained in the Parisian women’s prison La Petite Roquette, Dora Schaul began to create a journal entitled “My War Adventures, 1 September 1939 – ?” following her steps from her expulsion from Paris through her imprisonment and internment in Rieucros camp. In a series of pastels and aquarelles, Schaul, who was not a professional artist, portrays her personal odyssey, tinged with subtle criticism of the French betrayal of the asylum seekers. The “childish” and naïve drawings juxtaposed sardonic and ironic texts to form an unusual autographic testimony, in which her personal experiences give voice to a collective (hi)story of women inmates’ struggle to keep their dignity as human beings despite sexual abuse, their harsh circumstances, and the constant threat of being deported back to Nazi Germany.

*Keywords:* autographic novels, humor, Holocaust art, women, Jewish emigrants, Rieucros camp.

**Pnina Rosenberg**, Ph.D., is an art historian specializing in the artistic legacy of the Holocaust, focusing on women artists' oeuvres and graphic novels during and after World War II. She lectures on those subjects at the Technion, and has presented papers at international conferences and published articles and books including a co-edited volume *The Diary of a Young Girl* (2017) to which she contributed an article on Anne Frank's graphic novel. Dr. Rosenberg is a research fellow at the Institute for Holocaust Research Spiegel Fellows Forum, Bar-Ilan University, and the art editor of *Prism: Journal for Holocaust Educators*, Yeshiva University, N.Y. Her pioneering research on women artist inmates during the Holocaust and graphic novels done by camp inmates is manifest in the conference's paper.

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# Haunting Specters of Holocaust Perpetration and Victimhood Reconstituting a Young Child's Memory Lens: On Miriam Katin's Graphic Memoirs "We Are on Our Own" and "Letting It Go"

Dana Mihăilescu

My presentation analyzes two graphic memoirs by a Holocaust child survivor from Hungary living in the U.S., Miriam Katin's *We Are on Our Own* (2006) and *Letting It Go* (2013). These artworks bring together the haunting war memories of Holocaust child survivors, adult survivors, and children of survivors via a unique artistic style that combines soft pencil drawing with heavy, aggressive sketches. They do this by paralleling the experience during World War II lived by the artist and her mother (as a toddler and an adult surviving the war by hiding in the Hungarian countryside) to the post-World War II experience of the same protagonists in the present-day U.S., as well as of the artist and her son as the epitomes of a child survivor and a child of survivors.

Drawing on theoretical works about Holocaust memories by psychoanalysts Judith Kestenberg, Nathan Durst, and Paul Valent, and on the insights of literary and Holocaust studies scholars Michael Rothberg and Victoria Aarons, this paper examines how Katin constructs the haunting memories and struggles specific to each generation of survivors in the hybrid genre of the graphic narrative in relation to their assumed nationalities during and after World War II and the problematic return to "nasty places" of genocide perpetration such as Germany. We are particularly interested in examining how transgenerational transmission of haunting Holocaust memories of genocide perpetration and victimhood in families made up of various generations of survivors via the graphic narrative genre gives rise to an ethical engagement with WWII and to the possibility of overcoming stereotyped and prejudiced images of locations where genocide happened.

**Keywords:** Post-Holocaust, Holocaust art, children survivors, memoirs, graphic novel.

**Dana Mihăilescu** is an associate professor of English/American Studies at the University of Bucharest, Romania. She was a Fulbright Junior grantee at Brandeis University and the Edith Kreeger Wolf Distinguished Visiting Professor at the Crown Family Center of Jewish and Israel Studies at Northwestern University. Her main research interests include Jewish American studies, Holocaust (survivor) testimonies, trauma, ethics and memory, and their representation in various media, including art, visual culture, graphic narratives, literature, etc. She is the author of articles in *Yad Vashem Studies* (forthcoming), *Holocaust and Genocide Studies*, *MELUS*, *Shofar*, *East European Jewish Affairs*, *Journal of Modern Jewish Studies*, *French Cultural Studies*, *American Imago*, *Images*, and of the monograph *Eastern European Jewish American Narratives, 1890–1930: Struggles for Recognition* (Lexington, 2018). She is currently a member of the research project “Familiar Perpetrators: On the Intimacy of Evil in Contemporary American Literature and Popular Culture,” funded by UEFISCDI (the Romanian National Council for Scientific Research).

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# RESISTANCE

## The Lily of Birkenau – The Writings of Lili Kasticher

Lily Halpert Zamir

This paper focuses on the literary works of Lili Kasticher, written at the Auschwitz-Birkenau death camp from April to November 1944. In that inferno, the possession of a piece of paper or a pencil stub was absolutely forbidden. Anyone caught with such contraband was sentenced to death. Consequently, inmates at Auschwitz produced virtually no written material, with a few exceptions, such as the Sonderkommandos, who documented everyday life at the camp, concealing their records in jars that they buried near the crematoria, in the hope that someone would find them after the war.

The Germans ordered Jewish inmates to write postcards to their relatives, describing the “decent” living conditions prevailing in their “new place.” No women are known to have written at Birkenau except for Lili Kasticher, who risked her life by stealing pieces of paper and pencil stubs to write poetry. Lili also wrote a political-social manifesto entitled *Rules of Behaviour*, intended as a survival guide. The notes were concealed on her body until her liberation in the spring of 1945. Lili’s writings reflect an island of sanity in absolute chaos and constitute a testimony of a young woman who succeeded in challenging death with her writings and social leadership.

**Keywords:** Holocaust art, Auschwitz-Birkenau, resistance, poetry, Lili Kasticher.

**Lily Halpert Zamir**, Ph.D., is the Academic Director of WHISC – Women in the Holocaust International Study Center, and a senior lecturer at the David Yellin Academic College of Education in Jerusalem, Israel. She is a professor of Holocaust and Gender studies and a member of the College academic council, as well as the head of the Center for Women’s and Gender Studies. Prof. Zamir serves as the Presidential Advisor on Gender Equality, as well as the Sexual Harassment Treatment and Prevention Commissioner of the David Yellin College. She has published numerous books, seven of which deal with the Holocaust, and one monograph on Danilo Kish in Serbo-Croatian language. She has published dozens of articles in Hebrew and English that focus on Holocaust and gender studies.

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## **An Unlikely Rescuer: A Jewish Woman Who Saved Thousands of Poles During the Holocaust**

Joanna Sliwa

A petite and elegant woman with impeccable Polish, German, and French languages skills, Countess Janina Suchodolska earned respect even from representatives of German civilian authorities and some of the most notorious Nazis stationed in Lublin in German-occupied Poland. Fearless, persuasive, and goal-oriented, Janina advocated on behalf of Polish prisoners at the Majdanek concentration camp. As a coordinator of relief in the Main Welfare Council, the only German-approved organization to assist non-Jewish Poles, Janina entered Majdanek regularly to bring food and medicine, smuggle correspondence, check on prisoners, and arrange for the release of detainees expelled from their homes and temporarily held in the camp. Janina was a relief worker and a member of the Polish Resistance. Neither the people whom she helped nor her coworkers and fellow resisters (except the man who facilitated her arrival in Lublin) knew that Countess Janina Suchodolska was in fact Dr. Pepi Spinner Mehlberg, a prewar mathematician from Lwów or that she was Jewish.

This paper will examine Janina's involvement in rescue, relief, and resistance activities in Lublin on behalf of non-Jewish Poles. It will focus on factors that led her to engage in "flipped rescue", or rescue of Poles by a Jew, and a Jewish woman masquerading as an aristocratic Pole at that, and how Janina's mathematical scholarship underpinned her involvement in resistance. This paper derives from a book that the author wrote with Dr. Elizabeth (Barry) White, a historian at the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum, and which will be published in 2024. By focusing on Janina Suchodolska, this paper will illuminate the range of roles that Jewish women assumed, their survival strategies, and the legacy of their actions. It will draw from Janina's memoir and the extensive research conducted to corroborate and expand Janina's account of her activities during World War II.

*Keywords:* Holocaust, Poland, rescue, resistance, Janina Suchodolska.



**Joanna Sliwa**, Ph.D., is a historian at the Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany (Claims Conference) where she also administers the Saul Kagan Fellowship in Advanced Shoah Studies and the University Partnership in Holocaust Studies. Her research centers on the history of the Claims Conference, compensation for Jewish Holocaust survivors, and Jewish property restitution in Poland. Joanna's own scholarship focuses on the Holocaust in Poland and on Polish Jewish history. She is especially interested in examining the experiences of marginalized groups. Her first book, *Jewish Childhood in Kraków: A Microhistory of the Holocaust* received the 2020 Ernst Fraenkel Prize from the Wiener Holocaust Library and was selected by Choice Magazine as a 2022 Outstanding Academic Title in the Central and Eastern Europe category. Her next book, *Counterfeit Countess: The Jewish Woman Who Rescued Thousands of Poles During the Holocaust*, co-authored with Dr. Elizabeth White, a historian at the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum, will be published in 2024. She is currently working with Dr. Elizabeth Anthony (U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum) and Christine Schmidt (Wiener Holocaust Library) on a volume about the experiences of elderly Jews during and after the Holocaust. Joanna taught Holocaust history and Jewish history at Rutgers University and at Kean University. She has consulted for projects ranging from teacher training programs to academic texts, websites, films, TV programs, and exhibits.

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## Intersectionality: Female and Gay Resistance in Dieulefit

Paul Kutner

The French village of Dieulefit, in the Drôme department, is known for its protection of approximately 1,500 Jews during the Holocaust. This rescue's nerve center was the École de Beauvallon, a boarding school founded by two women – Marguerite Soubeyran and Catherine Krafft – who were lesbian lovers. Threatened themselves because of their sexuality, they took on even greater risks by sheltering hundreds of Jewish children. They convinced a third woman, Jeanne Barnier, the mayor's secretary, to create fake papers, which ended up being the catalyst for a larger operation that brought scores of refugees, including many artists and intellectuals, to the village and its environs. By the end of the War, another gay woman, Simone Monnier, came to the school and joined Soubeyran and Krafft in their mission to protect the hundreds of children in their care. Although this mission could not have been done without the help of many men, including Catholic priests and Protestant ministers, the story of Dieulefit is a story of women who went to great lengths to resist the Nazis. In so doing, they risked their lives, reputations, and livelihoods. While these women were not responsible for hiding everyone who sought refuge in Dieulefit, they are often cited by the rescuers and survivors as having played a role, assisting, or being an inspiration in most of the individual rescue stories of the area outside of the school.

This paper will examine the intersectionality of being both female and homosexual in the context of this rescue operation and will be based, in part, on the testimony we have recorded of survivors and the descendants of the rescuers for the past ten years. It will also discuss how the legacy of Krafft, Soubeyran, and Monnier has contributed to debates on contemporary issues such as France's same-sex marriage law.

*Keywords:* Holocaust testimonies, intersectionality, female and gay resistance, France.

**Paul Kutner** teaches Jewish history and focuses his research on the Righteous Among the Nations. He has recorded interviews with survivors and rescuers, amassing approximately forty hours of interviews thanks to grants received starting in 2012 enabling him to travel to Le Chambon-sur-Lignon, Dieulefit, and other places in France and Belgium where he interviewed several of the Righteous (or, in many cases, their descendants), as well as Holocaust survivors. One of his interviews, with Joseph Weismann, a survivor of the Vél d'Hiv Round-up, is currently at the USHMM archives. Additionally, he has worked in academia and archives, using these materials in teaching, speaking, and curating the museum exhibit *Conspiracy of Goodness* at the Harriet and Kenneth Kupferberg Holocaust Center at Queensborough Community College-CUNY, in New York, centering on the rescue in Le Chambon. Kutner translated the Chambon memorial-museum catalog, for which he was awarded the Médaille du Chambon in 2017 by Mayor Éliane Wauquiez-Motte. His work has been featured in the local press in the US and France. Paul Kutner earned his undergraduate degree from Georgetown University and is finishing his master's degree in Holocaust and Genocide Studies at Yeshiva University. He is also a Sacks Scholar for Ethics and Entrepreneurship, a program named for the late Rabbi Lord Jonathan Sacks, for which he is working on a project to combat Holocaust distortion as the ethical dilemma of his graduate field of study.

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## The Diverging Fates of Perla Golda and Mindla Diamant: Two Polish Jewish Sisters in the French Resistance

Bruna Lo Biundo and Caroline François

Born in the Polish Jewish village of Końskowola into a family of miners, Golda Perla Diamant (1907) and her sister Mindla Diamant (1911) joined the Polish Communist youth movement at a very young age. Their activism earned them several years of arrest. In 1931, Mindla fled to France on a leave of absence. Two years later, her sister Golda Perla tried to join her with the help of the Secours Rouge International but fell ill and had to stop in Belgium where she married a trade unionist worker and took the name of Julia Pirotte. After studying photography and journalism in Brussels, Julia started her career as a photojournalist. But in May 1940, following the invasion of Belgium by German troops, she fled to France and settled in Marseille. Julia Pirotte and his sister Mindla were both refugees in France during World War II and, with other refugees and immigrants, they took part in the French Resistance as FTP (Francs Tireurs Partisans) members. Mindla Diamant was arrested and deported on a Nacht und Nebel transport on December 3, 1942. A court of Breslau sentenced her to death and she was guillotined on August 24, 1944. Settled in Marseille, Julia Pirotte made an extraordinary photo report on the Jewish women and children interned in the Bompard camp in July 1942. A month later, the women of Bompard were transferred to the Camp des Milles and then deported to Auschwitz. In August 1944, Julia Pirotte took part in the Liberation of Marseille and, after the war, she returned to Poland where she died in 2000.

Through archives and photographs and thanks to the testimony delivered by Julia Pirotte, we will reconstruct the itineraries and the destinies of the two Diamant sisters, at the forefront of many dramatic events of World War II.

*Keywords:* French resistance, women resistance, Holocaust photography, Perla Golda Diamant, Julia Pirotte.

**Bruna Lo Biundo**, Italian-born, and Paris-based, holds a Ph.D. in French literature and Cultural history (University of Palermo). She is a specialist in women's representations in the interwar period of French culture. Since 2007, she worked as a research officer and curator of historical exhibitions in Paris at the Mémorial de la Shoah, La Contemporaine, and Génériques. In 2018, she co-founded the association Past/Not Past which promotes research in the field of cultural heritage. As a scientific and cultural curator for Génériques – a European research center on immigration heritage (2013–2018), she has worked on immigrant and refugee women in France in the 20th century and she participated in various international conferences on this topic.

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**Caroline François** is a historian in charge of the temporary and traveling exhibitions at the Mémorial de la Shoah in Paris. She is also an exhibition curator and the author of several articles on the topic of women in the Holocaust. As a speaker, she regularly participates in the Mémorial de la Shoah training program on subjects of discrimination, gender issues, and sexual violence in the context of the genocidal process. In 2016, she curated for the Mémorial de la Shoah the temporary exhibition *Women in the French Resistance*.

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## **Sardinian Jewish Women During the Holocaust – Between Resistance and Genocide**

Alessandro Matta

Catania, July 1943: A Polish Jewish woman posing as a German, who is in love with the local commander of the Nazi forces. The commander releases the women's husband already in line to a mass grave; Florence, 1943: After her little girl witnessed the roundup of a Jewish family across the street, a Jewish woman from Trieste procures a cart with a horse, takes her mother and children, and flees the Tuscan capital in the middle of the night; Rome, 1944: In the former ghetto after the attack in via Rasella, Nazi soldiers arrive to make a series of arrests as part of the retaliation that will lead to the massacre of the Fosse Ardeatine. An American Jewish lady distracts them by pretending to be a non-Jewish Viennese who has recognized their Austrian dialect.

This paper will present in detail these three incredible stories of resistance and self-saving during the Holocaust by Jewish women who lived in Sardegna before the war and returned to Sardegna afterward. The main question we will ask is how many similar Jewish women's resistance stories are there out there. And how much these histories are connected with the recent historiography concept of "self-saving" (Salvarsi) expressed by the historian Liliana Picciotto.

*Keywords:* Italy, women, resistance, Holocaust, self-saving.

**Alessandro Matta** is the director and founder of the Sardinian Shoah Memorial Association. He is a Shoah scholar and historical researcher on the subject, with a particular focus on the cinematography of the genocide of the Jews in the Second World War. He is a member of the archival experts group of EHRI – European Holocaust Research Infrastructure. He is also a member of the scientific-educational group of the ILMC Foundation (Istituto di Letteratura Musicale Concentrazionaria) in Barletta, Bari, Italy. He is an experienced Holocaust educator who cooperated as a participant and lecturer with the University of Florence, Yad Vashem, Memorial de la Shoah, USC Shoah Foundation, Anti-Defamation League, and many other organizations. He is the author of *The Racial Legislation Laws in Sardinia 1938–1944* (2016), *A Cent for a Body: Juridical-Historical Analysis of Processes against Nazi Criminals Franz Stangl and Alois Brunner* (2017), and *Zachor Calendarium* (2018).

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# The Fabrics of Resistance: The Contribution of Female Jewish Couriers in the Second World War

Sylwia Szymańska-Smolkin

The notion of fabrics calls to mind the interweaving of disparate threads that form a stronger whole; the creation of such fabrics is also a historically female endeavor. Jewish resistance took many forms, often involving clandestine efforts that either contributed to or supported more explicit measures like armed combat; although one can identify disparate activities, the lines blur as most actions involved considerable risk and were active and potentially conspicuous.

Turning our lens towards the contribution of couriers and more specifically the women couriers, increases our understanding of factors that supported Jewish resistance. While active resistance has historically been studied in the domain of armed combat, we believe that taking an intersectional approach, which includes the politics of gender, the social domain, and psychological and philosophical considerations around power and perception, disrupts a simplistic view of hierarchical contributions. Rather than a vertical notion of what is passive or active, we can entertain a more horizontal definition by amplifying the necessary contributions the female couriers made which were instrumental in building the resistance movement. This paper will discuss their work through their own stories and those of their contemporaries.

*Keywords:* Holocaust, Jewish resistance, women, couriers.



**Sylwia Szymańska-Smolkin** is a researcher at the Department of Historical and Contemporary Studies at Södertörn University in Stockholm, where she conducts research on the Jewish couriers and their role in establishing contacts and networks between Jewish communities during the Second World War. Her project is supported by the Foundation for Baltic and Eastern European Studies (Östersjöstiftelsen). She was a Postdoctoral Research Fellow in Holocaust Studies at the Hugo Valentin Centre, Uppsala University, and the recipient of the International Ephraim E. Urbach Post-Doctoral Fellowship in Jewish Studies awarded by the Memorial Foundation for Jewish Culture. She earned her Ph.D. in History and Jewish Studies at the University of Toronto. Her dissertation examined the complicity of the Polish policemen in the Holocaust in occupied Poland. Dr. Szymańska-Smolkin has international teaching and research expertise at several universities and institutions in the history of Eastern Europe and the Holocaust. She has taught at the University of Toronto, York University in Toronto, University of Warsaw, and Uppsala University. Her research and writing have been supported by external funding from various federal and private organizations including the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council, Canadian Friends of the Hebrew University, and the Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany.

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# MOTHERHOOD

## Mothers and Motherhood in the Ghettos: Re-considering the Images from Diaries and Testimonies

Dalia Ofer

This paper is dedicated to the multiple images of the mothers as they appear in contemporary ghetto sources, in memoirs, and in testimonies of survivors. It explores several different perspectives such as how children described their mothers, how mothers were described by their spouses and other adults, and, finally, how mothers described themselves.

We will focus on the images of mothers' activities in the ghetto in several spheres: their roles at home, their work outside the home, their responsibility regarding food, their psychological relationship with their husbands and children, and their thoughts about and plans for escape and rescue. Keeping in mind the impact of contemporary images of motherhood on the proposed research, we stress the historical development concerning the role of mothers in families of different backgrounds, (class, education, religious observance) and the changes that occurred in the ghetto.

In the final section of the paper, we will examine these images with retrospection, both from a feminist and historical perspective, and discuss how the images at the time do not adequately reflect women's important contribution to their family's material wellbeing, their psychological resilience, and their adaptability in the face of overwhelming odds.

*Keywords:* Jewish ghetto, mothers, feminism, Holocaust memoirs, Holocaust testimonies.

**Dalia Ofer** is the Max and Rita Haber Professor Emerita of Holocaust and East European Studies at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, the former director of the Avraham Harman Institute of Contemporary Jewry (2003–2007), and of the Vidal Sassoon International Research Center for the Study of Anti-Semitism (1995–2002). She was a visiting professor at Harvard, Yale, Brandeis, University of Maryland, and University of Sydney, Australia; as well as a Charles H. Revson Foundation Fellow at the USHMM. Her publications include *Escaping the Holocaust: Illegal Immigration to the Land of Israel* (Oxford University Press, 1990), which won the Ben Zvi Award and Jewish Book Award for the Hebrew and English versions respectively; *Women in the Holocaust* (Yale University Press, 1998), co-authored with Lenore Weizman; and *Her Story, My Story: Writing about Women and the Holocaust* (Peter Lang, 2020), coauthored with Judy Baume. She also co-edited with Sarah Rosen both the Hebrew and English versions of *Lipman Kunstadt, Diary from Hell in Transnistria 1942–1944* (Yad Vashem, 2020 and 2022). In 2018, she received the Distinguished Achievement Award in Holocaust Studies from the Holocaust Educational Foundation of Northwestern University.

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## Clandestine Abortions as Resistance During the Holocaust

Micaela Procopio

In the later decades of the twentieth century as scholarship started and grew on women's experiences during the Holocaust, female scholars started to look more specifically at what we have termed the "umbrella of reproductive health." There has been growing work on the gendered experiences of women during the Holocaust, specifically focusing on the concept of reproduction. This fits into the larger narrative of gendercide during the Holocaust, including pregnancy, abortion, childbirth, sexual assault, and rape. This growing scholarship particularly on reproduction has led us to explore the topic of abortion during the Holocaust, specifically for the Jewish women who discovered their pregnancies in the years of 1938–1945, and who often found themselves pregnant in the ghettos or concentration camps.

The memoirs by Gisela Perl and Lucie Adelsberger have been instrumental in understanding the "choiceless choices" that these women faced with their pregnancies and the measures that doctors took to save the lives of the mothers. This paper focuses on clandestine abortions performed in Theresienstadt ghetto and Auschwitz-Birkenau concentration camp. The majority of primary source material comes from memoirs written by survivors who underwent abortions during the Holocaust, as well as oral testimonies conducted by Joan Ringelheim at the USHMM. The significance of this work is to demonstrate that abortions were occurring at all stages of the Holocaust, both as a last-minute resort to prolong the life of the mother and as a form of indirect resistance to the Nazi regime. The focus on abortions demonstrates the specific, gendered experience women experienced during a time of trauma and adds to the growing scholarship on reproductive health during the Holocaust, as well as to the history of abortions and the importance of this medical procedure.

*Keywords:* Holocaust memoirs, concentration camps, abortion, reproductive health, Auschwitz, Theresienstadt, resistance.

**Micaela Procopio** is a Ph.D. student in Holocaust and Genocide Studies at Gratz College. She received her master's degree in Public History with an emphasis on the Holocaust from The American University in 2019. During the summer of 2022, she was a graduate research fellow at the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, conducting research on abortions from 1933 to 1945. She served as the Digital Education Manager for the U.S. Army Women's Museum for two and half years, as well as teaching as an adjunct professor at the U.S. Naval Academy. Her research focuses on clandestine abortions performed in the ghettos and concentration camps during the Holocaust. She is also interested in expanding Holocaust education in the United States and creating appropriate pedagogy to teach the subject from middle school to university level.

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## **Gendered Bodies as Sites of Reproductive Investigation: Probing Female Holocaust Survivors' Fertility 1940–2022**

Tiarra Cooper

In the decades following the Second World War, politics of restitution and claims of war-related damages opened up survivors' fertility as a new site for investigation. Rather than an organic condition, infertility became the language through which to articulate gendered, bodily damage stemming from Nazi persecution. Curiously, the (ir)regularity of women's menses – not attempted reproduction – is what became indicative of fertility. Though dozens of studies never came to any consensus – including any demonstrable infertility stemming from imprisonment in the camps – they nevertheless continue until the present. Our question is why have studies persisted? And to what ends? In this paper, we claim that the confluence of West German restitution politics with the gendered/reproductive dynamics of nation-building, manifested the female survivor's body as the landscape for nations and people to stake their claims.

This medical history traces and contextualizes the studies of female survivors' fertility conducted over the decades. After having first been observed in the Theresienstadt and Kovno ghettos, amenorrhea, or the absence of menstruation during the reproductive years of a woman's life, continued through many women's imprisonment in the camps and persisted years after the war. The first period of studies (1945–1950) represents documentation of a phenomenon that many physicians and women themselves had yet to fully understand. In the wake of genocide, against the backdrop of nation-building, and towards the end of population rejuvenation, women's reproductive abilities became a focal point of investigation. Once claims of bodily damage became central in restitution in the 1950s, these fertility studies quickly adopted "restitutional" frameworks. Such probes, conducted between 1950 and 1970, were driven by West German doctors who sought to rectify the injustice of continued claims rejections. Meanwhile, physicians in Poland sought similar claims for restitution (1963–1970). Having been barred from receiving funds for their damages, Poland also sought acknowledgment of victimhood – to

which end they too conducted their own fertility probes.

In contrast, the current engagement with female survivors' fertility signals a shift. Scholars are reinterpreting previous data, conducting posthumous interviews with survivors' children, and investigating if trauma can be passed down biologically – demonstrating that we are still continuing to ask the female body what – and if – it can reproduce for peoples and nations.

*Keywords:* female body, infertility, ghettos, concentration camps, medical studies, Holocaust reparations.

**Tiarra Cooper** is a Ph.D. candidate in the German Studies program at the University of Massachusetts Amherst. Her dissertation to be defended in 2023 is entitled “Women’s Experiences of Forcible Sterilization under the Nazi Regime, 1933–1945.” Her research has been supported by grants and fellowships from the Holocaust Educational Foundation, Northwestern University, the Museum of Jewish Heritage, the Coalition of Women in German, and the University of Massachusetts Amherst. Her research was awarded first place at the 3 Minute Thesis competition at UMass Amherst in 2022 and published in the *German Studies Review* journal. Currently, she is an instructor in the Women, Gender & Sexuality Studies program at UMass where she teaches courses on race and sexuality, gender and culture, and decolonization through indigenous knowledge. In 2023 she became a Research Associate at the Five College Women’s Research Center in Amherst, Massachusetts. In addition to her work as a researcher, educator, and volunteer, she is a partner to Dinesh, a mother to two young boys, Olatunde and Uzoma, and a dog mom to two canines, Balu and Karadi.

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# **VICTIMS AND PERPETRATORS**

# The Genocide of Sinti and Roma from a Gender-Historical Perspective

Verena Meier

This paper analyzes the genocide of Sinti and Roma under the NS regime from a gender-historically differentiated perspective. Gender not only played a role in specific persecution measures that targeted women but also in the network of perpetrators who organized and committed the crimes. The state crime of the genocide was carried out in a division of labor and in the center of the network of perpetrators was the “scientific police complex”, i.e. the criminal police and the “Racial Hygiene Research Center” in the Reich Health Ministry. In both of these institutions, women were the ones perpetrating crimes. One of them, Erika Bergman, who worked at the Ravensbrück concentration camp, ill-treated two female Sinti or Roma inmates and was eventually tried for murder after 1945 in East Germany. The persecuted female Sinti and Roma on the other hand were affected by intersecting categories of persecution which is evident in the incarceration of “fortune-telling female gypsies” in concentration camps after the outbreak of the war or in the attribution of deviant sexual behavior and the persecution as alleged prostitutes.

A kaleidoscopic view of gender in this genocide is undertaken in this presentation. We will not only rely on previous research on female perpetrators from the criminal police or the gendered antigypsyist motif and the persecution of fortune-telling Romani women but also bring in Eva Justin from the “Racial Hygiene Research Center” as well as Erika Bergmann from the Ravensbrück concentration camp and question the representation of these female perpetrators in trials in the postwar East and West Germany.

*Keywords:* Samudaripen, female perpetrators, concentration camp, Romani women.

**Verena Meier** studied history, English philology, European art history, and philosophy at the Ruprecht-Karls University Heidelberg and the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. In her previous role at the Documentation and Cultural Centre of German Sinti and Roma, she assisted in creating exhibitions. She has also worked at the Working Group on Minority History and Civil Rights in Europe, at the Grafeneck memorial site, and at the Documentation Centre of North African Jewry during WWII in Jerusalem, the Foundation to the Murdered Jews of Europe, the Foundation Topography of Terror, and the State Archives of Saxony-Anhalt. Since August 2018, she has been a Ph.D. candidate at the Research Centre on Antigypsyism (Forschungsstelle Antiziganismus) at the University of Heidelberg. The title of her Ph.D. is “Criminal Police and Genocide – The NS-persecution of Sinti and Roma in Magdeburg and Transitional Justice after 1945 under the Allies and in the GDR.” Her research interests include minority history, the history of ideas, and research on historical antisemitism and antigypsyism.

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## Female Perpetrators within the Concentration Camp System

Jesse Tannetta

In the academic sphere, Nazi perpetrators have long been viewed as inhuman monsters, stripping them of their agency, humanity, and the crucial decisions they made to commit genocide. This predisposition has been especially prevalent when discussing the role of Nazi women as active perpetrators in the participation and execution of genocide. Initially believed to be a very small minority in an enormous sea of violent murderers, historians have recently begun to examine the many roles that women played in the concentration camp system. Portrayed as beasts and monsters, they were dehumanized in their depictions and written off as rare abominations. Recent research, however, has shown the prevalence and crucial participation of female perpetrators in organizing, managing, and promoting the Holocaust, particularly within the concentration camp system. This paper seeks to return the agency of these women, rehumanizing them, and ultimately judging them for the actions they committed. By focusing on the human story of the perpetrators, we will have a greater understanding of the history of the Holocaust and will recognize the power of individual choices.

*Keywords:* Holocaust, female perpetrators, concentration camps, Nazism, agency.

**Jesse Tannetta** is a former high school teacher and is Program Manager for Echoes & Reflections specializing in providing professional development to middle and high school teachers focused on Holocaust education throughout the United States. He holds bachelor's degrees in History and Catholic Theology from Emmanuel College as well as a master's degree in Holocaust and Genocide Studies from Gratz College. He is a current Ph.D. student who is just beginning his dissertation analyzing the life of concentration camp guard Hermine Braunsteiner Ryan.

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## Research Projects with Prospective Teachers on Local Women History in Gießen

Randi Becker

In local German remembrance culture women in National Socialism are one of the blind spots in research as well as in visible remembrance culture. To address this issue, we conducted two projects with prospective teachers to not only teach them about women in National Socialism but also share these results with individuals outside of academia. During the summer semester of 2021, within a digital seminar entitled “Women in National Socialism”, we used the 15 sessions to provide the 50 participants with general knowledge on interrelations between sexism and antigypsyism, antisemitism, the nazi category of “anti-socials”, as well as women as perpetrators.

The students were given the name of a local woman (perpetrators as well as victims) who lived under National Socialism and then used the semester to conduct research on their biographies. The results were printed in a 116-page booklet that includes overview articles and summarized biographies of 23 women. The aim of the booklet is to guide educational tours around the city of Gießen. It can be used by any interested individuals and/or groups. The second project in the summer of 2022 focused on women from Gießen who suffered in the Ravensbrück concentration camp. Seventeen prospective teachers visited the memorial site for five days. The students were again given the name of a woman from Gießen and used the semester as well as the excursion to conduct research on her biography. The results will be converted into a traveling exhibition in 2023, displaying the various connections between Gießen and Ravensbrück with 14 biographies.

Considering the outcome and impact of both of these projects to not only enhance student curriculum, but also teach locals in Gießen about women in National Socialism, we believe that presenting this teaching approach will contribute to the overall field of study focusing on women in the Holocaust.

*Keywords:* female perpetrators, female victims, Gießen, Ravensbrück concentration camp, Holocaust education.

**Randi Becker** studied social sciences (B.A.) in Gießen from 2011–2015. His bachelor's thesis focused on forced prostitution in concentration camps. Afterward he finished two master's programs: one in Sociology in Gießen on women as perpetrators and their representation in memorial sites, and one in Political Theory in Frankfurt and Darmstadt on reproduction of antisemitism within the concept of intersectionality. He is a Ph.D. candidate at the University of Passau, studying under Prof. Karin Stögner. He also works as a political education teacher in a state education center for the German civil service and is a visiting lecturer at universities in Gießen, Marburg, and Hamburg, in the Department of Educational Studies, Sociology, and Gender Studies. His research and teaching focus is on women in National Socialism, antisemitism, and gender, critical theory and gender, and antisemitism in feminist and antiracist movements.

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# **ART AND THE HOLOCAUST**



## **Actresses as Memory Keepers: The Stories of Lea Koenig and Miriam Zohar, Israel Prize for Theatre Laureates**

Roy Horovitz

The art of theatre is often thought of as taking place in the present moment with actors performing in real-time. However, each performer brings with them their own personal and professional history, shaping the theatrical work they are creating. This is especially true in the case of the two legendary actresses Lea Koenig and Miriam Zohar, both of whom are Holocaust survivors in their 90s. Their personal experiences have had a profound impact on their careers as actors, and they have often been cast in Holocaust plays. Koenig escaped east to Uzbekistan during the war, spending most of it in Tashkent and Samarkand. Meanwhile, Zohar was sent to the horrors of the concentration camps in Transnistria at the age of nine, where she also contracted typhus. Later, the two women have taken different approaches to addressing the memory of the Holocaust in their work. Their cases offer a glimpse into the role of artists as agents of memory in society and reflect broader patterns in Israel's collective memory of the Holocaust. My lecture will examine the ways in which their personal biographies have been used both as raw material for their actual performances and as a tool for interpreting the theatrical pieces.

*Keywords:* Holocaust art, theatre, Lea Koenig, Miriam Zohar, collective memory, Israel.

**Roy Horovitz** is an acclaimed Israeli actor, director, translator, dramaturg, and scholar. He is a graduate of Nisan Nativ Acting Studio, with a B.A., and M.A. (with Distinction) from Tel-Aviv University and a Ph.D. from the Department of Comparative Literature in Bar-Ilan University, where he is currently a senior faculty member. He also teaches at the David Yellin Academic College in Jerusalem. Horovitz has performed many roles for various theatres (in both Hebrew and English) and represented Israel in many prestigious festivals around the world (including Edinburgh and Grahamstown Festivals). He was awarded Best Actor at the International Haifa Festival in 1997. He also won the “Best Director Award” for *Pollard’s Trial* (The Cameri Theatre, Tel Aviv). He starred in the film *The Body* with Antonio Banderas. Horovitz directed a succession of critically acclaimed productions (including *Not About Nightingales* and *Rabbit Hole*). *My Zakopane*, his last production at Israel’s National Theatre is still running. Horovitz was artistic director of the Municipal Theatre in Kiryat Shmona, dramaturg of Beer-Sheba Theatre, and was a visiting professor at the University of Texas in Austin and Middlebury College. In Spring 2022, he was Israel Institute visiting faculty at the American University in Washington DC. Dr. Horovitz published several articles in various academic journals. He is the author of *World of Innocents – The Dramatic Afterlife of the Bible in Yaakov Shabtai’s Plays* (2021).

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## Écriture Féminine of the Holocaust: Hilda Dajč and Diana Budisavljević

Nevena Daković

The aim of this paper is to analyze *écriture féminine* of the Holocaust documents originating in former Yugoslavia. The case study includes the four letters of Hilda Dajč (Belgrade, 1941–1942) and the diary of Diana Budisavljević (Zagreb, Jasenovac, 1941–1945). The comparative analysis of their writings as well as in numerous literary versions and cinematic adaptations of their biographies maps out different and diverse articulations of the (gendered) Holocaust experience of both the victim – Hilda Dajč (died in Staro sajmište concentration camp); and the savior – Dijana Budisavljević (who saved more than 15.000 Serbian children in the Independent State of Croatia, but in the end also became a victim of persecution by the new Yugoslav government).

The analysis of the narratives inspired by the past: fiction-fiction novels and films about Diana Budisavljević *Dianas Liste* (2017), *Heroine from Innsbruck* (2019); *Austrijanka* (2020), *Diana Budisavljevic* (2021); and films *Dnevnik Diane Budisavljevic* (The Diary of Diana Budisavljevic, 2019), *Dianina deca* (Diana's Children, 2018) and *Peto pismo Hilde Dajc* (The Fifth Letter of Hilda Dajč, 2023) allow us to follow the changes of both memory culture (in terms of cosmopolitanism, and multi-directionality of memory) as well as transmedia storytelling on trauma and the past.

**Keywords:** Holocaust films, Holocaust literature, memory culture, women's writing, NDH, Yugoslavia.

**Nevena Daković** is a full professor of Film and Media Studies at the Department of Theory and History, Faculty of Dramatic Arts, University of Arts in Belgrade. She is the director of the Institute for Theater, Cinema, Radio, and Television and Chair of Interdisciplinary Ph.D. Art and Media Studies of the University of Arts in Belgrade. She is the author and editor of numerous books, most recently *Memory: Trauma, Film, Transmission* (2020), *Graničnici sećanja: jevrejsko nasleđe i Holokaust* (Markers of Memory: Jewish Heritage and the Holocaust, 2018), *Soft Power of the Balkan Screens* (2022), *Representation of the Holocaust in the Balkans in Arts and Media* (2015), and *Media Archaeology* (2016). Nevena Daković publishes widely in the national and international framework (USA, UK, Turkey, Slovakia, Italy, Austria, and France), presents at conferences, and participates in research projects. She is a visiting professor at universities in London, Ohio, Washington, Ljubljana, Paris, Oxford, and Vienna, and gave lectures and seminars at Alpbach, Memorial de la Shoah, and IHRA. She is a member of Academia Europaea and assistant editor of *ER Cambridge* journal. Her main research themes are cultural memory, the Holocaust, nation and representation, and the Balkans.

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## Poetry of Women in the Holocaust

Jane Saginaw

How do contemporary readers relate to the lives and the writings of women who survived the Holocaust? Gut-wrenching tales of concentration camp survival can start to sound redundant, even cliché, as other world catastrophes begin to overshadow the atrocities of World War Two. With these ten poems, we endeavor to bring fresh articulation to voices of the past. We leave behind the grand landscape of the war and focus on the intimate specifics of these women and the travails of their survival. The poems are an exercise in empathy. They are based directly on women's writings with a layer of the author's own twenty-first-century voice.

While our emotional connection to these surviving women is direct, the lived experience is distant. How can we remember that which we have never experienced? The predicament is not unique. Holocaust scholar Marianne Hirsch aptly coined the term "postmemory" precisely to capture the phenomenon and has identified the complexities attendant to its expression. With these ten poems, we hope to bring a new expression to the experiences of Giuliana Tedeschi, Rachel Auerbach, Ruth Moses Berns, Ruth Kluger, Charlotte Muller, Jamila Kolonomos, Ety Hillesum, and Charlette Delbo.

*Keywords:* Holocaust art, poetry, female victims, female voice, postmemory.

**Jane Saginaw** is a Ph.D. student in Literature at the University of Texas at Dallas. Her memoir, *Because the World is Round*, recounts a family trip around the world in 1970 with her mother who was wheelchair-bound from polio. Before returning to graduate school, Jane was a trial lawyer with Baron and Budd in Dallas, Texas. She later served in the Clinton Administration as the Regional Administrator of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region Six. In 2006, she was awarded Trail Lawyer of the Year by Trial Lawyers for Public Justice for her environmental work involving groundwater contamination in Tucson, Arizona. Jane's undergraduate degree is in cultural geography from the University of California, Berkeley. Her law degree is from the University of Texas, Austin. Her essays and poetry have been published in *Athenaeum Review* and are forthcoming in *Image, D Magazine*, and *Paper Brigade Daily*.

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# Unveiling the Emotions of Love, Fear, and Hope: Women of the Holocaust

Tamara Plećaš

This presentation is divided into two segments. The first explores the woman's perspective from a male viewpoint, while the second delves into the woman's perspective from a female standpoint. *The Mauthausen Trilogy*, known as *The Ballad of Mauthausen*, composed by Greek artist Mikis Theodorakis, serves as a poignant example of Holocaust narratives. Within this trilogy, the Song of Songs, which features evocative lyrics by the Greek poet Iakovos Kambanellis, provides a glimpse into the human experience of love and loss within the harrowing context of the Holocaust. Namely, the Song of Songs (Asma asmaton) captures Kambanellis' affection for a Lithuanian-Jewish woman. Kambanellis, himself a survivor of the Mauthausen-Gusen concentration camp, subsequently channeled his personal Holocaust experiences into an autobiographical novel. While acknowledging the predominant male perspectives on Holocaust experiences, this presentation also devotes special attention to the often-overlooked female voices. One of the most renowned and impactful female testimonies of the Holocaust is *The Diary of a Young Girl* by Anne Frank which provides an intimate and personal account of Anne's experiences and emotions while hiding from Nazi persecution. In addition, a special focus will be on the testimonies of Ruth Klüger, who wrote about her Holocaust experience in her autobiography *Still Alive: A Holocaust Girlhood Remembered*.

In the concluding segment of this presentation, a key objective is to explore the commonalities and distinctions among these works in relation to the emotions of love, fear, and hope. By examining these motives, we aim to discern the shared elements and divergences within the testimonies discussed. Additionally, we will try to critically examine the notion of generalizing from individual experiences, questioning whether it is possible to extract overarching conclusions from the multifaceted and deeply personal accounts presented.

**Keywords:** female voice, Holocaust testimonies, Holocaust narratives, The Mauthausen Trilogy, emotions.

**Tamara Plećaš** is a deputy director and Research Fellow at the Institute for Philosophy and Social Theory, University of Belgrade. She obtained her Ph.D. in Philosophy at the Faculty of Philosophy, University of Belgrade. Before joining the Institute, she worked at the Institute of Philosophy, Faculty of Philosophy, University of Belgrade (2017–2022) and as a Teaching Assistant at the same Faculty at the Department of Philosophy (2014–2021). Her main research interests are ancient Greek philosophy, Hellenistic philosophy, the philosophy of education, the philosophy of friendship, cosmopolitanism, and women's studies. She is a member of the editorial board of the journals *Critique: The Journal for Philosophy and the Theory of Society*, and *Khōrein: Journal for Architecture and Philosophy*.

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# **NARRATIVES AND POLITICS**

## Women Writers and the Holocaust in The Jewish Almanac

Žarka Svirčev

The paper presents women writers' literary work published in The Jewish Almanac launched by The Federation of Jewish Communities in Yugoslavia (Belgrade, 1954–1971). We will focus on a genre-diverse body of texts (stories, radio-drama, poetry) centered on the topic of women and the Holocaust by female authors: Frida Filipović, Julija Najman, Mirjam Štajner, Maja Zrnić, Eva Tičak Vajler, Sonja Nahman Premeru, Zora Dirnbah, Ina Jun Broda, Zlata Bojović, Dalia Lea Štern, and Mirjana Papo. This corpus of texts is interpreted in several contexts by the interdisciplinary intersection of periodical studies and feminist literary studies: (1) within the documentation and commemorative-monumental function of The Jewish Almanac and cross-genre and intertextual connections within that periodical publication; (2) in their correlation and communication, as a specifically gender-determined and marked literary-representative corps on the Holocaust; and (3) within the strategies of the socialist culture of memory (as their support or as the construction of alternative representational models).

The interpretation mainly addresses one of the critical narratives that connect the women writers' texts in The Jewish Almanac – the traumatic narrative about motherhood as a biological, psychological, and social category. The paper will discuss the literary-historical and cultural significance of the actualization of social and aesthetic activism, which contains the literary corpus written by women writers in The Jewish Almanac over several decades.

*Keywords:* female voice, female writing, Holocaust, The Jewish Almanac, Yugoslavia.

**Žarka Svirčev** is a Senior Research Fellow at the Institute for Literature and Art, Belgrade, in the Periodicals Department for the History of Serbian Literature and Culture. She is the author of *Ah, that identity! Deconstruction of gender stereotypes in the work of Dubravka Ugrešić* (2010), *Vinaver's Literary Republic* (2017), *Portrait of the Predecessor: Draga Dejanović* (2018), and *Avant-Garde Women. Essays on Serbian (Female) Avant-garde Literature* (2018). She is also the editor of the conference proceedings book *Women's Movement: 1920–1938* with Jelena Milinković and *Becoming a Women Writer*.

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## **“Minsk, my Minsk, the old Bolshevik”: Sara Kagan’s Poetry as a Mirror of the Transformation and Development of Secular Jewish Culture in the Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic**

Katarzyna Taczyńska

In my presentation, I would like to focus on the poetry of Sara Kagan (born in 1885), a Jewish writer from Belarus who wrote in Yiddish and died in the Holocaust in 1941 (the Minsk Ghetto). Kagan’s literary work is both her testimony and an archive of knowledge about the writer herself. However, she has only been mentioned as a reference point in cultural and literary studies devoted to other subjects. These references were limited to a brief biographical note and a list of her works. We will focus on the poetic works of Sara Kagan *On the Road* (1934), *My Homeland* (1938), and *Our People* (1940), which present the Jewish culture captured at the watershed moment when the old must give way to the new.

Jews were actively involved in the creation of the Soviet culture, expressed primarily in Yiddish. Thanks to the implemented Soviet state policy, in the 1920s, the USSR was the only country in the world with state-sponsored publishing houses, writers, and schools. They were meant to create a new culture – one based on socialist ideology. In the case of Jewish culture, the aim was to build a secular Jewish culture that would implement the Soviet policy. I will analyze Kagan’s writing against the background of the social changes brought about by the victorious communist revolution which resulted in establishing the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics in 1922. Kagan’s home country, the BSSR, was one of the four founding members of the USSR. I will explore how Yiddish, as a material manipulated in the course of artistic expression, implements the objectives of the Soviet state policy. At the same time, I will also consider the historical moment captured and reflected in Kagan’s poetry.

**Keywords:** Holocaust art, poetry, identity politics, Belarus, USSR, Yiddish culture.

**Katarzyna Taczyńska** holds a Ph.D. in Literary Studies. She is a researcher in Balkan, Slavic, Polish, and Jewish studies. She is the author of a monograph *A Joke That Stretched for Two and a Half Years, The Portrait of Goli otok in Serbian Literary and Historical Discourse at the End of the 20th and the Beginning of the 21st Century* [in Polish], and many scholarly articles. She was an editor of the series *Get to know the Balkans* and is a member of the editorial staff in *Slavia Meridionalis*. Since 2019, she has been a vice-chair of the Polish Commission of Balkan Culture and History affiliated with AIESEE (Association Internationale d'Etudes du Sud-Est Europeen). She is a recipient of a number of awards and scholarships. She currently works as a researcher at University College Dublin in the project "When Nationalism Fails: A Comparative Study of Holocaust Museums in Ex-collaborationist Countries funded by the Gerda Henkel Foundation. She cooperates with the Bente Kahan Foundation in Wrocław on projects related to Jewish culture. Her research interests include contemporary culture in the context of memory in Eastern and Southern Europe, Holocaust studies, historiography, and literature and art created by Jewish women in the Balkans.

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## Implications of the Holocaust for a Woman – Experiencing the Post-Holocaust Migrant Integration with Sophie Zawistowska

Natalija Perišić

William Styron's *Sophie's Choice* of 1979 has significantly contributed to the processes of understanding complicated implications of the Holocaust for women. The novel's main character, Sophie Zawistowska, has multiple identities: she is a Polish-born Catholic, a daughter, wife, lover, mother to two children, an emigrant to the United States of America, and a Holocaust survivor. Her different identities are not mutually consistent, but competing and hard to be reconciled. Her character, which is not an extraordinary example of bravery, but rather an example of a human being with all its flaws and falls, becomes revealed to a reader gradually. Sophie's story is narrated by Stingo, who is himself confused from time to time (just as a reader) with knowledge about the situation, but willing to genuinely understand its complexities. Sophie's turbulent relationship with Nathan Landau, a New Yorker with a Jewish background, with whom she is desperately in love, adds to the astonishing complexities of her character and leads her to her death. The novel leaves us with questions about the damage inflicted on women in multiple processes, their resilience and vulnerability, as well as final outcomes.

Following the case study of Sophie Zawistowska, this presentation explores intersections between the Holocaust and emigration and their implications for integration. Integration is one of the most explored and still most controversial concepts in migration studies. Here we will focus on feminist approaches to the Holocaust, migration, and integration, due to their importance in understanding the everyday life of women, their experiences, narratives, and expectations.

**Keywords:** Holocaust art, *Sophie's Choice*, emigration, integration, feminism.

**Natalija Perišić**, Ph.D. in Political Science, is a full professor of Social Policy at the University of Belgrade Faculty of Political Science, Department of Social Policy and Social Work, where she lectures on national and European welfare states, aging, and migration at the undergraduate, masters, and Ph.D. level. She is also a lecturer in the Migration Studies masters program at the University of Belgrade and a visiting professor at the University of Eastern Sarajevo, Department of Sociology with Social Work, Bosnia and Herzegovina. She is a vice dean for Undergraduate Studies at the Faculty of Political Science and the Coordinator of MIGREC, a project funded under the European Union's Horizon 2020 scheme. Her scientific and research interests include the nexus between aging, migration, and welfare state, national and European social policies, and gender perspectives. She has published extensively in national and international journals and contributed to several edited books.

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