

FORUM Z

A public history
events series

18.10.2021

15.00 - 18.00

Université du Luxembourg - Maison du Savoir
2, avenue de l'Université
L-4365 Esch-sur-Alzette

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WHAT IS REMEMBERED LIVES

Mémoire de la Shoah à l'ère digitale

Conférences par

- Prof. Peter Klein (Touro College Berlin)
- Prof. Sarah Gensburger (CNRS -Paris)
- Prof.-Ass. Denis Scuto (C²DH - Université du Luxembourg)

Ateliers:

- l'initiative #EveryNameCounts des Archives Arolsen
- le projet Iwalk de l'USC Shoah Foundation
- le Mémorial Digital de la Shoah au Luxembourg

Les interventions seront en français, allemand et anglais.



Photographie de Barbra Hermann et ses filles, Archives du Commandat et Repatriement, CS-0882, Archives Nationales du Luxembourg

Summary of the presentations – English translation



A. Conferences

1. Prof. Peter Klein, Dean of the M.A. in Holocaust Communication and Tolerance

Die Transporte nach ‚Litzmannstadt‘ im Oktober 1941: Entscheidungen, Schicksale, Konsequenzen

The transports to ‚Litzmannstadt‘ in octobre 1941: decisions, destinies, consequences

The ‘Getto Litzmannstadt’ in German occupied Łódź was the second biggest in Poland and the one that existed the longest. Among the decisions that had an impact on the existence and the life of its Jewish detainees, some are outstanding and can be labeled with words like ‘productivization’, ‘type of administration’ and ‘objective of deportation’. Such decisions had a significant impact on the collective fate of the imprisoned Jews, and the consequences for Polish, Luxembourgish, Czech, Austrian and German Jews were fundamental.

By its size, its production of goods and its late dissolution during the summer of 1944, the ‘Getto Litzmannstadt’ within the occupied city of Łódź is one of the best studied ghettos. Until October 1941, the destiny of the Jews in occupied Luxembourg followed a different path than the one of the Jews in occupied ‘Litzmannstadt’. In Luxembourg the forced migrations, difficult to achieve, were replaced by a more structured emigrations, more plannable and less costly. In spite of the difficulties linked to the multiplication of actors involved in the Western emigration process, the Berlin authorities pushed the Jewish leaders in Luxembourg to have people integrating overseas transportations via Portugal.

Parallely to that on the Eastern side, the inhabitants of a ghetto whose existence was fragile and ephemeral were trying to protect themselves from famines through the yield of forced labor. German municipal authorities ‘supported’ these efforts in their own way, providing money that allowed this ‘Jewish residential district’ to remain, in spite of the high rate of death by famine.

But from October 1941 onwards, the destiny of the Jews of ‚Litzmannstadt‘ and the ones of Luxembourg were linked. After their arrival in the ghetto - where they were first housed in a closed school - on October 18th 1941, the Jews of Luxembourg experienced a cultural shock, as they were now forced to live in a place where every human being was integrated in forced labor groups. And if the contacts with their place of origin were maintained and even encouraged, it was only to generate fundraising campaigns. For the days of the new inhabitants of the ghetto were counted: starting in May 1942, 10,000 of the 20,000 people who had been deported from the Reich and Luxembourg to the ghetto in October-November 1940 were taken to the camp of Chelmno to be murdered.

2. Prof. Sarah Gensburger, Directrice de Recherche au CNRS, Institut des Sciences sociales du Politique

Les Parisiens racontent la Shoah : de la recherche fondamentale au récit sonore

Parisian people tell about the Holocaust: from basic research to audible story

More than half of the Jews deported from France lived in Paris in 1940. And in spite of the multiplication of micro-history studies on the one hand and local monographs on the other over the last few years in France, the scale of Paris remains untouched until now. How can you write the history of the Jewish population in the capital closest to social interactions and ordinary proximity relationships? And how can you then report places and actors at the closest in a city that has known very little destructions since 1945? This presentation will trace back the origins of a collection of audible stories “Parisian people tell about the Holocaust” that tell the story where it happened thanks to a dedicated Webapp and an in-depth scientific research.

In 1940 more than 130.000 Jews live in Paris, which represents more than half of the Jews in France whilst more than half of the racial deportees between 1941 and 1944 were Parisians. Yet the history of the Holocaust in Paris is still to be written. Since 2016, with a group of colleagues, we cross-reference Urban History and Holocaust History to locate the persecution in the space of the capital, and thus have a better understanding of the mechanisms that led to the extermination in a city where no neighborhood was mainly populated by a Jewish population.

This presentation will go back to the richness of the fundamental research process, before presenting how this work has been made accessible to a broad audience through a series of audio stories located in the space of the city called “*Les Parisiens racontent la Shoah*”, available freely on a dedicated webapp in English and French (<https://passe-ici.fr/saisons/des-parisiens-racontent-la-shoah>). These podcasts tell the history of the Holocaust as a proximity history, a history of closeness, where it happened, including neighbors, colleagues, classmates.

Sarah Gensburger is a Senior Researcher at the CNRS. She is a specialist of the sociology of memory and the history of the Holocaust.

<https://www.sarahgensburger.com>

3. Prof. Ass. Denis Scuto, Directeur adjoint du Centre for Contemporary and Digital History – Université du Luxembourg

Ecrire et rappeler les vies. Le projet de Mémorial Digital de la Shoah au Luxembourg

Writing and remembering lives. The project of the Digital Memorial of the Holocaust in Luxembourg

The Digital Memorial of the Holocaust in Luxembourg, conceived as a partnership between the Centre for Contemporary and Digital History – University of Luxembourg and the Luxemburgish Foundation for the Memory of the Holocaust, is based on one central idea: instead of reducing victims of the Holocaust to this status of victims and names on lists, it will aim at giving back to each of them a face, an identity, a biography. It will show them as acting subjects, members of the societies in which they lived; it will also explore the possibilities of digital tools to document their lives and allow the public to participate to the documentary, scientific and memorial dimensions of the project.

So it will not only be a Memorial of the Deportation, but a Memorial of the individuals, of the families, of the social groups. Going beyond administrative information, it will present the biographies, their contexts and the networks that they reveal. It aims at allowing a memorial process, but also a documenting and research process. In that same vein, it will not only allow visitors to look and read, but to find information, testify, ask questions, bring new elements. It will not only confront the visitor to thousands of documents and lists of people, but allow for individual meeting. It will go beyond targeted research in the corpus of the Website, providing help for further investigations in other websites, archival fonds, libraries etc.

This is a participatory project, so the initiators would like to invite families of victims, researchers, academics, scholars, teachers, students, participants from diverse horizons and countries, to participate to the writing of the biographies.

B. Workshops

1. Dr. Kerstin Hofmann, Research Associate, Research Education Department of the Arolsen Archives – International Center on Nazi Persecution

#everynamecounts – Die Crowdsourcing-Initiative der Arolsen Archives auf Zooniverse

#everynamecounts – The crowdsourcing initiative of the Arolsen Archives on “Zooniverse”

#everynamecounts is an initiative by the Arolsen Archives which aims to establish a digital memorial to the people persecuted by the Nazis. Future generations should be able to remember the names and identities of these victims. But the initiative is important to today’s society as well – because by looking back, we can see where discrimination, racism and antisemitism lead.

Remembering and commemorating the victims of National Socialism often involves formal rituals that don’t resonate with younger generations. The #everynamecounts crowdsourcing initiative offers a new and very direct way of actively engaging with the past – not only to remember the victims of Nazi persecution, but also to promote respect, diversity and solidarity.

We are building the world’s largest online archive on people persecuted and murdered by the Nazis. To do this, the names and data in scanned historical documents must be digitally transcribed. This is a huge task, because there are around 30 million documents in our archive with references to the fates of 17.5 million people. Many millions of names can already be easily searched online. But not nearly all of them. This is why we launched the #everynamecounts crowdsourcing initiative. You can spend as much time on it as you like. All you need to participate in #everynamecounts is a computer with an internet connection. Thousands of volunteers are already helping out.

2. Jakub Bronec, Doctoral Candidate, Centre for Contemporary and Digital History – Université du Luxembourg

The project “IWalk”: an App to learn about Jewish history in Luxembourg

In his article « Un antisémitisme nouveau? the debate about a ‘new antisemitism’ in France. » (*Patterns of Prejudice*, 2009, 43 (2), p. 103-121) Timothy Peace has proven through recent sociological statistics that hatred and animosity towards many minorities have dramatically increased, especially among young people. He argues that it is necessary to actively counter antisemitism, xenophobia and homophobia, and that teachers must address this issue in their classes. Based on the conclusions of his work, it is important to ask: How can we foster an awareness of history among young people?

The aim of the IWalk project in Luxembourg was to create two interactive and educational online tours that provide rich content for online applications, which would involve (primarily) university students, but also secondary school pupils, based on the principles of open science. It aims to motivate students to become active content producers and not merely consumers, while the teacher assumes the role of mediator by helping students interact with the materials and derive their own conclusions. It is also important to create deep and meaningful structures, as well as foster abilities, skills and approaches based on content-specific critical enquiry. How can a teacher do this? The teacher must offer several pathways, with the students selecting which method to follow and which model to choose in order to deal with the issue. In particular, the teacher should provide additional critical context for working with oral history to enable students to understand the whole historical context. Finally, it is necessary to allow enough time for students to discuss a controversial topic and for students to determine the basic principles of the whole project.

3. Marc Gloden, Secrétaire Général de la Fondation Luxembourgeoise pour la Mémoire de la Shoah, et **Blandine Landau**, Doctoral Candidate, Centre for Contemporary and Digital History – Université du Luxembourg

Le Mémorial Digital de la Shoah au Luxembourg, un projet participatif et inclusif

The Digital Memorial of the Holocaust in Luxembourg, a participatory and inclusive project

« What is Remembered Lives ».

Based on this guiding principle, the *Fondation Luxembourgeoise pour la Mémoire de la Shoah* (FLMS) and the Centre for Contemporary and Digital History (C²DH) of the University of Luxembourg are planning the creation of the Digital Memorial of the Holocaust in Luxembourg. As the last direct witnesses of the persecutions that hit people considered as Jewish during World War II are disappearing, it is our common duty to preserve their memory.

Either long-term residents or fleeing refugees, Luxemburgish citizens or not, more than 5000 men, women and children were victims of these persecutions. But before that they were businessmen and in all these dimensions. To this end we are issuing a call for participation on an international scale.

On the digital platform created by the C²DH and the FLMS, the biographies of the victims of the Holocaust who lived in Luxembourg will be published. They will be illustrated by documents of all kind (photographs of archives, clips from documentaries and testimonies, diverse types of images).

This large-scale scientific project is open to everyone, including education professionals. If you are interested, you can participate:

- By writing one biography or more;
- By sharing historical documents with the authors of the biographies;
- By testifying of your path and/ or of the one of some of your relatives.

If you wish to take part in this collective project, please fill-in and send back the form available on the Internet site of the FLMS:

<https://fondluxshoah.lu/>