
Commentators

Karolina Szymaniak (University of Wrocław,

Jewish Historical Institute)

Jie-Hyun Lim (Sogang University, Seoul)

Chair

Zofia Wóycicka (University of Warsaw)

Organizers of the event

German Historical Institute Warsaw

Centre for Research on Social Memory,

University of Warsaw

Venue

German Historical Institute Warsaw

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The lecture and discussion will be held in English.

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Historikerstreit 2.0: Current German Debates on the Interconnections between History and Heritage of Colonialism and the Holocaust

Natan Sznaider

The Academic College of Tel Aviv-Yaffo

lecture / discussion

24.11.2022, 7–9 p.m.

German Historical Institute Warsaw



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**Niemiecki
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In spring 2020, a public debate sparked off in Germany that became known as **Historikerstreit 2.0**, in reference to the famous dispute of German historians from the 1980s. The debate concerned the relationship between colonialism and the Holocaust. Historians have discussed the specificity of the Holocaust in comparison to other genocides and crimes against humanity long before this latest debate. They have also asked about possible ideological, structural and personal continuities between German colonial rule in Africa before World War I, the Nazi genocide of the European Jews and the broader German occupation, in particular of Central-Eastern Europe. However, these disputes have had a rather academic character. This latest debate has a much broader reach and thematic scope. It concerns not only historical issues but also current problems, such as the rivalry between the memory of the Holocaust and colonial crimes, the relation between racism and antisemitism and the boundaries between legitimate critique of Israel and antisemitism. An important stimulus for the debate was also the recognition that Germany has become a multicultural society. This raised question of whether and how, in a society consisting to a large part of people with no family connection to Nazism and World War II and with totally different cultural baggage, the consensus on the centrality of the Holocaust for the German culture of memory can be upheld.

The latest book by **Natan Sznaider**, *Fluchtpunkte der Erinnerung: Über die Gegenwart von Holocaust und Kolonialismus* (Vanishing Points of Memory: On the Presence of the Holocaust and Colonialism), published in 2022, is an important voice in this debate. In his lecture, Sznaider will present the main thesis of his book and share his reflections on the recent developments in Germany. The lecture will be supported with additional commentary by **Karolina Szymaniak** and **Jie-Hyun Lim**, who will put these disputes in a Polish and global perspective.

Natan Sznaider is professor at the Academic College of Tel-Aviv-Yaffo. He has also held visiting professorships at Columbia University in New York, University of Munich, Vienna and Zurich. As a sociologist, Sznaider specializes in Holocaust memory, the sociology of emotions, globalization and the political theory of Hannah Arendt. He has also developed a sociological theory of cosmopolitanism. He has published 15 books, most prominently *Holocaust and Memory in the Global Age* (2006) and *Human Rights and Memory* (2010) [both co-authored with Daniel Levy]. He has also authored over 50 journal essays, among them one which received a prize from the British Journal of Sociology as the one of the most important articles of the decade. His most recent book is *Fluchtpunkte der Erinnerung: Über die Gegenwart von Holocaust und Kolonialismus* (Vanishing Points of Memory: On the Presence of the Holocaust and Colonialism, 2022).

Karolina Szymaniak, assistant professor at the Taube Department of Jewish Studies at the University of Wrocław and a research fellow at the Jewish Historical Institute. Her research interests range across Polish-Jewish literary and cultural relations, the politics of memory, histories of Yiddish modernism, women's literature, and translation studies. She received the 2016 Polityka History Prize for her edition of Rachel Auerbach's writings in the Warsaw Ghetto. She is the editor-in-chief of "East European Jewish Affairs". Among her most recent publications are two critical editions: *Rachel Auerbach, "Schriften aus dem Warschauer Ghetto"* (2022) and *Malka Lee, Oczami dziecka* (2022).

Jie-Hyun Lim is professor of Transnational History and director of the Critical Global Studies Institute at Sogang University, Seoul. He is now principal investigator of the research project *Mnemonic Solidarity: Colonialism, War and Genocide in the Global Memory Space* (2017–2024) and series editor of *Entangled Memories in the Global South* published by Palgrave/Macmillan. His recent memory studies books include *Global Easts: Remembering, Imagining, Practicing* (2022). *Victimhood Nationalism: A Global History* (2021; 2022), and *Mnemonic Solidarity: Global Interventions* (2021) co-edited with Eve Rosenhaft. As a memory activist, he has also co-curated exhibitions of "Unwelcome Neighbors," "Naming Forced Laborers" and others.

Zofia Wóycicka is an assistant professor at the Faculty of Sociology of the University of Warsaw, where she is currently leading a research project titled *Help Delivered to Jews during World War II and the Transnational Memory in Making*. Wóycicka has nearly 10 years of professional experience in museums. She has also been a researcher at the Centre for Historical Studies Berlin of the Polish Academy of Sciences and at the German Historical Institute Warsaw. She authored amongst others *Arrested Mourning. Memory of Nazi Camps in Poland, 1944–1950* (2013).

