



Early Attempts at the Historical Documentation of the Holocaust

International Workshop

**within the framework of the European Holocaust Research Infrastructure (EHRI),
supported by the European Union**

Holocaust Memorial Center - Budapest

November 27-28, 2012

We would like to invite you to an international workshop on **Early Attempts at the Historical Documentation of the Holocaust**, to be held at Holocaust Memorial Center in Budapest, Hungary on November 27-28, 2012.

The expert meeting is organized within the framework of the European Holocaust Research Infrastructure (EHRI) program, supported by the European Union. EHRI was launched in November 2010, and is dedicated to opening up collections related to Holocaust history within a web-based environment. The overall objective of the EHRI experts' workshops is to generate a creative exchange of knowledge and views between experts in various methodological subfields of Holocaust research and documentation.

Participants are invited to present their findings pertaining to the early attempts to document the mass destruction of European Jews during WWII in a comparative perspective. The period covered by the papers is expected to range from, but is not strictly limited to, the beginning of WWII to the end of the 1950s, before the growth of scholarly interest in the Holocaust. We would especially like to deepen our knowledge of documentation projects which have been researched to a lesser extent, often those from Central, Eastern, and South-Eastern Europe.

The overall aim of the EHRI, to connect and to make accessible Holocaust-related archival material, raises the principal issue of the origins of these collections. In order to understand the structure, contents, and historical value of the sources preserved in European archives and other documentation centers, we must explore who created these collections and how they were created: what were the political circumstances, resources and motivations surrounding these early documentary projects.

The workshop aims to provide a comparative perspective on early Jewish and non-Jewish documentary projects, including historical commissions that collected documents and conducted interviews with Holocaust survivors. The significance of this

theme lies in discussing the archives not as definite, stable and objective sets of documents, but as (partly) constructed entities. Looking at the attempts of mostly Jewish survivors to re-construct the documentation, in the face of wide-spread Nazi destruction of documents at the end of the war, also highlights connections between archives and identities and the role of documentation/archiving as a way to cope with genocide.

We invite historians and other scholars to submit proposal papers dealing with the history of various documentation projects, including historical commissions and documentation committees in DP-camps. The history of these initiatives is closely intertwined with various facets of post-1945 European history. Presentations may also explore the links and connections between these initiatives and other political, social, and cultural phenomena in postwar Europe, such as restitution, relief, legal processes against and pursuit of perpetrators, postwar antisemitism, and the birth of the State of Israel. The workshop also wishes to address survivors' testimonies. In particular, we would like to explore how early interviewers regarded the survivors they spoke with: were they considered primarily as a source of "objective" information or were interviewers interested more in subjective experiences and reflections? And how did survivors perceive their accounts? Finally, we seek to gain a better understanding of early memorial projects and the beginnings of scholarly research on the Holocaust.

The workshop will be conducted in English, at the **Holocaust Memorial Center**, 1094 Budapest 39 Páva Street, Hungary.

The workshop is planned to coincide in topic and timing with the annual Simon Wiesenthal Conference of the Wiener Wiesenthal Institute entitled *Before the Holocaust had its name. Early confrontations of the Nazi mass murder of the Jews* taking place in Vienna on November 29 – December 1, 2012. Read more at www.vwi.ac.at.

Call for Papers

Proposals are now invited for individual presentations or participation in round tables relating to the topics above. NB case studies and collection-specific presentations are also welcomed across all topics.

- **Individual Papers**

Each accepted paper for individual presentation will be allotted 30 minutes for presentation and discussion.

- **Round Tables**

An opportunity for several shorter presentations (approx. 10 mins each) and a chaired discussion. This may be a more suitable slot for 'work in progress' submissions.

If you are interested in giving an individual paper or participating in a round table discussion, please send a short 500 word proposal and a CV (including all relevant contact information) to:

ehriworkshop@hdke.hu

The deadline for submissions of proposals is June 29, 2012.

Notification will be sent via email by July 29, 2012.

Subsidies will be available to participants in accordance with European Commission guidelines and the EHRI project budget.

Contact

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