

We Still Need to Talk

Towards a Relational Culture of Remembrance



08.12. – 10.12.2023



from 03:00 pm



To be announced



Download event [Link: <https://www.bpb.de/bpbapi/event/download?nid=541171>]

About the event

In the 1980s, civil society activists in West Germany developed a culture of remembrance premised on taking responsibility for the Nazi genocide of European Jews. These grassroots efforts transformed Germany's memorial landscape, defining commemoration of the Shoah as central to post-war German identity. As such initiatives achieved broad recognition in the reunified Germany of the 1990s and 2000s—and eventually came to form the basis of state-sanctioned 'memory culture' (Erinnerungskultur)—the German model was celebrated internationally as exemplary in its approach to redressing an extremely violent history. At the core of this model are an understanding of the Holocaust as a singular and unprecedented historical event, and the embrace of responsibility for the genocide of Jews as an unavoidable element of national identity.

While the German approach to coming to terms with the National Socialist past remains widely admired, a lively public discussion about some of its central tenets has taken place over recent years. Scholars, activists, journalists and cultural workers have—in particular—debated how best to understand the relationship between the Shoah and other deeply traumatic histories, not least the violence of colonialism. Such conversations have raised the question of how adequately the German model can respond to multiple incidents of historical violence—not only those perpetrated against Jews, but also those perpetrated by the Nazi regime against non-Jewish victims, as well as those perpetrated by the German state before and after the Shoah. Critics have suggested the value of exploring alternative models of remembrance that might be able to register the magnitude and specificity of the Shoah, while nevertheless allowing meaningful space for rigorous consideration and commemoration of other German trajectories of violence; historical events such as the Nazi-perpetrated genocide against Roma and Sinti people (also known as the 'Porajmos,' the 'Pharrajimos,' or the 'Samudaripen'), or the Ovaherero>Nama genocide that took place in what is now the country of Namibia between 1904 and 1908 under German colonial rule (to name but two examples).

Equally central to the German model is a conception of antisemitism as an absolutely distinct form of hatred. Parallel to the discussion of the Holocaust's uniqueness in the last few years, there has also been interrogation—involving Jewish and/or Israeli voices, among others—of whether antisemitism should be understood as unique in its workings or, rather, as entangled with other forms of violent prejudice, such as anti-Black and anti-Asian racisms, racism against Sinti and Romani communities, Islamophobia and anti-Palestinian biases (both historically and in the present). Alongside a variety of scholarly approaches to such questions, a robust public debate has emerged, spurred on by the introduction of competing definitions of antisemitism—the most well-known of which are the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance's 'working definition' and the Jerusalem Declaration on Antisemitism. At stake in the debate pertaining to the specificity of antisemitism are both the notion of 'Israel-related antisemitism' (Israelbezogener Antisemitismus), and implications for the current and future politics of Israel and Palestine.

A third thread of discussion in recent years involves the question of whether the German model of coming to terms with the past—as it was consolidated in the wake of reunification—remains adequate for the diverse, post-migrant society that Germany has become since 1945. Teachers and educators at memorial sites have raised the question of whether and how Germany's memory culture, as it is currently constituted, can be relevant to a contemporary society that includes migrant, post-migrant and diasporic communities carrying legacies from other parts of Europe, Asia, the Middle East and Africa; many of whom are not historically implicated in the Shoah and bring with them their own experiences of political violence and trauma. While there is consensus (outside of right-wing and/or ethno-nationalist movements) regarding Germany's continuing responsibility with respect to the Holocaust, there is also a call for reflection on how the culture of remembrance might evolve to serve an increasingly plural German population.

This symposium seeks to explore these related questions about the German model of memory culture. In order to open up multivalent ways of coming to terms with the past and the present, the symposium will bring together a broad range of speakers who offer relational approaches to the history, memory and ongoing legacy of the Holocaust. It will invite reflection on the interwoven histories of various victims of the Nazis (Jews, Sinti and Roma, Eastern European civilians, Black people, queer communities, those considered disabled or mentally ill, etc.). It will consider the relationship between National Socialist violence and other traumatic histories perpetrated by the German state. It will probe the ethics of relating to the suffering of others, with particular attention to debates around works of art that endeavour to represent traumatic histories; and will invite discussion regarding what it means to be 'implicated' in violent histories that are not one's own. It will provide space to efforts to better understand the relationship between antisemitism and other prevalent forms of hatred, considering the ongoing normalization of right-wing ideology within political discourse in Germany and beyond. Without seeking to impose a singular model of coming to terms with the past, the symposium responds to an increasingly widespread sense of urgency regarding the need for a relational culture of remembrance and intersectional forms of solidarity.

Curatorial team: Candice Breitz, Michael Rothberg, Iris Rajanayagam and Peggy Piesche.

The full programme (GER./EN.) will be available here soon.

Organizer:

Federal Agency for Civic Education/bpb

Target group:

Prospective) historians, actors in (historical-)civic education, interested members of the public

Press contact:

Journalists please contact the [press office \[Link: https://www.bpb.de/die-bpb/presse/503649/pressekontakt/\]](https://www.bpb.de/die-bpb/presse/503649/pressekontakt/).

Directions:

Will be delivered later

Registration:

Participation fee: None

The entire venue, including the bathrooms, is accessible by wheelchair. Both English/German spoken language interpretation and translation into German sign language will be provided throughout the event. The symposium will be streamed live. Please note the [event regulations of the bpb \[Link: https://www.bpb.de/system/files/dokument_pdf/bpb_Veranstaltungsordnung.pdf\]](https://www.bpb.de/system/files/dokument_pdf/bpb_Veranstaltungsordnung.pdf) when participating.

Weitere Inhalte

Dossier

Nationalsozialismus und Zweiter Weltkrieg [Link: <https://www.bpb.de/themen/nationalsozialismus-zweiter-weltkrieg/dossier-nationalsozialismus/>]

Mit dem deutschen Überfall auf Polen begann am 1. September 1939 der Zweite Weltkrieg. Als er 1945 endete, lag Europa in Trümmern. Über 60 Millionen Menschen waren tot. Wie konnte es soweit kommen?...

Artikel

Film, NS-Vergangenheit und Geschichtswissenschaft [Link: <https://www.bpb.de/themen/holocaust/520907/film-ns-vergangenheit-und-geschichtswissenschaft/>]

Dass Spielfilme über den Nationalsozialismus die Erinnerungskultur prägen, ist kaum zu bestreiten. Insbesondere die TV-Serie „Holocaust“ gilt als eine Zäsur, die zugleich zahlreiche neue...

Schriftenreihe

4,50 €

»Ich gehörte nirgendwohin.« [Link: <https://www.bpb.de/shop/buecher/schriftenreihe/522985/ich-gehoerte-nirgendwohin/>]

Was wurde aus den jungen Zeugen der Shoah? Rebecca Clifford wendet sich den Biographien und schmerzlichen Erinnerungen von Menschen zu, deren biografische Wurzeln durch den Holocaust gekappt wurden.

Schriftenreihe

4,50 €

Sonderbehandlung [Link: <https://www.bpb.de/shop/buecher/schriftenreihe/520752/sonderbehandlung/>]

Der Bericht Filip Müllers über seine Zwangsarbeit in einem Sonderkommando im Vernichtungslager Auschwitz-Birkenau gibt Einsichten in das Innenleben eines unfassbar grausamen Gewaltsystems.

Konferenz / Tagung

67. Bundesweites Gedenkstättenseminar 2023 [Link:

<https://www.bpb.de/veranstaltungen/veranstaltungs-kalender/519854/67-bundesweites-gedenkstaettenseminar-2023/>]



27.06. – 30.06.2023



ab 18:00 Uhr



Hamburg

Hintergrund aktuell

Vor 70 Jahren: Der Deutsche Bundestag stimmt "Luxemburger Abkommen" zu [Link: <https://www.bpb.de/kurz-knapp/hintergrund-aktuell/519239/vor-70-jahren-der-deutsche-bundestag-stimmt-luxemburger-abkommen-zu/>]

Am 18. März 1953 stimmte der Bundestag dem Luxemburger Abkommen zu. Deutschland erklärte sich damit bereit, insgesamt 3,5 Milliarden Mark an Israel und die Jewish Claims Conference zu zahlen.