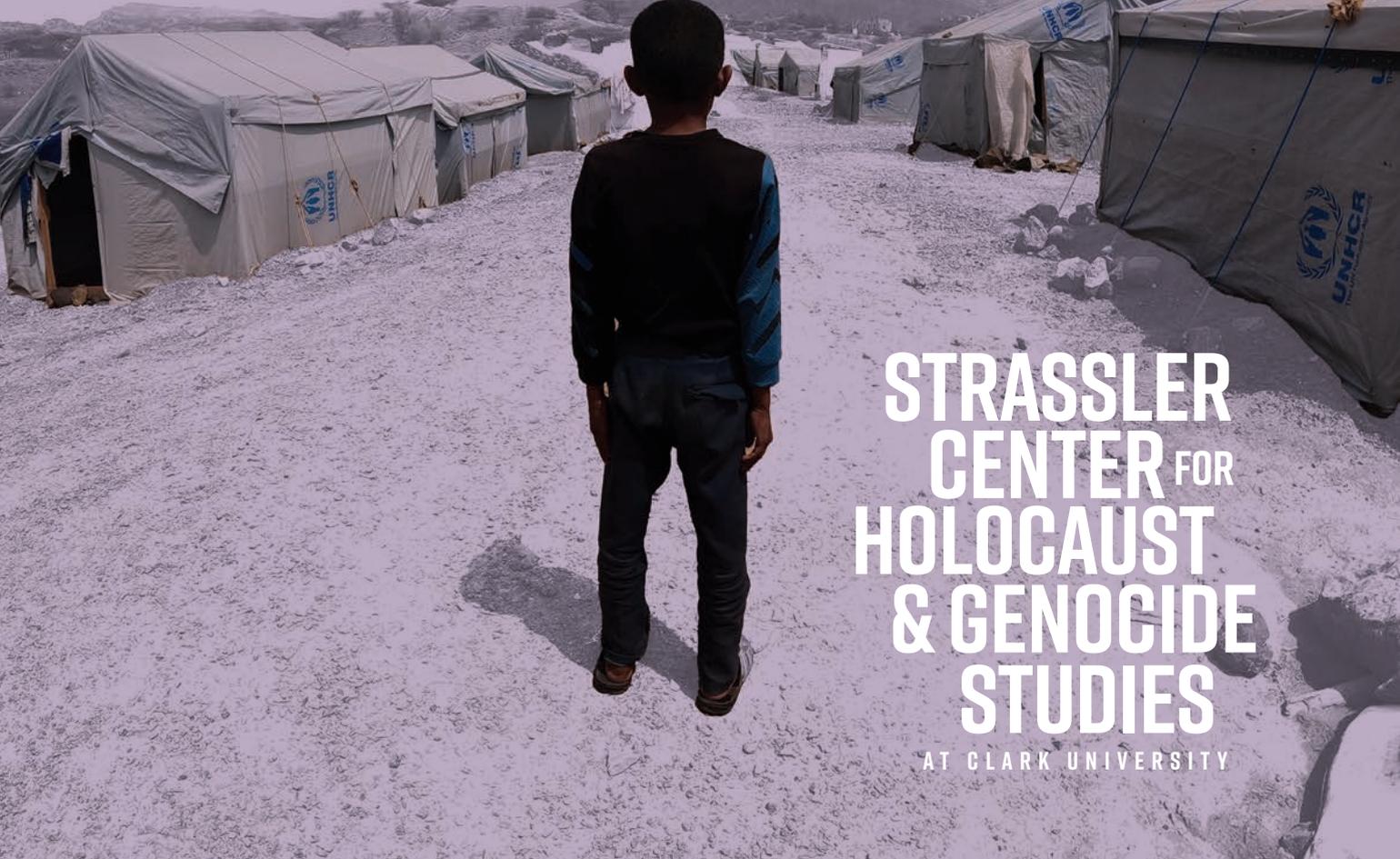


2022



**STRASSLER  
CENTER FOR  
HOLOCAUST  
& GENOCIDE  
STUDIES**

AT CLARK UNIVERSITY

ALBERT EINSTEIN ADMONISHED THAT “THE WORLD WILL NOT BE DESTROYED BY THOSE WHO DO EVIL, BUT BY THOSE WHO WATCH THEM WITHOUT DOING ANYTHING.”



Russia’s brutal war in Ukraine has caused a massive refugee crisis to which the world has responded with outrage and sympathy for the millions of civilians forced from their homes. Yet, this is but one violent conflict that has resulted in large-scale displacement. Today, there are tens of millions of refugees fleeing violence, persecution, and political turmoil. Yet, we quickly turn our gaze away as humanitarian crises inevitably fade from the headlines. Despite the temporal and geographic boundaries that we impose upon these events, the plight of innocent victims continues even as our attention shifts to new tragedies. As scholars of genocide, human rights abuses, and forced migration, Strassler Center students and faculty want to understand the circumstances prompting flight and why the suffering of refugees is so quickly forgotten.

The failure begins with language that is temporally bounded. Public discourse frames refugee events in terms of emergency rather than as a phenomenon with a history and ongoing reality. A crisis passes and its victims disappear from view. The Russian invasion quickly mobilized world attention. Yet, as the conflict grinds on, despite the possibility that genocide may be occurring, the public grows weary of the news. We have seen this happen time and again with refugees fleeing war in Syria, genocidal persecution in Myanmar, unrest in Sudan and so on. Reframing the conversation with a longer temporal trajectory allows us to establish narratives that better address the reality of refugee displacement.

Of course, war and violence are not the only processes driving refugees. Environmental change, political upheaval, economic instability, gentrification and other factors also fuel population movements. Professors Sultan Doughan and Frances Tanzer organized a workshop, *Living in Climate Refuge*, that shed light on the connections between climate and displacement not only in terms of imminent catastrophe but also as a current reality with a complex history. Another conference, *Representing Absence: Refugees, Forced Migration, and Aftermath*, explored the lingering trauma that results from persecution, displacement, and

loss. Planned long before the Ukraine crisis, the participants proved prescient in retraining our gaze on refugees in the aftermath of flight. Their contributions, with a focus on the long durée, provide an important corrective that understands the experiences of displaced people more fully.

As the crisis in Ukraine shifts into a war with no foreseeable end, the need to better understand Eastern Europe has become essential. Professor Jan Grabowski highlighted the importance of this region in his lecture, “Student and Faculty Guide to Holocaust Distortion, or How to Domesticize the Shoah in a Few Easy Steps.” The politicization of Holocaust memory is on the rise in Poland but also in Hungary, Russia, Ukraine and other countries of the former Soviet Union. Expertise on the Holocaust in Eastern Europe, including knowledge of the languages of the region, would strengthen our doctoral program in myriad ways.

After the Russian invasion of Ukraine, we were inspired by the example set by colleges (many of them historically black institutions) that offered opportunities to German Jewish professors expelled by the Nazis. We invited Dr. Marta Havryshko, a talented young historian from Lviv, to join the Strassler Center community to finish her book project *Gender and the Holocaust: Sexual Violence against Jewish Women in Nazi-Occupied Ukraine*. The support of friends and donors make this invitation possible and we hope that circumstances will permit her to take advantage of it. “Real generosity toward the future,” according to Albert Camus, “lies in giving all to the present.” The work of the Strassler Center aims to build a better future by doing all we can today to deepen our understanding of the past. Your interest and generosity truly matter.

MARY JANE REIN, PHD,  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

THOMAS KÜHNE, PHD,  
DIRECTOR AND STRASSLER COLIN FLUG PROFESSOR

The image features a complex abstract composition. A large, dark purple, stylized letter 'F' is positioned on the left side. The background is a grid of white and light gray squares, some of which contain textured patterns in shades of purple, blue, and brown. The word 'EVENTS' is written in a bold, blue, sans-serif font in the upper right quadrant. A larger, semi-transparent version of the word 'EVENTS' is centered horizontally across the middle of the page. The overall aesthetic is modern and geometric.

**EVENTS**

EVENTS

LECTURE SERIES, *CLIMATE AND GENOCIDE***Fall Semester 2021**

A series of lectures presented during the fall 2021 semester addressed the intersection of climate catastrophes and mass violence. The impetus for these events was the publication of a powerful statement regarding climate change, signed by leading genocide scholars, including Taner Akçam and Thomas Kühne, that urged a paradigm shift in the field. Pivoting away from an exclusive focus on mass violence perpetrated by human beings against other human beings, the signatories proposed a fundamental change to their cornerstone mentalities.

Genocide scholarship examines why one group of people seeks the annihilation of another group of people and its practitioners seek to understand how to prevent mass atrocities. Until now, devastating man-made crises such as pandemics and environmental disasters were mostly left to the natural sciences. Yet, the consequences from these human induced catastrophes have the potential to imperil not only Earth's ecosystems but also all living species, which creates a moral imperative to act. Moreover, climate catastrophes disproportionately impact marginalized and disadvantaged communities around the globe. The eventual cost to human life may eventually approach an unforeseen scale. In order to push these issues to the center of genocide studies, the scholars' statement advocated advancing the conversation linking climate change to potential mass death through university curricula, research priorities, and scholarly discourse.

Historian Mark Levene, an Emeritus Fellow at the University of Southampton (UK) who authored the climate statement, opened the series. In his talk, "Facing Off or Facing up to 'The End'? Reflections on the Omnicidal Trajectory of Homo Anthropocenus" (28 September 2021), he examined how mankind has repeatedly ignored opportunities to avert major existential threats to the planet. In presenting the subject through the lens of his political and intellectual evolution, Levene considered milestones from his life as an environmentalist and peace activist. He began by showing the doomsday clock that the Bulletin of Atomic Scientists created, at the dawn of the nuclear age, to broadcast the dangers inherent in technology. The scientists who monitor the world's vulnerability eventually incorporated climate change into their prognostications, which currently calculate that mankind is within 100 seconds of extinction.

Already in the 1970s, Levene recognized that the future of the planet looked bleak. He began protesting nuclear power and advocating for environmental awareness. In the wake of the oil crisis, there were attempts to reduce the carbon footprint and the addiction to fossil fuel. Nonetheless, climate change was not on the political or social horizon and the opportunity to intervene was missed. At the same time, the Cold War brought the nuclear threat to a crisis point. These developments inspired Levene to dedicate himself to active campaigning against these potentially catastrophic dangers. He high-

lighted the influence on him of the scholar activist E.P. Thompson who, during the 1980s, was a leader in the movement to ban nuclear weapons in Europe. During the 1990s, as the nuclear crisis waned, the dangers related to climate change intensified. Indeed, Levene concluded by suggesting that we may have already passed midnight on the doomsday clock.

Princeton University historian Emanuel Kreike considered the history of environmental degradation in the context of mass violence in his talk, "Environcide: Environmental Warfare as a Crime against Humanity and Nature" (21 October 2021). In examining the impact of conventional war on society and the environment, he distinguished between crimes against culture and those against nature. While international crimes against civilians are the subject of human rights law, with genocide at the apex, environmental warfare belongs to a separate realm of law that has never been prosecuted successfully although current initiatives are underway to have ecocide and wartime environmental destruction recognized as crimes against humanity. Kreike proposed the term environcide to describe the destruction of environmental infrastructure, which he defined as neither solely a gift from nature nor a human artifact but occupying a middle ground between nature and culture.

Throughout history, wars have damaged, destroyed and rendered inaccessible the environmental infrastructure that communities depend on to sustain lives and livelihoods. To illustrate, Kreike presented two cases: the Dutch revolt against the Spanish also known as the War of Flanders (1568-1648), which was the last of the pre-modern wars, and the Dutch Aceh War (1873-1904), a modern war of colonial conquest on the Indonesian island of Sumatra. In the former war, Dutch rebels led by William the Orange caused massive flooding to break the siege of Leiden. Several months after opening Holland's southern sea dykes, the landscape became inundated and caused the Spanish to retreat. The victory brought about the birth of the Dutch Republic but the flooding caused an immense water wilderness that consumed agricultural lands, displaced the population, and impoverished the countryside. In the second case, the Dutch invaded the Aceh Sultanate to complete their conquest of Sumatra and Indonesia. The protracted and brutal war became known as a volkerenmoord, a Dutch word that equates to genocide. The densely populated Aceh River Delta depended upon an elaborate hydraulic system to cultivate rice that could be stored for long periods as a buffer against floods and droughts. Dutch invaders pursued scorched earth policies and targeted food supplies to advance their conquest, which ultimately succeeded but at a huge cost to the Achinese people and the region. Kreike used these cases to highlight continuities in the conduct of war in which armies intentionally target environmental infrastructure to advance their cause despite steep costs.

The intersection between environmental destruction and violence against Indigenous Peoples was the subject of "The Ecology of Genocide" (3 November 2021) a lecture by Felipe Milanez. A Brazil-



Soldiers of an Australian 4th Division field artillery brigade on a duckboard track passing through Chateau Wood, near Hooze in the Ypres Salient, October 29, 1917

ian journalist and a professor at the Federal University of Bahia. Milanez was a visiting scholar with A New Earth Conversation, a recently established Clark University initiative that grapples with issues of climate change. His work examines the relationship between genocide and ecocide in contemporary Brazil where the authoritarian government of Jair Bolsonaro pursued historic practices of controlling indigenous resources and perpetrated violence against indigenous and forest peoples. Defending their communities and natural environment was challenging for these communities, especially during the Covid-19 pandemic from which they suffered disproportionate harm.

The commodification of life is an expression of extreme capitalism in Brazil where private industry and the economy of extraction are complicit in state sponsored racism. Milanez presented the paradigmatic case of the Piripikura, a tribe from the western part of the Brazilian Amazon, victimized by rubber tappers who have engaged in enslaving, killing, and kidnapping villagers. A people at risk of total extermination from genocide, the Piripikura have only three

surviving members. Their case reveals the interconnection between racism, extractivism, international capital, interests of local bosses, land grabbers, loggers, cattle ranchers, and the military in profiting off raw material and territory. In bringing attention to this ongoing tragedy, Milanez quoted the Indigenous leaders who attended COP 26, the UN Climate Conference in Glasgow underway at the time of the lecture, “there is no solution to the climate crisis without us!”

Highlighting the nexus of ecocide, climate change, and genocide, these lectures raised awareness and challenged the Strassler Center community to place scholarship at the service of building a more secure future for all peoples. Chris Davey, the Charles E. Scheidt Professor of Genocide Studies, has aligned his teaching with the call to genocide scholars. His course, “Climate and Conflict: Understanding Violence in the Anthropocene” examines how conflict is worsened by climate change and how conflict, in turn, increases climate change — an intersection that should be of concern to all genocide students and scholars.

*Mary Jane Rein*

## ALEXANDRA GARBARINI, “VICTIM TESTIMONY, MASS VIOLENCE, AND TRIALS IN INTERWAR EUROPE”

2 February 2022

Eyewitness testimonies provide descriptions of mass atrocity and genocide that fill the gaps left bare by the limitations of official documents and legal records. They provide victim perspectives that enrich historical narratives by bringing humanity and an individual lens through which to understand systematic violence and oppression. Alexandra Garbarini, Professor of History and Jewish Studies at Williams College, an expert on the interpretation of testimonies, diaries, and letters, discussed the cultural history of testimony and testimonial strategies developed in response to mass violence during the two world wars.

Garbarini analyzes the transnational process of documenting mass violence as part of her upcoming monograph, tentatively titled *The Era of Atrocity and Its Witnesses*. This study examines victim responses to the Armenian Genocide and to the pogroms perpetrated against Jews in Ukraine during the Russian civil war. Her work encompasses the Nazi period, considering documentation produced by Jewish Holocaust victims and their advocates. Garbarini’s lecture highlighted the interwar murder trials of Soghomon Tehlirian and Scholem Schwarzbard which, according to Hannah Arendt’s description in *Eichmann in Jerusalem*, established justice for mass crimes that legal frameworks had previously failed to address. These trials also fascinated Raphael Lemkin who wrote about their importance in his biography. Ground-breaking Jewish legal thinkers, whose lives were similarly shaped by Nazism and the Holocaust, Arendt and Lemkin described the moral and cultural importance of victim testimony as central to these cases, yet Garbarini’s research demonstrates that victim testimony was largely renounced and discredited in these trials.

Garbarini focused on Schwarzbard’s 1927 Paris trial in which he stood accused of murdering the Ukrainian politician Symon Petliura in revenge for his role in widespread anti-Jewish pogroms. Although the defense had prepared eighty witnesses, only nine testified. Schwarzbard’s defense attorney, Henry Torr s, famously rejected calling more witnesses to the stand on the seventh day of the trial. Among other reasons, he worried about straining the attention of the court. The Jewish community reacted with dismay to the muting of survivors’ voices and the missed opportunity to expose the savagery of the pogroms.

Haya Grinberg, a 29-year-old Jewish medical student who had been visiting her family during the pogrom in Proskurov, was one of only two survivors to share her story. Torr s defended Grinberg’s testimony from those who wished to discredit her and presented her testimony as representative of the entire victim group. In presenting her words as symbolic of all Jewish victims, Garbarini argues that she became the collective individual, a metonym. While testimony played an important role in the trial, it was not what the Jewish public had anticipated nor did it prove as central as Arendt or



Alexandra Garbarini

Lemkin observed. Although Torr s succeeded in presenting a case for Schwarzbard that resulted in acquittal, he spoke in place of the many survivors who were present in the courtroom whose voices were silenced and merged.

A scholar of witnessing and record-keeping during the Holocaust, Garbarini’s research deepens our understanding of how Jewish testimony was received prior to the Nuremberg Trials and during the Nazi prosecutions that followed. Given the cultural shift in the post-war period that has brought with it a social demand regarding listening to victim testimony, Garbarini provides valuable insights into the status of Jewish testimony from the interwar period and how it differs from subsequent decades. Her analysis reveals what public reactions to testimony tell us about perceptions of mass violence and attitudes towards victims, more specifically Jewish pogrom victims and Jews more broadly, in the years prior to the Holocaust. While Garbarini provided a glimpse of how testimony and responses to it functioned during the interwar period, we will have to read her forthcoming book to gain further insight into the evolution and status of Jewish testimony.

Lauren Ashley Bradford

## WORKSHOP: LIVING IN CLIMATE REFUGE

17 March 2022

Strassler Center Professors Sultan Doughan and Frances Tanzer organized a workshop to examine climate induced displacement, its historical implications, and current dimensions. They directed a wide-ranging conversation with Justin Hosbey (Emory University), Caterina Scaramelli (Boston University), and Tessa Rose Farmer (University of Virginia) that highlighted the connections between three case studies: post- Katrina New Orleans, the wetlands of Turkey, and water-scarce Cairo. The discussion captured historical and anthropological perspectives that enable a reframing of our understanding of climate and displacement not only as a looming crisis but also as a historical and ongoing reality.

In Hosbey's ethnographic research on the black population of post-Katrina New Orleans, education is one node in the fight to return to the city. Characterizing his research as an "ethnography of absence," Hosbey emphasizes that 100,000 low income and working-class black people displaced by Katrina have not returned. Yet, he questioned the fight to restore black life in a city that may not survive another 100 years. Climate change and environmental degradation exacerbate structural issues including race, class, and the massive carceral system. Angola Prison, located on the site of three plantations that enslaved people trafficked from Angola, is the largest maximum-security prison in the US and the site of major human rights violations. During Katrina, the disproportionately black prisoners remained behind bars despite rising waters. Moreover, following the massive Deepwater Horizon oil spill, prisoners were subcontracted to private companies to remediate the clean-up. These events are harbingers of what to expect as climate change brings issues that define the long *durée* of black suffering in this vulnerable coastal zone to a head.

Scaramelli introduced the term slow violence, first theorized by the literary scholar Rob Nixon, to describe environmental harm that unfolds over decades. Rather than a dramatic spectacle, slow violence accumulates from incremental events including long term exposure to toxic pollution, droughts, fires, climate change, land and water dispossession. Her archival and ethnographic research focuses on climate and environmental change in Turkish wetland areas. She recounted the deeply fraught history of one coastal wetland where saltier, warmer, and more polluted water has infringed on the labor of a group of fishermen who have long maintained the environmental infrastructure of the place. Descended from a population resettled from the Balkans around the founding of the Turkish Republic, the fishermen experienced their work in the lagoon as a refuge from factory labor. Turkey's changing and unpredictable climate has impacted the traditional work of these fisherman as well as that carried out by Turkish seed savers who are crucial to the country's biological and cultural diversity.

Farmer describes cities as "hyper visible locations of fear" within



(left to right) Sultan Doughan, Frances Tanzer, Tessa Rose Farmer, and Caterina Scaramelli

the discourse of climate change. The threat of thirsty cities is growing given the rapid warming of the planet, especially in the global south where access to potable water and reliable wastewater systems are not guaranteed. Researching charitable water fountains, called *sabils*, that are part of a tradition of gifting water in the street, Farmer shows how the residents of Cairo prioritize ethical concerns as the city experiences more days of extreme heat. The people of Cairo have picked up the tradition of *sabils* to remake their built environment in ways that respond to the needs of human bodies as well as the desire to be kind and good. In other research, Farmer articulates the issues underlying competing claims to Cairo neighborhoods between luxury developers and those seeking to preserve Egypt's archaeological patrimony for tourism. Efforts to unseat the residents of these contested places is part of a project of capital accumulation through dispossession. The state casts the residents as fundamentally problematic, justifying their dispersal to satellite desert cities.

The relationship between displacement and climate change is not only about physical displacement or forced migration, but also dispossession, changes in access to citizenship, public services, welfare, and quality of life. These changes impact people who are forced to move but who may not fit legal or official definitions of refugees. It also might include experiences of people who remain in the same space, but then adapt to a dramatically transformed environment.

Ongoing debates about climate change, ecocide, and its relation to genocide opened discussion on the issues such as to what extent racism might be considered genocidal, as well as how we can define regime-sanctioned violence in the context of ecology.

*Diana Hayrapetyan*

## MARIANNE HIRSCH AND LEO SPITZER, “ANIMATING ABSENCE: PHOTOGRAPHS IN LIQUID TIME”

7 April 2022

Marianne Hirsch, Professor of Comparative Literature and Gender Studies at Columbia University, and Leo Spitzer, K. T. Vernon Professor Emeritus of Cultural History at Dartmouth College, co-authors of *School Photos in Liquid Time* (2019), have long collaborated on the study of memory and post memory of atrocities. Their keynote lecture, sponsored by the friends and family of Dr. Michael Hirsch in memory of his mother Lisl Hirsch, a Holocaust survivor and refugee from Vienna, was the opening event for the workshop, *Representing Absence: Refugees, Forced Migration, and Aftermath*. Photographs, according to Spitzer and Hirsch, are an important medium of family memory in the aftermath of displacement and forced migration that become “haunting reminders,” visual and tactile remnants that can bridge absences and discontinuities.

A central tenet in the field of memory studies is that we “create the past we need in the present.” In examining the messages that photographs transmit, Hirsch and Spitzer described how images can cross generations and geographical divides to mediate absence and presence, trauma and nostalgia. They wondered if it is possible to look at pictures of dead people without the retrospective knowledge that they are dead. Can we possibly look at photographs in the present, they asked, as well as in relation to the future that was yet possible at the time the subjects faced the camera? Can we reflect back on the event itself or even to the time before the shutter caught the image? Do images allow for contingency that leaves space for potential history – not just for what was, but for what might have been?

Drawing theoretical inspiration from various philosophers and scholars of photography, including Roland Barthes, Walter Benjamin, Ariella Aïsha Azoulay, and Jeff Wahl, Spitzer and Hirsch argued that despite capturing a single moment in time, photographs and their meanings are not linear or static. Rather, they can be interpreted from different vantage points, including those of the photographed persons themselves, or even their descendants. Photographs can be viewed as still images, but also in terms of the events and purposes that occasioned them. According to this perspective, each new viewer of the photograph may see something that was not detected at the time of its creation. The concept of liquid time, according to Spitzer and Hirsch, postulates that photographs continue developing, their meaning expanding and changing every time someone looks at them in a different time and space.



(left to right) Mikhal Dekel, Omar Bartov, Marianne Hirsch, Sarah Ihmoud, Hannah Tzuberi, Frances Tanzer, Noa Shandlinger, Anita Fabós, Leo Spitzer

In their demonstration of liquid time, Hirsch and Spitzer presented three photo-based post memorial art projects by contemporary artists Mirta Kupferminc, Silvina der Meguerditchian and Sarah Davidmann. Although very different, all three projects originate from a history of persecution. Drawing on archival images of Armenian and Jewish subjects before the genocide, the artists attempt to “unfix” these photographs from the moment they were taken in order to “find the spark of contingency” within them, where potential futures of the captured subjects might be found. In their manipulation of archival pre-atrocity photographs, these artists challenge viewers to find meanings beyond what is obviously visible in the captured image. Considering these projects, Hirsch and Spitzer contemplate the various possibilities of archival photographs as media of memory in relation to forced migration. They shared numerous examples from each artist, such as animated school photographs, photographs developed using the artist’s blood, and copies of photographs crocheted together into blankets.

Hirsch and Spitzer concluded by acknowledging that pre-atrocity photographs may be marked by violence and absence, but by looking at them from different vantage points, viewers can also “touch them from very different futures that they could not themselves foresee when they were facing the camera.”

Sandra Grudić

## JAN GRABOWSKI, “STUDENT AND FACULTY GUIDE TO HOLOCAUST DISTORTION, OR HOW TO DOMESTICATE THE SHOAH IN A FEW EASY STEPS”

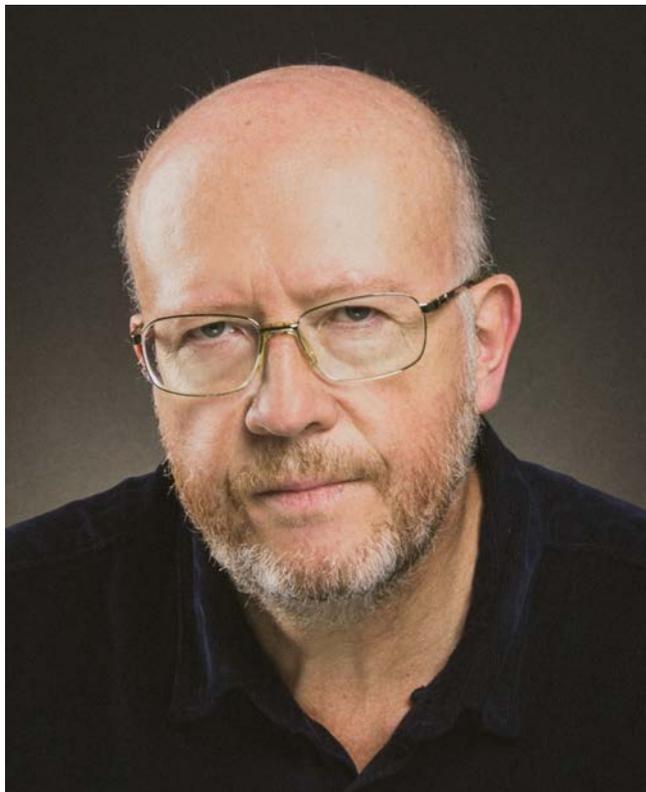
12 April 2022

Poland, on whose soil three million European Jews were murdered, has become the reluctant custodian of Holocaust memory. In an attempt to deal with this, and with their own complicity in the genocide, Polish society – and the state – have attempted to dissociate themselves from this history. Jan Grabowski (Professor of History, University of Ottawa) discussed the processes of dissociation and distortion, that have led to an unprecedented shift in public consciousness towards the deJudaization of the Holocaust. Michele and Robert Simpson sponsored the lecture in memory of Herbert M. Rein.

In Poland, the epicenter of the Holocaust, historical distortion stems from a deeply embedded envy of suffering, which results in efforts to raise Polish national suffering to the level experienced by Jews. This is not, as Grabowski points out, denial of the Holocaust, but rather an insidious – and more dangerous – deception and manipulation of historical context. Denial is easy to recognize because it is based on outright lies but distortion is a partial lie that requires a knowledge of history. As part of its campaign of distortion, the Polish state presents antisemitism and antipolonism, a concept invented by Polish nationalists, as two equally dangerous ideologies. In response, the state has established its own memory institutions devoted to regulating national consciousness regarding Holocaust narratives. In addition, they amplify the actions of righteous Poles who tried to save Jews despite the fact that such rescuers were a tiny minority who were deeply afraid of their Polish neighbors.

By filling the countryside with monuments to Polish glory, the state and its memory institutions distort Holocaust history. In the past three years, in the region of Treblinka alone, the Pilecki Institute has built ten monuments dedicated to courageous Poles who aided Jews. One monument erected at the Treblinka train station celebrates a Polish man shot by Germans for offering water to Jews on trains headed to the extermination camp. The monument, however, obscures the many Jewish and Polish testimonies documenting Jewish exploitation, including charging exorbitant sums for water but often taking Jewish belongings without offering water. At the site of the Płaszów concentration camp, a monument erected 76 years ago, commemorates officers of the Polish Blue Police executed by Germans. The Blue Police were deeply complicit in murdering Jews, yet this monument continues to stand where 12,000 Jews perished. In Warsaw, a ‘sanitary cordon of Polish memory,’ celebrates Irene Sendler and Jan Karski, brave Poles whose actions deserve recognition. Yet, these markers to Polish martyrdom and righteousness sit atop spaces of Jewish suffering and death – spaces where Jewish memory should continue to breathe but is unable to do so.

Polish memory institutions control commemoration at sites of Jewish mass murder like Treblinka and Auschwitz. For example, activities in remembrance of Jewish victims from the ghettos around Treblinka, all liquidated on 22 September 1942, were held in



Jan Grabowski

the postwar period; yet, on this date in 2019, the Pilecki Institute unveiled a monument dedicated to Polish rescuers – taking over a formerly Jewish commemoration and reinscribing it with a Polish narrative. Equally egregious is the Polish government’s decision to establish June 14 as the National Day of Remembrance of the Victims of the German Nazi Concentration Camps and Death Camps. On this day in 1940, the first transport arrived at Auschwitz – and it was a transport of Polish inmates. This decision aligns with the efforts of memory institutions to blend Polish and Jewish suffering by making the extermination sites (Jewish) and the concentrationary sites (Polish) of camp complexes indistinguishable in commemorative narratives.

There exists a continuity in Holocaust distortion in Poland – the refusal to acknowledge history is part of a pattern that has flourished since 1945. Memory institutions have all the resources of the state at their disposal in the manipulation of Holocaust narratives. The real history of the Holocaust is counterproductive to Polish authorities and so they have created a useable past in which the Holocaust is decontextualized and manipulated into a narrative of Polish victimhood and heroism that erases Jewish suffering.

*Jessa Sinnott*

## SÉVERINE AUTESSERRE, “THE FRONTLINES OF PEACE: AN INSIDER’S GUIDE TO CHANGING THE WORLD”

April 21, 2022

Séverine Autesserre (Professor of Political Science at Barnard College), characterized her recently published volume, *The Frontlines of Peace: An Insider’s Guide to Changing the World* (2021), as a book about hope. In a lecture given at the invitation of Charles E. Scheidt Professor Christopher P. Davey, she described how individuals and communities can successfully confront violence. Following her talk, she met with students from Davey’s courses, “Mass Atrocity Prevention” and “African, War, and Genocide” to deepen the discussion of peacebuilding and to describe related careers.

Drawing on stories gathered from her extensive ethnographic research, her lecture highlighted peacebuilding approaches that favor grassroots initiatives emerging from impacted communities. Autesserre has patrolled with United Nations peacekeepers, conducted observations, interviewed politicians, warlords, survivors, perpetrators of violence, and outside observers. Her book describes ordinary citizens, grassroots activists and foreign interveners who have successfully reduced conflict. She contrasts these stories with conventional, often flawed, approaches that rely on governments and foreign aid workers; these well-meaning efforts often result in relapses to violence.

Autesserre began by telling the audience, comprised of mostly undergraduate students, about Luca, a Congolese boy kidnapped by rebels in 2004. Too small to hold a rifle, he was made to serve as a human shield at the frontline. After several years, his militia commanders released him and returned him to his village where he struggled to adjust. Having learned that violence was the key to his survival, he kept trying to rejoin an armed group. In the meantime, Vijaya Thakur, a US aid worker who had tired of top down approaches to peacebuilding in Congo, observed that outside organizations often harmed those they sought to help. For example, legislation designed to reduce violence stemming from conflict minerals caused vulnerable Congolese to lose their jobs, driving many to join armed groups.

Thakur travelled to Luca’s village and, in partnership with local activists, solicited ideas from residents about how to promote peace. The villagers requested funding for women, including Luca’s mother, to start small businesses. Eventually, the women earned enough money to invest in initiatives such as installing taps for clean drinking water and training teachers to educate students about ways to reduce ethnic violence. The community’s success inspired Luca to strive to get an education and his mother observed “my son now wants to hold a pencil instead of a gun.”

Thakur established the Resolve Network to help individuals at risk of being recruited by armed groups, including many former combatants. Resolve’s grass roots initiatives rely on community members rather than enforcing plans developed by outsiders or elites. Militias in Congo are constantly forming and reforming and



Séverine Autesserre and Christopher Davey

yet, over the past decade, none of the Resolve participants have joined or rejoined. More than two billion people currently live under the threat of violence in more than 50 conflict zones around the world and more than half of all ongoing wars have lasted for more than twenty years. Fair elections, democracy building, billions in aid, and massive intervention programs don’t produce reliable and lasting solutions. Rather, empowering ordinary citizens to develop innovative solutions, at times with outside support, has more potential to make a difference on the ground.

Congo, home to one of the deadliest conflicts since World War II, has been the recipient of one of the costliest ever peacekeeping initiatives. Yet, violence persists with the noteworthy exception of the island of Idjwi in Lake Kivu. The island has managed to avoid mass violence despite all the preconditions that have fueled conflict elsewhere in Congo: extreme poverty, minimal resources, ethnic tensions, lack of state authority, struggles over power and land. Yet, Idjwi’s citizens have fostered a culture of peace that draws on community resources along with well-informed and experienced foreign activists. Autesserre contrasted these localized efforts with “Peace Inc,” the massive top down approach to peacebuilding that perpetuates interventions from governments, elites, and foreign aid groups. In conclusion, she observed that real and lasting peace needs to be built from the bottom with the participation of the people who know the situation best and who have most to gain from effective, long-term solutions.

Mary Jane Rein



# FACULTY

## TANER AKÇAM

Faculty, students, and friends celebrated Taner Akçam at a spring reception honoring him for his many contributions to the Strassler Center. After a 14-year tenure as the Robert Aram and Marianne Kaloosdian and Stephen and Marian Mugar Professor in Armenian Genocide Studies, he departed Clark University to serve as the inaugural director of the recently established Armenian Genocide Research Program at the UCLA based Promise Armenian Institute. His new position will allow him to develop another important home for scholarly activities relevant to the genocide, including opportunities for institute-affiliated postdoctoral scholars, graduate students and visiting researchers. At the same time, Akçam will maintain a robust affiliation with the Strassler Center as a senior research scholar. In that capacity, he will continue to advise his current doctoral students. Significantly, the Krikor Guergerian Archive that he established over the past decade with the assistance of his doctoral advisees will maintain its digital home at Clark with Akçam as its director.

Since 2008, as the second holder of the Kaloosdian Mugar chair, Akçam advanced the Strassler Center as a leading academic institute focused on research and education about the Armenian Genocide. In addition to pursuing his own remarkable scholarship, he has been dedicated to training doctoral students in order to ensure that research about the Armenian Genocide would continue as a subject of serious inquiry. During his tenure at Clark, he delivered countless lectures on his many book publications to diverse audiences at academic, government, and journalistic venues around the world. The platform for his ideas has often been far larger than that afforded to typical academicians, especially in his native Turkey. A brave activist, he has been willing to speak about difficult and unsettled topics that have challenged Turkey. He has used his renown and access to international media outlets to offer a consistent call for Turkey to face its history honestly as part of a process of greater democratization.

At the spring reception, Akçam addressed the audience and reflected poignantly on what he hopes to accomplish as he reflected on his difficult personal history. “In 1994, for the first time since escaping from prison, I returned to Turkey. I hoped to establish a documentation and research center on late 19th and early 20th Century Ottoman History, something that I had long dreamt of doing. A newly established university in Turkey accepted my proposal for such an institution, and another dream seemed to be on the verge of realization. Unfortunately, the Turkish government intervened and threatened the university from going ahead with the plan. Once again, my dream was crushed—or merely delayed. Only time would tell.... Now, after only 28 years, the dream is finally being realized.” Los Angeles is home to one of the largest Armenian diaspora communities in the world and UCLA has been a leading center for Armenian Studies thanks to Professor Richard Hovannisian, a leading figure in the field of Armenian history. While leaving Clark Uni-



Diana Hayrepetyan, Taner Akçam, and Hasmik Grigoryan

versity and Worcester, the oldest community for Armenian refugees in the United States, was not an easy decision, the opportunity to relocate to UCLA was singularly compelling as a place for Akçam to devote the next part of his career.

Several projects that Akçam initiated while at the Strassler Center will claim his attention as he settles into his new position. He plans to resume his investigations into the auctioning of confiscated or plundered Armenian properties during the early days of the Turkish Republic, Ottoman press coverage during the late Ottoman era (1918–1922), an oral history project on the Dersim Genocide (1938), and inquiries into the impact of the Armenian Genocide on the Turkish Republic’s founding principles, based on an analysis of Ottoman archival materials from the period 1918–1923. Clark faculty, students, and friends will eagerly anticipate his return visits to learn about these and other projects. These initiatives will serve as the basis for intense collaboration and a genuine partnership between the Promise Institute and the Strassler Center in the years to come.

*Mary Jane Rein*

## CHRISTOPHER DAVEY

Christopher Davey, a political scientist with a PhD in Peace Studies and International Development, holds a three-year appointment as the Charles E. Scheidt Professor of Genocide Studies and Prevention. With research interests that encompass postcolonial genocide in Central Africa to violence and identity, he has introduced much needed courses that broaden the scope of the Strassler Center including “Genocide and Civil War in the African Great Lakes Region,” “Mass Atrocity Prevention in Theory and Practice,” and “Africa, War and Genocide: From Kingdoms to Now.”

Davey wrote his dissertation on the relationship between genocide and the development of associated narratives and group identity amongst Congolese Tutsi and Banyamulenge soldiers from the eastern Democratic Republic of Congo. He has conducted ethnographic interviews in Rwanda and the Democratic Republic of Congo with Banyamulenge soldiers in both the Rwandan Patriotic Front and the *Alliance des Forces Démocratiques pour la Libération du Congo-Zaïre*. In 2021, he published “Soldiers Journey: Banyamulenge Narratives of Genocide” in the *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, drawing upon these interviews to analyze the layering of victim and perpetrator identities and perceptions of marginalization, agency, and insecurity. In his article “‘I need to protect everyone’: Banyamulenge Violent Masculinity,” published in the *Journal of African Military History*, he explores the development of Congolese Banyamulenge soldiers’ masculine narratives and moral justifications for violence and addresses the masculinity gap of broader ethnic conflict literature.

Davey’s chapter, “Further Agendas for Post Genocide Research,” in the volume *Postgenocide: Interdisciplinary Reflections on the Effects of Genocide* edited by Klejda Muljaj (2021) considers the future of genocide studies, particularly how it addresses or fails to address the intersection between climate change and violence. He employs the term “postgenocide” as a concept for framing climate related and structural mass violence in recognition of the fact that the actors and narratives arising out of mass violence events cannot always be placed into neat boxes.

In addition to these publications, Davey is developing a genocide studies-based ethnographic study of Banyamulenge soldier identities. Preliminarily titled *Banyamulenge Soldier: Genocide Narrative Identity Between Congo and Rwanda*, Davey uses the concept of genocide narrative identity to explain how social actors performatively see and define themselves through episodes of genocide. The book will include new interviews with members of the Banyamulenge diaspora, interviews with journalists and UN actors, NGO reports, and refugee accounts to analyze and contextualize the narratives developed by Banyamulenge soldiers around their genocide and post-genocide experiences and identities. Through this book, Davey intends to challenge the way people are categorized as victims or perpetrators in the study of genocide. He hopes this project will help to alter the way we think about the Rwandan and Congo-



Christopher Davey

lese conflicts, revealing a continuum of violence that still reverberates across the African Great Lakes region.

During summer 2022, Davey collaborated with an undergraduate intern on his current project, which entails research and interviews with survivors of the massacre of Congolese civilians in the Gatumba refugee camp in 2004. He also participated virtually in the International Network of Genocide Scholars’ 8<sup>th</sup> Global Conference in Mexico City and presented “Ntambara Itagira Iherezo: Connecting Gatumba and Gumino in Congo’s War Without End.” This paper describes how diaspora Banyamulenge communities in Texas have developed nationalistic victim and hero narratives, strengthened community identity, and presented calls to arms through group mourning practices.

In addition to these academic pursuits, Davey serves as a leadership board member for the international charity Education for Global Peace, an organization that is building a global network and movement to bring about a world based on cultures of peace.

*Elizabeth Topolosky*

## SULTAN DOUGHAN

While Holocaust education is widespread, few scholars study its civic uses as well as its effectiveness in reducing antisemitism. To that end, the Strassler Center invited political anthropologist Sultan Doughan to hold the Dr. Thomas Zand Professorship in Holocaust Pedagogy and Antisemitism Studies for the 2021-22 academic year. Her visit served as a precursor to the permanent David P. Angel Professorship that is to be established as a new endowed chair. An expert on contemporary Holocaust education, Doughan examines how pedagogical practices contribute to the formation of liberal-democratic citizens. In her fieldwork, she looks at civic education projects in immigrant communities, schools and neighborhood organizations across Berlin. Her research, conducted at sites of formal and informal education, investigates how Holocaust memory is mobilized as part of a strategy to incorporate students from migrant backgrounds into the secular German nation.

Doughan's book project, *Converting Citizens: German Secularism and the Politics of Tolerance after the Holocaust*, will present her research into how the enterprise of citizenship relates to history. It investigates the ways in which contemporary Western European countries use national history to foster social integration and promote European values of tolerance, often framed in opposition to traditional Islam. In Germany, civic education draws on a national history that centers the Holocaust and antisemitism by highlighting the memory of European Jewry from a perpetrator perspective. Her research calls attention to the experiences of minority educators, often from Middle Eastern backgrounds, who function as exemplary citizens in the context of increased securitization of Muslims as a religious and migrant community.

In addition to contemporary Holocaust and human rights education, Doughan teaches about antisemitism, racism and racialization, Middle Eastern migration and diaspora, gendered religious difference, Muslims and Jews, and secularism and nationalism in Western European liberal democracies. In her course, "Antisemitism and Racism in the Modern World," she includes contemporary events, including the 2017 white supremacist attack in Charlottesville, Virginia, and the Pittsburgh Synagogue shooting in 2018. Doughan understands those violent assaults as alarming omens regarding the danger of antisemitism in America and relatedly other forms of racism. Her courses on Holocaust pedagogy address social justice and extremism prevention as a way to complicate moralizing approaches to studying the Holocaust. She is interested in the teaching methods and practical skills that come with Holocaust education, a field that is most prominent in museums and memorials, but that has entered other public domains such as schools. She explores whether Holocaust education is preventing antisemitism and extremism, and she considers whether the Holocaust can be taught in ways that build allyship and solidarity across different racialized and minoritized groups.

During the winter, Doughan participated in a significant public debate published in the *Journal of the History of Ideas*. In a two-



Sultan Doughan

part article, "A New German Historians' Debate? A Conversation with Sultan Doughan, A. Dirk Moses, and Michael Rothberg," the discussants addressed German arguments regarding the history and memory of the Holocaust and colonialism. The first installment revisited the German Historians' Debate of the 1980s regarding the exceptionalism of the Holocaust and the degree to which it could be the subject of historical comparison. In part two, the same three scholars discuss how minorities in contemporary multicultural Germany are marginalized in relation to official Holocaust memory. Their conversation closely maps onto Doughan's ethnographic work with Muslim communities in Germany.

In her article "Minor Citizens? Holocaust Memory and the Un/Making of Citizenship in Germany," published in the digital journal *Replito*, Doughan advances her analysis of migrant, especially Muslim, communities in post-Holocaust Germany. She considers how outward displays of Muslim identity and religious difference impact belonging and citizenship. These are complex subjects that challenge how we understand memory, tolerance, and multiculturalism — Doughan handles them with intelligence and sensitivity.

Mary Jane Rein

## THOMAS KÜHNE

Thomas Kühne, the Strassler Colin Flug Professor of Holocaust History, is a dedicated teacher, a deeply engaged scholar, and a skilled administrator. His commitments to fostering the Strassler Center's academic excellence, to producing first-rate scholarship, and to advancing the field of Holocaust and Genocide Studies are hallmarks of his leadership. As director, Kühne devotes considerable time and energy to overseeing the doctoral program and furthering its international reputation. During the spring semester, after successfully introducing an interdisciplinary PhD in Genocide Studies to complement the degree in history, he overhauled the graduate handbook to ensure that the requirements for both degrees would most effectively prepare students as scholars or practitioners. His attention to such details has been honed over his nearly two-decade tenure at the Strassler Center, during which he has served as Graduate Studies Director advising every first-year PhD student, in addition to his own doctoral advisees.

A respected mentor, Kühne served as faculty advisor for eight PhD students over the 2021-22 academic year. The year concluded with the graduation of his advisee Gabrielle Hauth whose first-rate dissertation examines intimate relations during the Holocaust. *Intimacy in Ravensbrück: Sex, Violence, and Survival in a Nazi Concentration Camp* considers how inmates and perpetrators in that violent setting adapted to an environment that challenged civilian sexual norms. Supervising topics that range widely across themes and locales of the Holocaust requires Kühne to remain current with new scholarship and to follow diverse trends in the field. Nonetheless, many of the PhD theses Kühne advises are closely related to his areas of expertise in perpetrator studies and Holocaust memory.

As a historian, Kühne has earned an international reputation for his seminal scholarship on male bonding among soldiers of the Third Reich and the social cohesion of the racist Nazi Volksgemeinschaft, or people's community. He presented his work on this topic at conferences around the globe including *Masculinity and the Dilemmas of Compromise during the Holocaust* at the University College London and *Rethinking the Holocaust Survey* at the annual meeting of the Association for Jewish Studies in Chicago. He spoke about "Gendering Holocaust Perpetrators" at a workshop held at the University of Toulouse in France and organized a panel on genocide and masculinity for the 8th Global Conference of the International Network of Genocide Scholars (INoGS) in Mexico City, and contributed to an event on "Colonial Paradigms of Violence" at the Wiener Holocaust Library, London.

In conjunction with his new book project, tentatively titled *Holocaust Perpetrators Revisited*, he organized a fall 2022 workshop, *Holocaust Perpetrators in Fiction and Art*, with presentations moving beyond the usual binary that either demonizes perpetrators as the epitome of evil or humanizes them and normalizes their behavior. In considering whether fictional portrayals of Holocaust perpetrators tend to morally universalize or contextualize them, the



Thomas Kühne

workshop participants were asked to interrogate how the figure of the Nazi appears in various art forms. Kühne's insights into the complex psyche of the perpetrator took a deeply personal turn in the essay "A Father, a Perpetrator, a Son. Autobiographical Thoughts on Mystery and Curiosity," a contribution solicited for the volume *On Being Adjacent to Historical Violence* (ed. Irene Kacandes 2022). This piece tells the story of his father who grew up in a social democratic, anti-Nazi family and despised the persistence of 'old' Nazis in West German society after 1945 and yet kept friendly ties to a core Holocaust perpetrator, an SS officer, who was convicted in 1965 for the murder of 1,800 Jews and other individuals during the war.

As a leading figure in Holocaust Studies, Kühne has embraced many commitments to the field. Upon the invitation of Oxford University Press, he has started working toward a comprehensive compendium on the history of Nazi Germany, and together with his Clark colleague Frances Tanzer, he is planning for a no less comprehensive handbook of Holocaust memory around the globe. He is a co-editor for Palgrave Studies in the History of Genocide, a member of the editorial board of *Journal of Holocaust Research*, and he is routinely invited to serve on tenure promotion cases at universities in the US and beyond and as a peer reviewer for leading academic presses and journals. An academic committee of leading experts advises the Mandel Center for Advanced Holocaust Studies at the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, which Kühne joined this year. While flattered to work with a distinguished group of scholars, Kühne also recognizes that his service for the USHMM honors the Strassler Center and benefits current and future students in the program, an objective that remains at the forefront for him.

Mary Jane Rein

## KEN MACLEAN

As the Strassler Center curriculum shifts toward greater engagement with the subject of human rights, the research and teaching of Professor Ken MacLean has become increasingly central to the program. An anthropologist who studies human rights atrocities in South East Asia, MacLean researches how knowledge about state violence is established through the documentation of facts and the production of archives. That is the subject of his recently published book, *Crimes in Archival Form: Human Rights, Fact Production, and Myanmar* (2022), which is the culmination of extensive fieldwork conducted over many years. His book investigates fact-finding practices in Myanmar through a critical examination of a human rights group, two cross-border humanitarian agencies, an international law clinic, and a global NGO-led campaign. By calling attention to the methods that practitioners and scholars use to construct knowledge about these events, MacLean insists upon greater transparency and serious analysis of their practices.

Throughout his career as an academic and as part of his work on behalf of non-governmental organizations, MacLean has developed deep expertise on issues related to human rights violations, conflict-induced displacement, state-sponsored violence, extractive industries, and territorial disputes across South East Asia. As a faculty member with joint appointments in International Development and Social Change (IDCE) and the Strassler Center, he has drawn on his work in the field to develop courses that teach students about the history and practice of human rights, transitional justice, advocacy, globalization, and food security. These topics are of great interest to Clark undergraduates. Thus, when Professor Shelly Tenenbaum concluded her long tenure as coordinator of the undergraduate program and advocated changing the name of the concentration from Holocaust and Genocide Studies to Genocide and Human Rights, MacLean emerged as the best candidate to oversee the curricular changes associated with the new name and to direct the undergraduate program. He assumed the directorship of the concentration at the start of the fall 2022 semester.

In addition to his recently published book and new programmatic responsibilities, MacLean was actively engaged in publishing and presenting his research during the 2021-2022 academic year. In July, he presented a paper at the 8<sup>th</sup> annual conference of the International Network of Genocide Scholars, “The Historiographic Value of Conspiratorial Fantasies: Making Sense of Vietnamese Confessions in the Khmer Rouge Archives.” This paper examined the production and reproduction of non-knowledge, specifically the dubious testimonies obtained by the Khmer Rouge through the torture of men, women, and children at sites such as the notorious Tuol Sleng (S-21) prison in Phnom Penh. These victims of the Cambodian Genocide were then murdered in the “killing fields.” Another project that looks at fact finding in the context of transitional justice, “Interactive Digital Platforms, Human Rights Fact Production, and the International Criminal Court,” will appear in the *Journal of Human Rights Practice*.



Ken MacLean

Given his deep experience in Myanmar and knowledge of its diverse ethnic groups, MacLean has closely followed the government sponsored violence perpetrated against the Rohingya, a long persecuted Muslim minority. He contributed a chapter on the subject, “Genocidal Violence Against the Rohingya in Myanmar,” to *Centuries of Genocide*, ed. Samuel Totten (2022). MacLean further considered the Rohingya in a comparative study on the use of government issued documents, “Genocide by Attrition: The Role of Identity Documents in the Holocaust, Rwanda, and Myanmar Genocides,” which the Bangkok-based NGO Fortify Rights published in 2022. A senior advisor to Fortify Rights, MacLean is a lead researcher and writer engaged with their in-depth investigations and publications on human rights violations. Thus, he also participated in drafting, “Nowhere is Safe”: the Myanmar Military’s Crimes Against Humanity in the Wake of the Coup d’état.”

Book launches, podcasts, and invited talks have brought MacLean’s work to the attention of genocide scholars and the academic community. He delivered the 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Human Rights and History Lecture at the University of Towson, “Crimes against Humanity and their Archives in Myanmar” and presented “Human Rights Fact Production: What Is at Stake in Myanmar?” at Yale University. As research and teaching on human rights grows at the Strassler Center, MacLean’s expertise will continue to enrich the undergraduate and graduate program.

Mary Jane Rein

## FRANCES TANZER

As a historian of the Holocaust and modern Jewish culture, Frances Tanzer was delighted to join the Strassler Center in 2018 as a visiting professor. Her talents as a professor and her collegiality as a faculty member were immediately recognized. Following a rigorous search process, the Strassler Center announced her appointment as the Rose Professor in January 2020. In her teaching, Tanzer is innovative and engaging; she brings a fresh approach to courses on European history, the Holocaust, refugee history, and historical research methods and theories. For example, she and Professor Benjamin Korstvedt, a musicologist specializing in Austria, agreed to co-teach a spring 2023 course on Viennese culture and politics before 1938, including the history of its Jewish community. An international workshop is planned in conjunction with the course. This is one example of her novel and collaborative approach to examining the past, which often takes the form of investigations into the cultural production of Jewish refugees.

Growing up, Tanzer was profoundly impacted by her great grandmother's story—a refugee from Galicia during World War I, she fled to Vienna and then New York, where she established a dress shop in the Bronx and assisted relatives fleeing Nazi Europe. In addition, her paternal grandfather participated in the liberation of Ohrdruf, a subcamp of Buchenwald, and regaled the family with stories of his service. Over time, a lingering sense about this family history inspired Tanzer to reflect on what it means to grow up “in the aftermath of disaster.” She explored this topic as a dual history and studio art major at the University of Toronto, a unique pairing that contributed to her two-fold identity as an artist and scholar. While the subjects may seem quite different, Tanzer sensed that creating new knowledge and insights was essential to both disciplines. Her drawings and paintings as well as her historical research address temporality, memory, as well as the aesthetic experience and political potential of nostalgia and melancholy. Her artwork was featured in a faculty exhibition at the Schiltkamp Gallery in the Traina Center for the Arts in spring 2022.

At Brown University, where Tanzer earned a history PhD under the direction of Omer Bartov, she honed her historical approach. Her first book project, *Vanishing Vienna: Jewish Absence in Post-Nazi Central Europe*, based on her dissertation, investigates the long-term cultural consequences of the Holocaust in Central Europe. Analyzing the transformation of Viennese culture and Viennese Jews from the Anschluss of Austria in 1938 to the postwar period, it sheds light on philosemitism and antisemitism after the Holocaust. Her research likewise analyzes the crucial, but paradoxical role that Jews and representations of “Jewishness” played in cultural reconstruction with consequences that continue to shape refugees and minorities in contemporary Europe. Her research related to this project, published in *Contemporary European History* and *The Leo Baeck Institute Year Book*, charts a fundamental reevaluation of the relationship between European and Jewish culture in



Frances Tanzer

the postwar period—now defined by Jewish absence.

The unique framing of culture in terms of absence informs her scholarly agenda. She organized a workshop addressing this theme, *Representing Absence*, that gathered a diverse group of scholars to reflect on the nature of absence following forced migration and the long-term consequences of absence for refugees, as well as the places they used to call home. The experiences of refugee artists and popular performers is another thread that runs through Tanzer's scholarship and underlies her second book project, *Klezmer Dynasty: An Intimate History of Modern Jewish Culture, 1880-2019*. Her research focuses on her own family, the Brandwein klezmer musicians of Habsburg Galicia who innovated klezmer music and Jewish culture as they experienced the changes wrought by modernity, migration, the Holocaust, and its aftermath. Examining the transnational character of the music and its performance, she considers how collaborations with diverse ethnic groups including Poles, Ukrainians, Sinti and Roma, contributed to its distinctive form. Internal European displacement and transnational migration were essential to the history and formation of klezmer. Using an intimate, familial lens, this project connects large-scale transformations that defined modern Jewish history to personal stories of reinvention. Once again, this project demonstrates a commitment to challenging and expanding the chronologies and geographies that typically inform studies of Jewish experience and the Holocaust.

Nadia Cross

## TRIBUTE TO SHELLY TENENBAUM

Professor of Sociology Shelly Tenenbaum has been an invaluable member of the Strassler Center community. As founding coordinator of the Holocaust and Genocide Studies concentration, she nurtured a bridge between Clark University's undergraduate community and the Strassler Center. Her warmth, compassion, and intellect have been key ingredients in attracting both undergraduate and graduate students to her courses. Countless Clarkies were inspired by her gateway *Genocide* course, which introduced them to the subject and those who chose to concentrate often did so because of her gentle and effective guidance. PhD students fortunate to train alongside her learned how to teach from their experiences in her classrooms, both on campus and in Boston University's Prison Education Program

Throughout her tenure, Tenenbaum was dedicated to developing a rich and interdisciplinary experience for HGS students. Seamlessly integrating classes from different disciplines, including history, political science, geography, international development, and psychology, Tenenbaum helped to broaden and deepen the study of

genocide and mass atrocities at Clark. Overseeing undergraduate HGS internships, Tenenbaum took great pleasure advising students about opportunities to intern in programs across the country and around the world. The Especially for Students Lecture series, organized in connection with HGS courses, often inspired student activism. One invitation led to the formation of the STAND chapter at Clark; another inspired students to successfully lobby the university to reduce the use of conflict minerals.

Tenenbaum's final contribution as concentration coordinator was to champion a name change. The new Genocide and Human Rights concentration reflects the recent and future development of the field and addresses the changing interests of undergraduate concentrators as well as the expectations they face on a diverse job market. After two remarkable decades in her role as coordinator, Tenenbaum leaves the concentration having impacted the lives of many students and colleagues. Reimagining the concentration, with a stronger focus on human rights, heightens its potential impact for generations of students to come.



Shelly Tenenbaum

## ROBERT DEAM TOBIN (1961-2022)



To bump into Bob Tobin on campus, at a lecture, with a guest at the Freud statue in Red Square, or grabbing a coffee at Acoustic Java was unfailingly delightful. He was quite possibly the most charming and adored professor to navigate the classrooms and lecture halls of Clark University. Blending grace and confidence, brimming with enthusiasm and new projects, he was a true-life force. His premature passing has left colleagues, students, and alums feeling a deep loss and the keen sense that a bright light has been extinguished. Who else could pursue a serious passion for the Eurovision song contest while maintaining deep intellectual commitments to literature, history, human rights, philosophy, and queer studies? Bob made an impact across campus but the faculty and students of the Strassler Center are among those who will feel his loss most especially.

As a Professor of Literature, Language and Culture, and the first holder of the Henry J. Leir Chair, his teaching and scholarship on sexuality and human rights intersected with the scholarly concerns of the Strassler Center. In his book, *Peripheral Desires: The German Discovery of Sex* (2015), he examined the rise of a modern vocabulary and science of sexuality. Drawing on a wide range of nineteenth- and early twentieth-century literary, political, and scientific texts, he identified important themes in the development of ideas about sexuality. Examining the cultural and intellectual landscape of Germany and German-speaking Europe, he traced how and why the writers and thinkers of the region shaped the modern conception of sexuality. While most of the writers highlighted in his book were not active in the Nazi period, their attitudes about sexual freedom surely contributed to the Nazi response to homosexuality and sexual purity.

Insisting that gay rights are human rights, Bob drew on literary and historical texts to teach about the development of sexual freedoms beginning in the Enlightenment and continuing to the present day. Questions of sexual orientation, adultery, pre-marital sex, age of consent, prostitution, pornography and sex work were essential to his teaching on the subject. When should the state intervene in sexual matters and what legal restrictions are appropriate? He maintained that human rights theorists have been concerned with such matters for much longer than most would imagine. The 2019 exhibition, *LGBTQ + Worcester – For the Record*, that he helped to organize at the Worcester Historical Museum was a career highlight, for which he received a key to the City of Worcester. This collaborative project brought his scholarship on gay and lesbian history to a broad audience in his adopted hometown.

His thoughtful engagement with topics and ideas related to the Holocaust and human rights made Bob a genuine asset as a contributing Strassler Center faculty member. More importantly, his instincts as a mentor and teacher characterized his warm and valuable interaction with students who felt that he was truly dedicated to their research and success. Up to his last days, he was communicating with students who still hoped to benefit from his abundant wisdom and expert guidance. We are bereft to know a Clark devoid of his warm presence and extraordinary intellect.

May the memory of Robert Tobin be a blessing. And may we be inspired to pursue our work with the depth of feeling and commitment that he modelled throughout the Clark community.

Mary Jane Rein

## PROGRAM FACULTY

We are grateful to the following faculty for their contributions of scholarship, expertise, and teaching during the 2021-22 academic year.

**Taner Akçam, PhD**, History Department  
Kaloosdian Mugar Professor of Armenian Genocide Studies  
and Modern Armenian History

**Christopher Davey, PhD**  
Charles E. Scheidt Visiting Assistant Professor of Genocide Studies  
and Genocide Prevention, Strassler Center for Holocaust and  
Genocide Studies

**Sultan Doughan**  
Dr. Thomas Zand Visiting Assistant Professor of Holocaust  
Pedagogy and Antisemitism Studies, Strassler Center for Holocaust  
and Genocide Studies

**Debórah Dwork, PhD**, History Department  
Senior Research Scholar  
Founding Director and Inaugural Rose Professor of  
Holocaust History

**Anita Fábos, PhD**, Department of International Development,  
Community, and Environment  
Associate Professor of International Development and Social  
Change

**Everett Fox, PhD**, Department of Language,  
Literature and Culture  
Director, Jewish Studies Concentration  
Allen M. Glick Chair in Judaic and Biblical Studies

**Elizabeth Imber, PhD**, History Department  
Michael and Lisa Leffell Professor of Modern Jewish History

**Benjamin Korstvedt, PhD**, Visual and Performing Arts  
Professor of Music

**Thomas Kühne, PhD**, History Department  
Director, Strassler Center for Holocaust and Genocide Studies  
Strassler Colin Flug Professor of Holocaust History

**Stephen M. Levin, PhD**, Department of English  
Associate Professor of English

**Ken MacLean, PhD**, Department of International Development,  
Community, and Environment  
Director of Asian Studies  
Associate Professor of International Development  
and Social Change

**Valerie Sperling, PhD**, Political Science Department  
Professor of Political Science

**Ora Szekely, PhD**, Political Science Department  
Associate Professor of Political Science

**Frances Tanzer, PhD**, History Department  
Rose Professor of Holocaust Studies and Modern Jewish History  
and Culture

**Shelly Tenenbaum, PhD**, Sociology Department  
Coordinator of HGS Undergraduate Activities  
Professor of Sociology

**Johanna Ray Vollhardt, PhD**, Francis L. Hiatt  
School of Psychology  
Associate Professor of Psychology

**Kristen Williams, PhD**, Political Science Department  
Professor of Political Science



STUDENT NEWS

**STUDENT  
NEWS**



## GRADUATE STUDENT NEWS

During the 2021-22 academic year, Strassler Center doctoral students embraced their work wholeheartedly. As international travel, in-person fellowships, face-to-face conferences, and archival visits resumed, PhD students welcomed opportunities to pursue their research and share their findings. While the pandemic initiated a willingness to widen virtual access to archives, conferences, and language training, our students were eager to return to direct participation in these activities, as soon as it was feasible. They secured prestigious fellowships, travelled widely, and advanced their research and scholarship by attending conferences, publishing articles and visiting archives and partner institutions around the globe. These summaries of student activities and achievements highlight the many funders who made them possible by establishing permanent endowments funds or through their ongoing support.

Albert M. Tapper Fellow **Ali Avery** researches the roots and drivers of genocide, focusing on Rwanda and the Great Lakes Region (GLR) of Africa. Her dissertation project, *A Sociohistorical Analysis of the Interahamwe Militia*, is a case study exploring how militias are formed and used in genocide. Specifically, she examines the micro-dynamics that shaped the formation, organization, and evolution of the Interahamwe militia as well as the mindset of the perpetrators who participated in their murderous activities.

Avery's dissertation employs qualitative historical methods, drawing upon archival testimonies from the International Criminal Tribunal of Rwanda (ICTR) online archive, including first-hand testimonies of Interahamwe members, coupled with transcripts from open-ended interviews with Interahamwe perpetrators in Rwanda. While most existing studies of militia groups are based on interviews with perpetrators, Avery's research is innovative as one of the first to examine militia group mobilization using primarily archival sources and data. Her project will expand our historical understanding of the preparation and execution of the Rwandan genocide, as well as speak to the broader problem of regional instability due to armed militias in the Great Lakes Region. Avery's findings will thus help us to rethink our understanding of group perpetrator violence in genocide studies writ large.

Based on the research and analysis conducted thus far, Avery has identified three main factors that shaped the recruitment, mobilization and grooming of the Interahamwe militia: patriotism, situational factors combined with existential threat, and compulsory communal labor systems. These factors, which are especially pronounced in Rwandan social and cultural structures, together provide a more complete picture of the organization and transformation of the Interahamwe.

Avery defines patriotism as a sense of obligation or duty to nation, including the nation-state, the ethnic nation, and the monarchy. Based on government propaganda material reviewed, as well as the testimonies of former Interahamwe members, she argues that patriotism was a central driving factor in the years leading up to the genocide in Rwanda. It was patriotism that allowed people to let go of themselves as individual agents and submerge their sense of self into the idea of group. This finding is explored throughout her dissertation and provides the organizing frame of reference concerning group identity, militia and perpetrator action, and how patriotism in

the Rwandan historical concept shaped the history and actions of the Interahamwe militia. In April 2022, Avery presented her research findings at the University of Massachusetts (Boston) conference "Just Telling It Like It Is: Descriptive Work and Social Science Research."

Albert M. Tapper Fellow **Lauren Ashley Bradford** began the year on a positive note, as she passed her Yiddish exam after taking several courses offered by the YIVO Institute for Jewish Research, the Workers Circle, and the Naomi Praver Kadar International Yiddish Summer Program during her first two years at the Strassler Center. In addition, with support from the Samuel and Anna Jacobs Research Award, Bradford took her first dissertation research trip to Germany. Over the course of two months, Bradford conducted important preliminary archival exploration in Berlin and Munich, where she located critical sources for her project and established valuable connections with Holocaust scholars. Many long days were spent in the archives at the Institut für Zeitgeschichte and the Bundesarchiv Berlin-Lichterfelde, where she combed through newspapers, eyewitness reports, personal papers, and NSDAP documents.

Bradford's dissertation, *Cloaked in Femininity: Women's Participation in Racial Terror in Nazi Germany and Jim Crow America*, takes a feminist comparative approach to women as perpetrators of violence in Nazi Germany and Jim Crow America. She centers her research around certain public settings and acts of violence, such as riots, lynchings, and pogroms. This is in contrast to previous studies that have focused on the careers or family life of women perpetrators. Women's involvement took many forms, with varying degrees of severity, but the responses to their choices and actions are crucial to understanding the complex relational dynamics between victims and perpetrators and, additionally, the ways in which these dynamics were compounded by gender.

Up to now, much of Bradford's archival research focused on the Jim Crow half of her project. Her previous trips to Alabama, Georgia, and South Carolina were critical in providing the blueprint necessary for future research travel. She compiled a wide variety of source types that held examples of women's involvement in violence during Jim Crow, which she used to guide her exploration during her summer research trip in Germany. Bradford has since uncov-



Alison Avery

ered a number of sources related to both halves of her project. Some of the key examples from her summer findings are: a woman in Hamburg humiliating an older Jewish man in public during the November Pogrom, reports on the extreme looting and violence during the Berlin summer riots of 1935 and the November Pogrom, trial records including women who were accused of aiding in deportations and town liquidations, and public physical altercations between women in response to “race defilement.”

Bradford is a second-time recipient of the Dolores Zohrab Liebmann fellowship, which has added additional funding support for her research throughout the United States. Due to the nature of her multi-site comparative project, Bradford has accelerated the third-year timeline in order to spend more time researching in archives. In summer, she will return to Germany and intends to remain in Europe for a year, as the wide breadth of critical sources necessary for her project will bring her to archives throughout Germany, Austria, and Poland.

Debra and Jeffrey Geller fellow **Nadia Cross** received the MJR Memorial Research Award for her dissertation project on Holocaust memory within education and museum settings in the period following 9/11. Inspired by the concepts and approaches of memory scholars Michael Rothberg and Ariella Azoulay, she examines the conjuring of Holocaust memory in relationship to the 11 September 2001 attacks. Her dissertation, tentatively titled *Never Forget, Never Again: Conjuring the Holocaust in 9/11 Memorialization*, focuses on museums in the United States but she also considers settings abroad.

Cross also studies online extremist spaces, such as 4chan and even Twitter, which attract young white nationalists and white

supremacists. In particular, she is interested in studying their use of Holocaust denial to justify antisemitism and racism both to their own group and to potential members. This has become an acute interest for her as teens and young adults who frequent these sites, although they may use them more casually, gain exposure to this extremist logic. For example, a popular meme on 4chan and Twitter engages users with false information on death camps and Holocaust statistics to perpetuate Holocaust denial.

Cross came to the Strassler Center after completing an MA at Columbia University’s Institute for the Study of Human Rights. As a film and television major at Boston University, she was one of the first students to pursue a Holocaust and Genocide Studies minor. To understand post-Holocaust media, Cross researched the depiction of women in films and television series about the Holocaust. In 2016, she was awarded the Levine Martin Family Scholarship for Holocaust and Genocide Studies while at Boston University. After graduating, she interned at the Los Angeles Holocaust Museum as a Teaching Assistant. During this internship, she worked with middle and high school students to film the testimonies of local Holocaust survivors. At the completion of the workshop, she and her students created a short film based on the testimony of Dr. Jacob Eisenbach, a Holocaust survivor from Poland. Following the internship, she became the Education Coordinator and continued to work with middle and high school students. While at the museum, she coordinated and led educational programs which intertwined Holocaust education and art projects. These programs made a profound impact as students engaged with oral histories of the Holocaust while also sharing their own experiences with intolerance.

At Columbia University, Cross wrote her MA thesis, *The Future of Holocaust Education: Museum Settings*, on the relationship between Holocaust museum education and human rights museum education for K-12 students. Under the direction of Khatchig Mouradian PhD ’16, she performed qualitative research through interviews with the education staff of six Holocaust museums in the United States. These interviews, together with the museum content, offered a range of perspectives on the relationship between Holocaust and human rights education as well as the future of Holocaust education.

Claims Conference fellow **Daan de Leeuw** held the Ference and Ilona (Schulhoff) Czigler research award during the academic year 2020-21. His doctoral project, *The Geography of Slave Labor: Dutch Jews and the Third Reich, 1942-1945*, investigates how Dutch Jewish slave laborers experienced frequent relocations through the concentration camp system. Jewish slave laborers moved from camp to camp as the Germans moved prisoners to places where the war industry needed them. Each relocation shattered the prisoners’ networks and social structure as it affected the bonds that inmates created among themselves. De Leeuw focuses on 9 of the 103 trains that ran between the Netherlands and German concentration and

death camps between July 1942 and September 1944. Drawing on survivor testimonies and administrative documents, he maps the routes of individual deportees and follows their journeys through the concentration camp system. He applies geographic information system (GIS) and manual cartography to visualize the paths of individuals and groups of deportees to open a fresh perspective on the plight of Dutch Jewish slave laborers, the social dynamics of concentration camp inmates, and the German effort to win the war through the ruthless exploitation of prisoners.

As a Junior Fellow at the Center for Holocaust Studies at the Leibniz Institute for Contemporary History in Munich, Germany, he conducted research in the institute's archive, focusing in particular on the Nazi bureaucracy that drove forced and slave labor in the concentration camps and beyond. In the Netherlands, as an EHRI Conny Kristel Fellow, he conducted research at the NIOD Institute for War, Holocaust, and Genocide Studies and the Dutch National Archives (Dutch Red Cross collection). Both archives hold early postwar survivor testimonies, and collections pertaining to the Westerbork transit camp and Vught concentration camp in the Netherlands, and on concentration camps in Germany and Nazi-occupied Poland. In spring, he began a fellowship at the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, where he focused on collecting documents about concentration camps at large and individual experiences in particular.

De Leeuw presented his doctoral research at the workshop "Mileage, Mobility, Memory: Conflict Transport and Vehicular Networks in a Transnational Frame," in York, UK, in February 2022, focusing on the role of trains in prisoner relocations through the camp system. He gave another paper on the social dynamics of inclusion and exclusion in German concentration camps at the 25th Workshop on the History and Memory of Nationalist Socialist Camps and Killing Sites in Zagreb in May 2022. In addition, he participated in the April 2022 "HEFNU Regional Institute on the Holocaust and Jewish Civilization" at Arizona State University, which focused on space and place during the Holocaust. He also presented his research at the *Heroines of the Holocaust: New Frameworks of Resistance* conference at Wagner College, New York, in June 2022.

Finally, De Leeuw concluded an article based on his doctoral research that will be published in the Arolsen Archives Series (November 2022), entitled "Mapping Jewish Slave Laborers' Trajectories Through Concentration Camps."

**Hana Green**, recipient of a Claims Conference Fellowship, enjoyed the support of a Shahun Parish research award for her dissertation project. Her research interests lie at the intersection of gender and identity, and her dissertation project explores the experiences of Jews who passed as Aryan, Gentile, or as another, more protected group, before, during, and after the Holocaust. Centering the experiences and identity transformations of Jewish passers, Green considers the deeper implications of the broader phenomenon of passing during the Holocaust and explores what it meant to pass under the guise of a false identity *in extremis*. Taking a thematic approach, the project incorporates case studies of Jews pass-



Daan deLeeuw

ing in various regions and settings across Europe and assesses the ways they navigated survival on a day-to-day basis in diverse contexts. It is Green's hope to underscore the breadth and variation of passing experiences and to highlight passing as a distinct mechanism of survival during the Holocaust.

Since becoming ABD, Green has carried out both in-person and remote archival research across Europe, Israel, and the United States. She has discovered myriad unpublished testimonies, letters, and supporting documents of Jewish passers from across Europe. Such sources provide astonishing insight into the day-to-day life of Jewish passers and underscores several critical themes including the significance of movement, gender, luck, and the development of social networks. Her research contributes to the discourse on gender and identity during the Holocaust, survival studies, and is connected to a longer and entangled history of passing as a Jewish response to ostracism, persecution, and genocide.

In fall 2021, Green began a year of archival research in Austria and Germany. She was in residence as an EHRI fellow at the Vienna Wiesenthal Institute in Austria, the Bundesarchiv in Berlin-Lichterfelde, and a DAAD fellow in residence in Munich at the Leibniz Institute for Contemporary History's Center for Holocaust Studies. Over the summer, Green attended and presented papers at the 25th Workshop on the History and Memory of National Socialist Camps and Killing Sites in Zagreb, Croatia, an academic seminar hosted by Wagner College titled, *Heroines of the Holocaust: New Frameworks of Resistance*, and a workshop on Gender and the Holocaust hosted by the Wiener Library and Royal Holloway University in London. This past summer Green published her first article in *The Journal of Holocaust Research* entitled, "Passing on the Periphery: A Call for the Critical Reconsideration of Research on Identity 'Passing' as a Jewish Response to Persecution During the Holocaust."

In addition to her academic work, Green is a contributor to the



Hana Green

Jewish Women's Archive's *Encyclopedia of Jewish Women*, a volunteer transcriptionist for the Auschwitz-Birkenau Museum's Oral History Project, and serves on the organizing team for the 26th Workshop on the History and Memory of National Socialist Camps and Killing Sites to be held in Łódź, Poland in September 2023.

Hausrath Manoogian Fellow **Hasmik Grigoryan** received funding from the Asbed B. and Margaret M. Zakarian Fund to pursue her dissertation, *The Socio-Political Situation in Van and Bitlis provinces in 1912-1915 in the Context of the Armenian Genocide*. Her project is a microhistory that explores whether the events occurring in the Van and Bitlis provinces of the Ottoman Empire, during the years 1913 and 1914, had an impact on the final decision to perpetrate genocide. Her project begins in the summer of 1912 when there was an official break in relations between the Armenian Revolutionary Federation (ARF) and the Committee of Union and Progress (CUP). It ends in April 1915 with the self-defense of Van.

Grigoryan's project will shed light on the genocidal process by showing how local dynamics pushed the central government. The decision to focus on these two provinces is related to the dynamics in the region where tensions between Armenians and Kurds unfolded over issues of land reform. The first official decision to exterminate Armenians appears in a document sent from the

Erzerum branch of the Special Organization to Istanbul on 1 December 1914 that related specifically to Armenian leaders in the provinces of Van and Bitlis. Focusing on the interaction between Armenian representatives, Kurdish actors, and the Ottoman state, she explores the escalation in violence that took place against the backdrop of the negotiations over the Armenian Question between the Great Powers and the Ottoman Empire. She will investigate intra-ethnic relations between the main Armenian political actors, the Church, and notables within the Ottoman Empire (both in the center and the periphery) and abroad in order to scrutinize their different roles.

During summer 2022, Grigoryan conducted research in the ARF Archive, located in Watertown, MA. She identified important documents from 1912 to 1914 including letters sent between ARF members of the Central Committee and local branches in Van and Bitlis. Among her most important discoveries is a census document from 1912 that contains information about the male population of some villages in Bitlis province, including their names and ages. It is interesting that the age division is not only between adults and children but also between those above and below twenty-five years of age. These materials will allow her to identify individuals from Bitlis province, as well as to match the census information with other information appearing in newspapers and memoirs.

**Sandra Grudić**, the Shirley and Ralph Rose Fellow, received research funding from the Al and Hilda Kirsch Fund for her project on the Bosnian genocide. Grudić is conducting a micro historical study of her own hometown Bosanski Novi, located in northwestern Bosnia, during the years of the genocide (1992-1995). During a summer 2022 research trip, she conducted survivor interviews both on zoom and in person. She visited the Croatian State Archives in Zagreb and the Institute for Research of Crimes Against Humanity and International Law in Sarajevo. Both institutions yielded numerous testimonies, lists of local perpetrators, and documents issued by the police station in Bosanski Novi at the beginning of the war. These documents detail interethnic relations and tensions during the genocide.

During her research trip to Bosnia, Grudić interviewed individuals who fled Bosanski Novi/Novi Grad and moved to other towns within Bosnia as well as residents who remained during the war years and continued to live there afterwards. The interviews reveal that despite violence between neighbors of different ethnic groups, many Bosniak, Serb, and Croat neighbors remained friendly, and some nurtured these relationships throughout the war and after. In addition, the interviews revealed that the ethnic identities of individual Serbs and non-Serbs were not necessarily fixed but were often negotiated on the interpersonal level. In other words, even if some Serbs considered Muslims and Croats as "ethnic others," which they perceived as threatening, many often did not view their non-Serb neighbors as such, and continued protecting them, even when committing violence against other members of Bosniak or Croat ethnicities.

Conducting the interviews in person was especially fruitful and produced valuable documentation absent from the national archives. For example, while interviewing a local politician in his office in the city hall, Grudić received a folder containing local government reports issued during the war. This material is very valuable but generally inaccessible to the public and only made available through a meeting of this type. Similarly, during another interview a local politician offered a folder of documents from his private collection. While in Sarajevo, Grudić engaged in networking with Bosnian genocide scholars such as Hikmet Karčić and Muamer Džananović, which resulted in precious guidance on how to best approach various institutions that are generally difficult to navigate.

Agnes Manoogian Hausrath Fellow **Diana Hayrapetyan** received a Charlotte Calfaian Research Award for her dissertation project examining the foundations of the Turkish Republic and the problem of Armenian returnees in the period 1918 to 1938. Her research investigates the situation of minorities during the establishment of the Turkish nation state, the nationalistic movement known as the War of Independence in official Turkish historiography, the abolition of the sultanate and caliphate, the secularization of the state and the nexus between nation building and forced migration.

On 30 October 1918, Ottoman Turkey and Great Britain signed the Mudros armistice, which *de jure* stopped the Great War in the Middle East. Yet, war continued in a new form and under a veil of strong nationalism and jihadi rhetoric, later replaced with the idea of “the sacred fatherland.” An objective evaluation is crucial for understanding how the Kemalist authoritarian regime in Turkey implemented a set of non-democratic laws that ignored previous mass atrocities, ethnic cleansing and genocide. Under these conditions, the new Turkish nation was able to continue its genocidal policy of exterminating and marginalizing Kurds as well as Armenians in Dersim, Sasun, and elsewhere.

Hayrapetyan researches the experiences of the approximately 250,000 Armenians who returned from the deportations and exile. Her dissertation will consider how they survived the genocide, the coping mechanisms they used to form new social bonds, and the community organizations they established to integrate into Turkish society. Armenians who returned to Turkey often had to pass as Turks, Kurds and even Greeks to survive. A law requiring them to adopt Turkish names and surnames caused additional losses to their Armenian identity, while the nationalist policy of ethnic cleansing further eroded the community through deportations.

Hayrapetyan has conducted research in the archives of the Armenian Revolutionary Federation located in the Hairenik Building in Watertown, MA. She found reports, correspondence, and European and Russian newspapers detailing the situation of Christians in Turkey. She has also identified relevant material in the Krikor Guergerian Digital Archive at Clark University, including 150 documents regarding the situation of Armenians, reports from various provinces, as well as complaints about misdeeds and atrocities towards Armenian returnees. Under the supervision of Professor Taner



Diana Hayrapetyan

Akçam and in collaboration with two colleagues from Armenia, she is working on the translation and transliteration of the files, which are mostly in handwritten Western Armenian script. At the National Association for Armenian Studies and Research, she found previously unexplored primary sources describing the situation of Armenians under the Kemalist regime, which provide an alternative interpretation of the official history of the period.

**Alexandra Kramen**, a Claims Conference fellow and recipient of the Marlene and David Persky Research Award, explores how Jewish survivors living in Föhrenwald, the longest-running Jewish displaced persons camp in postwar Europe, conceived of and acted upon justice for the harms they and their loved ones suffered during the Holocaust. Föhrenwald offers the opportunity to investigate how notions of justice and revenge evolved over time in response to shifting political, social, and economic conditions. Her research elucidates an area of Jewish life during and after the Holocaust that has received scant attention, offering a new perspective on how Jews coped with the trauma they experienced under the Nazi regime and reestablished a sense of justice in the process, while contributing more broadly to the study of transitional justice processes in the wake of mass violence beyond formal international criminal tribunals.

Working in the archives at Dachau, Kramen collected files related to Moshe Rutschaisky, a survivor who testified at the Dachau trials and provided an oral history testimony to the USC Shoah Foundation. In his testimony, he discussed his participation in the tribunal process and his feeling that testifying was a form of revenge. His testimony calls into question the socially constructed dichotomy of justice versus revenge; for survivors like Moshe, justice and revenge were one and the same. A special exhibit on the Dachau trials at the Dachau museum features Moshe's Shoah Foundation testimony on

an interactive screen with the testimonies of one of the prosecutors and another high level official. Moshe describes the opportunity to testify about the crimes committed against him and others as revenge, but laments that the Nuremberg trials overshadowed those at Dachau. Kramen's dissertation will highlight Moshe as one of the ordinary DPs on an individual quest for justice.

Kramen has conducted research at the Center for Jewish History in New York as a David Baumgardt Memorial Fellow at the Leo Baeck Institute. In June 2022, she returned for a ten-month residency as the Dr. Sophie Bookhalter Graduate Research Fellow. She presented her work at Stockton University's International Workshop to Mark 70 Years to the UN Refugee Convention and at the seventh international multidisciplinary conference *Beyond Camps and Forced Labour: Current International Research on Survivors of Nazi Persecution* in London.

**Ani Garabed Ohanian** received generous support from the Armenian community including the Nishan and Margrit Atinjian Family Foundation during her fifth year of doctoral study. Her dissertation, *Bolshevik-Kemalist Reconfigurations of the Caucasus, 1917-1923*, examines Bolshevik-Kemalist relations through the lens of the Armenian Genocide. The triangular relationship between Turkey, Russia, and the South Caucasus reflects the effects of imperial decline and the rise of nationalistic ambition in the aftermath of the First World War. She aims to shed light on the entangled histories of Bolsheviks and Kemalists in the South Caucasus, which serve as a harrowing parallel to the ongoing inter-ethnic conflict and instability of the region today.

The conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan regarding the enclave of Nagorno-Karabakh is not coincidental. While Ohanian's dissertation focuses on the role of the Armenian Genocide in Bolshevik-Kemalist relations, during the period of 1917 to 1923, it also highlights the ongoing genocidal project against Armenians. Azerbaijani aggression and Turkey's continued role in present-day Karabakh relate directly to this research. The 1921 Bolshevik decision to separate Nagorno-Karabakh from Armenia proper is the most significant flashpoint for the conflict today. To date, there is no major scholarly work that puts these relations at the forefront or that considers perceptions of violence and genocide amongst these relations.

The outbreak of the Russian war against Ukraine curtailed Ohanian's plans to conduct archival research in Moscow. As a result, she has focused on sources available in Turkey and Armenia. Having studied Turkish in an intensive summer language program through the University of Indiana, Ohanian travelled to Istanbul to collect archival materials from the Social History Research Foundation of Turkey and to access Russian-language archives from the Turkish Communist Party, which operated in Baku. An award from the Society for Armenian Studies funded her travel to Istanbul. Ohanian is now analyzing the archival materials she collected in the United Kingdom, France, Armenia, and Turkey.

Ohanian's research shows the continued impact of unresolved history. Her dissertation highlights how Turkish and Azerbaijani

collusion against Armenian inhabitants is part of an ongoing genocidal process. Azerbaijani policy entails political repression as well as economic and social discrimination, which is part of the government's overarching nationalist project. In Turkey, there are similar policies, and the international community managed to overlook these unethical, undemocratic actions. Ohanian is also in the process of writing academic articles to further elucidate the current Nagorno-Karabakh issues, while contextualizing the conflict in a new light using her research and dissertation objectives.

Rosalie and Sidney Rose Fellow **Jessa Sinnott** received funding from the Roman and Hannah Kent award to research neighborhood and pogrom violence in Nazi and Soviet occupied Poland during the Second World War. The chief objective of her dissertation project is to create a fluid snapshot of a local sociocultural reality in which the murder of Polish Jewry took place. Her research considers three overarching categories of analysis to create a sociohistorical narrative of the perpetration of mass violence: the identification of actors and methods of aggression, ethnic and/or national socialization and shifting moralities, and the economic incentives for committing intra-communal violence. This project, demonstrating the ways in which anti-Jewish, neighborhood aggression fit into the totality of occupational violence, will take the form of a microhistory of Szczuczyn, in the present-day county of Grajewo. In addition, she examines significant broader themes including interethnic relations in Poland, Polish antisemitism, and the national identity and culture that allowed for attitudes of indifference and violence in the face of Jewish suffering.

Sinnott's knowledge of German and her continued study of Polish are essential to her archival research. She plans to examine police and military records, documentation of postwar trials for "crimes against the Polish nation," held by the Soviet-imposed Polish authorities and collected by the Chief Commission for the Prosecution of Crimes Against the Polish Nation, which has become the Institute of National Remembrance (IPN), as well as oral histories and written testimonies accessible through the Pilecki Institute in Warsaw, the archives of the IPN and their regional branch archives, the USHMM, and Yad Vashem. Her archival research has produced survivor testimonies talking about Polish-Jewish relations and Poles wanting to "settle scores" with their Jewish neighbors. Some testimonies also identify the names of perpetrators. At the IPN, she has accessed trial court documents and at the AAN (Archiwum Akt Nowych), she uncovered materials discussing the role of the Church in the region, which potentially point toward their political activities. She will pursue this theme further as she gains access to local archives.

In fall 2022, Sinnott served as an EHRI Fellow at the Emanuel Ringelblum Jewish Historical Institute in Warsaw, where she gained access to invaluable survivor testimonies. She secured a fellowship from the American Councils Title VIII Combined Research and Language Training Program in Poland, to spend the 2022-23 academic year in Warsaw.

## LIFE AFTER THE CENTER: JOSHUA FRANKLIN '05 MA '06

Joshua Franklin didn't plan on being a rabbi.

But "on a whim" he took a Jewish studies course during his first semester at Clark, becoming a history major with a focus on the Holocaust and genocide history and a concentration in Jewish studies. He earned his MA in history (under the direction of Professor Debórah Dwork), finding inspiration in his thesis subject: Rabbi Leo Baeck, leader of the German Jewish community under the Nazis. Franklin went on to pursue rabbinical studies at Hebrew Union College.

"Clark helped me find some direction, helped me find myself in really profound ways," he says. "I actually give credit to Clark for me winding up where I am today in the rabbinate."

These days, a normal week finds Rabbi Franklin holding Shabbat services at the Jewish Center of the Hamptons in East Hampton, New York, where he is a member of the clergy, teaching classes, or visiting those with pastoral needs.

But when Russia invaded Ukraine, Franklin found himself, like so many, wanting to do whatever he could to help the Ukrainian people. His congregation partnered with a nearby Ukrainian church to gather a truckload of medical supplies to ship to Ukraine. Eventually, they partnered with a rabbinic mission to bring money and supplies to Ukrainian refugees in Poland.

That's how Franklin ended up in Krakow with a group of 25 rabbis from across the United States and Israel in mid-April 2022. It was an eye-opening experience.

"We partnered with the Jewish Community Center (JCC) of Krakow, which transformed their entire mission and vision, and dedicated all of their resources, to helping refugees," he explains. "They became a center where refugees could receive food, shelter, toiletries medical supplies, childcare, Polish classes, psychological services, you name it. And they did so because of the fundamental Jewish value of helping those who are in need."

He notes the fortuitous timing of the trip, which immediately preceded Passover, the holiday that commemorates the escape of the Jewish people from slavery in Egypt. The Passover narrative, he says, "is a reminder that we were all once refugees at some point. And that should compel us to remember the suffering the pain, the anguish, that refugees often feel, and it should compel us to want to help them in any way we possibly can."

Franklin says one of the most surprising things about the trip was seeing the extent to which the Polish people have opened their homes and welcomed Ukrainian refugees. He explains that in Poland there are not the camps full of refugees so commonly seen in



Rabbi Joshua Franklin and fellow rabbis in Poland

similar conflicts. "The majority of refugees are actually staying in the homes of the Polish people who are opening up their spare bedrooms in a real, incredible act of not just hospitality, but of showing love to a neighbor when they really need it," he says.

The story of one Ukrainian woman he met has stuck with him. She fled to Krakow at the outset of the war and found support at the JCC. She shared that her 5-year-old daughter wakes up screaming every night because of the trauma of watching their city being bombed. The woman insisted she would raise her daughter to hate the Russians.

"That was soul-piercing," Franklin reflects. "To be able to have that much pain to say that — it was just very hard to hear. But I think it's a reality that a lot of Ukrainians are feeling."

Franklin came away from Krakow inspired by the hospitality being shown to refugees. "The Polish people have raised the bar incredibly high. They've been an exemplar of refugee relief."

Rabbi Franklin also has a message for fellow Clarkies, or anyone who wants to change the world: not all change has to be radical, or large in scale. He says that what his group was able to accomplish may seem like "nothing but a drop in the bucket" (an expression that comes from Hebrew scripture), but that it had meaning for those they reached.

"We know we're not going to stop the war, we're not going to influence a treaty between Russia and Ukraine, and we're not going to solve the refugee crisis," he says. "But our actions do matter, no matter how big or small they are."

*Kim Priore*

## UNDERGRADUATE ACTIVITIES: GATUMBA SURVIVOR PROJECT

With the support of a Doris N. Tager Internship, I spent the summer as a research assistant interviewing Banyamulenge survivors of the Gatumba massacre, a 2004 atrocity that was part of Burundi's violent civil war. Under the direction of Christopher Davey, the Charles E. Scheidt Professor of Genocide and Genocide Prevention, I transcribed interviews and created an archive that we published on the Clark University Digital Commons. To accompany the testimonies, I researched and wrote supporting documents that provide additional context. The grand hope of the project, although unlikely, is that the documentation of survivor testimonies will prove politically useful in such a way that may assist in bringing the perpetrators to justice.

On 13 August 2004, a Congolese Tutsi ethnic group deliberately targeted members of the Banyamulenge community at the UN's Gatumba refugee camp in Burundi. The Forces Nationales pour la Liberation, a Hutu supremacist rebel group fighting in the Burundian civil war, were responsible for the massacre that killed 166 and wounded 106 people. The identity of the leaders who orchestrated the attack are publicly known. Despite this, the perpetrators have never been held accountable. In fact, Agathon Rwasa, one of the main perpetrators, serves in Burundi's parliament as the leader of the opposition party.

The Gatumba Refugees Survivors Foundation (GRSF) - a community organization which, among other activities, lobbies governments and international organizations to bring perpetrators of crimes like the Gatumba massacre to justice - was an essential partner in the research process. The GRSF helped us to contact survivors living in Kenya, Rwanda, Burundi, the U.S., and the U.K. Professor Davey and I traveled to an annual memorial event in Indianapolis, where he presented a draft of the archive and I conducted further survivor interviews. The archive aims to preserve the survivors' memories in their own words and to communicate their experiences to relatives and community members, as well as the wider public. The interviews focus less on the details of the day of the massacre and more on the lives of the survivors. The questions draw out how survivors responded to their personal injuries and the loss of friends and family members. The generational tensions caused by immigration also feature prominently in some interviews, with survivors speaking about the relationship between Congolese parents and their children who have mostly grown up in the United States.

Some testimonies feature extended discussions that describe how communal losses impact cultural and religious celebrations. For example, one interviewee discussed his cousin's upcoming wedding, and what it will mean to see her walk down the aisle without her father by her side. Relatedly, many survivors described how their personal struggles with trauma have been both helped and hin-



Christopher Davey at a Banyamulenge event

dered by cultural norms around church and therapy. The diversity of responses to the massacre show the extent to which religious and communal norms play a major role in the lives of the Gatumba survivors and reveal the unique trajectories that shape the experiences of each survivor.

The subject which elicited the widest range of views was the failure of justice, which emerged as a dominant theme across all interviews. It has been 18 years since the Gatumba massacre, and the ascendance of perpetrators into the Burundian government remains an obstacle to survivors seeking the conventional, legalistic form of justice achieved through trials. Throughout the interviews, many survivors described how they have coped with the continued impunity of the attackers, and how the denial of legal justice has caused them to redefine the term altogether. The interviews record an intra-communal dialogue over the form and feasibility of justice.

*Ezra Schrader*

## ARCHIVES: BARRY HOFFMAN NAZI PROPAGANDA POSTCARD COLLECTION

The Third Reich used mass media to communicate messages about power, public service, and German supremacy. Propaganda permeated every aspect of German society and helped to instill Nazi ideologies and gain the support of the German people. One channel for spreading Nazi myths and ideas were postcards displaying powerful images: a never-ending sea of soldiers marching past Adolf Hitler at the Nazi Party Rally Grounds in Nuremberg; adoring crowds greeting Hitler and Mussolini; a satirical caricature of Winston Churchill wearing a broken battleship as a hat. The Reich Ministry of Public Enlightenment and Propaganda circulated these images and many more to easily and inexpensively communicate the Nazi message throughout Germany and German-occupied territories. As early as 1939, NYU Professor Julius Yourman described how the Nazi party controlled and communicated information, "Propaganda Techniques Within Nazi Germany." *The Journal of Educational Sociology* 13, no. 3 (1939).

In May, the late Barry D. Hoffmann (17 November 1936 – 18 September 2022) gifted an extensive collection of 1,471 propaganda postcards along with secondary source materials to the Strassler Center. Hoffman personally delivered the collection and spent an afternoon going through many albums of postcards with me and Center staff. His love of collecting and hope that the postcards would serve as an educational tool were apparent.

Before there was broad access to mass communication and media, postcards offered an affordable way to stay in contact and to share images with family and friends. During the rise of Nazism, this common form of communication became interwoven with images of Hitler and party symbols. Most of the postcards in the Hoffman collection depict Adolf Hitler and Nazi political and military leaders and events. They include many portraits, group photographs, and officials at Nazi Party rallies.

Nazi propaganda often used Hitler's image, building a myth of his supposed invincibility and charisma. Hitler became associated with the nation's prosperity and was portrayed as central to its future success. The images cast him as a hero, a father figure, and a protector of Germany. Other categories of postcards include; a "Get To Know Germany" series highlighting towns around Germany, sports-related postcards including the 1936 Berlin Olympics, postcards commemorating events in Nazi party history including elections and annexations of surrounding land into "the greater German Reich" and annual events such as the Day of the Postage Stamp, Labor Day, Armed Forces Day, and National Day of the German Police.

Approximately a third of the postcards in the Hoffman collection were sent through the mail. The various stamps and postmarks on them contribute to the story about where the postcards came from and where they were going. Some had long messages that filled every available space, while others contained just a word or two. Many were *Feldpost* (German military mail service), postcards written by soldiers. The collection requires translation and



further study to establish who sent and received them. Yet, even without that information, handling these primary source materials and seeing the original handwriting make history feel more tangible and real.

As a 2022 Clark graduate with a concentration in Holocaust and Genocide Studies and a current MA student in Communications, I interned at the Strassler Center to process the Hoffman collection. Under the supervision of Strassler Center Librarian and Archivist Robyn Conroy, I was able to research, organize, photograph, and rehouse the collection. Multi-channel communications are a significant aspect of the communications field, and looking at postcards, a traditional method of communication, offers a new perspective on the exchange of ideas. Communication existed long before the internet and cell phones; however, we do not associate the field of communication with history and only address it in modern technological terms. Yet, studying history is a way of communicating with the past. By digitizing the postcards and making them available on the Clark Digital Commons, we have made them accessible to students and scholars everywhere. For me, this is what academia is all about: expanding knowledge through multiple channels of communications.

Lamisa Muksitu '22

## ARCHIVES: NAZI ERA EPHEMERA OF DR. CORTEZ F. ENLOE

In spring 2022, the Strassler Center received a meaningful donation of Nazi era newspapers, magazines, and lantern slides from Clark University Professor Cynthia Enloe. A renowned Political Scientist, Professor Enloe is recognized internationally for her pioneering work on gender and militarism and for contributions to the field of feminist international relations. Her father, Dr. Cortez F. Enloe, collected these ephemera while attending medical school in Germany, during which time he served as an international dispatcher for *The Kansas City Star*. The materials highlight the increasingly propagandistic nature of media in the years leading up to World War II. Enloe indicated her father's urgency in salvaging these items, as he recognized their historic and educational significance.

The newspapers feature vibrantly illustrated advertisements, imposing images of Nazi leaders, and extravagant spreads celebrating landmark national events like the 1936 Summer Olympics and the 550th anniversary of the University of Heidelberg. The collection includes a volume of the *Munchner Illustrierte Press*, a publication whose Jewish editor-in-chief was among the first leading journalists arrested and replaced by Nazi sympathizers. Further assertions of National Socialist control are evident through the glamorous and complimentary articles on the "family-oriented" Propaganda Minister, Joseph Goebbels. German boxer Max Schmeling and Czech actress Anny Ondra are also notable fixtures of the papers as the couple was thought to epitomize Nazi excellence despite Schmeling's dislike of the party and Ondra's non-Aryan origins. The highly stylized content of these periodicals is an eerie snapshot portending the party's grip on media and public influence.

While reporting for the *Star*, Dr. Enloe frequented Nazi rallies accumulating pamphlets, papers, and he experienced an ever-heightening sense of urgency during the course of his work. His daughter noted his fear in attending the rallies—especially in light of his steadfast refusal to salute—but he persisted on behalf of his Midwestern readership. In being "part of something bigger, part of the larger world," Dr. Enloe recognized his responsibility in signaling the international threat posed by Nazism to the isolationist devotees of the paper. Upon graduation from the University of Berlin and departure from *The Kansas City Star*, Dr. Enloe's collection grew. He volunteered as a flight surgeon for the US Army Air Corps during World War II, ultimately receiving thirteen military decorations. His medical expertise brought him to Burma, where he served on 39 missions before returning to Germany as an interrogator of Nazi scientists—some of whom were his former professors. This experience accounts for the nine lantern slides included in the archive illustrating the U.S. Trial of Nazi Physicians. They document criminal experimentation on prisoners, the trial itself, and the subsequent execution of the perpetrators.

Dr. Enloe's innovation in the fields of Nutrition and Aviation medicine defined his post-military career. Professor Enloe noted her father's propensity to "go for the margins," and these scarcely



Dr. Cortez F. Enloe

explored subjects provided him the ideal opportunity. He founded the well-regarded research journal *Nutrition Today* in 1966, for which he served as both editor and contributor. Dr. Enloe's work garnered him membership in the Royal Academy of Medicine (London), the New York Academy of Medicine, and the American College of Preventive Medicine. He spent his final years in Annapolis, MD, where he passed away in 1995.

The impact of his leadership in both medicine and the armed forces was felt internationally. This collection is indicative of Dr. Enloe's resourcefulness and lifelong dedication to education—by increasing the accessibility of these periodicals, the academic community will have greater insight into everyday life in the Nazi regime. These materials are available for study at the Strassler Center and an index to the collection is online as part of the Clark University Digital Commons; additional papers belonging to Dr. Enloe can be viewed at the United States Air Force Academy's McDermott Library in Colorado Springs, CO.

Tara O'Donnell '23

## ROSE LIBRARY: *GOTCHNAG*, AN ARMENIAN WEEKLY COLLECTION

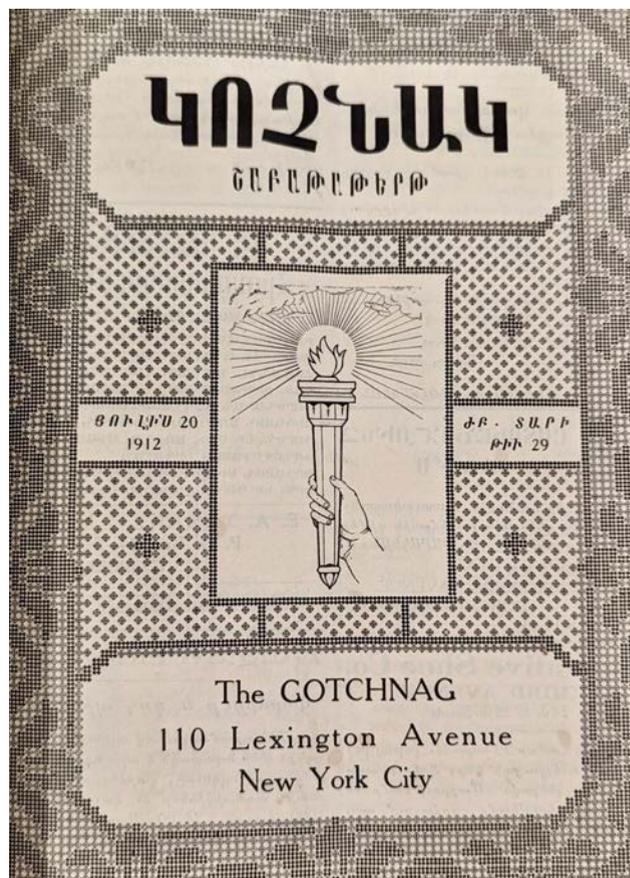
The Rose Library is the beneficiary of a valuable Armenian language weekly donated to the Strassler Center by George Aghjayan, Director of the Armenian Historical Archives and chair of the Armenian Revolutionary Federation (ARF) Central Committee of the Eastern United States. The *Gotchnag* periodical collection is comprised of 41 incomplete volumes (1908 to 1956). The Reverend Herbert Allen, an American missionary, founded *Gotchnag* (meaning *Church Bell*) in Boston in 1900 and served as its first editor. Sponsored by the American Missionary Association and the Armenian Protestant Church in America, *Gotchnag* represented the Protestant Armenian community.

Rev. Allen was an ideal founding editor of this publication in its original formulation as an organ of the American missionary movement. Born in 1865 in Harput, where his parents spent fifty years as missionaries, he attended Williams College (class of 1888) and then the Bangor Theological Seminary, receiving his degree in 1893. Returning to Harput, he taught there and then in Van before returning to the US in 1898. The Home Missionary Society appointed him superintendent of the Armenian community, and within the context of this work, he established *Gotchnag*. In 1903, he was called back to Turkey, as director of the Adabazar High School, and in 1907 he was invited to take over the *Avedaber* editorial office in Istanbul.

The first issue of *Gotchnag* appeared on 15 December 1900 but the paper was subject to significant changes over the subsequent decades. In 1909, the publication offices moved to New York and a series of name changes followed. In 1919, it was renamed *Gotchnag Hayastani* (*The Bell of Armenia*), then in 1921, *Hayastani Gotchnag* (*Armenia's Bell*). By 1960, it had transitioned to a monthly magazine until suspending publication in 1968. Not only did the newspaper's title and publication address change over the years, so too did its governing body. It gradually evolved from a missionary periodical into a wholly Armenian publication with Armenian funding. Despite the modifications, the principles of the newspaper persisted, "to remain progressive, independent and impartial, to preach the truth, defend justice and enlighten public opinion." Covering national, international, and social issues, the newspaper aimed to instill patriotism and love for religion.

*Gotchnag* touched upon all aspects of Armenian life, as it contributed to the preservation of Armenian identity and the strengthening of diaspora-homeland ties. Besides editorial and correspondence sections, the newspaper had particular columns exploring religious and family issues. *Gotchnag* viewed the family as the core of society and illustrated its socio-economic and socio-political role. Furthermore, it regularly published materials on the latest scientific news, works of art, and literature, as well as on Armenian national holidays and traditions, thus educating and promoting Armenian identity among young people in the diaspora.

From its early days, *Gotchnag* reported on timely political events including the situation of Armenians in the Ottoman Empire, cover-



ing the Armenian Question in detail. The newspaper published articles on the persecution of the Armenian population, the arrests of intellectuals, the massacres, and the situation of Armenian refugees in the Caucasus and elsewhere during the First World War. *Gotchnag* warmly welcomed the birth of the Republic of Armenia, viewing it as an anchor for the Armenian people. During World War II, it stood behind the Soviet people and its editorial stance was firmly anti-fascist, covering the joint struggle against Nazi Germany.

As a religious newspaper, *Gotchnag* not only emphasized evangelical Protestant ideology but also referred to Armenian national and political life both in the US and abroad though it did not favor a particular political affiliation. The paper's main goal was to serve the Armenian people. The ideology of *Gotchnag* can be summarized in three points - to endow the Armenian individual with morally sound principles, to strengthen the Armenian Diaspora with national consciousness, and to be dedicated to the reconstruction of Armenia with unconditional sacrifice.

*Hasmik Grigoryan*



GROWTH

DEVELOPMENT

**GROWTH &  
DEVELOPMENT**

GROWTH

## GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT



Rose Library and Colin-Plug Graduate Study Wing

In order to become a truly comprehensive program that contributes most effectively to Clark's agenda of training students who tackle the challenges of a complex and rapidly changing world, the Strassler Center is committed to fostering new areas of research and teaching. Fortunately, dedicated donors, appreciating the importance of this academic mandate, have generously funded two three-year positions: the first on mass violence in the global south, and the second on linking the study of past human rights violations to pedagogical and political efforts to prevent current and future violations. The Charles E. Scheidt Professor focuses on research and teaching about genocide and its prevention in Africa and the Dr. Thomas Zand Professor examines the history of antisemitism and effective teaching about the Holocaust.

As we look to the future, we plan to institutionalize these positions by establishing new professorships. In the coming years, thanks to a group of dedicated alumni and loyal supporters, the David P. Angel Chair will permanently expand our core faculty to incorporate new scholarly approaches to the study of antisemitism and the Holocaust in the context of Eastern Europe. Such a scholar will have expertise in what many see as the epicenter of the Holocaust: East European Jewry before, during, and after World War II. Our current faculty scholarship focuses on the Holocaust in West-

ern and West Central Europe. Yet, the majority of Jewish victims lived in Eastern Europe before the war and the murder sites were there. Training students who will develop these realms of the discipline will have an enormous impact on Holocaust studies worldwide. Moreover, surging nationalism in the region as well as the current war in Ukraine have complicated the memory of the Holocaust and these factors demand new approaches for understanding how history resonates politically.

While a permanent position related to genocide in the global south remains a top priority, we are not as close to realizing this goal. Nonetheless, our program continues to attract interested students eager to study genocide in Africa. Funding for doctoral fellowships has allowed us to recruit these students who find innovative ways to approach their research through a combination of Clark and external faculty resources. They are forging the way forward as we secure the resources to better root this work at the Strassler Center.

Contributions to support faculty and student research, lectures, conferences, and the ongoing operation of the Strassler Center underlie the many accomplishments detailed in this report. It is with genuine appreciation that we acknowledge the many donors listed here whose gifts made possible the activities of the academic year 2021-22.

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## IN MEMORIAM: VAN AROIAN, SUZANNE LEON '88, AND BARRY DAVID HOFFMAN

Van Aroian (1927-2021), a regular guest at Strassler Center events and a consistent donor to the Armenian Genocide program, typically sat in the front row at lectures, poised to listen closely and always ready to ask a smart question. Born in Boston to Armenian parents who emigrated from Kharpert and Hussenig, his mother was a survivor of the genocide. Having earned a BA in history from Boston University and an MA in Middle East History from Harvard University, Van moved to Worcester to pursue a PhD in Geography at Clark. Eventually, he worked at the Worcester Redevelopment Authority and then as a dealer of oriental rugs. Throughout his life, Van remained a dedicated student of Armenian history and culture. A long-serving treasurer of the National Association for Armenian Studies and Research he served the organization for 50 years and was a trustee until the end of his life.



Mary Jane Rein, Lane Hoffman, Barry Hoffman, Stanley Richmond, Robyn Conroy, Lamisa Muksitu '22

Strassler Center PhD students researching the Armenian Genocide, enjoyed getting to know Van and his wife Mary. He will be missed.

Clark alumna Suzanne Leon '88 (1967-2022) embraced a passion for Jewish studies following her early career in banking. Eventually, she pivoted from Credit Suisse to a new profession at the Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany as a senior program associate. She managed a sizable portfolio of grants related to Holocaust research, education and documentation including the Strassler Center's first award from the Claims Conference. At the YIVO Institute for Jewish Research, where she spent more than a decade, Suzanne rose to become the director of development and was responsible for many innovative projects. As a member of the Strassler Center Leadership council, she drew upon her rich experience and connections to offer programmatic insights and guidance about potential donors. A move to the Hudson Valley led to her work as the executive director for the Jewish Federation of Newburgh. At the time of her passing, Suzanne was a major gifts officer at the Omega Institute for Holistic Studies. According to her obituary, "Suzanne wanted more than anything to end suffering and create a more peaceful world."

Barry Hoffman (1936-2022) was an inveterate collector of books and ephemera with a special interest in the history of the Holocaust and the Third Reich. A fortunate introduction by Dr. Jeffrey Kraines inspired Barry to donate some of his most beloved collections to the Strassler Center. Working closely with librarian and archivist Robyn Conroy, Barry donated hundreds of the books he had meticulously collected. In addition, he purchased newly published books to



Suzanne Leon '88



Mary Aroian, Asya Darbinyan PhD '16, and Van Aroian

add to our library in response to requests from students and faculty. His final act of generosity was to contribute his archive of Nazi propaganda postcards. He and his wife Lane travelled to campus during summer 2022 to deliver several beautifully organized binders of well preserved postcards and reference materials. Apart from his career in real estate and development, Barry served as Boston's honorary consul general of Pakistan, a position he held since 1976 and enjoyed greatly. Finally, a love of reading inspired him to share what he learned from books and newspapers and barely a day passed without him sending emails and clippings to friends far and wide.

*Mary Jane Rein*

## GRATITUDE

I am thankful to my colleagues at the Strassler Center who share with me the perspective of Lewis Carroll: *One of the secrets of life is that all that is really worth the doing is what we do for others.* Robyn, Alissa, and Kim embody the wisdom of this maxim as they serve the needs of students, faculty, alumni and visitors. Dependable, supportive, organized, friendly and eager to help, they take pride in supporting the scholarly activities that are essential to the success of the Center. As archivist, librarian, and program manager, Robyn Conroy ensures the smooth operation of events that often entail managing overseas travel, complex itineraries, and complicated choreography. She also wears another hat as resident tech guru, a skill she learned in the pressured setting of high stakes web-based events like zoom lectures and online conferences. Administrative

Assistant Alissa Duke brightens everyone's days thanks to her warm demeanor and unwavering commitment to hospitality. Her care and attention to the people in the Strassler Center community lightens their work and makes Cohen Lasry House a welcoming environment for students and faculty despite the tragic histories they research. Although budget coordinator Kim Vance no longer occupies an office on campus, she remains dedicated to ensuring that our finances are balanced, reimbursements are paid, and adequate funds are available to fulfill our mandate for research, education, and outreach. The daily tasks so skillfully managed by this small but highly competent staff make possible the achievements described in this report.

*Mary Jane Rein*



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