

Terrortimes, Terrorscapes? Temporal, Spatial, and Memory Continuities of War and Genocide in 20th Century Europe

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In a joint conference of Arizona State University (Tempe, USA) and the Akademie für Politische Bildung Tutzing, Germany, historians from various sub-disciplines and countries discussed continuities of war and genocide in twentieth-century Europe. The conference in Tutzing was convened by MICHAEL MAYER (Tutzing) and VOLKER BENKERT (Tempe), and addressed researchers and the interested public to spend four days of intense debate on „Terrortimes“ and „Terrorscapes“ with a *longue durée* perspective. Eighteen speakers and about 40 participants contributed to this summer school. The current centenary of the beginning of World War I and the seventieth anniversary of the beginning of World War II served as initial motive to look at the contemporary history of war and atrocity with its transnational entanglements. The conference focused especially on spatial approaches to violence¹ and remembrance cultures of wars, with case studies ranging from Colonial Morocco to the representation of Nazi terror in German television. Benkert and Mayer referred to the immense public interest in new Great War historiographies.² Moreover, the conference hosts aimed at including methods and perspectives of cultural history, gender and colonial studies, as well as memory studies into the discussion of war and terror in twentieth-century Europe.

MICHAEL MAYER started the first panel on atrocity during the World Wars with a talk on „Jihads made in Germany“. According to Mayer, German Oriental Politics 1914-1918 learnt from Islamic revolutions of the nineteenth century in order to implement Islamic insurrections in the Middle East. However, the German attempts to foster Islamic revolutions during World War I stranded due to their failure to understand local customs

and traditions. CHRISTOPH DIECKMANN (Keele) explored continuities of Lithuanian history throughout the World Wars. He compared the World Wars in Lithuania, demonstrating continuities of *Lebensraum* discourses, anti-semitism, methods of forced labor, and stereotypes of bandits in both wars. In the panel debate the participants discussed whether and how World Wars and small wars by individual warlords could effectively be compared.

The second panel on „Nation and Past“ was introduced by STEFAN BERGER's (Bochum) presentation on war and atrocities in National European historiographies. Berger asked his audience to overcome national approaches to the history of war, and instead look at each other's national history through the eyes of other states. Berger called this a cosmopolitan way of history-writing, although this only marks a modification of the national approach. GEORGI VERBEECK (Maastricht) then gave a talk on competing memories in the age of totalitarianism. Verbeeck stressed the role of the Holocaust in European identity that was founded on the negative narrative „Nie Wieder“ („never again“). European memory cultures looked at the suffering of victims instead of the traditional 'history of the winners'. In the panel discussion it was asked whether national history has been rendered obsolete, and if history could replace myth.

JÖRN LEONHARD (Freiburg) gave an elaborate keynote speech on the First World War with regard to nationalisms that challenged the old Empires. Woodrow Wilson called multi-ethnic Empires anachronistic. Nation-states on the other hand were considered homogenous and progressive. And European empires did indeed struggle with separatist nationalism before 1914. Yet, despite ethnic tensions and separatist movements empires persisted in the long 19th century. Leonhard mentioned the flexibility of traditional empires that borrowed nation-state ideas, such as the loyal nation in arms. According to Leonhard, wars were used as

¹ See for example Timothy Snyder, *Bloodlands. Europe between Hitler and Stalin*, New York 2010.

² Cf. for example Christopher M. Clark, *The Sleepwalkers. How Europe went to War in 1914*, London 2013.

tests of loyalty by the empire, and only after the collapse of imperial infrastructures in 1917 did nationalism broadly fight ethnic minorities and the empire itself. Leonhard wanted to overcome the antagonism between empires and nation-states by using the term „nationalizing empires“ that stressed the overlapping between the two political structures. He claimed that ethnicity was not a natural bond of nations that led solely to the disintegration of empires, but an identity produced and modified during the Great War. In the discussion Leonhard's views were compared to the concepts of Timothy Snyder and Christopher M. Clark (vide supra).

The talk of BEN BERESFORD (Tempe) on Jazz at the Eastern Front was broadcast from Russia, where Beresford stayed for archival research. He claimed that Jazz music was a mobilizing force for the soldiers. He analyzed popular songs of Red Army Jazz bands which characterized Russian (not Soviet) heroes of war, homesickness, and displayed a good sense of humor. Ideology, Beresford concluded, was either hidden or totally absent. FELIX SCHNELL (Berlin) then presented on long-term continuities of violence in Eastern Europe. This continuity of atrocity was accordingly caused by permanent individual experts of violence who were engaged by different regimes. Schnell described violence in this region as everybody's resource, and a very profitable one.³ In these „open spaces of violence“ cruelty became an option systematically employed by all. Some critique of Schnell's presentation included that a spatial and long-term approach would eventually essentialize Eastern Europe. The panel's third presentation was given by JEAN-MARC DREYFUS (Manchester) who looked for the fate of thousands of corpses of French deportees that remained in Germany after the Second World War. Different National Tracing Missions exchanged data and corpses in order to (re)bury them. Dreyfus called this second burial of the dead the „renationalization of corpses“.

In the following panel on (De)Colonization Violence BART LUTTIKHUIS (Leiden) focused on the continuities of violence between Europe and its former colonies. He took the Netherlands as an example, whose colonies

did certainly not experience a 'year zero' after 1945. Violence did not stop or decrease, and therefore, Luttikhuis claimed, „the European terrrorscape is global, the global terrrorscape is European.“ CHOUKI EL HAMEL (Tempe) analyzed the continuous violence in the Protectorate Morocco. Many Arabic Muslims attended mantra-like Islamic mass prayers as a peaceful answer to political crisis in 1944, but in Fez French soldiers intervened and shot at the people. El Hamel concluded from the behavior of French colonial staff that their orientalism was ambiguous and that colonialism was never modern.

The next panel was dedicated to the memory of war and atrocity. URSULA MINDLER (Budapest) described the criminalization and marginalization of the minorities called „Gypsies“ (or „Zigeuner“) in the former Habsburg Lands. She started in the nineteenth century, when self-appointed crime experts defined „Zigeuner“ as criminals. And not until 1993 were Romani people recognized as a National Ethnic Group in Austria. ILSE RAAJIMAKERS (Maastricht) then compared German and Dutch memory cultures. She explained that during the past twenty years the Dutch discussed whether or not war commemoration could be practiced together with German representatives. This debate included the general question of German victimhood and transnational remembrance.

The talk of RACHEL FUCHS (Tempe) initiated the panel on gender perspectives on war. She presented documents of divorce cases from a French law firm during the Second World War, which clearly proved that in those letters the war was usually completely absent. However, the war was the unspoken background that forced many women into marriage and divorce negotiations as a survival strategy. UTE CHAMBERLAIN (Macomb, IL) presented on German female labor in the mining industries of the Ruhr during the Great War. Women were generally allowed to work underground if the mines asked for exceptions. But in the 1920s female miners had to

³ Cf. Heinrich Popitz: Trutz von Trotha, Zur Soziologie der Gewalt, in: Sonderheft der Kölner Zeitschrift für Soziologie und Sozialpsychologie 37 (1997), S. 19 (S. 9-56); Georg Elwert, Gewaltmärkte. Beobachtungen zur Zweckrationalität der Gewalt, in: ebd., S. 86-101.

give up their jobs in the mines to make room for returning soldiers.

ANNA CICHÓPEK-GAJRAJ (Tempe) explored the fate of Jewish survivors in post-war Poland. In the period right after the war the young and weak Polish state was engaged with repolonization and the resettlement of Germans. The Polish government asked the 100.000 Jewish survivors to resettle in the „recovered territories“ of Lower Silesia and act as loyal guards of „Polishness“. NADINE BLUMER (Toronto) focused on the Roma as a forgotten group of victims in German Holocaust memory. She explained that all Holocaust memorials of Berlin were produced in a memorial cluster and influenced each other in terms of architecture, place, and ceremony. „Memorials don't always silence each other“, Blumer concluded.

The last panel discussed memory cultures and the role of German television and cinema productions. VOLKER BENKERT (Tempe) spoke about the TV miniseries „Unsere Mütter, unsere Väter“ (engl. „Generation War“)⁴ and how it negotiates the victim-perpetrator dichotomy of ‘ordinary’ Germans during the Second World War. Benkert explained that this movie represented the general unsteadiness of German commemoration that oscillated between two separate discourses – one on victims and another one on perpetrators. WULF KANSTEINER (Aarhus) agreed that the German TV prime time was usually dedicated to documentaries about the victims of the war, and not the perpetrators. The success of Guido Knopp's perpetrator-revolution in the 1990s was hence based on the absence of the perpetrators in the narrative worlds of the previous decades.

This intensive conference addressed very broad questions posed by the continuities of violence in 20th-century Europe and its colonies and protectorates. The panels featured continuities and discontinuities of war and atrocity with regard to space (Eastern Europe), time (World War times, crisis of empires), gender, ideologies (racism, nationalism), and collective memory. All speakers were eager to think out of the box of their sub-disciplines and questioned general historical phenomena and explanations. Unsurprisingly, many participants hesitated to

formulate sweeping answers. However, this summer school presented insightful ways of trans-national and trans-local research in order to generate new results and perspectives on the history of atrocities and violence. It was also a meeting point for scholars with different national backgrounds and the interested public, who were able to discuss the history of wars and violence as an issue of permanent relevance.

Conference Overview:

War and Atrocity during the World Wars

Michael MAYER (Tutzing): War and Atrocity during the World Wars. Setting British and Russian Territory Alight. German Intelligence and the Holy War in Afghanistan, Iran and Caucasus, 1914 to 1918

Christoph DIECKMANN (Keele): Continuities? Deliberations on Lithuania and Germany, 1918 to 1945

Nation and Past

Stefan BERGER (Bochum): Writing the Nation. National and Transnational Perspectives on War and Atrocity

Georgi VERBEECK (Maastricht): Competing Memories in the Age of Totalitarianism. Some Historiographical Reflections

Nation State and Violence

Jörn LEONHARD (Freiburg): Empires, Nation-States and Violence. The First World War in Perspective

War and Atrocity in Eastern Europe

Ben BERESFORD (Tempe): Jazz and Total War on the Eastern Front

Felix SCHNELL (Berlin): Eastern Europe as an Arena of Terror in the 20th Century

Temporal Continuities of War and Atrocity in 20th Century Europe

Jean-Marc DREYFUS (Manchester): Search and Identification: The Corpses of French Deportees in Germany, 1945 to 1969

Colonial Violence – Decolonization Violence

Bart LUTTIKHUIS (Leiden): A Global European Terrorscape. Continuities of Violence be-

⁴ Regie: Philipp Kadelbach, 3x90min, ZDF 2013.

tween Europe and its (Post)Colonies
Chouki el HAMEL (Tempe): Violence and Decolonization in Protectorate Morocco

Transnational Memory of War and Atrocity

Ursula MINDLER (Budapest): Criminalization of Marginalized Communities in Former Habsburg Lands in the First Half of the 20th Century

Ilse RAAJIMAKERS (Maastricht): Transnational Memory. Remembering World War II between the Netherlands, Germany and Europe

Gender Perspectives on War and Atrocity

Rachel FUCHS (Tempe): Private Lives in Wartime France: Desertion, Divorce, and Deprivation

Ute CHAMBERLIN (Macomb): The Home Front from a Regional Perspective: Female Labor in the Mining Industries of the Ruhr during the Great War

Traces of the Past: Survivors, Displaced Persons and Forced Migrants in Germany and Poland

Anna CICHOPKEK-GAJRAJ (Tempe): Jewish Survivors in the „Recovered Territories“ after World War II

Nadine BLUMER (Toronto): Forgotten Holocaust Victims. How Germany Remembers the Roma

German TV and Cinema Memory Production

Volker BENKERT (Tempe): Apologia and Redemption. Despite Addressing the Complicity of Ordinary Germans in Nazi Atrocities, Contemporary German Filmmakers Still Turn Perpetrators into Victims

Wulf KANSTEINER (New York): Creating the Nation on TV. ZDF and German Memory

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