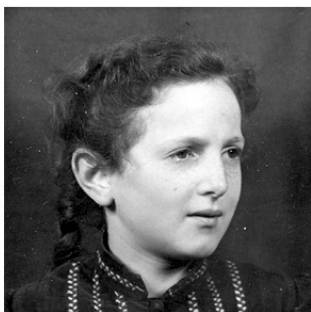
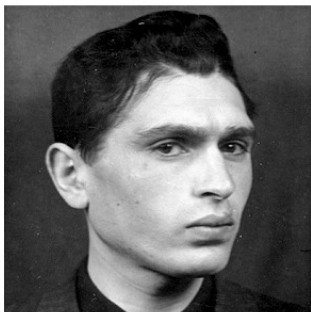


**Reassessing Nazi Human Experiments  
and Coerced Research, 1933-1945:  
New Findings, Interpretations and Problems**

Thursday 4 July – Sunday 7 July, 2013



**Organised by Paul Weindling and Marius Turda (Oxford Brookes University),  
and Volker Roelcke (University of Giessen).  
Hosted at Wadham College, Oxford**

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*Cover image:*

*These portraits depict six individuals on the brink of tragedy. Clockwise from the top left, pictured are: Bienem Gold, Estera Fuerstenzell, Beti Fuerstenzell, Moses Fuerstenzell, Lea Fuerstenzell, and Sita Fuerstenzell. The photographs were taken as part of a racial survey of the Tarnów ghetto, Poland, in 1942. The survey was a joint venture of the Institut fuer deutsche Ostarbeit, and Dr. Dora Kahlich-Koener, a racial anthropologist from the University of Vienna. Mere weeks after these photographs were taken, the mass killings and mass deportation of Tarnów's thousands of Jewish residents to Belzec extermination camp began*

*The symposia are supported by Wellcome Trust, the Rabbi Israel Miller Fund for Shoah Research of the Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany, Oxford Brookes University, and the University of Giessen.*

**“Reassessing Nazi Human Experiments and Coerced Research, 1933-1945: New Findings, Interpretations and Problems”**

**Schedule for Thursday July 4th**

15:30 – 16:45: Tea and Coffee in the Trap Room

17:00 – Introductory Session: Victims as Populations

19:00 Chair: Volker Roelcke (University of Giessen)

Paul Weindling – Anna von Villiez – Aleksandra Loewenau (Oxford Brookes University) – Nichola Farron (Amsterdam):

Researching Experiment Victims - Findings and Problems

Sabine Hildebrandt (Harvard University, Massachusetts): Current Status of Identification of Victims of the National Socialist Regime whose Bodies were used for Anatomical Purposes

19:15 – 21:15: Reception/Buffer Dinner in Wadham Hall

## Schedule for Friday July 5th

9:00 – 10:30	First Session: <u>Concentration Camp Research</u> Chair: Ryan Farrell (Oxford Brookes University)  Astrid Ley (Sachsenhausen Memorial and Museum): <u>Children as Victims of Medical Experiments. Why were Experiments made on Children in Concentration Camps?</u>  Raphael Toledano (Struthof Museum, Schirmeck): <u>Deliveries of Dead Bodies at the Anatomical Institute of the <i>Reichsuniversität Strassburg</i> between 1941 and 1944</u>
10:30 – 11:00:	Coffee in the Trap Room
11:00 – 12:30	Anne Sudrow (Centre for Contemporary Historical Research, Potsdam): <u>Industrial Research in Concentration Camps – an Understudied Field of Nazi Human Experiments</u>  Andreas Frewer (Friedrich-Alexander-Universität, Erlangen-Nürnberg): <u>Research in Slave Labour-Camps during National Socialism</u>  Round Table Discussion: <u>Evaluating Concentration Camp Research</u>
12:30 – 14:00:	Lunch in Wadham Hall
14:00 – 18:00	Second Session: <u>Problematic Locations – Transnistria and Romanian Backgrounds</u> Chair: Marius Turda (Oxford Brookes University)  Paul Shapiro (USHMM, Washington DC): <u>Vapniarka: A Special Camp with Special Sources</u>  Vladimir Solonari (University of Central Florida): <u>Fighting Typhus – Killing Jews: On Relations between Modern Science and Mass Murder in Romania-occupied South Ukraine, 1941-1942</u>
15:30 – 16:00:	Tea in the Trap Room
	Alexandra Laignel-Lavastine (Paris): <u>Mass killings of Jews in Ukraine (1941-1944): the Involvement of the Local Population as a Kind of Nazi Human Experimentation</u>  Round Table: <u>Transnistria, Romania, and Other Problematic Locations</u>
20:30	Dinner at the Cherwell Boathouse

## II

# “Reassessing Nazi Psychiatric and Brain Anatomical Research, 1933-1945: New Findings, Interpretations and Concepts”

### Schedule for Saturday July 6th

<p>9:00 – 10:30</p>	<p>First Session: <u>Psychiatric Experiments and Eugenics</u>            Chair: Sheldon Rubenfeld (Baylor College of Medicine, Houston)            Maike Rotzoll (University of Heidelberg) and Gerrit Hohendorf (Technical University of Munich): <u>Medical Research on the Victims of “Euthanasia” – Carl Schneider and the Heidelberg “Research Children” 1942-1945</u>            Hans-Walter Schmuhl (University of Bielefeld): <u>Ernst Rüdin’s Recommendations on Psychiatric-neurological Research during the War (1942)</u></p>
<p>10:30 – 11:00: Coffee in the Trap Room</p>	
<p>11:00 – 12:30</p>	<p>Second Session: <u>Use of the Psychiatric Hospital Patients for Medical Experiments</u>            Herwig Czech (University of Vienna): <u>Beyond Spiegelgrund and Berkaitit: Human Experimentation and Coerced Research at Vienna University, 1939 to 1945</u>            Kamilla Uzarczyk (Medical University of Wrocław): <u>“Der Kinderfachabteilung vorzuschlagen”: Psychological examination of children at the Jugendpsychiatrische Klinik Loben</u></p>
<p>12:30 – 14:00: Lunch in Wadham Hall</p>	
<p>14:00 – 16:00</p>	<p>Third Session: <u>Racial and Reproductive Research</u>            Chair: Sabine Hildebrandt (Harvard University, Massachusetts)            Margit Berner (Natural History Museum, Vienna): <u>A Racial study of Jewish families in Tarnow, 1942</u>            Gabriele Czarnowski (Medical University, Graz): <u>Fetography: A National Socialist Medical Crime on Pregnant Forced Labourers and the International Research Context (ca. 1930-1950)</u>            Marius Turda (Oxford Brookes University): <u>The Bond of Complicity: Reading</u></p>

	<u>Miklós Nyiszli's Memoirs</u>
15:30 – 16:00: Tea in the Trap Room	
16:00 – 19:00	Fourth Session: <u>Reading Memoirs, Testimonies and Compensation Claims</u> Chair: Sari Siegel (University of Southern California)
	Christian Bonah (University Strasbourg) and Florian Schmaltz (MPIWG, Berlin): From Witness to Inditee : Eugen Haagen and his Hearings from the Nuremberg Military Tribunal (1947) to the Struthof Medical Trials (1952/1954)
	Rakefet Zalashik (Ben-Gurion University, Beer Sheva): <u>The Testimonies of Israeli Victims/Survivors: Specific Characteristics and Historical Values</u>
20:00: Dinner at the Head of the River	

## Schedule for Sunday July 7th

9:00 – 12:30	First Session: <u>From Survivor Testimony to Research Ethics</u>
	Michal Simunek (Czech Academy of Sciences, Prague): <u>Informed Testimonies: Medical Experiments in Nazi Concentration Camps In the Reports of Physicians-Prisoners from Czechoslovakia, 1945–1989</u>
	Gabriele Moser (University of Heidelberg): <u>Ordinary Ethics: The Practice of X-Ray-/Radium-Sterilization in Nazi Germany and Associated Medical Scientific Research</u>
10:30 – 11:00: Coffee in the Trap Room	
	Volker Roelcke (University of Giessen): <u>Regulating Human Subjects Research: Scope, Limitations, and post-WW II Negotiations on the Research Guidelines/ Reichsrichtlinien of 1931</u>
Concluding Discussion: <u>Unresolved Issues and our Further Research</u>	

## **Abstracts in order of presentation:**

Paul Weindling, Anna von Villiez, Aleksandra Loewenau (Oxford Brookes University), and Nichola Farron (Amsterdam):

### Researching Experiment Victims – Findings and Problems

The victims of medical experiments and other forms of coerced research form a distinctive but still inadequately understood set of WW2 and Holocaust victims. Leading Nazis, notably Himmler, gave much attention to devising and enabling experiments. The numbers and identities of victims, and the very diverse locations, have long only been known in terms of isolated clusters. The aim of our research has been to build up a composite picture by piecing together fragmented victim records. Essentially the methodology is one of “record linkage” with the overall aim of reconstructing the total population (or at least as near to this as is possible) of victims. This provides the basis for a structural analysis in terms of victim cohorts, perpetrator profiles, and the agencies sponsoring such research.

The aim of this presentation is threefold: to present some overall findings, to consider critically weaknesses in terms of methodologies, and to indicate how using available resources (notably the ITS records) the research is being taken forward. The project scope is deliberately wide – covering all forms of coercive research: that means taking into account not only concentration camp research, but researches in clinics, ghettos and all types of holding institutions. While routine systematised forms of genocidal killing – as for “euthanasia” – fall outside the scope of the project, research on victim body parts is included. This means tracing all victims whose brains were retained for research.

While a database allows both systematised data storage and analysis, there are problematic issues. One is that it is essentially cumulative – here the challenge is to add a time element, to indicate the different duration of the experiments, and hierarchies of authority. Another problematic issue is that not all victim testimony can be linked to documentation on Nazi research. This has resulted in a “pending” category, that currently covers ca. 45% of victims.

The research has encountered the difficulty of access to archives, and the issue of naming and privacy. There is a lack of standardisation, and no standards of best practice. The German Archives Law is interpreted varyingly and at times severely restrictively as regards conditions of access, and subsequent data usage. To date the project is unable to fulfil an original aim of publishing any full biographical listing, and is limited to cohort analysis.

Finally, a case study of Auschwitz X-ray sterilization victims will focus on the problem of taking a set of known victims, and establishing how many and who survived.

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Sabine Hildebrandt (Harvard University, Massachusetts):

Current Status of Identification of Victims of the National Socialist Regime whose Bodies were used for Anatomical Purposes

Research on the history of anatomy in the Third Reich has often focused on the anatomists who collaborated with the National Socialist (NS) regime. Only recently has attention shifted to investigations on the victims, of whom there are two groups: the anatomists whose careers were disrupted by NS policies, and the victims of the NS regime whose bodies were used for anatomical purposes. No systematic approach has yet been undertaken towards the identification of all the different groups of victims and the individuals' fates.

This overview of currently available data on NS victims whose bodies were used for anatomical purposes reveals that an estimated total number of all bodies used lies at more than 40,000 and that the currently documented number of executed persons is at a minimum of 3,749. The various sources of body procurement and their significant changes during the NS period from the traditional sources can be traced. Only about 500 NS victims' names and biographies have been at least partially identified so far. However, existing memorials rarely name individuals. New approaches to the identification of victims will be presented. The potential of a data bank of these victims' biographies as an appropriate memorial needs to be examined.

Astrid Ley (Sachsenhausen Memorial and Museum):

Children as Victims of Medical Experiments. Why were Experiments made on Children in Concentration Camps?

Experiments were carried out on humans in almost all concentration camps from the beginning of the war. Some had been undertaken on behalf of the SS or the Wehrmacht; while others were the initiative of scientists themselves from civil research institutions. In these experiments, the physicians essentially treated their test subjects as animals, who, for research purposes, were infected with dangerous diseases or operatively mutilated, and the event of tests taking a lethal course was routinely taken into account. In some cases, the death of the subject was even a planned part of the experiment.

Initially, test subjects were chosen exclusively from among grown male inmates. However, from the summer of 1942 the Nazis also used female prisoners. As the war persisted, even children were finally misused for medical experiments. That children were first involved in such experiments from the relatively late point of mid-1943, allows the presumption that the concentration camp experiments on children were the apex of morally uninhibited research in the Third Reich. Yet the selection of the groups of persons misused for experiments in the individual phases of the war did not follow any linear development leading from men to women to children. To trace the reasons for the experiments on children, it is therefore worthwhile to investigate how the test subjects were selected and what interests were affected.

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Raphael Toledano (Struthof Museum, Schirmeck):

Deliveries of Dead Bodies at the Anatomical Institute of the *Reichsuniversität Strassburg* between 1941 and 1944

Between November 1941 and November 1944, the Anatomical Institute of the Reichsuniversität Strassburg was headed by the anatomist August Hirt. As a member of the NSDAP, the SS and the Ahnenerbe, August Hirt was involved in various medical experiments made in the KL Natzweiler (Lost experiments) and in the Struthof gas chamber (Jewish skeleton collection). Although his project of Jewish skeleton collection

is well known and has been the object of many publications, the delivery of the dead bodies to his Institute in the Third Reich has never been studied. After the war, the French military justice was only interested by the Jewish bodies that were found during the Liberation. We investigated the origins of the dead bodies received by the Anatomical Institute of Strasbourg under National-socialism and tried to find out how August Hirt and his assistants processed to get the corpses. Our main issue was the absence of the body register (Leichenbuch) for this period. A French assistant of August Hirt named Henri Henrypierre had given it to French Army at the end of war but we were not able to find it in the archives. Nevertheless, we were able to use some new material found in the French, German and Russian archives and the manuscript of Henrypierre's memories who gave new indications. Evidence were found concerning soviet prisoners of war whose bodies came from two military hospitals for prisoners of war (Lazarettabteilung für Kriegsgefangene) in Alsace (Strasbourg and Mutzig). We also found evidence of bodies of executed persons received, as French resistant and criminal shot. Among this period, we could identify names of 234 delivered bodies, in addition to the 86 Jews already identified by H.J. Lang. The purpose of these bodies is discussed, as well as their faith. This investigation doesn't end the research upon this subject and some questions still remain, such as what happened to the anatomical and histological preparations made with these corpses after the war.

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Anne Sudrow (Centre for Contemporary History, Potsdam):

### Industrial Research in Concentration Camps – an Understudied Field of Nazi Human Experiments

Technological experiments in concentration camps are a class of human experiments in the history of coerced research in Nazi Germany that has hardly been studied. A predominant method in this field was the ‚wear trial‘ of German consumer goods with inmates of the concentration camp of Sachsenhausen as involuntary human product testers. The experiments were organized and instigated by scientists with a background in material science and material testing and managers of German consumer good firms.

The paper gives an overview over the range of experiments conducted in this field between 1933 and 1945. It asks for the scientific traditions and economic rationale

behind such trials and for the reasons that led the scientists to use concentration camp inmates for this research. It compares these findings with similar testing procedures in firms and scientific institutions in Germany and other countries at the time and asks what the firms achieved through these human experiments. Using a quantitative sample of SS commitments of concentration camp inmates to the ‚shoe testing unit‘ the paper will also address the difficult problem of the death rate of inmates on the ‚shoe testing track‘ in Sachsenhausen concentration camp.

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Vladimir Solonari (University of Central Florida):

Fighting Typhus – Killing Jews: On Relations between Modern Science and Mass Murder in Romania-occupied South Ukraine, 1941-1942

This paper explores the connection between the death of tens of thousands of Jews from typhus in the camps and ghettos of Transnistria, and Romanian policy towards Jews in the region. More specifically, the paper focuses on the issue of intentionality: did Romanian officials purposefully use typhus epidemic as a way to “peacefully” eliminate racial enemies of the Romanian nation or was this calamity an unintended result of incompetence, poor planning, and negligence on the part of Romanian officials?

On the basis of a great variety of sources, the paper concludes that the intentionality hypothesis is not supported by hard evidence. However, catastrophic mortality rates stemmed not only from incompetence and negligence but also from deliberately defined priorities which favoured protection of the army and the abandonment of Jewish inmates to their own fate. Anti-Semitic ideology also contributed to the unfolding of this dynamic: the Jews were seen as members of an irredeemable enemy nation, and so saving their lives was to many an official and doctor a non-issue. The Romanian medical establishment was divided among itself: while its leaders fully subscribed to the view that the well-being of the troops and administration was their sole responsibility in the region, individual doctors did help the suffering Jewish inmates.

Paul Shapiro (USHMM, Washington DC):

Vapniarka: A Special Camp with Special Sources

Romanian authorities established a camp for Jews at Vapniarka in Romanian-administered southwestern Ukraine, a territory between the Dniester and Bug rivers that the Romanians called Transnistria. The camp experienced two distinct phases, during the second of which communist internees were fed a diet of fodder peas that resulted in paralysis of extremities and a variety of other physical ailments. The paper provides a brief history of the camp and reviews the multiple sources regarding Vapniarka, the efforts of medical professionals among the prisoners to cope with the advance of disease among the internees, the manner in which survivors of various backgrounds described their experiences in early postwar years, and the long-term consequences of the disease (Lathyrism) as reflected in postwar claims for compensation assembled en masse by the government of the Socialist Republic of Romania in the early 1970s.

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Alexandra Laignel-Lavastine (Paris):

Mass Killings of Jews in Ukraine (1941-1944): the Involvement of the Local Population as a kind of Nazi Human Experiment

With the quite recent opening of the Soviet Archives, historians know much more now about the ways the Jewish Genocide in Ukraine was carried out between 1941 and 1944. However, to assassinate some 1.5 million Jews on the spot, mostly women, children and old people, was not such an easy task for the Nazis. My presentation will explore and underline the extent to which these mass killings would have been impossible to carry out without the very active participation of the surrounding Ukrainian population, especially in the countryside where we can talk about a very real «Alliance for murder». As we know from German reports, it was also a key issue for Hitler's army, who knew that the «success» of the genocide would entirely depend on the frequency and intensity of civilian collaboration. My point here will be to address the following question: how far can this specific and very central issue — i.e. how far

could the killing units rely on substantial assistance from the locals? — be considered as a kind of broad Nazi human experiment?

My analysis is based on archival documents, but also on a number of interviews (about 150) conducted on the ground with local Ukrainian involved-bystanders, most of them teenagers in 1941-1942. In this matter, my own collection of interviews and testimonies has provided me with a vision shared by the historian Omer Bartov, and one in opposition to the perspective of Father Desbois (a catholic priest who gathers testimonies in Ukraine). I suggest that in the Podolian villages where I investigated, the vast majority of the ordinary inhabitants obviously participated in the genocide and hardly anyone was a passive bystander. In a way, I will emphasize why and how the results were above Nazi's most optimistic expectations: the very great majority of the locals immediately understood there were no limits on what they could do to their Jewish neighbours and thus behaved accordingly.

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Maike Rotzoll (University of Heidelberg) and Gerrit Hohendorf (Technical University of Munich):

Medical Research on the Victims of "Euthanasia" – Carl Schneider and the Heidelberg "Research Children" 1942-1945

It is common knowledge that neuropathological and pathological-anatomical research was conducted on the body parts of the victims of National Socialist "euthanasia" after they had been murdered. The victims' brains in particular were to be used for research purposes. It is less well known that the operational headquarters for the organization of the "euthanasia" program at number 4 Tiergarten street maintained two research departments, one in Brandenburg-Görden and one in Heidelberg, in which children, youths, and young adults were subjected to a comprehensive clinical, psychological and hereditary examination program before the decision was made whether or not to murder them. This paper deals with the Heidelberg-Wiesloch research department under the direction of Heidelberg professor of psychiatry Carl Schneider. He wanted to examine the "problems of idiocy and epilepsy" and take advantage of the opportunity to correlate clinical, radiographical and psychological testing research results selectively and quickly with the findings from the post-mortem examination of the brain. Of the 52

children and youths examined in the Heidelberg hospital, 21 were murdered in the paediatric department of the Eichberg state asylum so that their brains could be examined in Heidelberg. A memorial in front of the Heidelberg hospital since 1998 reminds us of the murdered children and youth.

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Hans-Walter Schmuhl (University of Bielefeld):

Ernst Rüdin's Recommendations on Psychiatric-neurological Research during the War (1942)

In October 1942 Dr. Ernst Rüdin, in his role as chairman of the Society of German Neurologists and Psychiatrists, drafted for the "Reich health leadership" a 17-point plan of sponsorship for psychiatric and neurological research during the war. The plan, which was formulated mainly by Rüdin, links psychiatric genetics, therapy, practical racial hygiene, sterilization and "euthanasia", which were regarded as complementary elements within a comprehensive system. The document allows insight into the world of ideas in which the doctors and scientists involved in "euthanasia" lived.

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Herwig Czech (University of Vienna):

Beyond Spiegelgrund and Berkaitit: Human Experimentation and Coerced Research at Vienna University, 1939 to 1945

To date, the only concerted effort to shed light on unethical research practices at Vienna's Medical Faculty during National Socialism was a research project initiated by the university in 1997. The project was prompted by the publicly voiced concern that the anatomist and former dean, Eduard Pernkopf, had used body parts of Nazi victims to create his famous topographical atlas. Although the commissioned report contained detailed studies of the use of victims' body parts at various university clinics and departments during and after the war, it was never published and the affair was quickly forgotten by the public. Furthermore, the mandate of the commission was limited to the question of the (mis-)use of human remains, so that the broader question of human experiments and coerced research was never properly addressed. Regarding

other instances of unethical research practices documented in the literature, the involvement of Hans Eppinger and Wilhelm Beiglböck in the seawater experiments in Dachau is the most important example. Also known are the tuberculosis experiments on mentally handicapped children carried out at the Pediatric University Clinic. In my paper, I will give an overview of the current state of research, including recent findings on hitherto unknown experiments at various university clinics on methods of shock treatment, hypothermia, and others.

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Kamila Uzarczyk (Medical University of Wrocław):

“Der Kinderfachabteilung vorzuschlagen”: Psychological Examination of Children at the Jugendpsychiatrische Klinik Loben

The psychological evaluation of children reported by various care institutions, orphanages and psychiatric clinics constituted an important field of investigation among numerous Nazi medical research projects. Depending on the results of these coercive examinations, children could be transferred either to the children’s euthanasia’s “special psychiatric care units” (Kinderfachabteilungen), correctional institutions or juvenile reform schools, or recommended for NS-Jugendheimstätten or family care.

The Jugendpsychiatrische Klinik Loben was actively involved in the psychiatric examination of children from various Upper Silesian institutions. Doctor Elisabeth Hecker and her assistant physicians, mainly Hildegard Stanjek and Beate Sandri-Dawid, systematically gave expert opinions on children – many of them transferred from orphanages – and took decisions regarding further “distribution” of the patients. Diagnostic procedures, such as brain X-rays, were used to verify the hereditary character of the observed disabilities. Children diagnosed as “unable to learn” were subjected to poisoning with luminal and provided material for post mortem neuropathological research, conducted at the Neurological Institute in Wrocław. Similar projects were carried out in other provinces of the country as part of erbiologische Bestandsaufnahme. In Upper Silesia, however, due to a large proportion of Polish population, additional factors played a role in the process of selection and evaluation, and in the relocation of children in various institutions.

In my paper, I will focus on the psychiatric-psychological evaluation of the children admitted to the Jugendpsychiatrische Klinik Loben. I will analyse examples of medical reports containing information on family background, intelligence tests and diagnostic methods used in the course of observation of the children who were sent to the killing station Abteilung B, and those who were recommended for treatment at the Jugendpsychiatrische Klinik or for further observation at the reform school in Bergstadt. I will also present a few examples of psychological tests and medical expertises of children considered as suitable for Lebensborn, in order to account for the full array of possible outcomes of these examinations.

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Margit Berner (Natural History Museum, Vienna):

#### A Racial Study of Jewish Families in Tarnow, 1942

In 1942 the Austrian anthropologists Dora Maria Kahlich from the University of Vienna, and Elfriede Flietmann from the "Institut für Deutsche Ostarbeit" in Krakow (IDO), carried out anthropological studies of Jews in Tarnow, Poland. After the war a collection of photographs, fingerprints and measurement sheets produced by this study came into the Museum of Natural History in Vienna.

A project began which cross-linked the collection of records housed in the Natural History Museum in Vienna and in the National Anthropological Archives in Washington, from which a record of names and related photographs for further biographical studies was reconstructed. Through the survivors in contact with the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum two survivors of the survey had been found and contacted. Based on this investigation this paper will address the anthropological studies of persons who were not free volunteers which were carried out under National Socialism.

Gabriele Czarnowski (Medical University, Graz):

Fetography: A National Socialist Medical Crime on Pregnant Forced Labourers and the International Research Context (ca. 1930-1950)

Contrary to some other German and Austrian university hospitals the Graz University women's hospital not only did not reject the admission of forced labourers for abortions, even in very advanced stages of pregnancy, but also subjected these women and their fetuses to additional radiological, physiological, and surgical experiments.

By describing and discussing these experiments - focussing principally on fetography - the paper will make three specific contributions to the history of human experimentation under National Socialism:

- That the experiments took place not in the concentration camp setting, but within the context of the daily routine of a university women's hospital.
- That the perpetrator began experimentation in the early 1930s before the National Socialist seizure of power.
- That the perpetrator placed his experiments in the context of the international scientific community.

Fetography more generally remains a little-studied phase or technology in the history of depictions of the unborn child, located between Samuel Thomas Soemmering's first anatomical representations in 1799 and the invention of ultrasound imaging of the pregnant womb in the 1960s. This paper will examine the similarities and differences which can be found in an analysis of the Graz experiments on pregnant forced labourers, and contemporary international research in this field.

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Rakefet Zalashik (Ben-Gurion University, Beer Sheva):

The Testimonies of Israeli Victims/Survivors: Specific Characteristics and Historical Values

A fact is an event under description. After using the survivor testimonies of victims of Nazi human experimentation to build a database, historians should consider what else

can be done with this material. The paper aims to offer some reflections on the testimonies provided by survivors of Nazi human experiments to Yad Vashem. I will try to suggest answers to questions such as: 'how can we deal with these testimonies from ethical and aesthetic points of view?' and 'can we narrate these testimonies and if so, how?' etc.

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Marius Turda (Oxford Brookes University):

### The Bond of Complicity: Reading Miklós Nyiszli's Memoirs

In this paper I focus on the importance of 1) reading problematic texts such as memoirs of inmate doctors in Nazi concentration camps; and 2) relating these memoirs to their corresponding “epistemology of testimony.” (Verónica Tozzi). Memoirs are at once narratives — a text that narrates the author’s experience — and testimonies — in the sense of serving as witness to that experience. There is an additional difficulty with some of these memoirs, namely their authors’ implicit complicity in unethical medical research. To address this issue, I consider the memoirs of a Jewish inmate doctor, who worked for Joseph Mengele in Auschwitz: Miklós Nyiszli’s *Auschwitz: A Doctor’s Eyewitness Account* (first published in 1946). I want to unpack Nyiszli’s memoirs and thus establish their multiple textual components, their “performative” quality (Quentin Skinner, *Visions of Politics*, vol. 1) as a historical document. This is an attempt to reveal the complexities, structures and problems characterising Nyiszli’s experience as Jewish physician in Auschwitz. I argue, in conclusion, that Nyiszli did gain a “deeper meaning” from his experience as a forensic pathologist working for Mengele at Auschwitz. In addition to providing invaluable sources about Nazi medical experiments, Nyiszli’s memoirs can help us understand wider truths about the “bond of complicity” that, according to Primo Levi, existed between perpetrators and victims in a concentration camp.

Informed Testimonies: Medical Experiments in Nazi Concentration Camps In the Reports of Physicians-Prisoners from Czechoslovakia, 1945–1989

Hundreds of victims of Nazi medical experiments from former Czechoslovakia have given their testimonies in connection with compensation proceedings in the 1960s and 1970s. In contrast, relatively few witness reports by physicians who were imprisoned in the Nazi camps were published after the war. The aim of this contribution is to summarise their main characteristics and points and to set them in a proper context. Special attention is paid to connections with the IMT (F. Bláha) and to the limited possibilities of investigation which the Czechoslovak authorities had to deal with in the post-war period and during the Cold War. Finally, the contribution also describes an overlooked group of SS-physicians from Sudetenland who worked in the camps and some of whom have also participated in carrying out the medical experiments.

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Christian Bonah (University Strasbourg, Strasbourg) and Florian Schmaltz (MPIWG, Berlin):

From Witness to Inditee : Eugen Haagen and his Auditions from the Nuremberg Military Tribunal (1947) to the Struthof Medical trials (1952/1954)

The Struthof war crimes trials, named after the location of the only Nazi concentration camp on French soil in Alsace, also identified by the occupiers as the Natzweiler camp, were held between 1952 and 1954, respectively five to seven years after the US Nuremberg Military Tribunal (NMT). One of the SMT inditees was professor of hygiene, bacteriology and virology Eugen Haagen (1898-1972). With his close collaborator Hellmut Erich Gräfe and his technical assistant Brigitte Crodell, Haagen pursued according to Raphael Toledano an ambitious research program in Strasbourg on yellow fever (1941-43) typhus (1943-44), influenza (1943-44), epidemic hepatitis (1944), sulfonamides (1944) and penicillin (1944).

After the French Military Tribunal at Metz had issued an arrest warrant against Haagen, he was arrested and released several times. While awaiting his trial, Haagen was transferred to Nuremberg in May 1947 where he served between June 17 and June 20 as a defense witness in the Nuremberg doctors' trial. No other witness had been

interrogated on so many days. On August 15, Haagen was transferred back to France to be detained in Metz until his trial in 1952. He remained imprisoned for eight years until his final conviction in Lyon in 1954 and was granted amnesty and released in September 1955. The presentation will propose a close reading of Haagen's testimonies and defense strategies between 1947 and 1954.

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Gabriele Moser (University of Heidelberg):

Ordinary Ethics: The Practice of X-Ray-/Radium-Sterilization in Nazi Germany and Associated Medical Scientific Research

Although a wide range of historical research has been conducted into the Nazi sterilization law and on its victims, the use of X-rays and radium in order to produce infertility has received only a little attention so far. When the 'Law for the Prevention of Offspring with Hereditary Diseases' (Gesetz zur Verhütung erbkranken Nachwuchses) was approved on 14 July 1933, surgical intervention seemed the only known way of performing sterilization in men and women. Long stays in hospital, the difficulty of the operation on women and high mortality rates among the patients operated upon, led to discussions not only among Nazi politicians, who feared for the acceptance of the sterilization law, but also among medical practitioners and medical scientists. On 25 February 1936 the 5th enactment for the performance of the sterilization law was released by the Reichsministers of Interior and of Justice. From this date sterilization by ionizing radiation (X-Ray and Radium) was introduced as an alternative to surgical intervention. Approximately 7,000 women fell victim to this procedure which was not only sterilizing, but in fact castrating.

The medical scientific community, especially physicians specializing in gynaecology and in radiology, played a quite active part in modifying the initial regulations of the law, and they also accompanied the course of practice with scientific studies during the following years. Besides some medical theses, which have been produced by the physicians involved and have only been completed after the end of World War II, there also exists a survey about the practice of sterilization in about 90 medical institutions in Nazi Germany. These findings provide not only a glance at everyday medical practice in respect of national socialist eugenics, they also allow an insight into the field of action of physicians during this period. Finally I want to discuss the problem of medical ethical guidelines which become modified within a generalized system of shifting ethical baselines, at the latest with the German invasion of the Soviet Union in 1941, within which a comprehensive erosion of humanitarian positions is recognizable.

Volker Roelcke (University of Giessen):

Regulating Human Subjects Research: Scope, Limitations, and post-WW II Negotiations on the Research Guidelines/ Reichsrichtlinien of 1931

At the Nuremberg Medical Trial and in its immediate context, there were contradicting references to the German ethical guidelines on human subject research (Reichsrichtlinien) dating back to the Weimar Republic (1931): On the one hand, there was the assumption e.g. by British scientists that German researchers in general had kept to these rules and thus had applied the principle of informed consent in their activities; on the other hand, the guidelines were seen as an ethical “benchmark” which had notoriously been disregarded by many medical researchers up to 1945.

The presentation will attempt a first evaluation of the actual relevance which the Reichsrichtlinien had during the Nazi period; it will then look at the references to these rules in the context of the post-war trials; and finally it will focus on discussions in the late 1940s amongst German scientists which – as a corollary of the discussions at the trials – aimed at weakening these rather strict rules of human subject research.