



PRELIMINARY PROGRAM

INTERNATIONAL FORUM ON HOLOCAUST MEMORY AND LEARNING IN AN AGE OF MANIPULATED INFORMATION:

MARKING THE 80TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE LIBERATION OF AUSCHWITZ

January 28-29, 2025 | Krakow, Poland

ul. Reymonta 4 30-059, Kraków, Poland

Please note that this preliminary program is subject to change.

The final program will be published in early January.

January 28, 2025

9h00-9h30

Welcoming Messages - Co-Chairs



Dr Katarzyna du Vall - assistant professor at the Institute of Political Sciences and International Relations of the Jagiellonian University Jagiellonian University, Poland

Attorney at law, Doctor of Law, graduate in law (M.A.) and political science (M.A.). She completed her doctoral studies at the Centre for Holocaust Studies of the Jagiellonian University. Dr. du Vall teaches intellectual property law, media law and issues related to freedom of speech. Her research interests include genocide denial, promotion of totalitarianisms, criminal and civil protection of the reputation.



Dr Jack Jedwab - CEO & President of the Metropolis Institute and the Association of Canadian studies, Canada

He is the President of the Association for Canadian Studies (ACS) and the Metropolis Institute, which oversees Canada's largest conference on immigration and integration

January 27th marks 80 years since the liberation of the Auschwitz death camp. Ceremonies will be held in several countries to honor the remaining survivors, remember the six million Jews that were murdered and the countless other victims of what is widely regarded as the 20th century's most horrific crime.

In several countries, significant initiatives have been launched to increase awareness about the Holocaust through mandatory school programs, museum expansion and support for film and literature. Such initiatives reflect the strong commitment to ensure that the critical lessons of the Holocaust are not lost on future generations. Yet this goal is facing the continued threat from ongoing denial, distortion, dilution and the growing spread of disinformation about the Holocaust. Another challenge is evolving interpretation of Holocaust history and what it implies for contemporary lessons in rife with tests to our moral compass.

It is with this in mind that I'm pleased to co-Chair this International Forum on "Holocaust Memory and Learning in an Age of Manipulated Information." Over the course of program, the aim is to generate ideas for addressing the evolving challenges for the promotion of knowledge about the Holocaust. I

want to thank my co-Chair Professor Katarzyna Duvall and Jagiellonian University for hosting the Forum. Thanks as well to all the speakers that have agreed to participate. Finally I wish to express my appreciation to the organizing team from the Metropolis Institute led by Miriam Taylor and Raissa Sintcheu.

9h30-10h00

Q and A with Omar Sharif jr



Omar Sharif Jr - Descendant of Auschwitz survivor, Canadian actor and author

Born to a Jewish mother and Muslim father, Omar Sharif Jr. was given his name by his iconic grandfather. With maternal grandparents who were Holocaust survivors and paternal grandparents who were famous actors, Omar was assured a colorful life. As a child, he shuttled frequently between his birthplace of Montreal, Paris and Cairo. Omar obtained both a Master's Degree in Comparative Politics from The London School of Economics and a degree in Performing Arts from The Lee Strasberg Institute by the age of 26.

10h00-10h30

Opening Presentation

Comparing Public Opinion on Knowledge About the Holocaust in Canada and the United States

Some one in six North Americans between the ages of 18 and 24 believe that the Holocaust is exaggerated. The view that the Holocaust is exaggerated presents an important challenge for contemporary educators and policy-makers. This session will examine the extent to which such views are held, the sources of information supporting such views and what underlies them.

- **Jack Jedwab** - President and CEO of ACS-Metropolis Institute, Canada

Bloc A : 10h40 PM - 12:10 PM

Teaching the Holocaust and other Genocides in a Comparative and Interdisciplinary approach

The pedagogical guide *Studying Genocide* proposes a comparative analysis and an interdisciplinary approach, combining history, sociology, ethics and literature. To ensure that learning about the Holocaust becomes more relevant for students, they are invited to think critically in an anti-racist outlook that they can apply to the analysis of other historical and social phenomena. In this session, we will present the comparative approach that allows the understanding of the genocidal process, the anti-racist approach we adopt in doing so, and the way it is implemented through the use of literature.

- Moderator: **Sivane Hirsch** - University of Laval, Quebec, Canada
- **Sabrina Moisan** - University of Sherbrooke, Canada
- **Audrey Bélanger** - Université of Laval, Quebec, Canada

What could impactful Holocaust education be in 2025?

The panel discussion, moderated by Kamil Gut & Hila Weisz-Gut from the Auschwitz Jewish Center Foundation, will focus on insights from Jewish heritage tours and educational programs, the impact on participants, and what it means for Poland and its Jewish communities.

We will discuss the particularist and universalist perspectives on teaching about the Holocaust, the impact of contextualization and dialogue, contemporary approaches among Polish educators, and the future implications of the transmission of memory and history. It will be followed by small group discussions that explore different approaches.

- **Moderator: Kamil Gut & Hila Weisz-Gut** - Auschwitz Jewish Center Foundation
- **Helise Lieberman** - Taube Foundation, Poland
- **Marta Jankowska** - Taube Foundation, Poland
- **Katarzyna Suszkiewicz** - Galicja Jewish Museum
- **Aga Kocur Smoleń** - JCC Krakow

Lunch Break: 12:10PM TO 1:30PM

Bloc B : 1:30 PM - 3:00 PM

Scotland as a Model for Teaching and Learning about the Holocaust

The report entitled Education After Auschwitz highlighted Scotland “as a model for future scholarly work in Teaching and Learning about the Holocaust (TLH)” (Pistone et al, 2021:87). Our purpose is to explain and discuss this “model”. Presenters will speak on three aspects of TLH in the classroom: the benefits of a national schools’ programme in TLH, one school’s growing commitment and development of TLH and research findings from teachers on the present challenges of TLH in the changing world. The presentation will include a short school- based film that enhances participants’ understanding of TLH in the Scottish context.

- **Susan Brownlie** - St Andrew’s and St Bride’s High School, South Lanarkshire, Scotland
- **Dr Paula Cowan** - Vision Schools Scotland, University of the West of Scotland
- **Dr Elysha Ramage** - Vision Schools Scotland, University of the West of Scotland

AI and the future of Holocaust memory and learning

In this panel, we will discuss the implications of the rise of artificial intelligence (AI) for the future of Holocaust memory and education. The growing adoption of AI for finding and generating information about the past enables new possibilities, but also risks for learning about the Holocaust. Some of these risks include the loss of trust towards historical facts and amplification of hate speech and denialism. To address these risks, we discuss the new approaches for conceptually and empirically assessing the impact of AI systems on Holocaust memory and education together with strategies for translating these assessments into policy actions.

- **Mykola Makhortykh** - Bern University
- **Victoria Richardson-Walden** - University of Sussex
- **Nathalie Rücker** - Institute for Strategic Dialogue

Bloc C : 3:00 PM - 4:30 PM

The Holocaust in Film and Literature

Panelists will look at the role of film and literature in raising awareness about the Holocaust and how the personalization of survivor stories plays a critical role at a time of generational transition as the second and third generations consider how to preserve and transmit Holocaust history and knowledge.

- Moderator : **Elise Herzig** - JIAS Toronto
- **Melissa Hacker** - Executive Director, The Kindertransport Association, Filmmaker, USA
- **Myer Siemiatycki** - Toronto Metropolitan University, Canada
- **Jamie Michaels** - Filmmaker, Canada

Bloc D : 9:00-10:30 AM

History of Holocaust Denial and Distortion Part 1

This session examines the evolution of Holocaust denial and distortion, their progression toward radicalization, and proposes solutions to counter their impact in the era of social media and artificial intelligence.

- Moderator: **Dr. Nicholas TERRY (The University of Exeter, UK)**
- **Dr. Stephanie SHARE** (The London Centre for the Study of Contemporary Antisemitism, UK and The Comper Center for Contemporary Antisemitism of the University of Haifa, Israel): "Holocaust Denial and Distortion: Understanding, Addressing, and Countering the Threat"
- **Dr. Lev TOPOR** (The Institute for the Study of Global Antisemitism and Policy (ISGAP); The Academic College of Tel Aviv-Yaffo, Israel): "Digital Cloaks of Antisemitism: Analyzing Holocaust Denial in Anonymous Online Spaces"
- **Yfat BARAK-CHENEY** and **Marija LJUBINKOVIC** (World Jewish Congress's Technology and Human Rights Institute): "Machine Learning against Human Harm: The Role of AI in Cases of Holocaust Denial, Distortion and Other Forms of Antisemitism in the Online Sphere"

History of Holocaust Denial and Distortion Part 2

This session examines the intersection of Holocaust denial rhetoric and contemporary research on genocide materiality and necropolitics, while exploring denial and distortion in post-communist contexts, with a particular focus on Poland.

- Moderator: **Dr. Stephanie SHARE**
- **Dr. Nicholas TERRY (The University of Exeter, UK)**: "The Necropolitics of Holocaust Denial: The Pseudo-Forensics of Killing Sites and Camps"
- Dr. hab. **Anna ZAWADZKA** (The Institute of Slavic Studies, Polish Academy of Sciences, Warsaw, Poland): "The Denial and Distortion of Holocaust Memory in Post-Communist Eastern Europe"

10:30 AM - 11:00 AM Closing Remarks

11:30 AM : Departure to the Auschwitz Birkenau Memorial