



## **“Documenting the Holocaust: Testimonies as Historical Evidence”**

The international conference organized within the framework of the European Holocaust Research Infrastructure (EHRI)



The organizers invite submissions for an international conference devoted to Holocaust testimonies produced during the World War II and in the immediate postwar period. The Collection of Holocaust Survivors’ Testimonies held at the Jewish Historical Institute represents one of the earliest systematic efforts to locate and record survivors’ individual experience. It is, however, only one of many such collections. Over the years, various institutions have initiated projects to gather Holocaust survivors’ testimonies and memoirs, creating a rich yet methodologically complex body of sources.

The aim of the conference is to examine these testimonies as historical evidence by exploring their possibilities, limitations, the contexts in which they were produced, and their subsequent uses in scholarship, education, and commemoration. We welcome contributions that critically engage with early Holocaust testimonies and situate them within broader historiographical, methodological, and ethical debates. The conference will devote particular attention to audiovisual testimonies of Holocaust survivors.

We invite also papers that address the specific methodological, interpretive, and ethical challenges posed by video testimony. Contributions may explore the relationship between early written accounts and later recorded narratives, as well as in which retrospective narration shapes survivor testimony over time. Papers may also analyse the role of video testimonies in historical research, museum exhibitions, and public history, and reflect on the ethical considerations involved in their collection, and dissemination.

**Possible topics include (but are not limited to):**

- Collection of Holocaust Survivors' Testimonies of the Jewish Historical Institute Archive: history, scope, and significance
- Testimonies recorded during the war and in the immediate postwar years
- Jewish historical committees and early documentation initiatives
- Testimony as a historical source: methodology and interpretation
- Narrative forms, language, and silence in survivor accounts
- The relationship between memory, trauma, and historical writing
- Comparative perspectives on early Holocaust documentation
- Testimonies and the reconstruction of local histories
- Ethical issues arising from the use of testimonies
- Video testimonies: audiovisual narration, interviewing practices, and historical analysis
- Reflection on new analytical technologies and directions, primarily in the field of computational science.

The conference is intended for historians, archivists, literary scholars, sociologists, anthropologists, and researchers from related disciplines working in Holocaust studies, memory studies, and archival research. Approaches within digital humanities are also welcome.

**Submission guidelines:**

Please submit an **abstract of 300–400 words**, along with a short biographical note (up to 150 words), by **March 31, 2026**. Abstracts should clearly outline the research question, sources, and methodological approach.

Acceptance notifications will be sent by **April 30, 2026**.

**Conference details:**

- **Date:** June 16–17, 2026
- **Location:** The Emanuel Ringelblum Jewish Historical Institute, Warsaw, Poland
- **Language:** English

For submissions and inquiries, please contact [ehri@jhi.pl](mailto:ehri@jhi.pl).

We look forward to your contributions and to a stimulating scholarly exchange on the role of testimonies in documenting and understanding the Holocaust.

## Conference committee

Natalia Aleksion (Harry Rich Professor of Holocaust Studies, University of Florida)

Havi Dreifuss (Yad Vashem)

Barbara Engelking (Polish Center for Holocaust Research IFiS PAN)

Éva Kovács (Wiener Wiesenthal Institut für Holocaust-Studien)

Stephan Naron (Fortunoff Video Archive for Holocaust Testimonies)

Christine Schmidt (The Wiener Holocaust Library)

Zofia Trębacz (The Emanuel Ringelblum Jewish Historical Institute)

The conference is organized by **The Emanuel Ringelblum Jewish Historical Institute**



## In cooperation with



Fortunoff Video Archive  
For Holocaust Testimonies

The Wiener  
Holocaust Library



WIENER WIESENTHAL INSTITUT  
FÜR HOLOCAUST-STUDIEN (WVI)

## Partners



Centrum Badań  
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Ministry of Culture and National Heritage  
Republic of Poland

The organizers will reimburse part of the travel expenses.\*

\*This does not apply to individuals representing member institutions of the EHRI-ERIC network.