Martin-Springer Institute

Global Engagement Through Holocaust Awareness



2020-2021: YEAR IN REVIEW

20th ANNIVERSARY EDITION

LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR

What a year! I will refrain from any laments regarding COVID-19. We have heard it all. The good news is that we are celebrating our 20th Anniversary this year. Doris and Ralph Martin signed the Letter-of-Understanding in 2000, and in fall 2001 the institute began its educational work. Let's celebrate this milestone.

Another cause for celebration is the passing of a mandate to teach about the Holocaust and genocide in Arizona public schools. It was approved at the end of June 2021. Our institute has been involved in supportive work regarding the passing of this bill, especially through a statewide taskforce to assemble educational resources for Arizona teachers (resources can be found on the official Arizona Board of Education website).

Our institute is well positioned to play a leading role in teacher training as we have done for the past 16 years and which we plan to expand with new initiatives. We have already started with a reading group for educators where we discussed two survivor memoirs. In June 2022, we will take a group of Arizona educators on an extensive study tour to Holocaust memorial sites in Poland and Germany.

In the last 12 months, we temporarily replaced in-person gatherings with Zoom events. In five successful conversation series we presented different perspectives from around the world; and our listeners, likewise, tuned in from locations around this country, Europe, Israel, Canada, and South Africa. Each series consisted of four separate speaker events, with experts engaging us in a wide range of topics. You will find more details in this newsletter.

For our 20th Anniversary, we have initiated a special fundraising challenge. We hope to raise \$20,000 for the 18-day European study tour for Arizona educators. Please help us reach this goal of 20K in our 20th year of work.



Bjon Viorlossa

Björn Krondorfer, Regents' Professor Director, Martin-Springer Institute & Endowed Professor of Religious Studies

NORTHERN ARIZONA
UNIVERSITY

Martin-Springer Institute

MESSAGE FROM THE NEW DEAN OF THE COLLEGE OF ARTS AND LETTERS

MSI's work has grown more urgent than ever. Its mission to preserve the knowledge and memory of the Holocaust and other genocides is a necessary barrier against the rising culture of misinformation. Dedicated to education, reconciliation, and dialogue, it gives us a critical roadmap to recognize our shared humanity.

MSI's public-facing orientation has always been ahead of its time, demonstrating why engaged scholarship the public humanities remain critically important. Led by Regents' Professor Björn Krondorfer, MSI leverages the best academic knowledge and makes some of humanity's painful experiences comprehensible and real to new generations of teachers and learners.



Chris Boyer, Dean College of Arts and Letters

People

POSTDOCTORAL FELLOWSHIPS

MSI's second postdoctoral fellow is John Barruzza, who joined us in January of 2021 and will stay with us until December 2021. He is an historian of modern Europe and earned his PhD from Syracuse University. He is currently working on turning his dissertation into a book, *The Good Italian, the Bad German, and the Survivor: Narratives and Counter-Narratives of the Shoah in Italy.* At NAU, he is teaching two courses on the Holocaust.

"After a productive spring I look forward to returning to an eventful semester in the fall. I will be part of a student-faculty research project on an Italian-Jewish painter, presenting my research to the NAU community, and coordinating an on-campus international research symposium titled Holocaust without the Nazis."

John Barruzza, PhD Postdoctoral Fellow, Martin-Springer Institute Department of Comparative Cultural Studies





Asya Darbinyan is our third post-doctoral fellow who will stay with us for the 2021-22 year. She completed her PhD in history at the Strassler Center for Holocaust and Genocide Studies (Clark University), exploring the Russian Empire's responses to the Armenian genocide. Previously, she worked as Deputy Director at the Armenian Genocide Museum-Institute in Yerevan, Armenia. She also conducted comparative research on the Armenian genocide and the Holocaust in Paris, France.

"I am enthused by the opportunity to support, evibrant intellectual environment of the Martin-

engage, and help grow the vibrant intellectual environment of the Martin-Springer Institute and the Department of Comparative Cultural Studies."

Asya Darbinyan, PhD Postdoctoral Fellow, Martin-Springer Institute Department of Comparative Cultural Studies

NEW MSI ADVISORY COUNCIL MEMBER

"By joining the Martin-Springer Institute Advisory Council, I hope to continue the mission of helping communities, especially tribal communities, to 'use insights and lessons of the past to address current conflicts.' Ultimately, I want to help students take responsibility towards creating a just and democratic society by being cognizant of their thoughts, speech, and actions."





20 YEARS: OUR STORY

Doris Martin (née Szpringer) survived the Holocaust. Born in Będzin (Poland), she was 16 when she was deported to a Nazi labor camp. After the war, her whole family reunited, each member having survived under different circumstances. Her family's remarkable story is captured in her book, *Kiss Every Step: A Survivor's Memoir from the Nazi Holocaust.*

After arriving in America, Doris eventually met Ralph in Los Angeles. Ralph had grown up in the heartland of America. From the moment they met, they walked through life together; and together they founded MSI at NAU. The institute started offering public educational programs in the fall of 2001.

Today, our programs engage students and teachers and reach audiences nationally and internationally. MSI's many and diverse programs include public commemorative speakers, events, teacher education. student research projects, public humanities events, and exhibits on Holocaust history and art. Together, they give powerful testimony to necessity of raising awareness to today's social conflicts that continue to harm individuals and communities—locally, nationally, globally.

In the last 20 years, we have moved from a local unit to an internationally recognizable entity. To honor our founders Doris and Ralph, we want the institute to grow stronger in its ability to respond to the pains of the past and to contribute to repairing present injustices.

Our Year in Review



CONVERSATIONS ON ZOOM

During 2020-2021, we offered five Zoom conversation series, each with four expert speakers. Each series introduced different perspectives from around the globe.

"Representing Past Evils and Trauma" focused on Holocaust museums in various national contexts. Directors and curators talked about museums in the United States (Steven Luckert, Washington D.C.), South Africa (Tali Nates, Johannesburg), Poland (Dariusz Stola, Warsaw), and Germany (Thomas Lutz, Berlin).

Jewish and Black scholars engaged issues of injustice in the series "Race, Rights, Resilience." Kate Temoney (Montclair State University) introduced critical issues when comparing the Holocaust and slavery; Susannah Heschel (Dartmouth College) talked about Jewish participation in the civil rights movement; Stephanie Mitchem (University of South Carolina) focused on the intersection of race, religion and human rights; and Susan Neiman (Einstein Forum, Berlin) looked at painful legacies in Germany and the U.S.

"Muslims and the Shoah" attended to the largely ignored experiences of Muslims during the Holocaust: Muslims negotiating colonial regimes and Nazi-occupation in North Africa (Aomar Boum, University of California, Los Angeles); Muslim populations in Europe between collaboration and persecution (David Motadel, London School of Economics); Arab rescuers of Jews (Robert Satloff, Washington Institute of Near East Policy); paradigm shifts when looking at the Shoah through Muslim eyes (Mehnaz Afridi, Manhattan College).

"Unholy Alliance: Nationalism and Christianity" investigated links between rising nationalism within particular branches of Christianity: in Nazi Germany (Victoria Barnett, Washington D.C.), the United States (Sarah Posner, Washington D.C.), Poland (Annamaria Orla-Bukowska, Krakow), and post-Soviet Russia (Katya Tolstaya, Amsterdam).

To honor the 100th anniversary of the massacre in Tulsa, Oklahoma, our last series "Pogroms and Riots" explored similarities between anti-Jewish pogroms in 20th century East Europe (Elissa Bemporad, Queens College, and Jeffrey Kopstein, University of California, Irvine) and anti-Black pogroms in East St. Louis (Charles Lumpkins, Pennsylvaia State University) and Tulsa (Robert Turner, Historic Vernon Chapel A.M.E. Church).

"The conversation on Representing Past Evils meant a great deal to me professionally and personally."

Laura Cohen, Kupferberg Holocaust Center, New York

"Unholy Alliance: What a terrific program." Ron Borkan, Flagstaff resident

"The Muslims and the Shoah speakers were excellent. Thank you for putting these together."

Ismail "Ike" Ozis, Head of Montessori School, Flagstaff

"Wonderful series. Rev. Dr. Turner was a great capstone speaker. Thanks."

Gioia Woods, NAU Professor of Humanities

This year, it was difficult to keep track of an accurate numerical account of our audience.

We offered and participated in numerous virtual programs (zoom/ webinars/reading groups) that reached about 3,300 people.

Also, our digital presence is growing, though it can be hard to track. Our "World War II Photographs" digital exhibit alone attracted 1,400 visitors from 10 different countries.

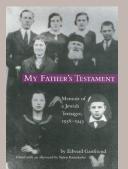
Our Year in Review

PREPARING ARIZONA EDUCATORS

For 16 years we have provided teacher training that has included seminars, workshops, resources, and reading groups for educators from Arizona. In June 2021, the state of Arizona mandated Holocaust education in public schools. With this encouraging news, we plan to expand our teacher training in the coming years.

During the COVID-19 year, we offered Zoom educational opportunities to teachers from across the state. Two "Crash Courses" on Holocaust and Genocide Education were expertly led by Sally Levine, executive director of the Georgia Commission on the Holocaust. Both February and March courses consisted of two evening sessions on best practices and online resources.

Director Björn Krondorfer led two sessions for the 2021 Educators Conference on the Holocaust by the Bureau of Jewish Education, Phoenix. Titled, "I Have Only Five Days: Foundational Building Blocks for Teaching about the Holocaust in Schools," his sessions offered different models and pathways.



MSI also offered two evening reading groups (summer 2021) for Arizona teachers. Krondorfer moderated a lively conversation among the participants about their reading of two survivor memoirs, Doris Martin's *Kiss Every Step* and Edward Gastfriend's *My Father's Testament*.

"Over the years, I have attended workshops and trainings hosted by MSI, which provided me with a stronger understanding of the Holocaust to effectively teach my middle students. Each year, my students leave with knowledge, understanding, and empathy."

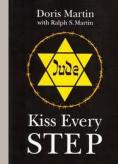
Laura Ballesteros, Valencia Middle School, Tucson

"Reading Edward Gastfriend's My Father's Testament for tonight teachers' reading group has left me in tears. Thank you so much for this unique opportunity to be a part of this group."

Sandy Flayton, Cocopah Middle School, Scottsdale

"Great book club last night. After reading Kiss Every Step, I thought this will be a good book for my class. I finally got Holocaust/Genocide Studies approved at my school. Fall 2021 will be our first class."

Ashley Crose, Saguaro High School



THE PLAGUE: INTERFAITH READING GROUP, FALL 2020



Together with NAU professor Gioia Woods, director Krondorfer moderated an interfaith reading group for religious communities in Flagstaff and Sedona of Albert Camus' novel, *The Plague*. In light of our own pandemic lockdown, the conversation raised issues of morality and spirituality in difficult times, and what it means to remain human when faced with vulnerability and death.

"Thank you so much for a thought-provoking and intellectually stimulating evening." Elliot Greenberg, Sedona

"Always happy to read more and knowing I'll have a discussion with others." Rabbi Alicia Magal, Sedona

Our Year in Review



Each year, our main speaker event takes place on January 27, the International H o I o c a u s t Remembrance Day. Five speakers from Arizona shared their perspective on how this commemoration is important to their work.

We heard from FBI

special agent Daniel Johnson, Diné teacher Shannon Allison, retired law professor David Kader, Holocaust educator Kim Klett, and social justice activist Eddie Chavez Calderon.

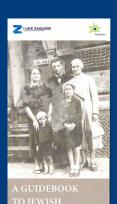
MSI AROUND THE WORLD:

Director Biörn Krondorfer continues to reach out to international audiences through work his reconciliation, conflict, and empathy. In December 2020, he was keynote speaker at the virtual South African Colloquium on "Aesthetics of Cruelty: Representations Violence and Deof humanization in Russia and South Africa." In January



2021, the Mandel Scholion Center at Hebrew University in Jerusalem invited Krondorfer to talk on "Unsettling Empathy." He presented a similar

theme at the 7th Annual International Conference on Genocide as well at Manhattan College, NY. He also teamed up with a group of four international scholars from South Africa, Hungary/Austria and the U.S. for a podcast series on current threats against democracy.



In the summer of 2021, MSI received an official letter from the mayor of Sosnowiec, Poland, thanking us for our "continuous involvement in projects related to the commemoration of the Jewish heritage in Sosnowiec and Zagłębie district." This is in reference to our Bedzin exhibit on display in Sosnowiec, and our continued engagement with people and organizations in the region.

CO-SPONSORED FVFNTS:

In the fall of 2020, MSI supported an event on genocidal violence against the **Uyghur in China**, organized by Mehnaz Afridi, director of the Holocaust, Genocide and Interfaith Education Center at Manhattan College, New York.



ASU's Center on the Future of War invited MSI to co-sponsor a Zoom conversation with David Scheffer on "Preventing Atrocity Crimes in a Violent World." Scheffer is the former U.S. Ambassador at Large for War Crimes.



"Listening to Voices of Color" featured Deborah Harris (Flagstaff's Murdoch Center), Kimberly Duenas ("Jewtina," CA) and MSI director Björn Krondorfer as part of a series on Race and Social Justice organized by the Jewish Community of Sedona and the Verde Valley

NAU's Latin American Studies program invited MSI to co-sponsor an evening with **Chilean folk musician and activist**, Nano Stern: "Revolt and Uncertainty in Chile: Songs and Poetry of Struggle."

Works in Progress

A FAN, A PHOTO, AND THE SPANISH CIVIL WAR



MSI recruited seven NAU students for this student-faculty research project to explore the Spanish

Civil War (1936-39) through a material object: a fan. On the backside of the fan, several American, British, and Canadian volunteers of the International Brigades signed their names.

The project, which began in March of 2021, researches the lives of these men within the historical and political context of Spain at the dawn of World War II. A Phoenix resident, who grew up in East Berlin, received the fan as a gift during his childhood from a relative who had fought in the war. You can check on the progress of our work at martin-springerin.wixsite. com/spanishcivilwar.



GINO PARIN: AN ITALIAN JEWISH ARTIST AND THE HOLOCAUST



This student-faculty research project will explore the life and art of Jewish-Italian artist Gino Parin in Trieste before and during the Holocaust. An assimilated Jew, he was caught-up in the complex political landscape of Italy under Mussolini's fascism and World War II. Parin eventually perished in the concentration camp of Bergen-Belsen. Several of his paintings are under the care of a Sedona

resident; as part of the late Necki Springer collection, they might find a home in a permanent exhibit at a Cottonwood church.

WORLD WAR II PHOTOGRAPHS

Our previous student-faculty research project on a collection of World War II photographs by James Kuykendall has formally come to an end. We continue to receive emails from people interested in the digital exhibit. We are also now in contact with his extended family.

1400 visitors from 10 different countries have visited the digital exhibit (U.S., Canada, Germany, France, China, Australia, England, Israel, Poland, Austria).





ENCOURAGED TO "DREAM BIG"

Given our success in recent years, we have been encouraged to "dream big." We have already embarked on two big dreams:

- With the generous support of Jeanette Garretty Reinhard and Eli Reinhard we have hired three **postdoctoral fellows**: Thomas Just (academic year 2019-20, antisemitism in Poland and Germany); John Barruzza (calendar year 2021, Italy and the Holocaust); and Asya Darbinyan (academic year 2021-22, Russian humanitarian aid and the Armenian genocide).
- With continued fundraising and grant writing efforts, we will be able to take twenty Arizona teachers on an 18-day study tour to Poland and Germany in June 2022.

We have outlined the rough contours of even bigger dreams:

- Holocaust Education 2045: What will Holocaust education look like 100 years after the end of WWII? In cooperation with two other centers, a five-year project would examine and develop new paradigms.
- MSI building: given our everexpanding work and growing international reputation, what would it take to get our own small, state-of-the-art building on NAU campus?

MSI's website can be found at nau.edu/martin-springer

Also search for "Martin-Springer Institute at NAU" on YouTube. We have more than 20 videos posted to date.

Upcoming 2021-2022

FALL 2021

Monday, September 27, 7:00 p.m. NAU Cline Library Assembly Hall

SALVAGED PAGES, Alexandra Zapruder

To honor Doris Martin's survival as a teenager, acclaimed author Zapruder will speak about the diaries of young writers who lived during the Holocaust.

Wednesday, October 20, 7:00 p.m. NAU Liberal Arts Building, room 120





Camille D. Bibles, U.S. Magistrate Judge

Bibles, a Flagstaff resident, was a Senior Trial Attorney in the prosecution of Ratko Mladic at the International Criminal Tribunal of the former Yugoslavia. A career prosecutor from Arizona and now a federal judge, she brings a unique perspective to the challenges of seeking justice in war crimes and crimes against humanity.

Monday, November 15, 7:00 p.m. NAU Liberal Arts Building, room 120 *HOLOCAUST WITHOUT NAZIS*

A public presentation on November 15 will conclude an international research symposium organized by our postdoctoral fellow John Barruzza. In addition to Barruzza, the panel features historians Emanuel-Marius Grec (Germany), Tony Foreman (Nebraska), and Lovro Kralj (Croatia).

SPRING 2022

March 3-6, 2022 NAU campus

SYMPOSIUM ON POST-AUSCHWITZ & POST-GULAG LEGACIES

Twice postponed because of COVID-19, we will host the international symposium, "Post-Auschwitz and Post-Gulag Legacies: Building Blocks for an Ethics and Theology of Responsibility" at NAU in Spring of 2022. We are organizing the symposium together with the Institute for the Academic Study of Eastern Christianity, Vrije Universiteit, Amsterdam.

Please also note the following upcoming events:

- September 9, Liberal Arts Building, room 120: Inaugural lecture of our 2021 postdoctoral fellow John Barruzza on Italy and the Holocaust
- October 5, Liberal Arts Building, room 120: Inaugural lecture of our 2021-22 postdoctoral fellow Asya Darbinyan on the Armenian genocide
- Fall 2021 (details to be announced): Join us for the award-winning documentary *A Reckoning in Boston* by James Rutenbeck on the ongoing struggle for Black residents of Boston, and how some residents became partners and shareholders in making this film.
- January 27, 2022 (details to be announced): International Holocaust Remembrance Day
- March 2022, (details to be announced): International Workshop on Refugees (Stockton University, NJ), in partnership with MSI



IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF SURVIVORS (JUNE 2022)

We are currently raising funds for our 18-day study tour to Poland and Germany for Arizona teachers.

In the Footsteps of Survivors follows the memoirs of two Holocaust survivors, each born in Poland. Doris Martin and Edward Gastfriend both survived forced labor camps and ended up in German Displaced Person camps before arriving in America. By following their different paths (from Krakow to Berlin), the study tour offers an intimate portrait of the calamities that befell Jewish people in Nazi occupied Europe.

Please assist us in reaching our 20th anniversary goal of raising \$20K in support of this unique program.

Checks may be made out and sent to:

Martin-Springer Institute Northern Arizona University P.O. Box 5624 Flagstaff, AZ 86011

Please write "20/20" in the memo line for this special Anniversary Fund.



For programming details go to: facebook.com/MSIatNAU Updates are also available at nau_msi on Instagram

Thank You to Our Donors

July 2020 to June 2021

INDIVIDUALS:

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