

peter novick the holocaust in american life

Peter Novick and The Holocaust in American Life: A Deep Dive into Memory and History

peter novick the holocaust in american life is more than just a phrase; it encapsulates a pivotal work in understanding how the Holocaust has been remembered, represented, and sometimes contested within American society. Novick's seminal book, **The Holocaust in American Life**, published in 1999, challenges readers to think critically about collective memory, national identity, and the politics surrounding the remembrance of one of history's darkest chapters.

In this article, we'll explore the heart of Novick's arguments, the historical context of Holocaust memory in the United States, and why his analysis remains relevant for anyone interested in history, memory studies, or cultural discourse.

Understanding Peter Novick's Approach to Holocaust Memory

Peter Novick, a distinguished historian, approached the topic of the Holocaust not simply as a historical event but as a living narrative shaped by cultural, political, and social forces. **The Holocaust in American Life** is a profound examination of how American society has grappled with the memory of the Holocaust from the immediate aftermath of World War II through the late 20th century.

The Central Thesis of Novick's Work

Novick argues that the Holocaust did not occupy a central place in American public consciousness immediately after the war. Instead, its prominence grew over decades, influenced by various factors including the civil rights movement, the rise of ethnic identity politics, and changing international relations, especially concerning Israel.

He challenges the assumption that the Holocaust was universally recognized as a singularly unique tragedy from the outset. Instead, Novick highlights the shifting nature of Holocaust memory, showing how it became a powerful symbol in American life only after being "discovered" and promoted by certain groups and political agendas.

Memory and Identity: Why It Matters

One key insight from Novick's research is how Holocaust memory intersects with American identity. The way the Holocaust is remembered says as much about Americans as it does about the victims of Nazi

genocide. Novick suggests that the Americanization of the Holocaust involved reshaping the narrative to fit U.S. values and concerns, such as emphasizing lessons about tolerance, human rights, and the dangers of totalitarianism.

This process of memory construction raises important questions: Whose stories are told? How do political and social contexts influence remembrance? And what does this mean for historical accuracy?

The Evolution of Holocaust Memory in the United States

To grasp the significance of Novick's work, it helps to understand the broader trajectory of Holocaust remembrance in America.

Post-War Silence and Limited Awareness

In the years immediately following World War II, the Holocaust was not a dominant topic in American culture. Survivors often kept their experiences private, and public awareness was limited. The focus was largely on rebuilding and moving forward, with less emphasis on reflecting on the specific horrors faced by European Jews.

The Turning Point: 1960s and 1970s

The civil rights movement and the growing awareness of human rights abuses globally helped shift attention towards the Holocaust. This period saw the emergence of Holocaust education, memorials, and public discourse. Novick highlights how the Eichmann trial in 1961 was a watershed moment that brought the Holocaust into the American and global spotlight.

The Holocaust as a Moral Touchstone

By the 1980s and 1990s, the Holocaust had become a central moral reference point in American culture. This was reflected in increased Holocaust education in schools, the establishment of museums, and the framing of the Holocaust as a warning against hatred and prejudice.

Peter Novick critically examines this phase, noting that while increased awareness is positive, the commercialization and politicization of Holocaust memory can sometimes obscure the complexity of historical realities.

Key Themes in “The Holocaust in American Life”

Novick’s book is rich with themes that continue to resonate in discussions about memory and history.

The Politics of Memory

One of Novick’s most provocative arguments is about the politicization of Holocaust remembrance. He points out that different groups have used the Holocaust to advance their own causes—whether to promote Jewish identity, support Israel, or advocate for human rights more broadly.

This politicization can lead to conflicts over historical interpretation and the appropriation of memory for contemporary agendas.

Comparisons with Other Historical Tragedies

Novick also explores how the Holocaust is often contrasted with other atrocities, such as the Armenian Genocide or the African American experience of slavery and segregation. He discusses how the singular status attributed to the Holocaust sometimes overshadows other histories of suffering.

Memory vs. History

A crucial distinction in Novick’s work is between memory—the ways people remember and commemorate—and history—the rigorous study of past events. He cautions that memory can be shaped by present-day concerns, which might lead to distortions or simplifications.

This distinction encourages readers to approach Holocaust remembrance with both empathy and critical thinking.

Why “The Holocaust in American Life” Remains Relevant Today

In an era where historical narratives are frequently debated and contested, Novick’s analysis offers valuable lessons.

Lessons for Education and Public Discourse

Understanding the dynamics behind Holocaust memory helps educators and policymakers craft more nuanced and inclusive approaches to teaching history. It reminds us that memory is not static but evolves with societal changes.

Critical Engagement with Collective Memory

Novick's work invites readers to question easy narratives and recognize the complexity behind how societies remember trauma. This critical engagement is vital in an age of misinformation and polarized viewpoints.

Holocaust Memory and Contemporary Challenges

As issues like Holocaust denial and anti-Semitism persist, reflecting on how Holocaust memory has been constructed can inform strategies to combat hate and promote understanding.

Exploring Further: Related Topics and Resources

For those interested in delving deeper into themes raised by Peter Novick's *The Holocaust in American Life*, the following areas offer rich avenues for exploration:

- **Memory Studies:** Investigate how collective memory functions in different cultures and historical contexts.
- **Holocaust Education:** Examine how curricula around the world approach teaching the Holocaust.
- **Comparative Genocide Studies:** Understand the similarities and differences between the Holocaust and other genocides.
- **American Jewish History:** Explore the experiences and cultural expressions of Jewish communities in the U.S.
- **Historiography:** Study how historians interpret and write about the Holocaust over time.

These topics can provide a broader perspective on the interplay between history, memory, and identity.

Peter Novick's **The Holocaust in American Life** remains a cornerstone text that challenges us to think about not just what happened during the Holocaust, but how societies remember, interpret, and use that history. It's a reminder that memory is a living process—one that shapes and is shaped by the present as much as by the past.

Frequently Asked Questions

Who is Peter Novick, the author of 'The Holocaust in American Life'?

Peter Novick was an American historian and author known for his work on the history of the Holocaust and its representation in American culture, particularly through his influential book 'The Holocaust in American Life.'

What is the main thesis of Peter Novick's 'The Holocaust in American Life'?

The main thesis of Novick's book is that the memory and significance of the Holocaust in America has been shaped by political, cultural, and social factors, often reflecting contemporary American concerns rather than solely historical accuracy.

When was 'The Holocaust in American Life' by Peter Novick published?

'The Holocaust in American Life' was originally published in 1999.

How did Peter Novick's book challenge existing narratives about the Holocaust in the United States?

Novick challenged the prevailing view that Holocaust memory in America was a natural and universally accepted truth, arguing instead that it was contested and politicized, especially in relation to American identity and policy.

What role does Novick attribute to American Jewish communities in shaping Holocaust memory?

Novick argues that American Jewish communities played a significant role in promoting Holocaust memory to foster solidarity, political influence, and to address issues of identity within the broader American society.

How does 'The Holocaust in American Life' address the relationship between the Holocaust and American politics?

The book explores how the Holocaust has been used in American political discourse, including its role in shaping U.S. foreign policy, especially regarding Israel, and debates about civil rights and historical memory.

What criticisms have been made against Novick's 'The Holocaust in American Life'?

Critics have accused Novick of downplaying the uniqueness of the Holocaust, oversimplifying complex memory processes, and being overly cynical about the motives behind Holocaust remembrance.

How has 'The Holocaust in American Life' influenced Holocaust studies and memory culture?

Novick's work has been influential in encouraging critical examination of how the Holocaust is remembered and represented, highlighting the interplay of memory, politics, and identity in shaping historical narratives.

Is 'The Holocaust in American Life' suitable for general readers or more for academic audiences?

While accessible to general readers interested in history and memory studies, the book is primarily aimed at academic audiences, including historians, sociologists, and students studying Holocaust memory and American cultural history.

Additional Resources

Peter Novick's *'The Holocaust in American Life': An Analytical Review*

peter novick the holocaust in american life is a seminal work that delves into the complex relationship between American society and the memory of the Holocaust. Published in 1999, this influential book by historian Peter Novick critically examines how the Holocaust has been perceived, commemorated, and politicized in the United States from the post-World War II era to the late 20th century. Far from being a mere historical recount, Novick's study challenges prevailing narratives and invites readers to reconsider the cultural and political dimensions of Holocaust remembrance in America.

Understanding the Premise of **The Holocaust in American Life**

At the core of Novick's thesis lies the argument that the Holocaust, as a historical event, was initially not the central focus of American collective memory or Jewish identity after World War II. Contrary to widespread assumptions, Novick contends that the Holocaust did not immediately become the dominant theme in American Jewish life or mainstream culture. Instead, it took several decades for the Holocaust to emerge as a defining element in American discourse, influenced by political agendas, social movements, and evolving cultural sensibilities.

Novick's analysis draws heavily on archival research, public opinion surveys, and media representations to trace how the memory of the Holocaust was shaped by various actors, including Jewish organizations, government officials, and the broader public. The book explores how the Holocaust narrative shifted from a relatively marginal event to a central symbol of Jewish suffering and identity, particularly during the 1970s and 1980s.

The Evolution of Holocaust Memory in America

One of the key insights in **The Holocaust in American Life** is the timeline of shifting attitudes towards the Holocaust. Initially, the American Jewish community prioritized other issues such as combating anti-Semitism, supporting Israel, and integrating into American society. Novick illustrates that it was not until the rise of the Soviet Union as a geopolitical rival and the civil rights movement that the Holocaust gained prominence as a moral and political touchstone.

The 1960s and 1970s marked a turning point, when the Holocaust began to be invoked more frequently in public discourse and education. This period saw the establishment of Holocaust memorials, museums, and academic programs, reflecting a growing institutional commitment to remembrance. Novick critically examines this transformation, suggesting that the politicization of Holocaust memory sometimes served broader ideological goals, such as reinforcing American exceptionalism or justifying foreign policy decisions.

The Role of Jewish Identity and Political Context

Novick's book is particularly insightful in dissecting the interplay between Jewish identity and Holocaust remembrance in America. He argues that the Holocaust became a defining event for American Jews not simply because of its historical magnitude but also due to evolving communal needs and external pressures. The rise of Zionism, debates over reparations, and the quest for social acceptance shaped how the Holocaust was remembered and commemorated.

Moreover, Novick highlights the tension between universalizing the Holocaust as a symbol of human rights violations and maintaining its specific Jewish significance. This duality often led to contested

interpretations and competing narratives within both Jewish and non-Jewish communities. The struggle over the meaning of the Holocaust, Novick suggests, reflects broader challenges in how societies confront historical trauma.

Critique of Holocaust Commemoration Practices

A significant portion of Novick's work is dedicated to critiquing the ways in which Holocaust remembrance has been institutionalized in American life. He questions whether the proliferation of memorials, museums, and educational programs truly serves the purpose of historical understanding or if it risks simplifying and commodifying a complex tragedy.

Novick warns against the potential pitfalls of "holocaustization," a process by which the Holocaust becomes a catch-all symbol for suffering that may overshadow other historical atrocities or dilute its specific lessons. He cautions that such memorialization can sometimes foster a form of moral exceptionalism that inhibits critical reflection on contemporary issues.

Comparative Perspectives: The Holocaust in American vs. European Memory

Comparing American Holocaust memory with that of European countries offers a valuable perspective on Novick's arguments. While European nations grapple directly with the legacy of Nazi occupation and collaboration, American society's engagement with the Holocaust has been more mediated and symbolic.

Novick's analysis suggests that the American context, with its unique political landscape and cultural dynamics, has shaped a distinct form of Holocaust remembrance—one that often emphasizes universal themes of justice and human rights over the particularities of Jewish suffering. This contrast illuminates the diverse ways societies process traumatic history and integrate it into national identity.

Impact on Education and Public Discourse

The influence of *The Holocaust in American Life* extends beyond academia into education and public discourse. Novick's critique has prompted educators, policymakers, and community leaders to reconsider how the Holocaust is taught and commemorated in schools and public institutions.

His call for a more nuanced and historically grounded approach encourages a balance between honoring victims and fostering critical engagement with the past. This perspective is especially relevant in an era marked by debates over historical memory, identity politics, and the rise of Holocaust denial and distortion.

Legacy and Continued Relevance

More than two decades after its publication, Peter Novick's **The Holocaust in American Life** remains a pivotal contribution to Holocaust studies and memory politics. Its investigative approach and willingness to challenge orthodoxies have inspired subsequent scholarship and dialogue around the complexities of remembrance.

By illuminating the evolving American relationship with the Holocaust, Novick's work underscores the importance of critically examining how history is remembered and mobilized. It invites ongoing reflection on the responsibilities of memory in shaping ethical and political consciousness.

In sum, **The Holocaust in American Life** offers a rich, multifaceted exploration of one of the most significant historical commemorations in modern society. Its insights continue to resonate for historians, educators, and anyone interested in the intersections of history, memory, and identity.

[Peter Novick The Holocaust In American Life](#)

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peter novick the holocaust in american life: The Holocaust In American Life Peter Novick, 2000-09-20 This "courageous and thought-provoking book" examines how the Holocaust came to hold its unique place in American memory (Foreign Affairs). Prize-winning historian Peter Novick explores in absorbing detail the decisions that moved the Holocaust to the center of American life. He illuminates how Jewish leaders invoked its memory to muster support for Israel, and how politicians in turn used it to score points with Jewish voters. With insight and sensitivity, Novick raises searching questions about these developments, their meaning, and their consequences. Does the Holocaust really teach useful lessons and sensitize us to atrocities, or, by making the Holocaust the measure, does it make lesser crimes seem "not so bad"? Have American Jews, by making the Holocaust the emblematic Jewish experience, given Hitler a posthumous victory, tacitly endorsing his definition of Jews as despised pariahs? What are we to make of the fact that while Americans spend hundreds of millions of dollars for museums recording a European crime, while comparatively little is done to memorialize American slavery? A New York Times Notable Book

peter novick the holocaust in american life: Deutschland und die USA in der internationalen Geschichte des 20. Jahrhunderts Manfred Berg, Philipp Gassert, 2004 Die Geschichtswissenschaft hat sich in den vergangenen Jahrzehnten stark internationalisiert. Kommunikation und Kooperation über Ländergrenzen, nach dem Zweiten Weltkrieg noch die Ausnahme, sind längst zur Routine geworden. Das gilt insbesondere für das deutsch-amerikanische Verhältnis, wo der beispiellose Einfluss, den die Vereinigten Staaten auf die Bundesrepublik ausübten, zur Bildung enger wissenschaftlicher Netzwerke geführt hat. Daher ist es kein Zufall, dass

deutsch-amerikanische Themen in der Internationalen Geschichte eine herausragende Rolle spielen. Dieser Band bietet einen Querschnitt durch das breite Spektrum der methodischen Ansätze, Fragestellungen und Themen, mit denen sich die Forschung auf beiden Seiten des Atlantiks in jüngster Zeit beschäftigt hat. Zugleich stellen einige der 29 Beiträge weiterführende Überlegungen zu Theorie und Methode sowie zur historiographischen Entwicklung der Internationalen Geschichte an. .

peter novick the holocaust in american life: The Holocaust on Trial D. D. Guttenplan, 2002-04-17 The account of a trial in which the very meaning of the Holocaust was put on the stand. D. D. Guttenplan's *The Holocaust on Trial* is a bristling courtroom drama where the meaning of history is questioned. The plaintiff is British author David Irving, one of the world's preeminent military historians whose works are considered essential World War II scholarship and whose biographies of leading Nazi figures have been bestsellers. Irving refuses to admit to Hitler's responsibility in the extermination of European Jewry, replying that the Holocaust as we know it never happened. The defendant is Deborah Lipstadt, who blew the whistle on Irving, calling him one of the most dangerous spokespersons for Holocaust denial. Irving sued for libel, and under English law, it was up to Lipstadt to prove the truth of her writings, and the falseness of Irving's views.

peter novick the holocaust in american life: Der lange Schatten des Nationalsozialismus Reinhard Rürup, 2014-05-26 Einer der renommiertesten deutschen Zeithistoriker schreibt über Geschichte und Nachgeschichte des NS-Regimes. Die langjährigen Erfahrungen des Autors im Umgang mit der Geschichte des Nationalsozialismus bilden die Grundlage dieses Bandes. Reinhard Rürup stellt die historischen Ereignisse und Prozesse, die für ein angemessenes Verständnis des NS-Regimes besonderes Gewicht haben, ebenso präzise wie anschaulich dar: von der »Machtergreifung und der »Bücherverbrennung bis zur Verfolgung und Ermordung der Juden und dem Eroberungs- und Vernichtungskrieg gegen die Sowjetunion. Ebenso widmet sich Rürup der in den letzten Jahren immer stärker diskutierten Frage nach dem Umgang der Deutschen mit der Geschichte von 1945 bis in die unmittelbare Gegenwart. Dabei geht es nicht zuletzt um die Kontroversen über die »Wehrmachtsausstellung, die »Goldhagen-Debatte oder den 8. Mai 1945 als »Tag der Befreiung. Der einleitende Essay zur europäischen Diktaturgeschichte im 20. Jahrhundert und eine abschließende vergleichende Studie über den Zweiten Weltkrieg und den Mord an den Juden in der Geschichtspolitik und Erinnerungskultur erweitern den Blick auf die deutsche Geschichte auf eine internationale Perspektive.

peter novick the holocaust in american life: Katastrophe und Gedächtnis Thomas Klinkert, Günter Oesterle, 2013-10-29 Der Band untersucht den Zusammenhang von Katastrophe und (kulturellem) Gedächtnis anhand von Beispielen aus der deutschsprachigen, französischen, italienischen, englischen, nordamerikanischen, spanischsprachigen und ungarischen Literatur sowie an Filmbeispielen. Die Beiträge versuchen diesen Zusammenhang sowohl theoretisch zu fundieren als auch durch exemplarische Fallanalysen zu illustrieren. Der historische Schwerpunkt der Untersuchungen liegt im 20. und 21. Jahrhundert. Behandelt werden der Erste Weltkrieg, der Zweite Weltkrieg und die Shoah, der Genozid an den Armeniern, der Bürgerkrieg in Jugoslawien und der 11. September 2001. Mit Beiträgen von Bettina Bannasch, Dorothee Birke, Vittoria Borsò, Claudia Brodsky, Michael Butter, Günter Butzer, Angelika Corbineau-Hoffmann, Gesa von Essen, Ursula Hennigfeld, Alexander Honold, Aurelia Kalisky, Thomas Klinkert, Peter Kuon, Monika Neuhofer, Günter Oesterle, Rolf G. Renner, Thomas Schmidt, Silke Segler-Meßner, Marisa Siguan und Lutz Winckler.

peter novick the holocaust in american life: Die Task Force Schweiz - Zweiter Weltkrieg - Band 1 Thomas Borer, 2025-05-02 Ab 1995 erlebt die Schweiz ihre grösste aussenpolitische Krise seit dem Ende des Zweiten Weltkriegs. Dabei geht es um ihr Verhalten während und nach dem Krieg, um nachrichtenlose Vermögen, Nazigold, Raubgut und Flüchtlingspolitik. Jüdische Organisationen und das US-Aussenministerium erheben mit Billigung von Präsident Bill Clinton Forderungen in Milliardenhöhe gegenüber der Eidgenossenschaft, untermauert durch ein präzedenzloses mediales Kesseltreiben, Sanktionsdrohungen und Sammelklagen. Zur Bewältigung

der Krise wird vom Bundesrat die Task Force «Schweiz - Zweiter Weltkrieg» geschaffen, und der junge Diplomat Thomas Borer zu ihrem Leiter ernannt. Wie es ihm und seinem Team erfolgreich gelang, die Interessen der Schweiz zu wahren, zeigt das vorliegende Werk. Daher ist es interessant für alle, die sich für Aussenpolitik oder Krisenmanagement interessieren. Der Autor beschreibt die grösste aussenpolitische Krise der Schweiz seit dem Ende des Zweiten Weltkriegs. In dieser Auseinandersetzung wird er 1996 als Sonderbotschafter und Chef des Krisenstabes beauftragt, die Interessen der Eidgenossenschaft gegenüber der enormen Druckausübung von jüdischen Organisationen, den USA und Israel zu wahren. Mit seinem Team während 30 Monaten mitten im politischen und medialen Sturm stehend, tritt er vor vielen nationalen und internationalen Gremien auf und führt laufend Verhandlungen. Daher kann Borer das Denken und Handeln der damaligen Akteure mit umfangreichen Original-Dokumenten darlegen. Dieses Buch soll Anleitung geben, wie eine derartige internationale Druckausübung abläuft und Hinweise, wie man damit umgehen soll.

peter novick the holocaust in american life: Die USA und ihre Bösen Stefan Butter, 2019-12-10 Spielfilme sind nicht nur ein populäres Unterhaltungsmedium, sie transportieren auch Konzepte und Werte der Gesellschaften, in denen sie produziert werden. Dazu gehören nicht zuletzt Vorstellungen vom »Bösen« - Feindbilder, ohne die keine Kultur auskommt. Die Geschichtswissenschaft hat dem bislang nur wenig Aufmerksamkeit geschenkt. In der ersten umfassenden Studie zu diesem Thema untersucht Stefan Butter den Feindbildwandel in den USA in jenen Jahrzehnten, in denen der Kalte Krieg zu Ende ging und der »Krieg gegen den Terror« begann und damit entscheidende Weichen für die Welt gestellt wurden, in der wir heute leben.

peter novick the holocaust in american life: Universalisierung des Holocaust? Jan Eckel, Claudia Moisel, 2012-03-01 Aneignungen und Funktionalisierungen des Holocaust in den letzten 50 Jahren. Seit den sechziger Jahren des 20. Jahrhunderts wurde die Beschäftigung mit dem Mord an den europäischen Juden weit über Deutschland und Israel hinaus zu einem wichtigen Gegenstand nationaler Geschichtsdebatten. Ereignisse wie der Eichmann-Prozess oder die Schulddebatten der neunziger Jahre lösten internationale Auseinandersetzungen mit dem Thema aus. Schließlich nahmen einzelne Gruppen auf das historische Geschehen Bezug, um einen Opferstatus zu reklamieren oder die internationale Aufmerksamkeit auf aktuelle Verbrechen oder Diskriminierungen zu lenken. Diese Thematisierungen haben dazu geführt, dass der Holocaust am Ende des 20. und Anfang des 21. Jahrhunderts als ein globaler Referenzpunkt erscheint, der von verschiedenen Akteuren mit heterogenen Bedeutungen versehen wird.

peter novick the holocaust in american life: Von Windhuk nach Auschwitz? Jürgen Zimmerer, 2011 Vierzig Jahre vor dem 'Vernichtungskrieg im Osten' und dem Holocaust verübten deutsche Kolonialtruppen in Deutsch-Südwestafrika den ersten Genozid des 20. Jahrhunderts. 'Von Windhuk nach Auschwitz?' fragt nach dem Verhältnis von Kolonialismus und Nationalsozialismus und nimmt Genozid, 'Rassenstaat' und Zwangsarbeitsregime als Ausgangspunkt einer vergleichenden Betrachtung. Der Band ist ein unverzichtbares Dokument einer Debatte um eine postkoloniale Erweiterung der deutschen Geschichte, wie sie innerhalb der deutschen wie der internationalen Geschichtswissenschaft intensiv geführt wird, und erlaubt einen frischen Blick sowohl auf die Geschichte des Kolonialismus wie des 'Dritten Reiches.'--Cover.

peter novick the holocaust in american life: Zwischen Wissenschaft und autobiographischem Projekt: Saul Friedländer und Ruth Klüger Karolin Machtans, 2009-09-04 Der Band untersucht die autobiographischen Projekte von Saul Friedländer und Ruth Klüger im Kontext ihres wissenschaftlichen Werkes. Sowohl Friedländer als auch Klüger betonen in ihren theoretischen Essays, dass die Interpretationen wissenschaftlicher Dokumente niemals losgelöst vom kulturellen und historischen Kontext und dem persönlichen Hintergrund des Interpreten entstehen. Eine definitive, allgemeingültige Deutung historischer und literarischer Dokumente existiert folglich nicht. Dies gilt ebenso und in besonderem Maße für die Annäherung an die persönliche Vergangenheit –kann diese doch immer nur über den Akt autobiographischen Erinnerns (re)konstruiert werden. Trotz ihrer Betonung der Kontextabhängigkeit von Interpretationen, die eine Vielzahl möglicher Deutungen impliziert, gehen jedoch weder Friedländer

noch Klüger so weit, den referentiellen Charakter von Sprache in Frage zu stellen und die Grenze zwischen Fakten und Fiktion aufzulösen. Sowohl ihr autobiographisches als auch ihr wissenschaftliches Werk stehen vielmehr im Spannungsfeld zwischen dem Bewusstsein für die Vorläufigkeit und Subjektivität jeder Interpretation einerseits – und dem Anliegen andererseits, auf eine außerhalb des Textes bestehende Realität zu verweisen. Damit nähern sich Friedländer und Klüger von den Polen ihrer traditionell entgegengesetzten wissenschaftlichen Disziplinen an: der an ‚objektiven‘, nachprüfbaren Fakten orientierten Geschichtswissenschaft – und der Literaturwissenschaft, in deren Mittelpunkt die Auseinandersetzung mit Fiktion steht.

peter novick the holocaust in american life: Die Politik der Schuld Luca Di Blasi, 2025-10-30 Spätestens seit dem 7. Oktober 2023 rücken namhafte kritische Intellektuelle von der lange unumstrittenen, ja als vorbildlich erachteten deutschen Erinnerungspolitik ab. Sie sei »übergeschnappt« (Susan Neiman), von Rechten gekapert worden, habe in letzter Zeit autoritäre und identitär-ausschließende Züge angenommen – eine Entwicklung, die laut Luca Di Blasi keineswegs überraschend ist. Ihm zufolge konnte eine nach 1945 diskreditierte und unhaltbar gewordene Volksgemeinschaft im Namen der Schuld als »Tätervolksgemeinschaft« überwintern. Denn in der Rede von der »deutschen Schuld« waren nicht nur die Weichen für eine progressive, für kollektive Opfer von Diskriminierung und Verfolgung attraktive Identitätspolitik gestellt. Auch eine Alternative für ehemalige Komplizen und Mitwisser auf Täterseite schien auf: die Bewahrung einer kollektiven Identität im Namen der anerkannten Schuld. Diese »negative Identitätspolitik« wurde im Nachkriegsdeutschland wirksam. In Rückgriff auf Sigmund Freud und Ernst Kris sowie auf unterschiedliche Formen des Umgangs mit kollektiver Schuld im Judentum und im Christentum weist Di Blasi Wege aus der gegenwärtigen Schuldpolitik.

peter novick the holocaust in american life: Der Hundertjährige Krieg um Palästina Rashid Khalidi, 2024-05-02 Rashid Khalidi, Nachfolger Edward Saids an der Columbia University und einer der führenden Historiker des Nahen Ostens, stützt sich auf eine Fülle von unerschlossenem Archivmaterial und die Berichte von Generationen seiner Familienmitglieder. Er zeichnet die Geschichte eines hundertjährigen Kolonialkriegs gegen die Palästinenser nach.

peter novick the holocaust in american life: Hannah Arendt and the Limits of Total Domination Michal Aharony, 2015-03-05 Responding to the increasingly influential role of Hannah Arendt's political philosophy in recent years, *Hannah Arendt and the Limits of Total Domination: The Holocaust, Plurality, and Resistance*, critically engages with Arendt's understanding of totalitarianism. According to Arendt, the main goal of totalitarianism was total domination; namely, the virtual eradication of human legality, morality, individuality, and plurality. This attempt, in her view, was most fully realized in the concentration camps, which served as the major laboratories for the regime. While Arendt focused on the perpetrators' logic and drive, Michal Aharony examines the perspectives and experiences of the victims and their ability to resist such an experiment. The first book-length study to juxtapose Arendt's concept of total domination with actual testimonies of Holocaust survivors, this book calls for methodological pluralism and the integration of the voices and narratives of the actors in the construction of political concepts and theoretical systems. To achieve this, Aharony engages with both well-known and non-canonical intellectuals and writers who survived Auschwitz and Buchenwald concentration camps. Additionally, she analyzes the oral testimonies of survivors who are largely unknown, drawing from interviews conducted in Israel and in the U.S., as well as from videotaped interviews from archives around the world. Revealing various manifestations of unarmed resistance in the camps, this study demonstrates the persistence of morality and free agency even under the most extreme and de-humanizing conditions, while cautiously suggesting that absolute domination is never as absolute as it claims or wishes to be. Scholars of political philosophy, political science, history, and Holocaust studies will find this an original and compelling book.

peter novick the holocaust in american life: Vergangenes Unrecht Berthold Unfried, 2014-08-04 Ein kritischer Blick auf die Entschädigungspolitik und ihre globale Dimension. In den letzten Jahrzehnten wurden historische Fragen verstärkt als Agenda der politischen Gegenwart

behandelt. Berthold Unfried untersucht die Bewegung zur Restitution und Entschädigung von in der NS-Zeit entzogenen Vermögenswerten seit Anfang der 1990er Jahre in Mittel- und Osteuropa. Beginnend mit einer Kampagne um unausgezahlte Konten von NS-Opfern bei Schweizer Banken griff die Diskussion bald über den »postsozialistischen Teil Europas hinaus und wurde in der Folge in den meisten europäischen Ländern geführt. Unfried setzt diese europäisch-nordamerikanische Bewegung in den Kontext anderer Entschädigungsbewegungen weltweit. Seine globalgeschichtliche, über Europa hinausgehende Perspektive eröffnet einen breiteren Blickwinkel und ermöglicht dadurch neue Erkenntnisse.

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