

# Rethinking Memory and Knowledge during Times of Crisis

Racism in History and Context

A Virtual Panel Series

presented by the

German Historical Association,

the German Historical Institute

Washington and its

Pacific Regional Office, and the

Institute of European Studies at

University of California, Berkeley

A discussion with

Ana Lucia Araujo, Manuela Bauche, Norbert Frei, and Michael Rothberg

Moderated by Akasemi Newsome and Francisco Bethencourt

September 15, 2020 | 9 AM PDT – 12 Noon EDT – 6 PM CEST

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## Racism in History and Context

**Part I: Rethinking Memory and Knowledge during Times of Crisis: September 15, 2020**

9 AM PDT – 12 Noon EDT – 6 PM CEST [REGISTER HERE](#)

**Part II: October 29, 2020**

The Black Lives Matter protest movement and the accompanying efforts to topple monuments to colonialism and slavery on both sides of the Atlantic have put the issue of racism back on the agenda in the United States, Germany, and beyond. Much of the public debate invokes racism as a shorthand for long and complex histories of inequality and oppression that resurface, rather than originate, in our momentous present.

These current movements and debates have unfolded in tandem with the global coronavirus pandemic. While the current health crisis has intensified and exposed deep-seated social and cultural fractures in modern societies, deadly world-threatening epidemics that recur in waves are a historical phenomenon that have existed throughout history. Some of them, such as the bubonic plague, or Black Death, that emerged and raged in the mid-14<sup>th</sup> century and reappeared regularly up into the early twentieth century, became a permanent part of cultural memory precisely because they initiated revolutionary political and social processes and changed societies significantly.

The German Historical Association (Verband der Historiker und Historikerinnen Deutschlands e.V., VHD), the German Historical Institute Washington with its Pacific Regional Office, and the Institute of European Studies at University of California, Berkeley, have invited scholars from the United States and Europe to explore recent assertions of historical understandings of racism by scrutinizing how current debates construct and represent this history in a two-part virtual panel series this fall. What and who defines the deeper and historically longer-term contexts of the present-day phenomenon? How do the various discourses and memories of racist violence differ in quite diverse national contexts and narratives, and what interdependencies can we discern? How do social and cultural tensions take form under the pressure of condemning racism in moments and historical narratives of crises?

On September 15, the panel will focus on conflicting memory cultures to shed light on narratives and practices of racist inequality which gained particular relevance as a framework for understanding the consequences of the current epidemic. The second panel on October 29 will discuss protest movements, state power, and violence. The panels will be held in English via Zoom. The audience will have the chance to ask questions via chat.

### Racism in History and Context – Part I: Rethinking Memory and Knowledge during Times of Crisis

Akasemi Newsome (University of California, Berkeley) and Francisco Bethencourt (King's College London) will moderate the first panel on September 15 with Ana Lucia Araujo (Howard University, Washington DC), Manuela Bauche (Freie Universität Berlin), Norbert Frei (Universität Jena), and Michael Rothberg (University of California, Los Angeles).

## Panelists



**Ana Lucia Araujo** is a professor of history at Howard University in Washington DC. She has authored seven books, including *Slavery in the Age of Memory: Engaging the Past* (2020), *Reparations for Slavery and the Slave Trade: A Transnational and Comparative History* (2017), and *Shadows of the Slave Past: Heritage, Memory, and Slavery* (2014). In 2017, she joined the International Scientific Committee of the UNESCO Slave Route Project. She also serves on the board of editors of the *American Historical Review* (the journal of the American Historical Association) and the editorial board of the British journal *Slavery and Abolition*. She is a member of the executive board of the Association for the Study of the Worldwide Diaspora (ASWAD) and the editorial review board of the *African Studies Review*.



Foto: Kerstin Kühl

**Manuela Bauche** is a postdoctoral fellow at the Otto Suhr Institute for Political Science at the Freie Universität Berlin and the director of the project “History of Ihnestraße 22,” which aims to develop a concept for remembering the history of the Kaiser Wilhelm Institute for Anthropology, Human Heredity and Eugenics at the historical site of Ihnestraße 22. Her research focuses on the history of colonialism and of the life sciences of the 19th and 20th centuries. Her dissertation, published in 2017, examines the relationships between state rule, racism, classism, and the fight against malaria in Cameroon, German East Africa, and East Frisia around 1900. She also has several years of experience in historical-political education and is one of the initiators of the project DEKOLONIALE Memory Culture in the City, which highlights traces and repercussions of histories of (anti)colonialism in Berlin.



Foto: Louisa Reichstetter

**Norbert Frei** is one of the most distinguished German scholars of the Third Reich. He holds the Chair of Modern and Contemporary History at the Universität Jena and leads the Jena Center 20th Century History. Frei's research work investigates how German society came to terms with Nazism and the Third Reich in the aftermath of World War II. His books include *Vergangenheitspolitik. Die Anfänge der Bundesrepublik und die NS-Vergangenheit* (1996; American edition: *Adenauer's Germany and the Nazi Past. The Politics of Amnesty and Integration*, 2002) and *Der Führerstaat. Nationalsozialistische Herrschaft 1933 bis 1945* (1987, 2013; English edition: *National Socialist Rule in Germany. The Führer State 1933-1945*, 1993). Norbert Frei is the editor of *Die Deutschen und der Nationalsozialismus* (2015 ff).



**Michael Rothberg** is the 1939 Society Samuel Goetz Chair in Holocaust Studies and Professor of English and Comparative Literature at the University of California, Los Angeles. He works in the fields of Holocaust studies, trauma and memory studies, critical theory and cultural studies, postcolonial studies, and contemporary literatures. He is on the editorial board of the journals *Memory Studies* and *Studies in American Jewish Literature*. Rothberg's books include *Traumatic Realism: The Demands of Holocaust Representation* (2000), *Multidirectional Memory: Remembering the Holocaust in the Age of Decolonization* (2009), and *The Implicated Subject: Beyond Victims and Perpetrators* (2019). Currently, Rothberg is completing a book with Yasemin Yildiz that focuses on the intersections between migration, citizenship, and confrontation with National Socialism and the Holocaust in contemporary Germany.

## Moderators

**Akasemi Newsome** is the Associate Director of the Institute of European Studies at the University of California, Berkeley. Her research on the politics of labor, immigration, and comparative racialization addresses topics at the forefront of international and comparative political economy, including rights and global governance, institutions, capitalist development, and social movements. In addition to two co-edited special issues and published articles in the *Journal of European Integration*, *Comparative Labor Law and Policy Journal*, *Perspectives on Europe*, and *PS: Political Science and Politics*, her book manuscript “The Color of Solidarity” examines the conditions for labor union support of immigrant claims-making in Europe. She is also a co-editor (with Marianne Riddervold and Jarle Trondal) of a book on EU Crisis forthcoming.

**Francisco Bethencourt** is the Charles Boxer Chair in the history department at King’s College London. He is a leading historian of the Portuguese-speaking world; he also contributes to Global History. He is the author of *Racisms: From the Crusades to the Twentieth Century* (2013) and *The Inquisition: a Global History, 1478-1834* (2009). His first monograph on the history of magic and witchcraft was published in Portugal and Brazil. He has edited or co-edited more than twenty volumes on many different subjects, particularly the most comprehensive history of the Portuguese expansion in five volumes, but also on inequality, cosmopolitanism, nations, memory, utopia, communication, and correspondence.

## About the organizers

The **German Historical Association** (VHD) is the representative organ of German historical scholarship in the public. The core task of the VHD is to organize the Biennial Convention of German Historians (“Historikertag”) – one of the largest conferences in the humanities in Europe, most recently with more than 4,000 participants. As a lobby group, the VHD is committed to the interests of its members in a variety of ways and, as a professional association, is in constant dialogue with universities, university-related institutions, and society. The VHD currently has about 3,400 members. ([www.historikerverband.de](http://www.historikerverband.de))

The **German Historical Institute Washington** (GHI) is a center for advanced historical research. Working with junior and senior scholars around the world, the GHI facilitates dialogue and scholarly collaboration across national and disciplinary boundaries. The GHI was established in 1987 as an independent non-profit foundation. Since 2002 it has been part of the Max Weber Stiftung – Deutsche Geisteswissenschaftliche Institute im Ausland (Max Weber Foundation – International Humanities Institutes Abroad), funded by the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research, which coordinates an international network of humanities institutes. In 2017, the GHI opened its Pacific Regional Office on the campus of the University of California, Berkeley, to foster cooperation with a myriad of world-class scholars and renowned research institutions on the West Coast, and to extend its public outreach effort there. (<https://www.ghi-dc.org>)

The **Institute of European Studies** (IES) at the University of California, Berkeley, is the leading center for research and education on Europe in the Western United States, and among the top three such organizations in the U.S. Through interdisciplinary public events, research programs, grant opportunities, and community outreach, IES seeks to enrich America's understanding of Europe – its people, developments and challenges – at Berkeley and throughout the state of California.