



**“VWI invites Piera Rossetto“**

**Wednesday, 1 June 2022, 3.00 pm**  
**1010 Vienna, Rabensteig 3, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor**

**Emily GIOIELLI**

**CATAclysm: WATER AND THE HOLOCAUST IN CENTRAL EUROPE, 1933–1945**



“Cataclysm” is a socio-environmental history of the Holocaust in (East) Central Europe. Using water as the connecting thread, this study investigates how hybrid human-ecological processes shaped the practices, experiences, spaces and memories of violence and persecution of European Jews, and how, in turn mass death and persecution shaped the natural world. Using methods and questions from both environmental and social history, “Cataclysm” investigates four themes that were defined by the cooperation and sometimes tension between human initiative and natural processes in Central Europe: the construction of genocidal spaces; forced labor operations in camps and ghettos; mass killing

operations; and resistance and adaptation to the environments of destruction produced by the National Socialist regime and their allies across central, eastern, and southeastern Europe.

**Commented by Piera ROSSETTO**

**Emily Gioielli**, VWI Research Fellow, is an Assistant Teaching Professor of History in the Humanities and Arts Department at Worcester Polytechnic Institute (Massachusetts). Her research focuses on the history of violence and regime change from a transdisciplinary perspective and the history of women, gender, and sexuality in twentieth-century East Central Europe. She holds a PhD from Central European University (Budapest), and her research has been supported by Imre Kertész Kolleg Jena, the American Council of Learned Societies (ACLS), the Rockefeller Archive Center, and the Open Society Archives in Budapest.

**Piera Rossetto** holds a PhD in Jewish Studies from Ca' Foscari University of Venice and in Socio-historical anthropology from EHESS Toulouse. Between 2018 and 2022, she was Hertha Firnberg research fellow and lecturer at the Centre for Jewish Studies, University of Graz with a project on contemporary Jewish migrations from the Middle East and North Africa to Italy (1940s-1970s). Her main research interests includes Jewish communities from the MENA region, post-colonial migrations, research-creation practices.

Cover illustration: The Liberation of Bergen-Belsen Concentration Camp, April 1945,  
[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:The\\_Liberation\\_of\\_Bergen-belsen\\_Concentration\\_Camp,\\_April\\_1945\\_BU3761.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:The_Liberation_of_Bergen-belsen_Concentration_Camp,_April_1945_BU3761.jpg)

Please register at [anmeldung@vwi.ac.at](mailto:anmeldung@vwi.ac.at) by latest 31 May 2022, 12.00 am and bring your ID.

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