

ETHICAL CODE FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ORAL HISTORY COLLECTION PROJECT OF “INTERVIEWS WITH SURVIVORS “

This Ethical Code is based on the Ethical Code of the Czech Oral History Association (Česká asociace orální historie, o. s.), the principles of which they share. It contains fundamental ethical principles and rules of oral history research and the standardized procedure of how to record such interviews and work with the Narrator.

INTRODUCTION

Undertaking the project of the Oral History Collection of “Interviews with Survivors”, the Jewish Museum in Prague record, collect and make available personal stories of Shoah survivors and their descendants. The museum preserves their authentic testimonies for future generations. The objective of the project is to document destinies of Jews during the World War II and their lives after the War and to give personal testimonies on the reality and practices of totalitarian regimes. The Oral History Collection of “Interviews with Survivors” serves for scientific, research and study purposes. It is administered in accordance with the fundamental ethical principles and rules of oral history research. Undertaking the project of the Oral History Collection of “Interviews with Survivors”, the Jewish Museum in Prague applies the oral history method and adheres to the ethics rules and duties not just in relation to the Narrators, but also in relation to the general public. For the purpose of this ethical code, the following terms shall have the meaning respectively set opposite them:

DEFINITION OF TERMS

JMP – the Jewish Museum in Prague.

Oral History – method applied by the contemporary historiography and by other social sciences. It is based on the personal testimony from the Narrator describing his/her experience of historical events of the past.

Oral History Collection of “Interviews with Survivors” – a collection of interviews with Shoah survivors (the so-called first generation) and their descendants (the so-called second generation). This collection has been built in the JMP systematically since 1990. It consists of audio or audio-visual records, transcripts of interviews, edited and Narrator-accepted transcripts of interviews.

Narrator – the survivor telling his/her story.

Interviewer – a JMP employee who implements the oral history project by conducting a structured interview with the Narrator and making an audio or audio-visual record thereof.

Audio or Audio-Visual Record – a record of the interview with the Narrator made by the Interviewer on a voice recorder or on a camera.

Transcript of the Interview – an unedited transcript of the interview.

Edited and Narrator-Accepted Transcript of the Interview – is the wording of the edited transcript of the interview having been checked, corrected, if needed, and subsequently approved by the Narrator as the final wording of the transcript intended for permanent storage or for publication.

Agreement on Participation in the Oral History Project of the Jewish Museum in Prague and on Grant of Rights – an agreement specifying the implementation of the project of the Oral History Collection of “Interviews with Survivors” and specifying the rights of the Narrator and of the JMP

in relation to the particular interview given. Under such Agreement, the Narrator expresses his/her wish about the form in which the Edited and Narrator-Accepted Transcript of the Interview shall be published (whether it shall be published in anonymized form or in full wording).

Registration Form – the form intended for registration of researchers whom the JMP has enabled to consult and to study the Edited and Narrator-Accepted Transcripts of Interviews from the Oral History Collection of “Interviews with Survivors”.

Rules for Study and Use of the Oral History Collection of “Interviews with Survivors” of the Jewish Museum in Prague – JMP’s internal regulations laying down the fundamental rules for consulting and studying the Edited and Narrator-Accepted Transcripts of Interviews from the Oral History Collection of “Interviews with Survivors”.

FUNDAMENTAL ETHICS RULES OF ORAL HISTORY RESEARCH

Implementing the Project, the JMP and the Interviewer shall adhere to the following ethics principles and rules of an oral history research:

1. The JMP and the Interviewer highly appreciate and respect the Narrator’s will to give the interview to the Jewish Museum in Prague. They realize the extreme significance and high sensitivity of the topics of the Shoah and of totalitarian regimes.
2. Interviews are recorded by the JMP at JMP’s own expense.
3. The purpose, the meaning and the objective of the oral history project to which the Narrator is contributing with his/her story shall be disclosed by the Interviewer to the Narrator.
4. The Interviewer shall explain the Narrator’s rights in creation of the new historical source, i.e. especially the Narrator’s rights to have final approval over the text and to anonymization of personal data etc.
5. The Interviewer shall explain to the Narrator how the historical source arising from the interview record will be stored and used in the future within the JMP (the Audio or Audio-Visual Record, the Transcript of the Interview, the Edited and Narrator-Accepted Transcript of the Interview will be stored in the JMP).
6. The record of the interview with the Narrator shall be made by the Interviewer using an audio or audio-visual recorder, mostly on a voice recorder or on a camera.
7. The JMP shall conclude with the Narrator an *Agreement on Participation in the Oral History Project of the Jewish Museum in Prague and on Grant of Rights (hereinafter referred to as “Agreement with the Narrator”)*, specifying the project implementation and the use of the particular interview given. The Agreement contains provisions respecting the Narrator’s wish (if any) to stay in anonymity or to restrict access to the Edited and Narrator-Accepted Transcript of the Interview.
8. Information received by the Interviewer at the interview shall be regarded confidential, unless the Narrator has given his/her permission that it may be made available or published.
9. The Interviewer shall always treat the entrusted sensitive information (concerning especially the religious belief, sexual orientation, social status, age etc.) with utmost respect and responsibility.
10. During the interview with the Narrator, the Interviewer shall go through particular topics and issues of the research plan carefully, but without making the Narrator feel under pressure. The Ethical Code forbids the Interviewer to use any tricks of manipulation, to engage in any arguments and polemics, to ask the Narrator any questions evoking sensation or misinterpretation, or questions defaming the Narrator.
11. The Interviewer has a professional and moral capacity to conduct the interview with the Narrator. The Interviewer has profound knowledge of the Shoah history and of the history

of Jews in the twentieth century as required and keeps educating himself/herself in this regard further on.

12. The JMP shall ensure permanent and safe storage and preservation of Audio- and Audio-Visual Records, of Transcripts of Interviews and of Edited Transcripts of Interviews, preventing from abuse thereof.
13. The JMP makes the Edited and Narrator-Accepted Transcripts of Interviews available to the professional and general public only to the extent as defined by the Agreement with the Narrator.
14. The implementation of the project of the Oral History Collection of “Interviews with Survivors” is carried out in compliance with the Regulation (EU) 2016/679 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 27 April 2016 on the protection of natural persons with regard to the processing of personal data and on the free movement of such data, and repealing Directive 95/46/EC (General Data Protection Regulation) and related general regulations (mainly the Act No. 110/2019 Coll., on Personal Data Protection) and Act No. 89/2012 Coll., the Civil Code.

STANDARDIZED PROCEDURE OF RECORDING INTERVIEWS AND WORKING WITH THE NARRATOR

Contacting the Narrator for the first time

1. The JMP get contacts to suitable Narrators through Jewish communities, by approaching the Narrators on their own, upon recommendations, based on information from periodical press, from literature etc.
2. The JMP approach the suitable persons and explains them the oral history project and the objective thereof.
3. Once the Narrator agrees to participation in the oral history project and to the recording of the interview, it is possible to proceed to implementation of the project.
4. The Narrator usually decides where and when the interview will be given.
5. The interview with the Narrator is conducted and recorded by the Interviewer
6. The Interviewer informs the Narrator about his/her rights (especially about his/her right to have the final approval over the text and to anonymization of personal data).

Transcript of the Interview

1. At the beginning of the record of the interview, the Interviewer notes the following key data: Narrator’s name and surname (and, as the case may be, maiden name, née), place and date of the interview.
2. Then the actual interview is given and recorded on a voice recorder or on a camera.
3. If necessary because of the extent of the interview or e.g. due to the Narrator’s temporary incapacity to carry on the interview, the continuance of the interview is rescheduled to a later date.
4. The Interviewer also records nonverbal communication and emotions of the Narrators (being insecure, being frank, joking, being mistaken etc.), as relevant for comprehensive understanding of the Narrator’s testimony, so that they could be subsequently included in the Transcript of the Interview.
5. The Interviewer provides conclusion of the Agreement on Participation in the Oral History Project of the Jewish Museum in Prague and on Grant of Rights between the Narrator and the JMP.

Transcript, editing and final approval of the interview by the Narrator

1. The audio record of the interview is subsequently converted into a transcript and edited, resulting in the edited transcript of the interview.
2. The edited transcript of the interview is sent to the Narrator for review, for comments and subsequently for final approval in the form of the interview transcript approval.

Storage and use of interviews

1. The JMP store the Audio- or Audio-Visual Record, the Transcript of the Interview and the Edited Transcript of the Interview in the Oral History Collection of “Interviews with Survivors” in the Shoah Documentation Section.
2. What may be made available to researchers by the JMP is solely the Edited and Narrator-Accepted Transcript of the Interview (all other records are used by JMP exclusively for their own needs).
3. The JMP may use the Audio- or Audio-Visual Record and the processed, i.e. the Edited and Narrator-Accepted Transcript of the Interview for scientific, research, public enlightenment, and exhibition purposes within the scope and to the extent as defined by the Narrator in the Agreement on Participation in the Oral History Project of the Jewish Museum in Prague and on Grant of Rights.