



Course Plan:

Wartime/Peacetime: Physics in Nazi-Germany, World War II and After

(Prof. Dr. Elvira Scheich)

Wednesday 14 – 17, Room E3

Winter Semester 2013/2014

The positions of physicists towards the NS-regime featured the full range of conducts and experiences: refugees, collaborators, resistance, followers, survivors. However, with the discovery of nuclear fission and the subsequent efforts to utilize the enormous released energies the physicists left normalcy and became major players in the further development of World War II. During the first part of the course we will study these historical changes through the biographies of the participants. The war ended with the atomic bombs over the Japanese cities Hiroshima and Nagasaki in August 1945. In the second part of the course we will look at how the professional memory of the recent past was constructed. How did physicists see their responsibility and what were the actions that were taken? Which differences became acute during the Cold War and how were they related to the events in the past?

		Session Title	Key Figure (Biography)
1	16.10.	Introduction Part 1: Being a Physicist during National Socialism	
2	23.10.	1933 – Staying or Leaving?	James Franck (Lemmerich 2007)
3	30.10.	1935 – Positions of Power	Johannes Stark
4	6.11.	1938 – Ideological Disputes and Professional Strategies	Werner Heisenberg (Cassidy 1992)
5	13.11.	1939 – Facing Imminent Dangers	Lise Meitner (Sime 1996)
6	20.11.	1940 – Science for a New Weapon	Kurt Diebner
7	27.11.	1942 – Regular Research in Irregular Times	Carl Ramsauer (Hoffmann/Walker 2007)
8	4.12.	Introduction Part 2: Memories & Visions of the Future	Carl Friedrich von Weizsäcker
9	11.12.	1945 - Justifications & Suspicions	Max von Laue (Zeit 2006)
10	18.12.	1949 – Warnings against Nuclear Weapons	Hans Bethe (Schweber 2007)
11	8.1.	1955 - The Scientific Community in the Cold War	Otto Hahn (Sime 2006)
12	15.1.	1957 – Standpoints of Physicists in Germany	Max Born (Greenspan 2005)
13	22.1.	1958 - Physicists in the Public: The Movement against Nuclear Armament	Robert J. Oppenheimer (Cassidy 2009)
14	29.1.	Strategies for the Future: Atoms for Peace	Joseph Rotblat
15	5.2.	Exam	
16	12.2.	Summary	