Holocaust/Shoah

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REMEMBRANCE AND SOLIDARITY

STUDIES IN 20TH CENTURY EUROPEAN HISTORY

EDITED BY
Dan Michman and Matthias Weber

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EDITOR'S PREFACE

Dan Michman and Matthias Weber

The persecution and systematic murder of the Jews throughout Europe and beyond during the National Socialist regime in Germany (1933–45) – now known as the Holocaust or Shoah – is a turning point in history in many ways and has aptly been called a crisis of civilization [*Zivilisationsbruch*]. More than seven decades after the end of the Second World War, study and reflection on this unprecedented crime is still a vital issue for historical learning in Europe and worldwide. The crime was carried out by many perpetrators and affected not only the Jews but also the societies in which they had lived. Historians had and still have an important role to play in this respect, yet they can provide only the descriptive and analytical basis of the event as such. Transmission of the deeper human meanings of the event needs additional channels, among them the testimonies of survivors and various forms of media and art. Given the demise of a generation of witnesses – victims as well as bystanders and perpetrators – one of the main objectives of current teaching initiatives is the dissemination of the memories of victims to the younger generations. Thus, the issue of individual and collective memory has become a core issue of research and education. And in spite of the growing number of studies on memory, much has still to be investigated, such as the Holocaust's different regional and local dimensions.

The Holocaust/Shoah is of great importance in the cultural, educational and academic activities of the European Network Remembrance and Solidarity (ENRS). For instance, in 2011 the ENRS co-produced the educational documentary *Quietly Against the Tide* which dealt with the concentration camps; the Sound in the Silence project has brought youngsters to memorial sites where they have conducted their own artistic and creative endeavours; and the short film *Memento* by the Hungarian author Zoltán Szilágyi Varga was aired in numerous countries on the occasion of Holocaust Memorial Day 2015 (http://www.enrs.eu/january27). The ENRS has also promoted academic research and conferences (such as 'The memory of the Holocaust and Nazi crimes in Europe after 1989 – competition and conflict', Vienna 2014). The current issue of the ENRS periodical *Remembrance and Solidarity. Studies in 20th-century European History* is similarly an expression of this enterprise.

The two terms that are used in the title of this issue – 'Holocaust/Shoah' – need some clarification. *Shoah*, meaning '(unexpected) catastrophe' or 'disaster' and to a lesser extent '*Hurban*' (in Hebrew) or '*Churbn*' (the Yiddish pronunciation of the same word) meaning 'destruction' are the Hebrew words that have been used among the Jewish community over the past seven decades to relate to the fate of the Jews during the Nazi era. It is worth noting that other terms arose during the period itself and immediately after 1945, such as *Tevah Am* [massacre of a nation]*, Cataclysm, Yemei Haza'am* [days of wrath] and *Umkum* [extinction]. Neither the Holocaust or Shoah were coined especially, they were retrieved from existing vocabulary. Shoah was used in Hebrew by the Yishuv, the Jewish community in mandatory Palestine, to describe the escalating persecutions they had been monitoring since 1933; inevitably the meaning of the term became increasingly loaded. In 1945 this turned into *Ha*Shoah, that is the *ultimate* catastrophe.

Holocaust, a Greek word meaning 'an entirely burnt sacrifice' originally relating to pagan sacrifices and used in the Greek version of the Bible to translate the Biblical *korban 'ola* [burnt offering]. It gradually became the principal term to describe the fate of the Jews of the Nazi era in the late 1950s – mainly, though not only, in the English-speaking world, where most Jews lived after the Second World War. The term was not used by Jewish survivors or in Jewish traditional circles; rather, it was rooted in Christian European tradition. It was also used in general secular discourse to describe real or looming large-scale massacres before, during and after the Second World War. The gradual increase in the use of the term Holocaust occurred in the late 1950s, precisely when the cumulative results of the first wave of scholarly research on the perpetrators, primarily carried out by German researchers, concluded that anti-Semitism and anti-Jewish policies had not just been one of the many facets of the Third Reich but was central to its totality; in other words, the 'Jewish' ingredient of the Nazi period was recognized as having special, pivotal importance and that fact raised the quest for some clear epithets. The worldwide attention given to the Eichmann trial in 1961, undoubtedly contributed to that desire, and it brought the Jewish and non-Jewish understandings of the peculiarity of the event together. The French intellectual François Mauriac used the term in his introduction to Elie Wiesel's autobiographic novel *Night* (published in French in 1958 and in English in 1960). Thus, the existing term with its partially sacral connotations was embraced as it was in tune with the current understanding of the event. During the 1970s and the 1980s the use of the terms Holocaust first and

Shoah later proliferated and entered additional languages, mainly as a result of their use in the popular media: the American TV-series 'Holocaust' (1978) and Claude Lanzmann's documentary *Shoah* (1985). We preferred to have both terms in the title in order to combine their common usage.

Since there are a number of relevant periodicals dealing with Holocaust research, the 'Call for Articles' for this current issue, published in February 2015, requested a focus on issues that are particularly relevant to the work of the ENRS. The objective was to obtain current research contributions from different European countries and to address authors with regional and methodologically different approaches. The response to this call has been overwhelming.

The fifteen contributions ultimately selected for publication in this issue were written by an international group of authors either in English or in their native language and then translated into English. They deal with Germany, Italy, Lithuania, Poland, Russia, Romania, Ukraine, Slovakia and Hungary, or Central and Eastern Europe as a whole. The issue is divided into two main parts: I. Articles, which include academic research, and II. Miscellanea, which present both project reports and professional reflections. The Articles are subdivided into two further sections: 'History – Studies on the Period' focuses on the history of oppression and dispossession of Jews as well as the history and course of the murders in different local, regional and national contexts; and 'Memory – Studies on Remembrance' centres on post-1945 memory and remembrance, in which a variety of forms of public and private remembrance and memory preservation are considered, including literature, exhibitions, films and memorials. Special emphasis is placed here on the ways in which the subject was handled during the communist era and the question of comparability of the Holocaust / Shoah with the crimes of Stalinism.

We extend a sincere gratitude to all authors for their dedicated work, to our colleagues who acted as peer reviewers, as well as to the many translators and interpreters. We are indebted to Ewelina Pękala for her coordination at the ENRS Institute and for holding all threads together.

Dan Michman and Matthias Weber
Ramat Gan and Oldenburg, December 2016

I. ARTICLES
History – Studies on the Period

THE NATIONAL SOCIALIST 'NATIONAL COMMUNITY' IN THE 'FOREIGN GERMAN COMMUNITY' THROUGH THE EXAMPLE OF TRANSYLVANIAN SAXONS AND THEIR NATIONAL CHURCH

Dirk Schuster
Institute for Jewish Studies and Religious Studies of the University of Potsdam

ABSTRACT

Attempts have recently been made to newly explain the social processes of change against the backdrop of National Socialism with the analytical concept of 'national community'. However, until now the subjects of the 'foreign German community' and religion hardly attracted any attention within these discussions about national community. This article links these two aspects through the example of the church of Transylvanian Saxons in relation to the 'national community' concept. This is the main focus of an investigation of communicative exclusion from 'others' to create an imagined national community. Such an existing verbal exclusion at least in part explains why the Transylvanian Saxon majority approved the expulsion of its Jewish neighbours and was able to enrich itself with their former property without any moral concern.

Historians and social scientists are still trying to develop a coherent approach to explain dynamics in the Third Reich that led to the mass murder of European Jews. As is now generally known, it was not merely individual perpetrators imbued with National Socialist ideology who engaged in the disenfranchisement and murder of Jews, and it was not a unilateral 'top down' process. The dynamics of exclusion rather ensued – alongside the legal framework – as a process 'from below' that often involved ordinary people (Wildt 2007). Attempts have recently been made with use of the analytical concept of 'national community' to review the social history

of National Socialism against the background of causes of social and cultural change.[1]

While many published studies to date have been fruitful,[2] they miss two key aspects to which attention should be given in any analysis of social transformation processes in the context of National Socialist influence: one is the so-called 'foreign German community', which has virtually received no attention in recent research on national community.[3] The second missing aspect is religion: due to its function within society (Luhmann 1992), it is not viewed separately from other aspects of social developments, but must be necessarily included in a debate on a foreign national community.

The following is set out in the example of the Evangelical (Lutheran) Church of the Augsburg Confession [A.B.] in Romania, the national church of the German-speaking minority of Transylvanian Saxons, which together with previous analyses of national community can explain certain social processes of change within the 'foreign German community' in the 1930s and 1940s. Given the importance of the church for the identity of Saxons, this example shows that religion has a socially relevant significant influence on such processes of change that also extends to national community-based inclusion and exclusion.

The national community inclusion and exclusion mechanism

The 'homogeneous racial character' of people was significant in the Nazi interpretation of national community, which, in relation to the so-called 'foreign German community', meant inclusion and in this context served as an 'instrument to demand the loyalty of citizens of foreign states to the Nazi regime in Germany and its policies, to mark claims beyond own state borders and, finally, to legitimise the Nazi policy of territorial conquest' (Götz 2012, 61 f.). In National Socialist understanding such membership in the national community, in addition to racial or 'location-based' belonging with the 'foreign German community' (Knoch 2013, 39), at the same time signified – in relation to a 'foreign German community' – a commitment to National Socialism because immediate access to the population was not possible. Therefore, a sense of belonging to such a community had to be created through emotion. This was pointed out in 1941 by Andreas Schmidt, the leader of the German minority in Romania: 'there can be no regard for satisfying individualistic efforts in the struggle for a European restructuring'. Rather, each individual must make sacrifices 'because a community order can only be built by disciplined and self-sacrificing members' (Schmidt 1942a, 17). Therefore,

according to Schmidt, only those belong to a 'people' or national community, who vow 'to bear a portion of the duties accorded to such persons'. (Schmidt 1942b, 44).[4] The demand for commitment to the national community in the form of individual sacrifice for its benefit was accompanied by the promise of a future community creating a better life for all (Schmidt 1942b, 45).[5]

Even if Schmidt's appointment as minority leader of the Germans in Romania was prompted less by his personal qualities or merit, but rather by his ties to the SS (Schutzstaffel, Nazi paramilitary organization), and was linked to his fanaticism, it nevertheless caused 'alienation' among the Transylvanian Saxon elite (Traşcă 2006, 275). His statements show that national community was an integral part of the discursive element in the Nazi leadership of the German-speaking minority in Romania.[6]

It was less about expected obedience of the German minority leadership in Romania, since it rather considered itself to be a part of the National Socialist national community. For the Nazis in the Third Reich, all 'Germans' beyond its borders belonged to the national community, whereby the ideology of national community understood as a supranational concept demanded loyalty to Nazi Germany of all 'Germans' outside the Reich (Götz 2005, 60). Such an expression of loyalty is already evident in the varied use of the term, as well as the promotion of its underlying ideology since the 1930s in political debates among Transylvanian Saxons and Banat Swabians (Götz 2005, 76). However, it would be wrong, as Sönke Neitzel and Harald Welzer rightly point out, to attribute the 'mental structural change of Nazi society solely to the propagandistic, legislative and executive actions of the regime: it is the action context of political initiative and private adoption and implementation that renders the Nazi project consensual in such an amazingly short time'. This can be called a participatory dictatorship to which members of the national community also gladly contribute their part, even if they are not 'Nazis' (Neitzel and Welzer 2011, 65). Thus, no active involvement within a National Socialist organization was required within a national community to take part in its leadership – in its broader understanding (Nolzen 2009, 77).

The concept of national community, which above all in the last decade has sought a new explanation of the social practice of an imagined communitarization in National Socialism, does not merely wish to explicitly examine those state instruments of enforcing such a community utopia 'from above'.

Rather, the concept focuses on independent actions 'from below', that is, how to define a national community within a society and what processes are employed. The propagandistic promise of the national community applied to a social community of Germans and the national resurgence of Germany, whereby 'the political force of reference to a "national community" [was] in the "promise, in the mobilization, not in establishing a social actual state [...]"' (Bajohr and Wildt 2009, 8). There is no search for the historical reality of the community, but rather for mechanisms of how and with what success such a consensus takes place within society (von Reeken and Thießen 2013, 17).

The core element of community imagined by the Nazis was in the inclusion of its members. This inclusion was based on the National Socialist worldview of a racially homogeneous society, which meant excluding those who did not fit into the racial scheme (Bajohr and Wildt 2009, 17). However, 'racial purity' was by no means automatic for inclusion in the national community. In National Socialist understanding; there was an immense ambiguity in the national community, which could be reinterpreted according to need and appeal to different sectors of society. Nevertheless, there was a clear demarcation of who could not belong to the community. This primarily concerned Jews and 'inferior' people from the perspective of racial ideology. 'Blood' affiliation was, in principle, the primarily unconditional affiliation requirement, but social practice also determined possible exclusion from the community. Exclusion could take place as a result of any misconduct, whereas inclusion in the community could follow from achievements in culture or other social merits (von Reeken and Thießen 2013, 20 f.). It should be noted, as Detlef Schmiechen-Ackermann found in relation to the research of Robert Gellately, that it was not the terror of the Nazi regime that prompted the populace to comply with National Socialist demands. Indeed, Peter Fritzsche in his work has shown even more the desire of Germans 'to meet the behavioural requirements of National Socialists, including complicity in genocide, and to be obedient members of a propagated national community' (Schmiechen-Ackermann 2012, 21 f.). The alleged engagement of the national community thereby concerned a state-enforced exclusion of 'others', above all, Jews, in which large parts of the population voluntarily and without duress also benefited, for example, through the acquisition of 'Aryanized' goods or the elimination of disliked competition in everyday work.

Despite all the different possibilities of interpreting the underlying concept of national community in the Third Reich, 'local communitization [...] based

itself on violence, but also on integration, inclusion and homogenization, whereby the framework for action particularly shifted during the Second World War. Whereas we, in fact, find no uniform national community in the Third Reich, many national communities existed with which social rules were negotiated locally' (von Reeken and Thießen 2013, 26).

National thought in the Evangelical Church A.B. in Romania until 1933
As already stated at the start, the so-called 'foreign German community', despite extensive research within that community concept, drew little attention until now. These 'Germans' numbering around thirty million, of which only ten million lived in Eastern and South-eastern Europe (Bergen 2005, 267), nevertheless, formed an integral part of the National Socialist national-community idea. Even more serious in analysis of 'community as a social practice' (von Reeken and Thießen 2013) was the neglect of the religion factor in an inclusion-/exclusion-based idea of community. This is even more surprising when considering that 94 per cent of all inhabitants of the Third Reich in 1939 belonged to either the Catholic or Protestant church (Junginger 2011, 197).

For pastors outside industrial agglomerations and cities, the idea of rebuilding a national community – as a direct counter-model to the emerging pluralist secularizing society – formed a contact point for service to the Third Reich, even before 1933. Especially in rural areas, the Nazis only succeeded in penetrating and ultimately winning over a majority of the Protestant milieu with the help of pastors. Nazi racial thought still aroused concern among most pastors, but the National Socialist 'guiding principle of the national community as a pastoral community especially appealed to village clerics' (Pyta 1995, 397). This fact was also demonstrated by the German-speaking minority in Romania. In Bessarabia, the Nazi self-help organization in 1932 resorted to assistance from the Transylvanian Saxon Minister Alfred Csallner in promoting the Nazi movement among the German-speaking Protestant population, as conservative leaders closed themselves off to Nazism (Schroeder 2012, 321).

During this time the transition from the idea of a cultural community to a decidedly Nazi-racial interpretation of community, with its inclusion-/exclusion-mechanisms, was smooth. As Michael Wildt has concluded, the concept of the national community was one of the basic linguistic elements of almost all political parties in Germany during the Weimar Republic. The

propagation of national community included different ideas, whereby the core idea of a harmonizing society always remained the same. Crucially society was not understood to be a pluralistic coexistence of individuals, but always as a collaborative unit of the people (Wildt 2009, 34).

Konrad Möckel, as the parish priest of Kronstadt and thereby holder of one of the most important offices within the Evangelical Church A.B. in Romania, argued in such a manner in 1933: as a result of the growing acceptance of National Socialist ideas within Transylvanian Saxon society – and again boosted by Hitler's rise to power in the German Reich – Möckel found himself compelled on the occasion of Hitler's birthday on 20 April 1933 to express his opinion on the national community within the church's official communication channel. With Banat Swabians and Transylvanian Saxons already being labelled Germans, it became clear that Möckel and most so-called Romanian Germans weakened their own local identity in favour of a connection with the German people, a process that had already commenced at the end of the 19th century.[7] Accordingly, Möckel spoke in his guiding message during meetings of Saxons of a 'strong sense of own kind and, therefore, of a commitment to the people's community', not a Transylvanian Saxon one, but rather a German people's community (Möckel 1933, 153). Semantically, Transylvanian Saxons and Germans were merged here, not only by Möckel, into a single people in the sense of a community-forming group.

Möckel complained, however, that everyday perceptible national elation nevertheless demonstrated an inner poverty because some Saxons had lost their true faith in God. A national community without faith only becomes a catchphrase. He spoke out strongly against the attempt in the Third Reich by those in an inner-Protestant movement of German Christians to merge religion and National Socialism into a German Christianity (Bergen 1996). Möckel did not see a way to a national community or national consciousness through a connection between religion and politics and instead employed both terms in the same way. He referred to faith starting 'to illuminate the German kind in such light and shine' (Möckel 1933, 155). He believed that the people would find their true meaning as a German people through faith.

Even if the parish priest in Kronstadt explicitly spoke out against the mere notion of a national community based on racial ideology, his idea of the national community already had an exclusive character. Such a distinction

from the multi-ethnic society of Transylvania is explicable given the restrictive Romanization policy of Bucharest central governments in the 1920s and 1930s. Also prevailing was the sense of superiority of Saxons and Swabians towards their Romanian and Hungarian neighbours from the Habsburg period, which resulted in a privileged position in the Austrian multi-national state (Duller 2012, 258 f.). Generally perceived civilizational decline through inclusion in the Romanian state in 1919 brought emphasis on a special 'German way'. Möckel himself distinguished his own group in the face of the minority situation by emphasizing the 'German way' and 'German national community' with respect to the Romanian-Hungarian environment.

Möckel's comments underscored the decisive change within Transylvanian Saxon society long before 1933 in which church representatives were actively involved: the 'cognitive turn from [the] self-identity of a national minority in a multi-ethnic Romanian state to an organizational part of the German nation' (Duller 2012, 273).

The idea of an organizational connection with Germany voiced by its proponents was based on race. The national church was also open to such a view well before 1933. Pastors and teachers, in particular, belonged to Saxon supporters of social-Darwinian eugenics of the interwar period (Georgescu 2010, 863). The most famous of them, Heinrich Siegmund, even appointed the former national Bishop Friedrich Teutsch as the 'first "medical member" of the church's governing council, the *state consistory*, in 1920' (Georgescu 2010, 866).

However, it was not only isolated church representatives who were involved in the eugenics movement of Transylvania: national church leaders were more involved even before 1933 in settlement projects initiated on the basis of racial selection and 'people struggle' (that is the struggle between Germans and other nationalities). The background for this was the increasing acceptance of eugenics and a loss of authority of the church within Transylvanian Saxon society since the early 1920s. As a result of the incorporation of Transylvania in Romania in 1919 and the subsequent deterioration of the economy[8] caused by various factors, different and partially National Socialist groups arose and held the church complicit in the generally difficult situation. The main point of criticism was the close personal ties between the church leadership and political elite of the Saxons, reinforced by the fact that political leadership circles were always keen on a settlement with the

Romanian government. Criticism of political relations in Romania accordingly led to the church and its ties to politics being criticized. In response to the criticism of its hegemony within society during the 1920s, the church, on the one hand, rigorously punished critics within its own ranks. On the other hand, it tried to benefit from the growing influence of National Socialism among Transylvanian Saxons. A readiness therefore arose within the church leadership to cooperate with the National Socialists in certain respects as long as this did not threaten the leadership claim of the political elite or enforcement of the church order (Hagen 2016, 21 f.).

With such cooperation based less on ideological and rather more on rational opportunistic motives, national church leaders also hoped to rein in the increasingly progressive secularization of Transylvanian Saxons. Thus, church leaders in 1930 already discussed an inner-Saxon settlement programme, together with the Nazi self-help organization and the noted eugenicist, Heinrich Siegmund, which aimed to resettle Saxon communities 'endangered' as a result of a rural exodus and alleged 'displacement' by other ethnic groups. The idea of race was founded on the idea of 'breeding and selection of more stalwart settlers' to reclaim Transylvanian municipalities from Romanians and at the same time to prevent 'miscegenation' (interbreeding among racial types). The main task was assigned to local farmers as 'carriers of the national body' and 'fountainhead of national life' in this conceptual construction (Hagen 2016, 24). As Timo Hagen rightly noted, it was a 'theme of inner settlement [...] in 1930, already a long-established part of ethno-centric thought and action of the Saxon (church) leadership that proved itself particularly adaptable to nationalist-racist thought and terminology' (Hagen 2016, 25).

With one such thought already prevailing in 1930 that considered the Saxon people to be part of a German people's community finding itself in a supposed 'race war' for its own survival, it was only a small step to adapt to the National Socialist national-community concept with its exclusion mechanisms.

**The National Socialist national community
and the Lutheran national church**
Whereas the Kronstadt Pastor Konrad Möckel in 1933 had a positive attitude toward the idea of community, but rejected mere homage to racial breeding, other church representatives at the same time blatantly legitimized National

Socialism and its community promise in the official communication organ of the church. The parish priest Josef Scheiner, for example, propagated the allegedly positive binding force of the National Socialist idea in relation to Saxon youth. Youth work camps organized by the Transylvanian National Socialists would finally create a sense of community and in visiting them Scheiner felt 'immense delight': 'the discipline, the youthful joyfulness with which the boys and girls carried out by no means easy work and the serious struggle for the highest truth, particularly for a position of faith in this faithless world' (J. Scheiner 1933, 156). Scheiner here projected a supposedly ideal condition of community onto the activities of National Socialism, which, differently than the church, would again foster that community feeling. The pastor therefore urged the church and its representatives to reach out to National Socialism because 'God may hold us accountable if we withdraw from this call to mission' (J. Scheiner 1933, 157).

A divine message indirectly reached the Third Reich, which would manage to recreate that idealized community of the Transylvanian Saxons. The church should therefore not shut itself off to such a great matter. The Heidendorf pastor and later chief counsel of the national church, Andreas Scheiner, described it in a similar way: fixation on the racial idea as in the case of National Socialism was 'very welcome' because there is no mere individual, 'but only one through a belonging in a natural life context of certain people [...]' (A. Scheiner 1933, 157). At this point, a community is formed only by the link to a race, and National Socialism rejuvenated that knowledge. Also, in the case of Andreas Scheiner, the ideal of community earned Christian legitimacy in that he pointed out that the Bible always speaks of people and 'our kin', hence, community, and not the individual or individuality (A. Scheiner 1933, 157).

Bishop Glondys spoke out in church publications with an editorial at the turn of 1934 in which the connection between people and Christianity as a racial link clearly stands out. First, the bishop made it clear that all German-speaking minorities outside the Reich were part of the German and now National Socialist national community: 'The foreign German community warmly welcomes the miracle viewed by the world in the revival of the German people from pitiful disunity to a powerful unity of German nations in the German Reich and the evolution of a great, blood and culture-based German national community throughout the world and across all boundaries' (Glondys 1934, 1).

Glondys attributed the divine mission to National Socialism and declared that the 'wishes and prayers' of Transylvanian Saxons would accompany Hitler's work (Glondys 1934, 2). Although the Gospel remains the 'supreme measure of everything, including the people', the 'Transylvanian Saxons also know that their church has vitally helped in their coming together as a people and that ultimately they are not strictly a people's or church community, but rather a nationalist-religious community' (Glondys 1934, 2). The bishop at

this point linguistically created an insoluble connection between the church and a blood-bound national community that could not survive independently.

The Brenndorf Pastor Fritz Schuller, who from 1933 had given biblical legitimacy to Nazi racial laws, went one step further:

> In the Old Testament we find not only racial theory, but practical racial politics with removal of foreign elements from the core of a people. That appears very inhuman and unchristian, but it is good for the race because blood is a special juice and the order of God's creation requires it to remain pure. Sterilization and race law in Germany is much milder than this method [of racial politics] of ancient Jews (Schuller 1934, 180 f.).

The anti-Semitic policies of the Nazis, as well as their crackdown on political opponents found a divine legitimacy, but with the repeated addition that Jews had supposedly invented racial theory and that measures of the Nazi state against them were therefore legitimate. The national community as well served as the base element of such policies, as Schuller points out further:

> God commands in the Old Testament. A leader accumulates supreme power in the Reich and everyone obeys his will. The enemies of the people – the alien gods of Marxism – will be vanquished in concentration camps; the example of Elijah will be followed who curtly dealt with the priests of Baal. Authority wherever extended is a nation-building element (Schuller 1934, 181).

Marxism and Bolshevism as an enemy of the German people naturally meant Judaism because the anti-Semitic view of Marxism and Bolshevism saw it purely as a Jewish movement to gain world domination (see Pufelska 2010). According to the priest, such influences had to be eliminated from the community and by force if necessary. 'Enshrined in the Bible is a model for all times of how a people rise under the call of eternal norms. Punishment and destruction will come if they abandon these standards [...]. The Bible writes these laws with flames of fire in world history' (Schuller 1934, 181).

Preservation of the racial national community was thus made a God-given law by church representatives, especially in the official communication channels of the church, which accepted and justified all measures for its

implementation. This basic understanding, which even the bishop similarly articulated, shows that the church itself helped shape a racist world image and thus solidified the idea of a community based on the exclusion mechanism: 'we' and 'others'. The church and its representatives, however, cannot be seen as initiators of such thought. Yet, the fact that large parts of Transylvanian Saxon society still saw the church as a supreme authority and defender of its own culture accorded a type of voluntary legitimacy 'from the top' in the sense of divine justification, even though such justification was not required. One finds here the mechanism described by Neitzel and Welzer: there is participation without having to directly belong, that is, without having to join forces with National Socialist organizations. Nevertheless, one feels a belonging to the great whole, to a national community and, thereby, at the same time assumes its exclusion mechanisms.

From national community to 'dejudaization'

Whereas the inclusion-exclusion of 'we' and 'others' focused more at the start of the 1930s on Transylvania's Romanian majority population and less on the Jews, 'the Jew' as a counterpoint to the national community took centre stage in church promotion of a national community at the latest with the election of Wilhelm Staedel as its new bishop in 1941.[9] Before Staedel was elected as the new bishop through active support of the now entirely Nazi German minority in Romania, the national church placed the matter of Jewish exclusion with reference to a government decree within its own sphere of competence. In a circular dated 15 October 1940, the church informed all school and kindergarten heads that 'those children whose have two parents or only a father who are Jews, regardless of religion, cannot attend Romanian or private schools, or schools of other Christian ethnic groups' (Rundschreiben [circular] 1940a, 531 f.).

Even if the last part of the sentence noted that Jewish children or children considered to be Jews could still be taught, for example, in church schools, the church pushed through the exclusion of these children from its own schools within several months (Möckel 2016, 97). Merely a week after the circular on 'the situation of Jews in schools', another circular followed to all school leaders subservient to the church. It stated that in an 'Announcement of the Ministry of National Education, Culture and Arts' that:

> 1. the purchase of textbooks, books and school props is only permitted to students in Christian bookstores,

2. Christian authors of textbooks cannot conclude any pub-
lishing contracts with Jewish publishers.
(Rundschreiben [circular] 1940b, 544)

The national church appeared to meet the call of Ion Antonescu and Horia Sima's new national Legionary government, whereby the now publicly celebrated discrimination and repression of Jews began to take shape in the sphere of the control of the church.[10]

The newly elected Bishop Wilhelm Staedel in 1941 was a follower of the German Christians, an anti-Semitic movement within the Protestant church, which promoted a symbiosis of Protestantism and Nazism (Schuster 2016). Accordingly, Staedel and his followers attempted to dejudaicize their own national church according to the model of German Christians in the Third Reich in that it joined the Institute for the Study and Elimination of Jewish Influence on German Church Life in late 1941 and founded their own branch of this institute in Sibiu-Sibiu (Schuster 2013a). It aimed to transfer the idea of a 'dejudaicized' Christianity onto its own national church, as well as to practically implement this idea. For example, it created a new curriculum for school religious education in which the Old Testament as a 'Jewish religion book' was entirely swept aside while Jesus and Christianity were represented as fighters against Judaism for this purpose (Wien 2007). This branch, which was established in the presence of nearly forty pastors and laymen in March 1942 and which published the 'dejudaization of Christian teaching and church life' as an aim, served as a recruitment agency for pastors sent on behalf of the national church to conquered Transdnistria to propagate this new understanding of Christianity and humanity among local German-speaking settlers. At the request of the SS, the national church also sent pastors from that branch to the government to ensure the religious care of local 'new settlers' (Schuster 2013b).

It was not just Staedel's radical circle who drove forward the exclusion of Judaism as a means of creating a community of 'we'. Bishop Friedrich Müller, as a representative of the old conservative elite and opponent of the church politics of Staedel, in internal discussions opposed the national church's efforts to join the noted institute. However, he officially stated that the protection of the race was in the spirit of Martin Luther, but that this task solely lay with the state. Even though he had to vote against church accession to the institute, this did not hinder 'dealing with issues imposed

upon us by the opponents of Christianity, Jews'.[11] Also, the aforementioned Konrad Möckel rejected membership in the institute through a mixture of religious and political concerns, but admitted that there is 'no harsher anti-Semitic scripture as the Old Testament in which the Jews were seen through the eyes of a court. He could agree with academic research in this form [the "dejudaicization" of Christianity].'[12]

Also, as of 1941 anti-Semitism was an integral part of public church pronouncements on national community construction. In 1943 alone, there was a wide variety of statements in the church's information bulletin that presented 'evangelical information and served as a dissemination body in Romania' (Schlarb 2006, 145) and which received appropriate attention. For example, August Schuster addressed the Jewish Question in detail and concluded: 'Anyone who studies the history of revolutions with some attention, who observes the forces of decay in all areas, especially the religious and social, encounters the Jewish Question, whose entire earnestness has never been so clearly exposed as now' (Schuster 1943a, 286).

Six months later, Schuster attributed Jews with lies, plans for world domination, etc., whereby Christianity was exactly the opposite of all this (Schuster 1943c). Also, 'the Jew' who seeks to destroy the 'sanctuaries of Western Christendom' stood behind the Allied bombing raids on the Third Reich (Schuster 1943b).

These are just a few of the many examples that show that the church also used 'the Jew' as a counterpoint to the national community. Thus, the church created a moral legitimacy to ostracize the Jews in Transylvania. Even though not all Saxons approved this, it was the German national group in Romania, the organizational merger of all German-speaking inhabitants of Romania, that from 1940 onwards benefited from the expropriation and expulsion of Romanian Jews. In Mediasch (Mediaș) alone, it took over all major Jewish enterprises in the city in November 1940 (Weber and Danecke 2016, 219). The 'Romania Germans' particularly benefited from the expropriation of Jews to such a degree that even the Antonescu regime viewed this development with concern and tried to curb it (Baier 2016).[13] Even if this trend could not solely be blamed on the church, the latter nevertheless contributed to it through openly conveying a racial national community concept promoting the exclusion of 'others' – whereby this involuntary role of 'others' from the late 1930s semantically meant Jews. Accordingly, Pastor Hoffmann was in

agreement with SS-Obersturmführer Hoffmann and SS-Hauptsturmführer Weingärtner regarding the Jewish Question during his mission in occupied Transdnistria.[14] Against the background of the mass murder of Jews in this area, this shows that some church representatives understood a 'solution to the Jewish Question' was a necessary measure that had been legitimized by the national church.

Summary

The example of the Transylvanian Saxons shows that the national-community concept initially provided cultural support for the German-speaking minority in south-eastern Europe. Early on, there was a distinction between 'we' and 'others', whereby the 'we' mainly referred to a racially understood bond with the German people. The 'others' were not only Jews, gypsies and communists, but rather initially referred to a distinction between 'German' and 'non-German', in the light of the status of Saxons as a minority in the Romanian state. However, such a mind-set enabled it to refine its image of 'others' to the 'Jews'. The anti-Semitic policies of the Legionnaires and Ion Antonescus (Glass 2014), coupled with the anti-Semitic policy of the Third Reich and its early military successes, undoubtedly encouraged Jewish exclusion within the region.

The binding force that rendered National Socialism a 'dominant moral system' justified the exclusion of 'others' as a higher principle and created a range of standards whose transgression created a feeling of action against the community, the national community (Gross and Konitzer 1999, 49). In light of a self-image of a threatened minority, binding forces emanating from the Third Reich further reinforced acceptance of a promised community ideology.

The national church, which as early as the 1920s faced increased secularization and a distancing by the public, unconditionally supported the idea of a national community, as its image was the unifying bond of Transylvanian Saxon culture. It is not surprising that the idea of faith and race or blood prevailed as an inseparable unity relatively quickly, with the active participation of Bishop Glondys. On the one hand, this reflects an early reception of Nazism and therefore racial thought in Transylvanian society. The church did not want to turn its back on this, especially since quite a few church officials were among the active agitators of the Transylvanian Nazi movement. On the other hand, this allowed the church to present itself as a vital part of the national community and thereby help to counter its gradual loss of leadership among the Saxons.

Not all church representatives wanted to foster National Socialism with their rhetoric. However, the still prevailing high social status of the church and its representatives – either intentionally or unintentionally – legitimized the image of 'we' and 'others' as a racial categorization. Through reference to Hitler's divine mission, the national church also created an additional justification for anti-Semitism. Social pressure exerted by National Socialism,[15] coupled with the influence of the national church on people's thinking in a racial way, impeded the individual from acting outside expected norms. The idea of being a member of an imagined great German community made many Saxons, also outside the borders of the Reich, 'obedient members of the Nazi national community'. The national church, as an institution that always bound society, reinforced this effect through the early use of a racial exclusion rhetoric.[16] It was not at first explicitly directed against Jews, but nevertheless was able to serve as a new definition of 'others' as a negative image in relation to its own community.

Translated from German into English by Edward Assarabowski

DIRK SCHUSTER
Dirk Schuster was born in 1984, and studied medieval and modern history and religion at the University of Leipzig and in 2011–14 undertook a PhD scholarship at the Friedrich Naumann Foundation for Freedom. In 2016, doctoral studies ensued on the academic understanding of self at the Eisenach 'Dejudaisation Institute' of the Religious Studies Institute at the Free University of Berlin. Since 2014, he has been an academic researcher at the Institute for Jewish Studies and Religious Studies of the University of Potsdam. His research has focused on the interdependence of religion and politics, the Transylvanian Saxon church, as well as atheism in modern societies.

ENDNOTES

1   For a discussion of this concept, see Steber et. al 2014.

2   For the state of research, see Steuwer 2013.

3   An exception is Götz 2005. In the collection on the National-Socialist regime of migration and the national community, only the article by Michael Wedekind (Wedekind 2012) deals with 'foreign Germans'. Elizabeth Harvey rightly draws attention to the special potential for research on 'foreign Germans' in relation to the community debate (Steber et. al. 2014, 450).

4   Also, for Schmidt a 'strengthening of the national community' through a pure-race approach was among those tasks underlying the slogan 'Common interest precedes self-interest' (Schmidt 1942c, 72).

5   It must be concurred with Michael Wildt in his research summary on the national community that it was a social utopia of the future, which promised to overcome social inequalities, but did not (Wildt 2013, 356).

6   This, of course, took place before Schmidt. So, the Association of Germans in Romania from 1935 was called the German national community in Romania.

7   Timo Hagen demonstrates this fact in the use from 1919 of motifs of the Teutonic Knights to symbolize the biological affiliation of the Saxons to the German 'national body' (Hagen 2013).

8   The onset of the Great Depression in 1929 tied the Saxons even more strongly to the German Reich because they saw a better market there for their own products (Gross 2016, 179).

9   Developments occurred within the national church in the 1930s against the background of the establishment and consolidation of National Socialism under the Transylvanian Saxons: Wien 2013; Frühmesser 2013.

10   Andreas Möckel writes, for example, in his memoirs about how gunmen drove the Jews of Kronstadt onto the main street in broad daylight (Möckel 2016).

11   Central archive of the Lutheran Church in Romania [ZAEKR] 102: minutes of the 6th national consistory meeting of 3 November 1941, agenda item 58.

12   Ibid.

13   Mariana Hausleitner attained the same result for the Danube Swabians in Romania and Serbia (Hausleitner 2014, 250–74).

14   ZAEKR 103 (1942), 138 [unfoiled] (Report of Pastor Hoffmann from Zuckmantel on his work in Transnistria).

15   The Nazis in Bessarabia demanded the exclusion of those German-speaking people from the community who opposed to National Socialism because this was seen as an act of treason (Schroeder 2012, 322).

16   Lida Froriep also refers to the fact that people's thought, the idea of being German, as well as the Church as an inseparable triad promoted the turn towards National Socialism (Froriep 2012, 155).

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RESOLVING THE 'JEWISH QUESTION' IN PÚCHOV DISTRICT OF SLOVAKIA (1939–45)

Pavol Makyna
The Nation's Memory Institute and
Department of History, Faculty of Education,
Comenius University, Bratislava

ABSTRACT
This is the first comprehensive study of the liquidation of the Jewish community in Púchov and its surroundings. The aim of this article is to describe in detail the life of the Jewish religious community of Púchov itself and its vicinity from 1939 to 1945. Considering the persecutions and hunt, the word 'life' seems to be inappropriate here though. The first section describes the initial persecutions and denunciations. The second section analyses the 'new approach' to resolving the 'Jewish Question' and life in Púchov in 1941. The third section deals with preparations for and the actual deportations of Jews from Púchov. The final section covers the end of the Second World War and the annihilation of the Jewish communities in the region.

Introduction

The solution of the 'Jewish Question' was one of the most traumatic events, not only regionally, but also for Slovak 20th-century history as a whole. It remains one of the most sensitive issues for both the Czech Republic and Slovakia, as well as worldwide. The tragedy is also one of the main reasons why historians interpret the period of Czechoslovakia post the Munich agreement of 1938 and the existence of the Slovak State from 1939 to 1945 differently and inconsistently.

Púchov's Jewish community numbered only 250[1] but they played an important role in the history of town despite the fact that during the community's short duration there, it experienced various difficulties, including hostility from some residents. They left a permanent mark on the entire life of the town through their

culture, self-governing policies and economic activities. A further three Jewish communities were present in Púchov District, in Pruské, Lúky and Bolešov.

This study focuses on the life of the Jewish community in Púchov and its neighbouring villages, mainly between 1939 and 1945. But it is difficult to speak of life there: instead it is easier to talk about the persecutions and hunts under various laws and decrees issued in this period. All these measures ended up turning what was an alleged economic transgression into a social problem. Jews were first deported to Slovak concentration camps before being moved to German-occupied Poland (General Government territory, a district of Kraków). Their liquidation in the death camps was the third stage of Hitler's 'Final Solution'.

The so-called 'Jewish Question' in Púchov District between 1939 and 1945 draws key information from the record office in Bytča (Považská Bystrica branch). Important sources of information were derived from monographs about Púchov published in 1970 and 2006. Publications were also used that dealt with problems the Slovak State faced (Lacko 2008) and solutions to the Jewish Question in Slovakia in 1939–45 (Kamenec 1991; Lipscher 1992; Nižňanský and Kamenec 2003). Data on Aryanization in the region published on the Nation's Memory Institute website was also used.

Púchov and its environs during the autonomy period

An authoritarian system came to power in the Czechoslovak Republic following border changes demanded mainly by Germany, Hungary and Poland. In Slovakia this was exploited by Andrej Hlinka's Slovak People's Party (HSĽS), which declared autonomy on 6 October 1938 in Žilina and seized power in Slovakia.

On the same day, Heinrich Radó, a local lawyer and HSĽS's chairman, declared autonomy in Púchov at a mass meeting held at the Catholic House of Culture.[2] So many people welcomed the declaration that their number exceeded the capacity of the Catholic House of Culture, and thus they celebrated in the adjacent square. Four days later the Hlinka Guard (HG) was established, and was joined by approximately 200 more men. Initially, the HG's function was to investigate politically suspect people, mainly Jews and Czechs (Janas 2006, 71). As a result, approximately thirty Czech officers and their families (totalling about eighty people) left (Gabriš 1970, 148). The HG also searched all vehicles and trains passing through the town, establishing a railway HG at the station with their own stationmaster. Wealthy

Jews were arrested throughout Púchov. Assets were confiscated to prevent them being transferred abroad. HG also organized targeted actions against the Jews. This started with the distribution of leaflets and propaganda in the *Gardista* journal, and escalated to violent assault, racketeering and theft. Troublemakers and vandals, not only from the HG, broke the windows of properties bearing the notice 'Jewish shop' (Kamenec 1991, 41; Sokolovič 2009, 557). Non-Slovak Jews (foreigners) were transported to the area that had been granted to Hungary in November 1938 under the terms of the Vienna Arbitration. Before the evacuation deadline expired those subjected to the evacuation regulations were only foreigners and stateless persons (Lipscher 1992, 18–19).[3] At that time the Czech-Slovak Republic was a relatively safe place for Jews in Central Europe. Elsewhere, for example in Budapest, government decrees against Jews had already been drafted (Kamenec 1991, 24). On 20 November 1938 all right-wing parties officially merged with the HSĽS, and Alexander Bezák, a wholesaler from Púchov, was appointed its new chairman. On 18 December 1938, the day the new Slovak parliament was elected with a united list of candidates, HG confiscated the premises of Sokol together with its film projectors, and the building was renamed Hlinka's House and became HG's headquarters. Voter turnout in the district was 99.25 per cent (Janas 2006, 72). Three weeks earlier, on 25 November 1938, the county office (ŽÚ) had ordered the Jewish party's activities to cease (Lipscher 1992, 17). Thus Jews paradoxically could vote only for candidates who would later participate, directly or indirectly, in their persecution (Kamenec 1991, 37).[4] It is worth mentioning that, on 22 February 1939, when Púchov residents were appointed as local and district officials, HSĽS officials resigned their positions in protest (Janas 2006, 72).[5]

Czechoslovak Republic government officials wanted to eradicate HSĽS's radical wing, which was engaged in a power struggle for Slovak independence. This was attempted in the Homola coup of 9 March 1939, which only accelerated the move towards independence. Hitler summoned Jozef Tiso, former chairman of the Slovak autonomous government, to Berlin, and under pressure Tiso asked Emil Hácha, president of the Czechoslovak Republic, to convene the Slovak parliament on 14 March and subsequently declare the Slovak State.

The hectic events of March were fully played out in Púchov. The HG confiscated radios and vehicles owned by Jews and disarmed local gendarmes on 12 March, who immediately started to leave the area after the declaration, moving to Moravia via the nearby Lyský priesmyk mountain pass. They

encountered only incoming German troops who occupied western Slovakia as far as the River Váh, where they set up a customs office and passport control on 17 March (Janas 2006, 72).

First public notifications and implementation of anti-Jewish measures in the town and its surroundings

On 18 April 1939, shortly after the Slovak State was established, Decree No. 63 Coll. was issued on the definition of the term 'Jew' and on limiting the number of Jews in certain occupations. A Jew was defined as a person who declared belief in Judaism, in spite of the fact that he or she had been christened after 30 October 1918, and who had at least one observant Jewish parent, or a person who married a Jew in the period when this decree entered into force (Lipscher 1992, 38–9). This was one of the first acts in Slovakia to create a special legal regime for Jews, allowing for their deportation and the Aryanization of their property.

The consequences started to become clear almost immediately, when a decree issued on 25 July 1939 regulating the number of Jews working in medicine came into force. The district office in Púchov refused to issue a medical licence to Dr Aladár Haas in Lúky pod Makytou. He had applied for a licence because he came from Bohemia. His practice was closed after 15 March 1939.[6] The county office served a notice dated 31 December 1939 to all municipal, town and district doctors.[7] Ernest Csillagi, Móric Dávid,[8] Ján Garai, Leonard Kušč, Alexander Piechura, Arpád Pollák[9] and Ladislav Ullman were among the doctors affected in the district.[10] Many were foreigners, such as the Russian Yelizabeta Stalinskaya, who wanted to settle there but was prevented from working anywhere, even in Stará Turá or Dubnica.[11] Employment of Jewish doctors continued, however, because there was a severe shortage of doctors.[12] Nevertheless, on 24 August 1941, the county office ordered a strict inspection to check whether Jewish doctors were continuing to see their patients, mainly under the pretence of administering first aid, and whether they had removed plaques from their offices.[13]

Government decrees targeted the licences of innkeepers and bar staff (Kamenec 1991, 55), and more than year later the Ministry of the Interior (MV) issued a complete ban on Jews working as barmen and innkeepers.[14] In Púchov only two Jews, Ferdinand Lielenthal and Móric Nathan, still had a licence, and only one, Alexander Flack, in Pruské. It is interesting that Jews owned two distilleries: Móric Nathan in Púchov and Mikuláš Feitl in Pruské.[15]

In the early months of the Slovak State, government and other decrees greatly constrained the life of Jews not only in Púchov but also throughout the whole district. Measures started to restrict their freedom of movement in the town. During the summer the Jews could not be outdoors between 10 pm and 5 am. They could not buy dairy products before 8 am or fresh goods before 10 am. They were completely prohibited from buying from street vendors and in markets (Janas 2006, 79). Over time the district office prohibited Jews from driving motor vehicles, possessing arms,[16] binoculars, postage stamps and many everyday goods (Janas 2006, 79). For the most part it was 'the biggest pro-fascist radical group in the town' (Janas 2006, 79), but Jewish inhabitants were also persecuted by their neighbours.[17] Public notices and regulations prohibiting contact with Jews and Jewish work colleagues and even standing and talking with them on the street were introduced. Any breach was punishable by detention in a work camp.[18]

Aryanization and its implementation in Púchov District

Opinions on how to resolve the Jewish Question differed. The economy was the most pressing matter, where, according to many, it was necessary to intervene as a matter of urgency. According to the 1940 census, approximately 87,000 Jews lived in Slovakia, 3.3 per cent of the total population. Despite being a small community, it accounted for approximately 40 per cent of the national economy. The opinion that the number of Jews active in the economy should match the ratio of their population in Slovakia started to prevail in government circles (Lacko 2008, 65).

After the first persecutions related to occupations and public life began, the process of liquidating companies commenced alongside the transfer of property from Jews to non-Jews/Aryans in the process known as Aryanization (Lipscher 1992, 45–6).[19] In Slovakia it started with the implementation of a decree on trustees and temporary administrators in industry, crafts and trade. The Ministry of the Economy (MH) or the district office (OÚ) would appoint a trustee with a controlling function for companies with at least fifty employees and an annual turnover exceeding 500,000 crowns (Kamenec 1991, 56). However, Act No. 46/1940 Coll. on land reform (approved on 29 February 1940) and the first Aryanization Act No. 113/1940 Coll. (which came into force on 1 June 1940) were the most important acts in the first stage of Aryanization. According to Act No. 46/1940 Coll., 101,423 ha of land owned by 4,943 individuals were among the Jewish agricultural real estate affected by this reform (Lipscher 1992, 62). In Púchov District,

almost 1,062 ha of Jewish land were included[20] and the following persons
were deprived of larger land plots: Dr Emil Frankl in the cadastral (land
tax) area of Piechov village with 340 ha of forest and 36 ha of pasture;
Samuels Lewenbein in the cadastral area of Krivoklát[21] village with 105.31
ha of forest; Andrej and Júlia Schlesinger in the cadastral area of Bolešov
village with 84.54 ha of forest and 33.51 ha of pasture; Arnold Weiner in
the cadastral area of Lúky pod Makytou and Vydrná villages with 51.11 ha
of pasture; and Markus Haas in the cadastral area of Mikušovce village
with 45.43 ha of forest.[22] According to the Act on Jewish Enterprises, the
county office could revise or withdraw the trading licence of Jews or Jew-
ish organizations,[23] and it set the number of Jewish employees permitted
in individual companies.[24] If a company had yet to be Aryanized, it had to
display a notice reading 'Jewish enterprise'.[25] This notice resulted in eco-
nomic and social discrimination against these businesses and put pressure
on the owners to find someone to carry out the Aryanization as quickly as
possible (Lipscher 1992, 65). The act was implemented for just three months
in the form in which it had been approved, but complications arose, with
the result that all Aryanization decisions were suspended in Trenčín Region
on 11 September 1940.[26] The entire agenda, together with the trustees' and
temporary administrators' reports, were transferred from the regional to the
Central Economic Office on 18 October 1940.[27]

Many companies were liquidated in Púchov District, with over thirty Jew-
ish companies liquidated in Púchov itself. Jewish companies were also

liquidated in the district villages: Lúky pod Makytou (six companies), Lazy pod Makytou (five), Pruské and Bolešov (three each), Dohňany, Dolná Breznica, Červený Kameň, Slávnica, Mikušovce and Lysá pod Makytou (two each), Dulov, Streženice, Nosice, Bohunice, Sedmerovce, and Piechov (one each).[28]

In spite of complications at the regional level, Aryanization continued at an even faster rate. More than twenty-one companies were Aryanized in Púchov District, while more than eleven Aryanizers entered Jewish trades in the town itself.[29]

Resolving the Jewish Question comes to a head after the Salzburg dictate
In spite of the many anti-Jewish public notices, decrees and acts issued, the German administration was dissatisfied with the quality of the solution in Slovakia. Ever since the state had been established, signs of Slovakia's autonomous foreign policy had surfaced, which Hitler did not take kindly to. These were the main reasons why, in July 1940, he summoned the president of the Slovak Republic, Jozef Tiso, to Salzburg where he 'dictated' the composition of a new government. Vojtech Tuka became Minister of Foreign Affairs and premier, and Alexander Mach was appointed Minister of the Interior. In this way the radical wing of HSĽS was strengthened, representing a change of political and ideological orientation, mainly in terms of 'resolving the Jewish Question' in Slovakia. In August 1940 the Reich had secured its position by sending Dieter Wislicény to Bratislava as an advisor to oversee the process. This paved the way for the further development of the anti-Jewish policy.

On 3 September 1940 parliament passed the Constitutional Act No. 210 Coll., which authorized the government to carry out additional Aryanization measures (Lipscher 1992, 67).[30] At the end of September the Central Economic Office (ÚHÚ) was established, with Augustín Morávek as its head with significant authority under Tuka. His assignment was to prepare and implement measures against the Jews to exclude them fully from economic and social life (Lacko 2008, 68). By the end of 1940 these measures included blocking the sale of Jewish property valued at over SK500, confiscation of money and valuables owned by Jews, and the Second Aryanization Act – a decree against Jewish companies. This was reported in the press as a 'new period of Aryanization' thanks to a 'revolutionary method of taking over Jewish property' (Kamenec 1991, 102).

The Aryanization process was marked by corruption and manipulation, mainly in the Aryanization centre at the Central Economic Office (ÚHÚ),[31] offices at the regional level,[32] and in the HSĽS. Germans associated with the Deutsche Party (DP), as well as leading state and party officials staking a claim in Aryanization proceeds (Kamenec 1991, 111–13). But for the most part those involved were non-professionals, nouveaux riches and 'chameleons' who all wanted to enrich themselves at the expense of others while causing large-scale economic harm. In this way many companies that had previously flourished were ruined. The worst of the occurrences came with the Aryanization of Jewish lands. Down-payments for these were 50 per cent, too much for poor farmers, and the wealthier ones preferred 'gold-digging' in a Jewish company or store (Lacko 2008, 69). According to a press article published in September 1941, the results of Aryanization were: 'a) Aryanization is carried out by non-professionals; b) the Central Economic Office does not respect the recommendations of the HSĽS or its deserving members; c) Aryanization is carried out by rich people who do not need it' (Kamenec 1991, 115). Jewish domestic property was Aryanized starting in October 1940, ending in the same way as it had for companies and stores. The decree ordered Jews to move out of streets bearing the names of well-known national figures or politicians.[33] These were mostly in the city centre streets and squares, and included Hitler Street and A. Hlinka Square.[34] The wording of one notification read: 'Because you are living on Hitler Street, and an Aryan [name] is interested in your apartment, I give you notice related to this apartment in accordance with the valid legal regulations for the period of 14 days so the apartment must be evacuated by 15 February 1942.'[35] This decree was subsequently mitigated by the Central Economic Office in the case of Jews working for the state administration, doctors permitted to practise medicine or if the apartments would be left unoccupied.[36]

From 1940 governmental, regional, district and local authorities issued decrees that deprived Jewish citizens of their basic civil and property rights and more. The decrees were vaguely worded and often inconsistent, which meant they had to be simplified and made consistent. On 9 September 1941 the decree on the legal status of Jews, known as the Jewish Code, was published in the Slovak Code of Laws, Decree No. 198/1941 Coll. It was inspired by the German Nuremberg Race Laws, but in Bratislava the German ambassador, Hanns Ludin, declared that he had been surprised by the publication of the code. The law comprised 270 articles that determined

the resolution of the Jewish Question firmly on a racial basis. The term 'Jew' was redefined: anyone with three or four Jewish grandparents was considered a Jew. Furthermore, it defined the term mixed-race Jew and outlawed mixed marriage, as well as banning sexual intercourse between a Jew and an Aryan.

The code was subdivided into three parts:

1. Restriction of Jews' social, civil, religious and personal rights

2. Jews' property rights

3. The transfer of Jewish property to Aryans.

With Articles 255 and 256, the president of the republic could grant full or partial exemption from the provisions of this decree (Kamenec 1991, 126).[37]

Púchov District in 1941

A labour camp for Púchov's Jews was opened in 1941 in Horné Kočkovce.[38] Jews had to sweep the streets and maintain pavement verges. They also worked in quarries. In addition to work in the labour camp, they dug beet, cleared the forest floor and in winter cleared the streets of snow; they were unpaid for working in distilleries or glassworks, or on the construction of the hydro-electric Dubnica power station.[39] Jews from the district's villages (for example, from Lúky pod Makytou that had the second largest Jewish community in the district) were also sent to the Horné Kočkovce labour camp.[40]

The Central Economic Office and its branch, the Central Office for Jews, ran various retraining courses and groups for Jews. For example, on 7 July the district office in Púchov opened a retraining group at a Jewish horticulturist in Púchov and also at a farm owned by H. Politzer and widow Neu in Dohňany. The group was registered at the Central Labour Office on 30 June 1941. Seventeen citizens were enrolled on the course.[41]

Preparation for the transfer of Jews at the national and local levels

After their civil, political and human rights had been stripped, many Jews in Slovakia were reduced to poverty, turning an economic problem into a social one. The transfer or concentration of Jews to the suburbs was the first proposal, but was not implemented.

In July 1941 a Slovak–German delegation went to the labour camp in Sosnowice, Poland to inspect where Jewish prisoners were living and working. They concluded that a similar camp would not be suitable in Slovakia. Yet, that autumn work began on the construction of camp facilities in Sereď and Nováky. Camps had also been planned for Nitra, Topoľčany, Vrbové, Nové Mesto nad Váhom, Žilina, Liptovský Sv. Mikuláš, Spišská Nová Ves, Prešov, Bardejov, Sabinov, Humenné, Stropkov and Michalovce (Kamenec 1991, 148–53), but the authorities, various organizations, HSĽS, HG and DP, as well as Jewish residents all protested. It was no small matter when evacuees arrived en masse in a town bringing with them poverty, disease, fear and uncertainty along with just a few personal belongings. The Ministry of the Interior responded when Mach indicated that 'the Jews would go further [...] to the camps' (Kamenec 1991, 148–53).[42]

In October 1941, Tiso, Tuka, Mach and others undertook a 'historic journey' to meet the Führer, according to populist propaganda. They also negotiated the Jewish Question in Slovakia. They learnt that Germany was prepared to allocate an area in Poland where European Jews could be concentrated. Tuka and Mach, along with the entire radical wing of the government, backed this proposal (Kamenec 1991, 148–53). In subsequent meetings with the German ambassador, they agreed a 'colonization fee', according to which the Slovak government would pay 500 Reichmarks to Germany as reimbursement for the settlement costs of each deported Jew (Lacko 2008, 72). When news of this was leaked, politicians tried to 'legalize' the steps by calling the deportations of Jews working for the Reich. Now, all the plans for the construction of the labour camps and centres were cancelled, in light of the 'new facts' Germany had presented.

Government chairman Tuka notified his colleagues of the decision to start the deportations on 3 March 1942 and informed the Council on 6 March 1942 (Nižňanský and Kamenec 2003, 142). The plan was to deport 20,000 young Jews 'for jobs' for which an agreement between the Slovak Republic and the German Reich was signed in the first months of 1942 (Lacko 2008, 72). The plan was outlined by Mach, who confirmed that approximately 15,000 young men and women aged sixteen to thirty-five would be deported, with more following once new settlements had been constructed (Kamenec 1991, 165).

The fourteenth department of the Ministry of the Interior implemented the deportations. Lawyers and police officers, mainly members of the HG and

Freiwillige Schutzstaffel (FS), took part in the Púchov District deportations as they did in other districts. This not only helped to ensure their powerful position in the state, but also gave them the opportunity to enrich themselves from the pilfered and ill-guarded property of the deported (Kamenec 1991, 165). On 5 March 1942, the Ministry of the Interior asked the Ministry of Transport and Public Works (MDaVP) to allocate six trains to transport Jews out of Slovakia. Each train was to comprise twenty-five goods trucks, each with a capacity for forty persons, while luggage would be taken in a further two wagons. In addition, a police escort would travel in one wagon with a Jewish doctor. However, these regulations and standards were not met. On 11 March 1942, Ministry of Transport and Public Works declared that the Da (David) transport was ready, immediately after which, and in cooperation with the relevant German authorities, the ministry prepared a timetable for the transports (Kamenec 1991, 165).[43]

Preparation for the deportations were made across the whole of Trenčín Region. Five concentration camps were established in Slovakia, in Bratislava–Patrónka, Sereď, Nováky, Žilina and Poprad.[44] The Trenčín Region camp, which covered Púchov District, was in Žilina, opened on 21 March 1942 and operated until 24 October. Rudolf Marček was appointed its commander. It was located at Štefánik barracks, and from summer 1944 Jews were deported from there from across Slovakia. In total 26,384 people passed through the camp, living in wooden huts and sleeping on wooden plank beds. They were there for only a few days, after which they were deported to death camps in the German-occupied Poland (the General Government). According to the official records, 12,702 Jews were transported to Auschwitz, 11,181 to Treblinka and 2,591 to Lublin. The railway station at Skalité served as the border crossing point (Janas 2007, 87).[45]

Deportations in Púchov District
The deportations' last stage was carried out in February 1942. The Ministry of Interior ordered the district, legal and municipal authorities to prepare a list of Jewish citizens with the assistance of the HG and FS. According to a decree issued by the ministry on 12 February 1942, Jews were listed in three categories:

1. All Jews in general, regardless of gender, age, nationality and employment (except those granted an exemption)
2. Male Jews aged sixteen to sixty regardless of inability to work
3. Men aged over sixty years and women over sixteen, who are employed.[46]

A list of widows and single or divorced women aged sixteen to forty-five was drawn up separately on 28 February and 24 March 1942 at the HG cinema (Janas 2006, 80).

The preparation for the next list of Jewish citizens was ordered by the district office in Žilina, which sent a request to the district office in Púchov on 20 February 1942. According to this request, Jews in all the villages and towns in the district were to be registered. In villages with up to 500 inhabitants, 43 were listed; with 500–999 inhabitants, 115 were listed; with 1,000–1,500 inhabitants, 68 were listed; and with over 1,500 inhabitants, including Púchov, 238 were listed – in total, 464 Jews.[47] The lists recorded not only the number of Jews living there, but also what they owned. The ministry ordered the regional and district offices to prepare a list of Jewish real estate they owned freehold by 10 March 1943. Their property was categorized under fourteen headings: 1. office equipment, typewriters and calculating machines, 2. carpets, 3. motor vehicles and bicycles, 4. radio sets, 5. sports equipment, 6. cameras and cine-projectors, 7. binoculars, 8. textiles, 9. pictures, 10. books, 11. ceramics and decorative items, 12. light fittings, 13. leather goods and 14. miscellaneous. Some items were immediately confiscated and subsequently sold at auction.[48]

By categorizing the Jewish inhabitants the authorities were able to assign them to the various concentration camps. In this way, forty-eight women

went to Bratislava–Patrónka on 30 March 1942. They included widows, single and divorced women (unless they had children under the age of sixteen years) aged sixteen to forty-five. However, only twenty were transported to Patrónka on 28 March 1942 and only six on 29 March 1942. Hence, twenty-two women were not transported because they were baptized, too ill or unable to work.[49]

The first transport of Jews left Poprad on 25 March 1942 at 8:20 pm, and crossed the border near Čadca at approximately 4:30 am. On board were 1,000 young women and teenagers from the Šariš-Zemplín Region (Lipscher 1992, 126). The relevant authorities received the following instruction: 'At-tached you will find thirty-two summonses in the given case, which shall be delivered on 22 March 1942 to the relevant Jews in such a way that they will have one hour in which to get ready.'[50] On the day, forty-four Jews were transported from Púchov. By the end of the month, a further two transports had been scheduled, and were due to take place on 24 and 28 March. Between April and August 1942, three more transports left the town.[51] The order for the transport from Púchov to Žilina was also delivered to individual Jewish citizens on 6 June 1942.[52] The district head wrote to the police station in Púchov on 6 June ordering that they summon sixty-seven Jews from Púchov, Nimnica and Streženice to the town hall at 11 am the next day. We learn from this letter that 220–230 Jews were to be transported in six wagons, so three police officers and nine guardsmen would be needed to accompany them to prevent desertions, while at least a two-member guard was to travel in each wagon. They also had to ensure that evacuated households and farms owned by Jews were closed and listed. The first train was to leave on 7 June 1942 at 1:20 pm carrying Jews from neighbouring villages. The Jews from Púchov would leave the station in a second train at 6:05 am.[53] By then approximately 45,000 people had been deported from Slovakia. As a result, the adjacent Považská Bystrica district was no longer issuing any notices as most Jews had already been deported (Kamenec 1991, 179).

According to a Ministry of Interior decree dated 16 April 1942, Jewish inhabitants could each take luggage weighing up to 50 kg. It could contain: 'One hat, 1 cap, 2 clothes of which 1 item of working clothing, 2 coats, 3 pairs of underclothing, 2 towels, 6 handkerchiefs, 2 pairs of shoes, 3 pairs of stockings, 1 blanket, 1 bar of soap, a razor, toothbrush, set of cutlery, cup, food for 3 days, religious items and a nickel watch' (Janas 2006, 80).

Transports from Púchov continued but not at such an intense pace. For example, on 30 June 1942 Ján Letko, the head of the handling department of the Váh company, put forward Alexander Hertzko, because he was sixty-one years old and had a heart defect so could not join the forest patrols. The next day, he was transported to Žilina with his wife and son.[54] The same happened to Dr Viktor Földy when his exemption to work was abrogated by the district office in Púchov. He was transported with his wife. On 27 August 1942 Jews who were members of former left-wing parties were transported to Žilina with their families. Nine men, six women and seven children (one of whom was three months old) were deported. In this case there were no exemptions, even if the wives were Aryan or the children had been baptized. Jews from adjacent villages were transported on 23 July 1942, nine from Lúky, Bolešov and Lednické Rovne.[55]

Constitutional Act of 15 May 1942
and the (non-)granting of exemptions

On 15 May 1942, parliament passed Constitutional Act No. 68/1942 Coll. on the deportation of Jews. The original governmental draft law, which was sent by the Ministry of Interior in March 1942, was not debated. Protection of certain groups of Jewish inhabitants from the deportations was the main goal of reworking the draft law. Nevertheless, the primary goal of government radicals remained the legalization of transporting Jews from the Slovak Republic. Those who were not to be transported included citizens baptized at the latest by 14 March 1939, that is to say before the Slovak State was established, as well as Jews living with a non-Jewish partner in a valid marriage contracted before 10 September 1941, that is before the Jewish Code came into force. Jews whom the Ministry of Interior considered essential to the economy and Jews granted a president's exemption could also avoid deportation (Lipscher 1992, 128–31).

Exemptions applied to a fraction of the Jews in Púchov District. They were primarily granted to doctors, pharmacists and dentists and their families, because of a general shortage of such professionals. Among them were Móric Dávid from Lúky and Ferdinand Steiner and Otto Klein from Púchov.[56] Klein had asked for his exemption, and the district office sent the president a proposal to pay Ks 500 to secure it. The president's office agreed but set the fee at Ks 3,000.[57] Stationmaster Štefan Jurík from Bolešov similarly asked for an exemption for his Jewish wife, but this was rejected because, according to the authorities, the application did not meet the criteria of

Constitutional Act. No. 68/1942 Coll.[58] Ladislav Goldberger also received an official notification from the Ministry of the Economy on the extension of his veterinarian practice to the end of 1943. But he then received an official order to relocate to Budimír in Prešov District and continue his practice there. The district office in Púchov raised an objection with the ministry, but the decision was upheld in the face of the permit being threatened with withdrawal altogether.[59]

Jewish inhabitants could avoid deportation only if they held a labour permit. On 31 August 1942 the Central Economic Office issued a directive according to which each employer had to file an application for every Jewish employee labour permit, except for those who held a labour permit to the end of 1942. The application was to be filed by:

• companies with a registered office in Bratislava
• employers of former (Aryanized) partners in Slovakia if they filed a written application to the Central Economic Office by 1 April 1942 in accordance with public notice No. 130 of 19 March 1942
• companies with a registered office abroad but with representation in Bratislava.[60]

Similar permits were granted by the Ministry of Interior to Ladislav Langfelder, who was employed at Ignác Langfelder in Lazy as an official, Erich Roth at Arpád Roth as an agricultural labourer also in Lazy and Július Pohr at František Trnka in Púchov as a shop assistant.[61]

An interesting case arose in 1942 when Ján Revák Jr from Dohňany obtained the property of a Jew apparently due to an official's error. On 4 March 1942 the Ministry of Interior issued a permit to Samuel Braun for the employment of Ferdinand Braun as an agricultural labourer at Samuel Braun's farm in Dohňany. On 16 March 1942 the district legal department in Dohňany failed to deliver a report for the labour permit because the Brauns had been deported in June. The ministry subsequently returned the application for the labour permit and ordered the head of the district to apologize and ascertain the name of the officer who had made the mistake. But the district office defended the officer in charge, Ján Smutný, because, in its opinion, he had followed the decree issued by the ministry. On 19 November 1942 the ministry issued an order demanding that the district office investigate the reason why the decree had not been delivered. The outcome of this

Synagogue in Púchov (1868–1988), 1950s. Unknown photographer, Pavol Makyna's private collection

investigation could not be found in the archives, and doubt exists whether the investigation was ever carried out.[62]

Other reactions

How citizens responded to the deportations and persecutions of Jews were not negligible at that time. Events in society affect each individual, albeit to a greater or lesser extent. The situation at that time is difficult to assess, but if we simplify, the relationship with Jews can be described as 'fluid' (Lacko 2008, 83) from the issue of anti-Jewish decrees up to the outcome

of frontline military engagements, which influenced how citizens responded. It is impossible to say whether the persecutions or deportations met with approval from other citizens, but a significant public demonstration of disapproval did not take place, the result of the general mood at the time as well as propaganda, mainly in the press.

Transports passed through Púchov and from there continued from Žilina. People must have been aware that their long-term neighbours were missing. The brutality of HG members guarding the transports was plain to see in the form of pushing and shoving during the allocation of Jews to the wagons, direct humiliation on the streets or when undertaking body searches, restricted time reserved for shopping and false assurances (Kamenec 1991, 179–80). Even children were frequently heard shouting derogatory slogans: 'Ra-ta-ta, ra-ta-ta, už sa to Židom poráta' [the Jews have it coming to them].[63] Many residents also blackmailed Jewish fellow citizens: money, gold and family jewels were targeted. Some started to avoid contact with Jews and stopped greeting them (Lacko 2006, 339–43). Simply put, discrimination was unknown or unseen only by those who chose not to see it. And they were the majority. However, silent acts of disapproval occurred in the form of helping, hiding and short-term material assistance offered to Jews. If such acts came to light the helpers would be denunciated with subsequent sanctions; labelled 'white Jews', they were arrested and sent to nearby Ilava prison for political prisoners. Disapproval was limited mainly to whispered propaganda (Janas 2007, 87).

The end of the first wave of deportations and the redistribution of the property of those seized

The first wave of transports ended on 20 October 1942. By then the populist regime had got rid of 57,628 Jewish citizens who had been deported from the Slovak State starting on 25 March 1942 (Lacko 2008, 74). The concentration centres in Bratislava–Patrónka were closed by 10 September, in Poprad by 10 October and in Žilina by 24 October 1942. Jews arrested after this were to be concentrated in the camps in Nováky and Sereď. German representatives wanted the final deportations to be over by the end of 1942, but their Slovak partners proposed continuing them until spring 1943 (Lipscher 1992, 134–35).

The majority of Púchov Jews were transported in the first wave. According to archive material of 22 November 1943, over one year after the first

transport ended, only eleven Jewish men able to work remained in Púchov.[64] Jewish real estate and movable property was left in the villages and towns. In addition to profitable companies and trades, fifty-eight real estate properties – mostly residential houses – had been abandoned. Loyal followers of the regime and anti-Jewish activists moved into fully furnished houses, often after fights for the spoils.[65] They also divided up the farms. The district legal department in Púchov had distributed seventy-four building, forest and agricultural land parcels by 1943 (Janas 2006, 80).

HG and FS members got most of the properties because they had the best overview owing to their assistance in deporting Jews to the concentration centres. The authorities even issued warnings because of cases where private citizens wearing official uniforms had entered Jewish houses and confiscated various articles, mainly valuables. Sometimes neighbours, acquaintances and other residents took in articles with the consent of the deported owners, who had vainly thought that one day they would be able to return to find their possessions in the safe keeping of trustworthy people. This explains why the Ministry of Interior issued a ban on buying Jewish movable property or taking in such property (Kamenec 1991, 203–4).

Attempts to continue with the transports

Despite various declarations by the HSĽS's radical wing, the Slovak government did not recommence transports in the spring of 1943. In 1944 the Allies opened a new front in Normandy on 6 June. On the eastern front Germany suffered its heaviest defeat of the war thus far during Operation Bagration (the code name for the Soviet Belorussian Strategic Offensive Operation in eastern Poland). There was an unsuccessful assassination attempt on Hitler in July, an uprising in Warsaw in August and a coup d´état in Romania. These events started to shake the foundations of the German Reich and the Axis. The Slovak Republic was affected by events such as the American bombing of Bratislava on 16 June 1944, the internal breakdown of order in the Slovak army, illegal preparations for an armed uprising and the disruptive actions of partisans and organized groups. All of these led to the German occupation of Slovakia, which started on 29 August 1944 (Lacko 2008, 170–74).

On the same day armed resistance by sections of the Slovak army commenced in Banská Bystrica; this later became known as the Slovak National Uprising (SNP). The Slovak National Council (SNR) was established in insurgent-occupied areas. It declared war against Germany, joined the

anti-Hitler coalition and aimed to restore the Czechoslovak Republic. Thus two regimes now functioned in Slovakia. The second regime, under the leadership of the HSĽS and Jozef Tiso, appointed a new government on 5 September 1944 led by Štefan Tiso. In reality this was an occupational regime, with the Slovak government's role being marginal.

A dissatisfied Hitler ordered the occupation of the Slovak Republic to commence on 29 August 1944. However, the Germans were already familiar in Púchov District as Púchov and its surroundings were in the German Protection Zone (Janas 2006, 307–8)[66] and the civil Slovak administration continued to function as usual. After the German troops arrived the uprising moved into surrounding areas where conflicts broke out, among which the most infamous were the murders of partisans in Zariečie and the torching of Mladoňov, where residents were executed for hiding partisans (Janas 2006, 82–3).[67]

In 1944 the situation had changed so much that most Slovaks had developed a sympathetic, even friendly relationship with the Jews. Many expressed real love in the midst of a situation that directly threatened their lives, this being done in the spirit of Christianity, which asserts that the greatest love is for a person to lay down his life for his friends. This is confirmed by the fact that Slovaks, proportional to population size, are the most numerous holders

Interior of a furniture shop in a synagogue in Púchov, 1970s. Unknown photographer, Pavol Makyna's private collection

of the honorific 'Righteous among Nations', which is granted by the State of Israel to those who helped Jews during the Holocaust (Lacko 2008, 85).

Outstanding issues regarding the solution of the Jewish Question were continued by German occupation troops. The government accused Jews of participating in the 'anti-Slovak uprising' and young populists issued a memorandum in which they asked for the solution of the Jewish and Czech issue be completed without further delay. The entire implementation of the 'solution' was taken into German hands, and they ignored any requirements to mitigate the liquidation of the Jews. Any exemption granted by the ministries or the president was now void. A central concentration camp was established in Sereď from where the first transport was dispatched on 30 September 1944. This started the 'definitive solution of the Jewish Question' (Lacko 2008, 85).

The end of the war and the liquidation of Jewish religious communities in Púchov District

During the German occupation and SNP, the district office issued a public notice on 2 October 1944 outlawing the concealment of any Jews attempting

to escape the deportations. The occupation army behaved with brutality when it caught Jews or rebels, with innocent people often paying for their actions. In Púchov the Germans occupied the evangelical residence and took over private and public buildings, including schools, for their accommodation. At the beginning of September the district head issued a ban on residents assembling and driving cars, with exceptions only for doctors, fire-fighters, ambulance drivers and military and security vehicle drivers. A curfew was imposed from 9 pm to 5 am[68] and a partial ban on the sale of alcohol was issued.[69] Residents knew that Germany would lose the war, so fearing reprisals they fled to the countryside. More German troops occupied Púchov on 27 January 1945 where Hungarian troops were also stationed,[70] and their arrival was accompanied by plunder and increasing depopulation of the town. The numbers working on fortifications steadily decreased, leading the German headquarters to complain that those presenting for work in Púchov was 60 per cent lower than in recent months despite workers being paid the going rate. The HQ also notified the legal department that if workers did not return, it would be treated as sabotage.[71] They ordered the district office and legal department to send 400 workers from the town every day.

On 16 April 1945, Púchov was bombed and two people were killed (Gabriš 1970, 150).[72] The Germans immediately evacuated the town and its surroundings before the Red Army arrived, blowing up the railway and road bridges over the River Váh as they retreated (Janas 2006, 84). The town was liberated on 30 April 1945.

In total, approximately 13,500 Jews had been deported from Slovakia by the end of the war; the majority of whom died (approximately 10,000). By contrast, approximately 10,000 Hungarian Jews from were saved in Slovakia (Lacko 2008, 85). The last of Jewish residents were transported from Púchov on 13 September 1944. The Jewish community that had been integral to the town for some 250 years had gone forever. Many people loyal to the regime and anti-Jewish radicals had now become rebels. A few Jews did return from concentration camps after the war but people who had appropriated their houses refused to return the properties. This led to several ugly confrontations, which resulted in the voluntary departure of the psychologically and physically broken and disgusted Jews, not only from Púchov but also across the whole of Slovakia (Janas 2006, 81). The handful of Jews who did resettle successfully in the town and other villages changed their names

to Slovak ones. All the Jewish religious communities in Púchov District ended in a similar way, with none being restored after the war. A single synagogue remained after the Jews left which, under the communist regime, was used as a furniture store. Finally, in the 1980s it was demolished. Today it is commemorated only by a paving stone in Moyzes Street. The Jewish synagogue in Lúky pod Makytou, which had been founded in 1872, was burned to the ground by departing German troops in 1945 (Madala and Okrajková 1996, 11). The Jewish cemetery at the foot of Mount Lachovec is the only extant monument of the Jewish religious community in Púchov. In Lúky, which had the second largest Jewish community, the ruins of the Jewish cemetery were also preserved under a railway embankment near the villages of Pruské and Bolešov.

Translated from Slovak into English by Darren Chastney

PAVOL MAKYNA
Pavol Makyna studied history in the Faculty of Education, Comenius University, Bratislava where he now teaches in the Department of History and was awarded a doctorate in 1987. He is also a researcher at The Nation's Memory Institute. His research focuses on 20th-century Slovak and regional history, the Holocaust and its impact on the country culturally and historically. He has published several academic and general articles and has contributed to a number of exhibitions about the regional history of Púchov District.

ENDNOTES

1   Púchov´s Book of Remembrance, p. 98.

2   Púchov´s Book of Remembrance, p. 143.

3   Emigrants were allowed only 20 Ks (Slovak crowns) per person; all other financial means were confiscated, access to their bank accounts was blocked, apartments were boarded up and shops were closed.

4   The Central Office of Jewish Autonomous Orthodox Communities and the Jewish Central Office urged their supporters to vote yes 'as a mark of their loyalty to the national independence of the Slovak nation'.

5   The appointments were made by Ján Kubolec, district chairman of HSĽS.

6   State archive Bytča, Považská Bystrica branch (ŠAP P. Bystrica), collection (f.) District Office (OÚ) Púchov, administrative file (admin.), ref. no. 4795/1939.

7   ŠAP P. Bystrica, f. OÚ Púchov, admin., sk. 438, ref. no. 7864/1939.

8   ŠAP P. Bystrica, f. OÚ Púchov, admin., sk. 452, ref. no. 2005/1940. They turned down Móric Dávid's request for an exemption from the Jew Act as early as 1940, but there

was no one to take his place. Thus on 9 July 1941, the Ministry of Interior granted him an exemption in the Pension Institute of Private Officers of the Health Department in Bratislava.

9   ŠAP P. Bystrica, f. OÚ Púchov, admin., ref. no. 2207/1941. Arpád Pollák was suspended from office on 31 December 1939, and his application for citizenship was refused despite its approval by the police station in Lednické Rovne on 27 January 1940 and the district office in Púchov on 9 February 1940.

10   ŠAP P. Bystrica, f. OÚ Púchov, admin., ref. no. 8272/1940.

11   ŠAP P. Bystrica, f. OÚ Púchov, presidential file (pres.), ref. no. 12768/1940.

12   ŠAP P. Bystrica, f. OÚ Púchov, admin., ref. no. 8191/1941.

13   ŠAP P. Bystrica, f. OÚ Púchov, admin., ref. no. 6251/1941.

14   ŠAP P. Bystrica, f. OÚ Púchov, admin., ref. no. 9349/1940.

15   Nation's Memory Institute (ÚPN): Liquidation of enterprises owned by the Jews [online]. Bratislava: 2008, 1–4.

16   ŠAP P. Bystrica, f. OÚ Púchov, admin., ref. no. 718/1941. 19. Two double-barrelled shot guns, four small-calibre guns, fifteen Brownings, one military rifle and two hunting rifles were confiscated.

17   ŠAP P. Bystrica, f. OÚ Púchov, prez., ref. no. 452/1941. On 29 April 1941 an inspection was carried out at the Jewish trader Alexander Birmann's outlet in Lúky after Tomáš (Jozef) Veteška alleged that he was hiding goods and foodstuffs there. However, this could not be proved.

18   ŠAP P. Bystrica, f. OÚ Púchov, prez., ref. no. 916/1941.

19   Lipscher gives two definitions of Aryanization according to Slovak official policy: 'Aryanization is a modern term, under which we understand an activity having the objective of restricting the excessive number of Jews in economic life and the gradual transfer of economic functions into the hands of Christians' and 'The objective of Aryanization is to create a central layer, which has capital and which is important for national life ... It is in the national interest that many financial people get rich.'

20   ŠAP P. Bystrica, f. OÚ Púchov, Size of Jewish land, ref. no. 10093-XI/1940. To comply with the law, the county office in Trenčín sent the size of the land to OÚ Púchov on 28 March 1940, and the Ministry of the Economy took charge of the forests located in Púchov District.

21   Krivoklát is an integral part of the village of Pruské today, and since 1 January 1943 Piechov has been an integral part of the village of Bolešov.

22   ŠAP P. Bystrica, f. OÚ Púchov, size of Jewish land, ref. no. 10093-XI/1940.

23   Lipscher (1992, 47). This was the first part of the Act, and did not cover factories. This was in fact the decision on forced or voluntary Aryanization.

24   Ibid. According to the Act, the number of Jewish employees should not exceed 25 per cent after 1 April 1941, and this percentage should be further decreased to 10 per cent in the following years. In 1939 in the Slovak Repbulic Jews made up about 4 per cent of the employees in organizations not owned by Jews.

25   ŠAP P. Bystrica, f. OÚ Púchov, admin., ref. no. 3944/1940.

26   ŠAP P. Bystrica, f. OÚ Púchov, admin., sk. 449, ref. no. 747/1940.

27   ŠAP P. Bystrica, f. OÚ Púchov, admin., sk. 461, ref. no. 12768/1940.

28   ÚPN: Liquidation of companies owned by the Jews [online]. Bratislava: 2008, 1–4. Today, Nosice is part of Púchov, Bohunice is part of Pruské, Sedmerovec is part of Slávnica and Piechov is part of Bolešov.

29   ÚPN: Aryanization of companies owned by the Jews [online]. Bratislava: 2008.

30   These were valid for one year, from 11 September 1940 to 11 September 1941.

31   Kamenec (1991, 102).

32   Janas (2007, 85–6).

33   ŠAP P. Bystrica, f. OÚ Púchov, sk. 19, unsigned; Jakub Dautenbaum had to vacate his apartment for an Aryan, Štefan Magerčiak.

34   ŠAP P. Bystrica, f. OÚ Púchov, prez., ref. no. 38/1941. Now renamed Moravian Street and Freedom Square.

35   55 ŠAP P. Bystrica, f. OÚ Púchov, admin., sk. 19, ref. no. 14/1942.

36   ŠAP P. Bystrica, f. OÚ Púchov, admin., ref. no. 3542/1941.

37   The Jewish Code was published two days before the expiry of the enabling Act on Aryanization.

38   ŠAP P. Bystrica, f. OÚ Púchov, admin., ref. no. 1543/1942.

39   ŠAP P. Bystrica, f. OÚ Púchov, admin., ref. no. 6678/1941.

40   ŠAP P. Bystrica, f. OÚ Púchov, prez., ref. no. 1144/1941.

41   ŠAP P. Bystrica, f. OÚ Púchov, admin., ref. no. 7793/1941.

42   Representatives of HSĽS, DP and HG in Žilina, the largest city in the Trenčín Region at the time, referred to Žilina as 'an old populist city that is trying to purge itself of Jews... and the awakening of Marxist, communist and socialist ideas among the Jewish proletariat who are threatening the proletariat in the city'.

43   The Ministry of the Interior requested that these trains should all set off at night.

44   Women were deported from Poprad and Bratislava–Patrónka, while men were sent from Sereď, Nováky and Žilina.

45   The maximum number of people held in the camp at any one time was 1,200.

46   ŠAP P. Bystrica, f. OÚ Púchov, admin., sk. 513, unsigned.

47   ŠAP P. Bystrica, f. OÚ Púchov, admin., ref. no. 2113/1942.

48   ŠAP P. Bystrica, f. OÚ Púchov, admin., ref. no. 1763/1943.

49   ŠAP P. Bystrica, f. OÚ Púchov, admin., ref. no. 5332/1942.

50   88 ŠAP P. Bystrica, f. OÚ Púchov, admin., sk. 513, ref. no. 2337/1942.

51   Púchov nad Váhom visitors' book, 45.

52   ŠAP P. Bystrica, f. OÚ Púchov, admin., ref. no. 5944/1942. Jozef Politzer committed suicide after receiving his transportation order to Žilina.

53   ŠAP P. Bystrica, f. OÚ Púchov, admin., sk. 513, unsigned.

54   He was sent back from Žilina, but the head of the district office returned him on 16 July 1943. According to the internet database of Holocaust victims, he died in the Nováky camp on 19 December 1943. Accessed 3 November 2016: http://www.yadvashem.org

55   ŠAP P. Bystrica, f. OÚ Púchov, admin., sk. 513, unsigned.

56   ŠAP P. Bystrica, f. OÚ Púchov, admin., sk. 513, unsigned.

57　　　ŠAP P. Bystrica, f. OÚ Púchov, admin., ref. no. 342/1942.

58　　　ŠAP P. Bystrica, f. OÚ Púchov, admin., ref. no. 351/1942.

59　　　ŠAP P. Bystrica, f. OÚ Púchov, ref. no. D-5821/1943. The last official mention of Dr Goldberger can be found in the internet database of Holocaust victims. Accessed 4 November 2016: http://www.yadvashem.org

60　　　ŠAP P. Bystrica, f. OÚ Púchov, admin., ref. no. 677/1942.

61　　　ŠAP P. Bystrica, f. OÚ Púchov, admin., ref. no. 1843/1942. Július Pohr was the original owner of a store selling iron and agricultural machinery, which was Aryanized by František Trnka.

62　　　ŠAP P. Bystrica, f. OÚ Púchov, admin., ref. no. 1616/1943.

63　　　From the memoirs of Jozef Kováčik from Lúky pod Makytou.

64　　　ŠAP P. Bystrica, f. OÚ Púchov, admin., ref. no. 6286/1943.

65　　　ŠAP P. Bystrica, f. OÚ Púchov, ref. no. D-6212/1943. As late as 13 September 1943 the HSĽS asked for the reallocation of the house belonging to Dr Ullman. Further archive materials from 1945 reveal that German field officers moved into this house.

66　　　The boundary of the so-called German Protection Zone ran along the following route: Devín – Kamzík – Rača – Sv. Jur – Pezinok – Modra – Kráľová – Dubová – Častá – Doľany – Dolné Orešany – Horné Orešany – Smolenice – Trstín – Naháč – Dechtice – Chtelnica – Vrbové – Očkov – Korytné – Čachtice – Nové Mesto nad Váhom – Bohuslavice – Trenčín – Zamarovce – Nemšová – Lednické Rovne – Púchov – Orlové – Veľká Bytča – Budatín – Kysucké Nové Mesto – Lieskovec – Čadca – Svrčinovec.

67　　　Mladoňov is now part of the village of Lazy pod Makytou.

68　　　ŠAP P. Bystrica, f. OÚ Púchov, admin., ref. no. 6084/1944. The punishment for a breach was a fine of Ks 5,000 or 14 days' imprisonment.

69　　　ŠAP P. Bystrica, f. OÚ Púchov, admin., ref. no. 5722/1944. Only beer and wine could be sold until 8 pm.

70　　　ŠAP P. Bystrica, f. OÚ Púchov, admin., ref. no. 1006/1945.

71　　　ŠAP P. Bystrica, f. OÚ Púchov, admin., ref. no. 1844/1945.

72　　　They were Augustín Paliesek and František Novosád.

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THE ORGANIZATION OF THE JEWISH REFUGEES IN ITALY: CULTURAL ACTIVITIES AND ZIONIST PROPAGANDA INSIDE THE DISPLACED PERSONS CAMPS (1943–48)

Chiara Renzo
Universities of Florence and Siena (Tuscany), Department of History, Archaeology, Geography and Arts

ABSTRACT
The Second World War caused millions of displaced persons (DPs), who were uprooted from their own country and needed international protection. Among the DPs, there were also the Jewish survivors who – despite being a minority in the great ocean of refugees – deeply influenced the post-war political landscape in Europe and in the Mediterranean. This article focuses on several aspects of the Jewish displacement in Italy (1943–48), highlighting dynamics of self-understanding and self-representation experienced by the Jewish DPs in the refugee camps. These mechanisms are analysed by examining the tension between the Zionist activity among the Jewish DPs and the wider international humanitarian programme for rehabilitating post-war refugees.

Introduction

The 20th century was characterized by an endless movement of people across the unstable boundaries of Europe, caused mainly by conflicts and political issues. Since the early 1900s, migrations became a mass phenomenon and began even to interfere with the European state system.

The refugee problem reached international dimensions during the First World War that for the founding of specific organizations to manage it were required for the first time. These organizations were created by

intergovernmental committees as provisional solutions for particular national groups who were considered in need of temporary assistance. From the time that humanitarianism became part of a shared agenda within the League of Nations, it required another thirty years to define refugee status at an international level: from 1921, the year of the foundation of the High Commission for Refugees of the League of Nation, to 1951, the year of the Geneva Convention. During this period, millions of men, women and children in Europe were uprooted from their towns, villages and cities, and forced to seek refuge elsewhere or deported to forced labour or concentration camps. These migrations challenged the fundamental concept of the nation state: citizenship. Thus, the refugees – viewed by contemporaries as 'the scum of the earth' (Arendt 1951, 267) – found themselves outside the protective network of the national frameworks and were thus totally deprived of the guaranties inherent in this membership, becoming instead increasingly dependent on the refugee-rescue organizations. Moreover, the European states system were in a state of collapse as a result of the two world wars, with new redrawn borders that further altered the demographic composition of states (Judt 2010, 13–40).

After the Second World War, refugee camps were established by the Allies throughout Europe, in which the uprooted found a temporary refuge, waiting for ultimate repatriation or resettlement. According to Malcolm Proudfoot, who was director of the Operational Analysis Section at the Prisoners of War & Displaced Persons Division (PW&DP) of the Supreme Headquarter Allied Expeditionary Force (SHAEF), by May 1945 the refugee problem involved more than forty million civilians from twenty-one countries (Proudfoot 1956, 32). In order to identify them, the Allies coined the term 'displaced persons' (DPs), a formula that defined those who were forced out of the boundaries of their own countries because of the conflict, requiring international assistance, and awaiting repatriation or resettlement. According to the Allies' policy, international assistance was to be granted only to persons uprooted from Allied countries, whereas refugees coming from enemy countries received a different treatment (Woodbridge 1950, vol. 3, 43). The social workers of the UN agencies – i.e. the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration (UNRRA) and then the International Refugee Organization (IRO), which provided assistance to the post-war European refugees (Woodbridge 1950; Holborn 1956) – carried out millions of individual interviews with the displaced persons, determining who and to what extent each refugee was eligible for international protection.[1] Although this

might imply that the displaced persons were passive in post-war Europe, the men and women who lived in the refugee camps were extremely active. They developed different feelings of belonging and membership, in which there were evident elements of continuity with the past as well as elements of a radical change (Holian 2011; Cohen 2012). By analysing this process, this article will show that while the network of organizations responsible for the administration of this humanitarian emergency had an innovative approach to how they supervised and managed, at the same time it became involved in dynamics of self-determination by the DPs, often in opposition with the ultimate goals of the Allied mission.

The Jewish displacement across Europe: DP policy vs. DP politics

In order to examine the development and the consequences of the management of the post-war refugee crisis, this article will analyse a specific case study: the Jewish displacement. In particular, it will focus on the Italian case, which has been investigated less than the German and the Austrian ones (Brenner 1995; Königseder and Wetzel 2001; Lavsky 2002; Patt and Berkowitz 2010). It highlights, on the one hand, the limits and concerns of the Allies' policies and, on the other, it shows how the sense of marginalization found typically in the DP camps accelerated the dynamics of community aggregation, a process sometimes similar to that of other refugee groups and sometimes peculiar to the Jewish refugees.

The crux of the Jewish displaced persons problem revolved around their rejection, in the wake of their experiences during the Shoah, of repatriation as well as their request to be recognized as Jews in the national sense and not according to their original nationalities. This approach led to a heated debate. At the time, Great Britain was the mandatory power in Palestine and, in accordance with the provisions of the British Mandate White Paper of 1939, vigorously limited the *aliyah* (Jewish immigration to Israel).[2] Thus, the British authorities – fearing the consequences of a massive Jewish emigration to Palestine – justified their negative response to the Jewish DPs' requests for national recognition or for any special treatment that would lead to pressure on the British Mandate to open Palestine for immigration.

Nevertheless, in the United States zone of occupation, the Jews were already recognized as a separate collective subject as witnessed in the Harrison Report, published in the summer of 1945. It was an inquiry that took the

name from its author: Earl G. Harrison (a United States representative of the Intergovernmental Committee on Refugees), who was appointed by President Harry Truman to investigate into the conditions of the surviving Jews in Europe in the DP camps. In his report, Earl G. Harrison described the alarming situation of the Jews and denounced the policies of the authorities responsible for that situation, putting into question the work of SHAEF and stressing that *aliyah* was the only suitable solution to the problem of the Jewish survivors.[3] President Truman, embracing Harrison's views and conclusions, positioned himself in completely opposition to his British ally (Lavsky 2002, 51–55; Kochavi 2001, 89–133).

Moreover, the publication of the Harrison Report brought to the attention of world public opinion the fate of the victims of the Nazi persecution and further sharpened the controversies between Great Britain and the United States on Middle Eastern policy. The Jewish DPs therefore – though representing a minority in the huge number of post-war refugees – became a major challenge for the general management of the large humanitarian crisis and the international political arena.

The post-war Jewish diaspora was not a uniform and homogenous group. Not all of them were Zionists who wished to immigrate to Palestine, but – regardless of the country where they were planning their future – the Jewish DPs were highly motivated by a powerful national feeling, defined by the historian Zeev Mankowitz as 'proto-Zionism'.[4] In fact, Zionism was fundamental in the experience of displacement of the Jewish survivors and indeed the urgent need for an ideology is a common feature of almost every group of refugees at that time in Europe (Wyman 1989, 106–30).

The idea of national independence was already widespread in the Jewish diaspora before the Second World War, but among the Jewish DPs it developed in a transnational context, becoming purely pragmatic and acquiring characteristics of political, cultural and military resistance. The return to the Promised Land meant a clean break with the past of the diaspora, which is summed up by the use of the word 'return' itself and the actual refusal to remain in Europe. These feelings were in part the result of the actions of a decisive Zionist leadership (in general, but specifically in the DP camps) as well as the controversial involvement of the refugee agencies in those mechanisms promoting the self-understanding of the DPs themselves.

Zion's Gate: Italy 1943

For obvious reasons, research into Jewish displacement generally takes as its starting point spring 1945. Nevertheless, in analysing the Italian case, this paper adopted summer 1943 as the starting point. In June 1943 the Allies landed in Sicily and the newly liberated southern Italian regions soon became the first assembly centres for the Second World War refugees, among whom a great number of non-Italian Jews had already reported.[5] In the spring of 1943, about 9,000 foreign Jews lived in Italy of whom 6,386 had been interned by the Italian authorities. These were the so-called 'old refugees', who were mainly German and Austrian Jews who had found refuge in Italy in the 1930s, and Polish students or Yugoslavs interned in Italy since 1940 (Voigt 1993).

At the end of 1945, according to the Anglo American Commission of Inquiry (AAC), the Jewish DPs of non-Italian origin in Italy numbered 16,000,[6] but this number continued to increase in the months and years immediately after the war due to the arrival of the Sherith ha-Pletah. This term, of biblical origin, which means literally 'the surviving remnant', was used for the first time in the ghetto of Kaunas in Lithuania at the end of 1944 to indicate the Jews who escaped Nazi deportation; the Jewish DPs used it later to refer to themselves (Mankowitz 2002, 24 ff.).

The Sherith Ha-Pletah arrived mainly from Eastern Europe through a spontaneous escape movement, known as Brikhah [flight, in Hebrew], which involved approximately 250,000 Jews (Bauer 1970). Brikhah was soon linked to the underground movement of the Mossad le-âliyah Bet (in short: Mossad), which from 1945 organized the illegal immigration of Jews from Europe to Palestine on behalf of the Jewish Agency. This transnational community of Jews who crossed Italy on their way to Palestine contributed to make Italy 'Zion's Gate', the last stop before the *aliyah*. Between August 1945 and May 1946, fourteen ships of the Mossad left from Europe, including ten from Italy with 5,586 passengers; an additional twelve ships sailed between June and September 1946, including six from Italy, with 10,408 people (Toscano 1990, 91; Sereni 1973; Zertal 1998).

The first encounter between the Allies and a large group of Jewish DPs in Europe took place on 14 September 1943 at Ferramonti Tarsia Camp (Calabria, south-west Italy). Since summer 1940, it had served as a Fascist internment camp until the Allies converted it into a refugee camp in 1943.

According to various sources, there were about 2000 refugees in Ferramonti when the Allies arrived, almost all Jewish 'old refugees' (Urbach 2008, 210; Capogreco 1987, 143–152).[7]

The Jewish refugees in Italy rapidly established an organized rescue network. Beyond temporal and numerical data, a question arises spontaneously in order to fully realize this accelerated development: who were the leaders of the Jewish DPs in Italy?

This examination should first take into consideration the composition of the British Army, which occupied Italy between 1943 and 1947 (Ellwood, 1985). In its ranks, there were a significant number of soldiers enlisted from the Middle Eastern territories, at that time under British control, including Mandatory Palestine. Almost 7,000 Jewish soldiers from the Yishuv (Hebrew term for the Jewish community in Palestine before 1948) voluntarily joined the Allies in the invasion of Sicily, though only in September 1944 were the Jewish volunteers constituted in separate units. Thus, the Jewish Brigade – as the Jewish Units of the Allied Army are known from late 1944 – inevitably represented the first contact between the diaspora and Eretz Israel and thereafter played a prominent role in the clandestine activities of the Brikhah and the Mossad.

Therefore, the profiles of the Jewish DPs' leaders in Italy came from the ranks of the Jewish Brigade, the Brikhah and the Mossad. Some of them arrived from the Yishuv and were members of paramilitary organizations (such as the Haganah and the Palmach) or delegates of the political parties of the Yishuv. Still others were those who had led the resistance in East European ghettos, or outstanding personalities who were leaders in the Zionist youth movements in pre-war Europe.

The official documentation of the Allied Control Commission (ACC) reveals that the Zionist groups, with their strong leadership, had replaced the Palestine Office immediately after the liberation of Ferramonti. They were in charge of recording those who wanted to make *aliyah* and providing them all the necessary documents for emigration.[8] In addition, the soldiers of the Brigade had been providing irregular rescue services to the Jewish DPs that they encountered since September 1943. By February 1944 they had established, inside their barracks in Bari, a facility for DPs that included a canteen, a hospital, a synagogue, a dormitory, a school for children and

a meeting room for youth movements. This facility was known as the Merkaz la-Plitim [the Centre for Refugees], an organization that assisted and supported all the Jews who were waiting for an entry certificate to Eretz Isreal. After the liberation of Rome, delegates of the Jewish Brigade, meeting in Fiuggi (near Rome) in September 1944, decided to give a more comprehensive and well-organized form to the Merkaz la-Plitim, which changed its name to the Merkaz la-Golah be-Italia, the Centre for the Diaspora in Italy (Urbach 2008, 286–91; Markowitzky 1997, 16).

The Fiuggi meeting was attended even by representatives of the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (better known as JDC or simply: 'Joint'), an American Jewish organization founded in 1914 which was in the frontline of the rescue of the Jewish refugees in Europe before, during and after the Second World War. In Italy, the Joint was active since the late 1930s through the Delegation for the Assistance of the Jewish Emigrants (DELASEM), a branch of the Union of Italian Jewish Communities entrusted with assisting foreign Jewish refugees (Sorani 1983). The Joint and other Jewish organizations financed 40 to 50 per cent of the DELASEM's budget, which from the early 1940s was forced to operate clandestinely until it was finally replaced by the Joint itself in 1944–45 (Handlin 1965; Bauer 1974 and 1981).

The organization of the Jewish refugees in Italy: self-understanding and self-representation

The Jewish DPs in Italy could rely upon a network of well-structured organizations and institutions, which gradually spread throughout the country. These services – reserved for the Jews – were in addition to those provided by the Allied Control Commission (ACC) and by UNRRA from 1945. From the time of the Allied landing in Italy, the ACC was responsible for directing the humanitarian programme for the refugees and the DPs. The ACC entrusted the task to the DPs Sub-Commission (established in October 1943), which assisted foreign refugees and stateless persons, whereas the Italian Sub-Commission assisted Italian refugees in cooperation with the Italian authorities. About a year later, in September 1944, the two DP branches were merged into a single unit: the Displaced Persons and Repatriation Sub-Commission. It provided accommodation for the refugees by transforming detention camps into refugee camps, as well as by confiscating schools, hospitals, barracks and private houses and designating them as refugee centres. In 1945 many of these structures were transferred to the administration of UNRRA.

With regard to housing, the Jewish refugees in Italy were often organized in *kibbutzim* [communes] and *hachsharot* [training collectives], attached to small agricultural colonies within the refugee camps themselves or nearby, where the refugees lived the typical communal life-style of the Yishuv while preparing themselves ideologically and practically for *aliyah*.

Hence, Italy became the place where the *halutzim*, the pioneers of Eretz Israel, met the survivors of the Jewish communities of Central and Eastern Europe. With the arrival of the Sherith Ha-Pletah, the identity of this transnational community of Jewish refugees became increasingly defined politically and culturally.

In the months immediately following the end of the war, the Jewish DPs in the refugee camps in Italy, as those in Germany and Austria, began to establish committees of self-representation. The first call for the unity of the Jewish DPs in Italy came with the circulation within the refugee camps of a leaflet, announcing a national conference that would open in Rome and continue in Ostia (near Rome) between 26 and 28 November 1945. Its purpose was the creation of an organization that would represent the 15,000 Jewish DPs at that time in Italy.[9]

The leaflet explained the goals of the Organization of Jewish Refugees in Italy (OJRI), namely:

1. to re-educate them for life in civilized society and develop their sense of social responsibility;
2. to sponsor the creation of an organization for mutual aid;
3. to educate them for productive work;
4. to satisfy their cultural and spiritual needs;
5. to fight against the problem of demoralization among them, caused by the terrible persecution and their fight for survival in ghettos and concentration camps;
6. to reawaken their sense of human dignity, their self-confidence and generally to give them guidance as they return to a normal way of life;
7. to promote agricultural and professional training in view of emigrating to Palestine.[10]

Prior to the conference of Rome, elections had taken place all over Italy on 8 November 1945 in order to democratically select one delegate for

each hundred DPs, for a total of 140 representatives who participated in the meeting.[11]

The first session of the conference was organized in the hall of a hotel in Rome, where a stage was set up for the presiding chairmen. The hall was decorated with blue and white banners as well as the flags of the USA, the Soviet Union, Great Britain, France and Italy. Banners proclaimed the slogan: 'Open the gates of Palestine. We have no way back to our previous homes'.[12]

The declared purposes of the conference, attended also by delegates of the Italian Jewish Community, of the Jewish Agency as well as of Italian authorities and representatives of the rescue agencies, were basically two. First, it aimed at giving a permanent organization to the network of Jewish groups that had risen soon after the Allies' arrival in Italy and was further expanded at the end of the war with the official establishment of the UNRRA mission. Secondly, the organizers hoped that the wide participation in the conference would resonate throughout the world and emphasize the condition of the Jewish DPs in Italy, thus raising public awareness about their situation and

Group portrait of members of the Kibbutz Mekor Baruch, a Poal Mizrachi fishing *hachsharah* (training farm) in Bacoli (near Naples, Italy), 1945–46. The banner on the right states 'Who will build the Negev?', while the banner on the left: 'We will build the Negev'. Photographer unknown, United States Holocaust Memorial Museum

their request for emigration to Palestine. Leo Garfunkel, afterwards elected OJRI president, stressed these points in his opening speech:

> The aim of our Conference is to consider the ways by which the very hard life of the Jewish Refugees in Italy could be mostly improved, how to mitigate their plight [...]. It is essential we should assume position towards the cardinal and ardent problem that faces us by all its tragic sharpness as a question of to be or not to be, whereto we should cast our views and steps, where, on which spot in the world we may now create a new, quiet and safe home. The hospitable Italian country is apparently to be temporary refuge whence we should proceed to another place which we may deeply root in for ever [...]. Whether there is any spot on earth to find rescue for our tortured and tormented body and soul – it is the only Eretz Israel.[13]

The result of this three-day assembly was the official establishment of the Organization of the Jewish Refugees in Italy (OJRI), which thenceforth was recognized as the sole organ of political representation of the Jewish refugees in Italy.

In order to facilitate the carrying out of services in various fields – cultural, educational, professional training, religious and health – the OJRI was divided into specialized departments. The activities of each department were supported both by the Jewish Agency and funded by private organizations, first of all the Joint (which spent for example in 1946 more than 56 million lira on the assistance to Jews in Italy). It should be pointed out that the programmes of the OJRI, though being part of the wider humanitarian rehabilitation programmes of post-war Europe, had a distinct Zionist slant.

Even though there was a hierarchical organization in the refugee camps, with the Allies at the top, followed by the agencies of the United Nations and finally by the non-governmental organizations, the Allies nevertheless welcomed the drive for self-government by the DPs. The DP self-organization served as a recognized channel for the transmission of official instructions affecting the community in general; it acted as a responsible body able to exercise control over the community and eliminate frivolous and unsubstantiated individual petitions for official consideration; and provided a measure

of control in domestic matters, in the registration of refugees and in the collection of personal data.[14] The UNRRA administration 'even encouraged any reasonable form of self-government on the part of refugees', as pointed out by Umberto Nahon, who visited the refugee camps in Italy as a delegate of the Jewish Agency in January 1946.[15]

Unquestionably, these forms of aggregation on the part of refugees, which were largely supported by the Allies and UNRRA, favoured the ultimate goal of their own mission, which essentially aimed at reintegrating refugees in a national identity framework. On the other hand, this support of self-representation reinforced the DPs' self-determination and promoted the formation of a communal identity that in some cases – as in the Jewish one – did not coincide with British policy.

Zionist activism: political and cultural programmes in the DP camps
'Help the people to help themselves' was the motto of UNRRA, which coordinated and regulated the missions of non-governmental organizations by promoting a shared collective responsibility and an innovative, secular and institutionalized approach in rehabilitating the refugees. The work of UNRRA – subordinated to the Allies' decisions – was also characterized by a system of mandates (some with a high degree of responsibility) to private associations to carry out the work.

For example, the involvement of the Jewish organizations in rescuing and rehabilitating the Jewish survivors represents a paradigmatic case of the contradictions arising from the collaboration between international institutions and private associations. The most evident example is the Joint, which signed an official agreement with UNRRA, ratified by the Allies – under which the Joint acted as an intermediary between the Jewish DPs and the authorities, and financed all the cultural and political activities among the Jewish DPs, making a special effort to obtain certificates for entry into Palestine.

The Joint was the major funder of *kibbutzim* and *hachsharot*, where the DPs were learning agricultural techniques according to the Zionist ideals of a return to the land and to manual labour, and in which emissaries of the Jewish Agency (*shlichim*) promoted political activism and national independence. Each *kibbutz* and *hachsharah* was affiliated with a political party or

movement of the Yishuv. Thus there were *kibbutzim* of socialist orientation affiliated with the Hashomer Hatzair, or religious-oriented affiliated with the Hapoel Hamizrahi Party or of Zionist-revisionist orientation affiliated with Betar. In 1947 about 12,000 Jewish refugees lived in *kibbutzim* and *hachsharot* in Italy (Marrus 1985, 338).

Through the activities of its cultural department, the Organization of the Jewish Refugees in Italy made Zionist education of the younger generation of Jews its main mission, promoting awareness of a new Jewish identity linked to Eretz Israel.

The cultural and educational activities in the refugee camps were central in the rehabilitation of the DPs, and had the purpose of offering them the possibility of a new start in life after resettlement. The programmes included schools for children, vocational courses for adults, circulation of information through the press, and cultural activities as theatre, music and sport. In every DP camps there were schools for children of all ages. The teachers came directly from the Yishuv or were selected and trained from among the refugees by teachers from Eretz Israel. The main subjects were Hebrew language, and those related to Judaism, the history of the Jewish people and Eretz Israel.

Children who arrived in Italy without parents were provided for in orphanages, often supported by the Joint and affiliated with the 'Aliyat Ha-No'ar (the movement of Youth Aliyah). The orphans were divided into groups according to age, each guided by a *madrich* [guide, in Hebrew], who was in charge of their education and preparation for *'aliyah*.

Adults had the opportunity to attend workshops and vocational training, where they learned crafts and trades related to manufacturing (sewing, upholstery, carpentry, bookbinding, plumbing, electricity, carpentry, iron working, etc.). These training courses were also offered in collaboration with UNRRA and the Organization for Rehabilitation through Training (ORT), another private Jewish organization that had been involved in rescuing Jews from 1880, which began operating in Italy in 1947.

OJRI also published an official weekly journal in Yiddish: *Ba-Derekh* [on the way, in Hebrew]. It featured a great variety of subjects, focusing on international politics, the condition of the Jewish communities around the

Jewish displaced persons conduct a memorial service for Theodore Herzl and Chaim Nachman Bialik in an JDC convalescent home in Rome, 1947. Photographer unknown, United States Holocaust Memorial Museum

world, the British Mandate in Palestine and the political situation in Italy. There were also other sections giving voice to the Jewish leaders of the DP camps, to war testimonies by the refugees on their experiences of persecution or resistance as partisans in the ghettos, and other sections dedicated to the search for lost relatives.

Moreover, the Association of Jewish Journalists, Writers and Artists Refugees in Italy founded the literary and art magazine in Yiddish *In gang: khoydesh-zhurnal far literatur un kunst* [On the move: a monthly magazine for literature and art]. It aimed to promote Jewish culture among the DPs after the war, in a Zionist-awakening framework. *In gang*, published between 1947 and 1949, gave space to personal stories of refugees, to poems and stories written by the DPs themselves, to reviews about the shows staged in the refugee camps, historical insights, sociological reflections, book reviews and introductions to new artists. The press and the bulletins produced by the Jewish DPs themselves circulated among the refugee camps in Italy. Many DP camps were equipped with libraries and reading rooms, where magazines and books were available to the readers in a number of languages (Hebrew, Yiddish, English, German, Polish, etc.).

The rehabilitation programme of the Jewish DPs consisted also of theatre and the music, which were resumed inside the refugee camps. Artists among the refugees, who founded itinerant acting companies and orchestras, often initiated productions. Great classic works of the Jewish theatre were staged, such as those of Shalom Aleichem, which told about life in the *shtetl* (small towns in Eastern Europe with a large Yiddish population before the Holocaust), and Aaron Ashman, which featured the pioneers in Eretz Israel.

In additions to producing cultural events, the Jews in DP camps in Italy began to play sports as an integral part of their rehabilitation. Through the support of the Joint, OJRI organized 'national' competitions, called the Maccabiah Games, which always ended with the singing of *Hatikvah* (literally 'The Hope', which would soon become the national anthem of the State of Israel).[16]

Conclusions
The goal of this brief review of the activities that took place in the Jewish DP camps in Italy is not to express mere praise of the Joint and of Jewish organizations in general, nor to depict the reality of the DP camps in post-war

Europe as free of complications. As in all the refugee camps throughout Europe at that time, those hosting Jews also experienced problems caused by overcrowding, hunger, black marketeering and general disorders generated by the condition of marginalization implicit in the nature of refugee-camp life itself. The goal of this reflection on the Jewish displacement in Italy is rather to shed light on several distinct features of the Jewish displacement, according to the above-mentioned considerations.

In redefining themselves and thus in reconstructing their identity during this period of marginalization, the displaced persons (in general) used traditional categories of membership and recollection to a given national place. Though embracing this element of continuity with the past, there emerged in the specific case of the Jewish displacement several aspects of discontinuity.

The refugee camp became an extraterritorial space wherein people from different nationalities and with different experiences of integration, assimilation, discrimination and resistance met in a place that did not belong to any of them, and in a place they did not intend to create any kind of bond. In this place they were controlled and managed by international institutions while at the same time subjected to internal forces of political aggregation, that often found (practical and ideological) support in those institutions that would have been expected to remain outside these dynamics. Thus, the Jewish displacement became a sort of space and time between the past of the diaspora and the yearning for a future new homeland in Eretz Israel. This intermediate space turned into a venue where the different experiences of its temporary inhabitants were mediated and even became a springboard for a new identity. It was the place where the DPs created a new self-perception and developed a new sense of national belonging through the 'negotiation' of personal and collective experiences.

CHIARA RENZO
Chiara Renzo is a PhD candidate in History at the joint doctoral programme of the Universities of Florence and Siena and a Claims Conference Saul Kagan Fellow in Advanced Shoah Studies. Her dissertation focuses on the transit of the Jewish DPs in Italy between 1943 and 1951. In 2015, Chiara Renzo was Visiting Research Fellow at the Hebrew University and at the Yad Vashem International Institute for Holocaust Research in Jerusalem. In 2016 she obtained a fellowship from the European Holocaust Research Infrastructure (EHRI) at the Wiener Library for the Study of the Holocaust & Genocide in London.

ENDNOTES

1   The United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration was an agency founded in 1943 by the Allies in order to rehabilitate Europe after the Second War World. It was active until 1947, when it was succeeded by the International Refugee Organization (IRO).

2   *Aliyah* in Hebrew means literally 'rise' or 'climbing up'. The term is commonly used to refer to the immigration of Jews to Eretz Israel (the Land of Israel, the traditional Jewish term for Palestine). After the failure both of the proposed partition of Palestine in 1937 by the British Royal Commission headed by William Robert Peel and the St James Conference in 1939, the British Government decided to act unilaterally with regard to the Arab revolts in Palestine at that time. The White Paper of 1939 set out British policy until the end of the British Mandate: it limited the *aliyah* for the following five years to 75,000 individuals, 15,000 per year.

3   Accessed 9 November 2016: https://www.ushmm.org/exhibition/displaced-persons/resourc1.htm

4   Zeev W. Mankowitz, 'Zionism and the Sherith Hapletah', in *She'erit Hapletah, 1944–1948: Rehabilitation and Political Struggle*, ed. Yisrael Gutman and Saf Avital (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1990), 211.

5   The Central Archives of the State in Rome (ACS), Jewish Refugees, 8 October 1943, UA – Headquarters Allied Commission (AMG), Reel no. 599B, Disposal Jewish Refugees, October 1943 – February 1944.

6   The findings of the Anglo-American Commission of Inquiry are available online. Accessed February 2016: http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/History/anglotoc.html

7   Central Archives for the History of the Jewish People in Jerusalem (CAHJP), *Reference my visit to your HQ on Oct. 43, 8 October 1943*, E.E. Urbach Archives P118, Fol. 6: Refugees (I) in Ferramonti, October 1943 – February 1944.

8   ACS, *Conditions of the Jews in Italy, Sicily and Sardinia, 30 January 1944*, Reel no. 104F, Jews in Italy, December 1943 – March 1944.

9   The Central Zionist Archives of Jerusalem (CZA), L16/521 *Sifron Kinus ha-Pliṭim be-'Iṭalia.* Record Group 4: Affiliated Office of the World Zionist Organization and the Jewish Agency and Institutions Established By Them, Collection L16: Palestine Office for Italy (Ufficio Palestinese), Rome 1944–1969.

10   Ibid., *Pamphlet of Conference of the Jewish Displaced Persons in Italy 26–28 November 1945.*

11   Ibid.

12   Ibid., *Pamphlet of the Conference of the Jewish Displaced Persons in Italy 26–28 November 1945*, 3.

13   Ibid., *Opening Speech by L. Garfunkel at the Conference of Jewish Refugees in Italy, Rome, 26 November 1945*, 4–5.

14   ACS, Reel n. 104F, Jews in Italy, December 1943 – March 1944, *Conditions of the Jews in Italy, Sicily and Sardinia, 30 January 1944*, 3.

15   CZA, *Jewish Agency report on Southern Region Camps*, S25/5243, 2.

16   This summary of the cultural and political activities organized among the Jewish DPs in Italy is an abstract of the result of the author's PhD research project. The primary

sources analysed are available at the Central Zionist Archives, at the Central American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee.

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'PURCHASING AND BRINGING FOOD INTO THE GHETTO IS FORBIDDEN': WAYS OF SURVIVAL AS REVEALED IN THE FILES OF THE GHETTO COURTS AND POLICE IN LITHUANIA, 1941–44

Joachim Tauber
Nordost-Institut Lüneburg (IKGN) at the University of Hamburg

ABSTRACT
The article focuses on the importance of work in the supply of food into the ghettos of Lithuania. Files of the ghetto courts and police reports used in this paper shed light on the reality of ghetto life and illustrate how individuals dealt with the situation and tried to get additional food. It is obvious that micro-networks (family, neighbourhoods and co-workers) were an important means of support for the individual within the context of ghetto societies. Normality and everyday life therefore reflect the reality of a forced society whose social differentiation was primarily based on a single criterion: access to food.

The idea of a ghetto still connotes the idea of a zone hermetically sealed off from the outside world, where people are fully separated from their previous environment. It has been repeatedly pointed out in recent decades that a special form of everyday life and normality existed in this extreme situation (Dieckmann and Quinkert 2009, 9–29). Research has increasingly followed this approach in recent years, as several publications have been added to existing memoirs of everyday experience, which are devoted in the form of anthologies to daily life in the German Reich (Löw 2014) and Eastern Europe (Hansen 2013). Monographs have also been added: Andrea Löw describes the situation in the ghetto of Litzmannstadt (Löw 2006), while this author has dealt with everyday work in the ghettos of Lithuania (Tauber 2015). The following may prove the potential of addressing such everyday issues and once again show that the history of the ghettos in Eastern Europe still has certain gaps that need filling. The genesis of this

particular form of normality is closely tied to work of the Jewish popula-
tion provided for its German masters. In most ghettos such work was
performed outside the 'Jewish district', so it was possible for many Jews to
establish contact with non-Jewish people in the immediate vicinity. At the
same time, Jewish councils, appointed by the Germans or selected by the
Jews on Germans' orders, formed an infrastructure to regulate and control
labour and its internal management within ghettos.

This development also took place in the three major ghettos in Lithuania.
Since extensive resource materials exist in Yiddish, Lithuanian and German,
traditions can be described relatively well (except for the ghetto in Šiauliai).
Deep insights into ghetto life can also be found in the diaries of Herman
Kruk in relation to Vilnius (Kruk 2002) and Avraham Tory with regard to
Kaunas (Tory 1990). In addition, early reports and accounts (Fun letztn
Churbn 7 and 8; Gar 1948; Balberyszki 1967; Dworzecki 1948; Shalit 1949)
have particular significance and contributions in a two-volume memoir (Su-
darsky 1951) are also important. There are complete histories of the three
ghettos in the encyclopedias of the US Holocaust Memorial Museum and
Yad Vashem. They contain research on the ghettos in Lithuanian, Israeli
and German (e.g. Bubnys 2014a and b; Kaunas 2014; Vilnius 2013; Porat
2009; Levin 2014; Dieckmann 2011; Tauber 2015). The histories of the
Jewish councils by Isaiah Trunk (Trunk 1972) and the emergence of the
ghettos by Dan Michman (Michman 2011) remain the seminal works on
this subject.

After the mass murders of late 1941, survivors were put to work in the
ghettos in Kaunas, Vilnius and Šiauliai where the interests of the German
administration and armed forces, as well as those of the Jewish councils,
were mutually dependant: the former were interested in labour of all kinds
by those willing and capable, whereas the latter, in turn, saw work as a means
of survival, guaranteeing the ghettos' continuing existence. Moreover, Jewish
labourers in Lithuania had to be paid by their 'employers', enabling Jewish
councils to provide at least some form of rudimentary aid through taxes
or direct salary deductions to those who were either too old or too ill to
work.

Work also offered a way for those in forced labour to improve their own
wretched living conditions. Naturally everyone was interested in obtain-
ing more food or goods for their families or themselves through official

allocations in order to relieve their misery. Inevitably activities clashed with the regulations of the occupying forces; sometimes they involved fraudulent behaviour or sparked conflicts with Lithuanians or other ghetto residents. Such incidents are evident in the criminal investigations of the ghetto police or in the files of internal ghetto courts that meticulously documented their inquiries and judgements in German, Lithuanian and Yiddish. These materials, which are now housed in the Lithuanian Central State Archive, shed light on the reality of ghetto life and illustrate how individuals sought to cope with the situation. Here I present some of these files, supplemented with memoirs and documents, and place them in a broader context.

All ghetto inhabitants were, as I stated, keen to work because the evidence of activity increased an individual's food-ration entitlement, e.g. in Kaunas the ration was doubled (LCVA R-973, ap. 2, b. 35, p. 236). Especially desirable were positions in work brigades that allowed you to leave the ghetto because you could then transact with locals. However, it did not always go as planned. In the spring of 1943, the head of the investigation section of the ghetto police, Giršas Volpertas, wrote a report on a related incident involving fraud. Baruchas Kovenskis, a member of a work brigade in Kaunas, reserved 5 kilograms of butter with a Lithuanian woman and wanted to pay and take it the next day. When he appeared on 1 May she stated that his colleague, who she believed had come on his behalf, had already picked up the butter. Since the woman did not want to issue the goods, Kovenskis's supposed colleague finally left her RM 325 and disappeared with the butter (LCVA R-973, ap. 2, b. 145, p. 35). The Lithuanian woman believed the claim of the man because he personally knew Kovenskis and his statement that Kovenskis could not come because he had to work that day at Aleksotas airport was a commonplace occurrence in the assignment of brigades. Often, people from city brigades were indeed divided up at short notice for hard work at Aleksotas outside the city (Tauber 2015, 190–95). On the basis of a testimony by Ilija Kaganas, a member of Kovenskis's work brigade, it turned out that the fraudulent buyer was Arkadijus Buršteinas, who Volpertas summoned for interrogation (LCVA R-973, ap. 2, b. 145, p. 35).

Buršteinas, who was questioned on 4 May, did not deny the incident, but believed to be in the right as he had already negotiated with the Lithuanian woman in front of Kovenskis, but failed to agree on a price: he offered RM 62 per kilogram, whereas she demanded RM 65. Having failed to force down the price, he left. Kovenskis witnessed this and ultimately paid the

woman her desired price, but only because he wanted to snub Buršteinas. Enraged, Buršteinas had then taken a portion of the butter, but stated that he could not recall whether he had claimed to have come on Kovenskis's behalf. However, he was only able to sell 2 kilograms in the ghetto and make a profit of RM 40, which he donated to a good cause.

The investigator recorded his findings and conclusions. Kovenskis had bought a total of 15 kilograms of butter in Kaunas, but only took 10 kilograms and wanted to pick-up the remaining 5 kilograms the following day (despite bribable German, Lithuanian and Jewish ghetto guards, the smuggling of food into the ghetto was officially forbidden and entailed considerable risks, as discussed below). Even if Buršteinas had to pay the purchase price owed to the suspicious Lithuanian, it was nevertheless assumed that he had wanted to acquire the goods fraudulently. This assumption is also supported by the fact that it was very difficult to find food in the city in the week of the incident between Easter and 1 May. The fraudster also made a profit. The investigators reached the conclusion that what mattered to Buršteinas was his own enrichment rather than settling a personal score with Kovenskis (LCVA R-973, ap. 2, b. 145, p. 35 f.).

These events provide initial insights into ghetto reality. The quantities reveal that the above incident not only concerned the purchase of food for the buyer's own use, but that the butter was bought with the intention to resell it in the ghetto (Gar 1948, 119 f.). The fact that the Lithuanian seller was not prepared to budge from her price showed there was a demand. Finally, it seems that Kovenskis was able to smuggle 10 kilograms into the ghetto in a single day, even though returning work gangs were searched at the ghetto gate. The way Buršteinas's fraud was recorded shows that such events were by no means an exception, but reflected an everyday aspect of food procurement and survival strategy. The fact that trade between Jewish workers and the Aryan populace was a mass phenomenon is evidenced by urgent instructions of the German civil administration passed through the Kaunas ghetto police to work gang leaders in July 1943, that is for 'workers not to leave their work places and engage in trade und hoarding' (LCVA R-973, ap. 2, b. 19, p. 126). The regularity of purchasing additional food is also clear in memoirs written after 1944:

> Early in the morning, after the night shift, they ordered us to walk back to the ghetto [...] farmer wives sold their own grown

vegetables there [at the former Jewish fish market outside the ghetto]. Whenever the opportunity arose, we stole away from the column, disappearing quickly between the stalls and grabbing a cabbage or other vegetables in exchange for some money before rushing back into the procession' (Faitelson and Widerstand, 53).

M. Chevasztein in Vilnius had similar experiences:

I used the lunch break or other free moments to make purchases. For this purpose, we ran into the next Polish huts. We bought bread, cheese, cucumbers, tomatoes, potatoes, etc. at a fairly high price [...] After work, we returned home with these purchases. We gradually got to know the guards and they allowed us to buy something (EK 3 Legal Proceedings, vol. 4, p. 1571, German translation of the book *Geopfertes Volk – der Untergang des polnischen Judentums* [Sacrificed people – the demise of Polish jewry] by M. Chevasztein).

Jozif Gar, who already reported on the events in Kaunas in the 1940s, emphasized that work outside the ghetto was the best and safest of all possible ways of procuring cheap 'food' (Gar 1948, 103, 118). In the summer, there was another option, as work in the countryside gave opportunities to forage for food and procure fresh vegetables and fruit (Gar 1948, 118). In this respect, the call for reflection at harvest time published in late September 1942 in an editorial of the Vilnius ghetto newspaper *In diesem Moment* has a special double meaning: 'We should not stop lifting our eyes to the sky' (Feldshtein 1997, 137).

While such procurement practices were commonplace, they could quickly lead to trouble. Even when Salomon Baron had permission to make purchases from the Local Commissioner of Kaunas, something soon went wrong:

On my arrest on 12 December the [...] Kaunas police took my money – approximately Rbl. 1,200 – as well as a brown leather wallet, pocket knife and a pocket watch. On my release from prison on 20 December, these things should have been returned to me, but the officer was not there at the time and I could not have them.

Baron was not the only one affected, which he made clear in his request to the chief of the ghetto police: 'the money is from aircraft wage [meaning: work at the airfield in Aleksotas] for my family. I kindly ask you to fulfil my request because we have been left without money' (LCVA R-973, ap. 1, b. 9, p. 24, front and back page). Such family networks were an important structural feature of the ghettos, as only cooperation and loyalty within a narrow (family) circle gave people the strength to cope with life in the ghetto. Tight communities were also formed through forced cohabitation with others in crowded houses or working closely in a brigade.

At times, people received small rewards or gifts from supervisory personnel within the ghetto, as did Ida Kaganaitė, who nevertheless had the misfortune of being found with two loaves of bread and a lemon during a check at the ghetto gate by her German masters. Meticulous findings of the ghetto police eventually led to the following conclusion:

> I established that she is engaged in clean-up work at the airfield. Above all, this is laundry work for workers or general construction foremen […] it has repeatedly come to the fore that also soldiers […] brought her laundry for washing [*sic*.] and that she received bread or small packets of baking soda – lemons – as a reward' (LCVA R-973, ap. 2. b. 19, p. 124).

Thus, the Jewess was spared the punishment imposed on other apprehended smugglers, which was usually work on Sunday (LCVA R-973, ap. 2, b. 19, p. 129). Also, the 47-year-old Pesė Perkienė fell into the hands of the ghetto police under German security police's orders because she had brought food several times at a shop in Kaunas and was denounced. Not only were Jews forbidden to visit a 'normal' food store, but it seems that Perkienė was not wearing the Star of David. In another case, a Jewess was punished by being held under arrest for four days or fined RM 20 for merely 'walking without a Star of David' (LCVA R-973, ap. 3, b. 52, p. 340). When questioned on 12 May 1942, Perkienė claimed not to have taken off the Jewish star or to have paid anything for the food. Rather, she repeatedly referred to her former Lithuanian neighbour, Dainauskienė: 'She sold me no [food], but out of pity gave my children some potatoes, cereals, bread and cabbage. I have no money to buy food and was therefore forced to beg from my previous neighbours' (LCVA R-973, ap. 2, b. 69, fol. 90). A Jewish woman under arrest summed up the reality of food procurement in a single sentence: 'I only know that

my children are starving and that I had to get some food for them' (LCVA
R-973, ap. 2, b. 69, p. 90, back page). The woman questioned by the ghetto
police had four children, the youngest an eight-year-old boy, a fourteen year
old, and two over the age of sixteen who were obliged to work.

The treatment of people from the ghettos varied, as the examples of Ida
Kaganaitė and Pesė Perkienė show, depending on their place of work and
how they were supervised. Access to food and trade with the local popu-
lace were directly linked. Bolt, an engineer at the construction company
Grün und Bilfinger in Kaunas, made a name for himself as a Jew hater:
'There was very heavy work and people could exchange things only under
extremely difficult conditions, as Bolt always watched and then took food
away from the people or notified the *Sicherheitsdienst* (SD; Security Service)
or City Commissioner' (EK 3 Legal proceedings, vol. 3, 817). In turn, Oskar
Schönbrunner, a paymaster at Field Headquarters 814 in Vilnius, was hon-
oured as a Righteous Among the Nations in 1977, as two survivors testified
after the war: 'Schönbrunner helped the Jews working for him by providing
benefits that were punishable by the SD; these included support through
food, wood and other items of daily use. Schönbrunner also improved the
living conditions of the Jews by building additional factory kitchens' (EK
3 Legal proceedings, vol. 4, p. 1455). Another way of food procurement
associated with work in cities was particularly dangerous. As the people's
misery was immense, there were those such as Jona-Dovydas Rubinas, who
was caught stealing at the army-catering store on 30 December 1942. The
upper paymaster of the army-catering store in Kaunas reported the theft
to the SD (Security Service) and the ghetto police and requested that the
thief be punished (LCVA R-973, ap. 2, b. 19, p. 243). In his interrogation,
Rubinas outlined the reasons for what he did:

> I have worked at the army-catering store for about two weeks.
> I previously worked at the airfield. During my entire time at
> work I have never done anything wrong. I have performed
> heavy work the whole time and had to support myself with
> my primary and supplementary rations. Today, I worked at
> my job as usual [...] loading food. Given the poor nutrition
> of my family, I succumbed to the temptation to take two
> tin cans from the load. I did not know what was in them.
> I just knew that there was food' (LCVA R-973, ap. 2, b. 19,
> fol. 244).

Nothing more is known about the punishment of Rubinas, but in similar cases beatings, additional work and the temporary withdrawal of reference cards were imposed (Tauber 2015, 294–313).

Finally, the attempt to provide food could also prove fatal as in the case of Nachmanas Srokas (aged twenty-six) and Joselis Fridas (aged forty-five), who were shot at Aleksotas airport by German guards on 23 May 1942. They ostensibly sought to leave the area in order to buy food (LCVA R-973, ap. 2, b. 33, p. 15, back page). It was also life threatening to smuggle food through the ghetto fence, and not through the ghetto guard post. On 28 February 1942, the Jewish ghetto police reported in its daily report to the chairman of the Jewish Council: 'I report to you that yesterday, on 27 February at 20:00, citizen Balkindas Jankelis was shot at the intersection of Stulginskis and Linkuva Streets outside the ghetto limits, as facts show, while pulling a small sledge with food.' The Lithuanian guard justified his action by stating that the deceased fled after his call and also that he did not respond to several warning shots (LCVA R-973, ap. 2, b. 33, fol. 300, p. 305).

However, a contact zone at the ghetto fence was soon created. The situation in Vilnius was especially pragmatic because here the ghetto was in the middle of the city:

> an agreement was reached with non-Jewish neighbours whose windows faced the ghetto and trade began. Initially, this trade was very simple: a noose was lowered from a window and ghetto inhabitants tied money, valuables or clothes to it. The neighbours took it on themselves and lowered goods [meaning: food] on the same rope into the ghetto [...] Later the trade was done on a larger scale. Dozens of loads were smuggled night after night with all kinds of goods through the attics of 21 Dajtsche Street [...] through the Maline [underground hideout] on 3 Straschun Road (Sutzkever 2009, 97).

Also, in Kaunas, a kind of professional trusteeship evolved: anyone who wanted could give goods to middlemen, who then sought to sell them to the Lithuanian population at the fence. Berelis Migancas was one of the negotiators. He was sentenced in the autumn of 1941. The 21-year-old was withdrawn from work at Aleksotas airport as well as in a city brigade because he drifted elsewhere: 'when questioned in court he admitted that he used

free time when he was neither at the airfield nor in the city to trade items for food for other people at the fence and for profit' (LCVA R-973, ap. 2, b. 51, p. 65). This example shows that individual trade was punished within the ghetto when it conflicted with the ghetto community's group obligation to work. The German masters punished such offences less than the ghetto authorities. In the case of Migancas, the ghetto court gave a harsher punishment, since the young man lived alone and did not have to provide for a family.

Such trade was also brisk in Vilnius, hence, the officer for Jewish affairs of the Lithuanian city administration proposed resuming strip corridor patrols along the ghetto to the German occupiers at the regional station in December 1941: 'it has also been noticed that the Jews even use twilight [sic.] for the receipt and delivery of different goods from unauthorized persons through the insulation [meaning: the fenced-off ghetto border]' (LCVA R-643, ap. 3, b. 194, p. 167). Shalom Eilati, born in 1933, watched in Kaunas as his mother traded with a Lithuanian woman:

> across from us [...] stood a Lithuanian woman, seemingly without purpose. My mother would wave her hand or flap a woollen skirt or a colourful towel up and down to arouse her interest [...] The gentile woman would [...] begin waving her own items of trade – eggs, butter and meat. Then the vocal transaction would begin. They haggled over the terms of exchange. When they agreed, both would look hastily left and right, spring simultaneously to the fence, trade the goods in their hands in an instant and retreat to their starting corners. Sometimes the lengthy bargaining would end without a result (Eilati, River 32 f.).

Such form of 'intermediary trade' between the ghetto and the 'Aryan' environment was no exception. During the first months of the ghetto, a certain kind of 'working from home' also developed in Kaunas. Its success depended on goods being transported backwards and forwards between their 'manufacturer' and non-Jewish customers. It was based on demand for most basic commodities, such as headscarves, aprons and hats that the Lithuanian population lacked. Bed sheets or white linen, which had often been dyed to make them more attractive, were sought after. Repairs and alterations were also common (Tauber 2015, 251 f.; Gar 1948, p. 121). Another possibility

was the skilled craft works of German and Lithuanian masters, which led to a warning sign being posted in the ghetto on 13 May 1943:

> Lately, Jewish workers have taken various items from their work posts such as shoes, watches and other items for repair in the ghetto [...] Jewish workers are forbidden to take any items from their work posts into the ghetto for repair. If such repairs are proposed, Jewish workers are to be politely told that the acceptance of such work is strictly prohibited (LCVA R-973, ap. 2, b. 1, fol. 22).

The early involvement of young people in the work process had special strategic importance. The Jewish Council in Kaunas reported in its 'overview of the activities of the council of elders' in June 1942: 'a new development in work is the presence of more than 200 young workers gardening outside the ghetto [...] This young group has proven itself and does a good job' (LCVA R-973, ap. 2, b. 40, p. 73). It was crucial that also one half of these children received additional food as workers. Since work offered the possibility to trade and to better food, there were also volunteers such as the fourteen-year-old son of the aforementioned Pesė Perkienė, who was hired at the dreaded Aleksotas airfield.

No one was immune to terrible consequences, even those who supposedly had easier access to food. This was the case of the Jewish cart-driver Jankelevitz, who on 1 May 1942 was reported missing by his wife after being arrested fourteen days earlier in the courtyard of the Lithuanian meat cooperative Maistas. The 36-year-old, as told by a ghetto resident who accompanied her husband, reported that the stolen meat was discovered during a cart search and that her husband was then arrested. In reality, the other riders wanted to exchange the meat for a dress and that her husband had nothing to do with the entire affair. However, interrogations of the Jews involved in the ride to Maistas painted a rather different picture. The meat was bought from an unknown Lithuanian, who was also at the court with his team. Three kilograms were traded, as there was not enough money for more. The deal went smoothly until Jankelevitz was denounced and accused of theft by a Lithuanian employee at Maistas (LCVA R-973, ap. 2, b. 69, fol. 39 f.).

Jankelevitz and his colleagues were in a privileged position because they were officially allowed to leave the ghetto regularly and move about to provide

social welfare for the ghetto, with the permission of the German ghetto guards. It was certainly part of their regular activity to procure additional food by visiting Maistas, especially to meet Lithuanian farmers, who were not averse to trade, in the courtyard. Also interesting in this context was the task of the Jewish drivers. They brought feathers to Maistas (there was a feather-sorting section at the ghetto) and exchanged them for bones, which were then brought into the ghetto to make soup for the needy (LCVA R-973, ap. 2, b. 69, fol. 41). All ghettos in Lithuania had soup kitchens and other social institutions – albeit makeshift – to provide warm soup or essential material resources (e.g. firewood in winter; Tauber 2015, 285–6).

Cooperative relationships existed beyond the already-noted micro-networks found within a family environment, as with the soup kitchens, but they were mostly limited to those belonging to the same status group or class. The work brigades entrusted one person to execute large orders on behalf of them all. The advantage of this large-scale food procurement was usually a lower unit price, less risk of discovery and being able to rely on the middleman's good contacts. But disagreements could also arise, as recorded in documents of the ghetto police. The 37-year-old worker Dovydas Tamše, who offered to buy sugar for members of his brigade, was considered suspect in the autumn of 1942. An investigation revealed that Tamše was likely to have embezzled money because Tamše's claim that his Lithuanian partners hit him on the ear was hardly credible. The initiation of proceedings by ghetto authorities took place under the force of the Criminal Procedure Code of the Republic of Lithuania with the telling note that such offences must be especially prosecuted under 'current ghetto conditions' (LCVA R-973, ap. 2, b. 145, p. 92 f.).

The benefits of work for individuals outside the ghetto meant that it was hard to be a permanent member in a city brigade. It was the brigadier who decided on who worked in the group, and thereby had access to obtaining food; he was the 'spokesman' and foreman of the group, who was the primary contact for Germans and Lithuanians at a workplace as well as for the internal ghetto organization. Isak Rozalsky, a merchant in Kaunas before the war, noted that the brigadier of a well-established brigade for constructing garages in Kaunas often selected even more workers for his group at the ghetto gate (LCVA R-973, ap. 2, b. 69, fols 77 ff.):

> In September 1941, I noticed Tomašauskas at the ghetto gate
> [...] who came from town. At my request, he temporarily hired

> me as a worker at the garage building in Kauen [...] Since I al-
> ways wanted to work in this brigade, I offered Tomašauskas
> my brand new suit that I estimated to be worth RBL 1,500 for
> a price of RBL 600. Tomašauskas agreed, took my suit and
> gave me two RBL 200 notes. He has not paid me the rest to
> the present day.

Testimony gathered by investigating bodies in the ghetto repeatedly showed that Tomašauskas did not only cheat Rozalsky, he initiated a change of workers in order to receive payment to work in the brigade (LCVA R-973, ap. 2, b. 69, fols 80 ff.). Such behaviour was far from the rule. On the contrary, many brigadiers were willing to accommodate their workers and also to cover for them. The incensed Kaunas ghetto police summed it up: 'Inspections revealed that persons listed as not working on given days showed a note from the column head or a work card as evidence that they did indeed work on such days. Such evidence cannot reflect reality' (LCVA R-973, ap. 2, b. 52, p. 141). Evidence of work was vital for every ghetto resident: better accommodation and remuneration depended on entries in work documents and the employer payroll (Tauber 2015, 226–48).

The above networks for transporting food to the ghetto were of great importance. Passing the ghetto gate was always a gamble: smuggled goods could be confiscated here. The situation was particularly problematic if Germans inspected the Jewish ghetto guards. This always had direct impact on the precarious economics of the ghetto. In good times, the price difference between ghetto and city goods was relatively small so that many people gave up smuggling and bought directly in the ghetto (Gar 1948, 118 f.). However, goods from outside the ghetto usually came via the ghetto gate. Officially, representatives of the Jewish labour office aided by the ghetto police were responsible for the collection and control of departing work columns. Jews, as already mentioned, were not allowed to return to the ghetto with any food or other items (Gar 1948, 340). As a result Jewish gate guards played an essential role and could keep some of the goods back for themselves. This limited smuggling opportunities for individuals: they could only hide food on their body and in their clothing (body-binding, so-called compresses, or hiding items in their shoes were popular in their attempt to bypass a superficial search). Dishes that were allowed to into the ghetto for on-site feeding could have a double bottom in which a piece of bacon, butter or margarine could be concealed (Gar 1948, 103). The great number of returnees each day

(several thousand in Vilnius and Kaunas) made it impossible to search every individual (Gar 1948, 103, 340 f.). The Jewish councils were well aware of the occasional questionable behaviour of Jewish gate guards. In April 1942, Fried, the chairman of the Jewish council in Vilnius, filed a fiery complaint against the ghetto police chief, Gens: 'Incidents occur during ghetto entry involving gate guards and those entering. Frequently, they are not caused by formal matters, but by careless dealings and improper edginess of gate guards' (Balberyszki 1967, 430). However, smuggling opportunities made city work particularly appealing. Such work, as Jozif Gar states, 'made the ghetto Jews privileged and secure [...] allowed them to eat better and to always have a few spare Marks [in the sense of freely available]' (Gar 1948, 104).

Under these circumstances, it is not surprising that professional smugglers soon organized themselves in the ghetto, offering their services for a commission. A black market thus developed, which now operated on a grand scale in which all ghetto institutions, including the Jewish council (for the soup kitchens), as well as German and Lithuanian guards participated (Tauber 2015, 257 f.). Hermann Kruk, the chronicler of the ghetto in Vilnius, summarized it succinctly: 'So, the smuggler has the possibility of smuggling and the ghetto has the possibility of getting bread' (Kruk 2002, 287).

A certain grey area appeared in the context of ghetto societies, which was a constant cause of great distress and danger to individuals. The acquisition of food outside the ghetto was so important as a strategy of survival that it always entailed many uncertainties: this could be a denunciation or the intervention of a zealous Lithuanian police officer, German engineer or employee of a meat cooperative. Or, it could be a close inspection at the ghetto gate, in particular, by German 'authorities' or it could involve fraud or theft inside or outside the ghetto. Normality and everyday life, therefore reflected the reality of a forced society whose social differentiation was primarily based on a single criterion: access to food.

Translated from German into English by Edward Assarabowski

JOACHIM TAUBER
Joachim Tauber obtained his PhD from the University of Erlangen-Nuremberg in 1989. He has served as the director of the Nordost-Institute Lüneburg (IKGN) at the University of Hamburg since 2010. He read modern history at the University of Hamburg, where he was appointed as a private lecturer upon completion of his

postdoctoral qualification with a monograph about the Jewish working force in Lithuania 1941–44. His research interests include the history of German–Lithuanian relations, the German occupation of Eastern Europe in the First and Second World Wars and the Holocaust in the Baltic States. He has published many articles, and his most recent book is: Arbeit als Hoffnung. Jüdische Ghettos in Litauen 1941–1944 [Work as hope. Jewish ghettos in Lithuania 1941–1944] *(Berlin/Boston: De Gruyter, 2015).*

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Memory – Studies on Remembrance

ANNE AND ÉVA: TWO DIARIES, TWO HOLOCAUST MEMORIES IN COMMUNIST HUNGARY

Kata Bohus
Georg-August-Universität Göttingen

ABSTRACT
This article presents the publication histories and reception of two diaries in state socialist Hungary: the world-famous diary of Anne Frank and the much less-known diary of Éva Heyman, the so-called 'Hungarian Anne Frank'. The analysis shows how Hungary's Kádár regime (1956–89) tried to thematize Holocaust memory through the publication (or, in Éva's case, non-publication) of Jewish wartime diaries in the late 1950s and early 1960s. These policies resulted in the emergence of a partial and ideologically loaded Holocaust narrative, but one that should nevertheless not be dismissed as complete fiction. Moreover, in light of this phenomenon, the long-held thesis about the complete tabooization of the Holocaust in state socialist Hungary cannot be maintained.

Introduction

'We have our own Anne Frank, only we have yet to acknowledge her' (Antal 1957) lamented a journalist in the official daily of the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party, *Népszabadság,* in 1957. He was referring to Éva Heymann whose life story and writing indeed bore a striking resemblance to those of Anne Frank.

Both Anne and Éva came from cosmopolitan Jewish families. Anne and her family lived in Frankfurt, later in Amsterdam, and her father owned a small business selling spices and pectin. Éva lived in Oradea (Nagyvárad), a city on the border between Romania and Hungary, where her family owned a pharmacy. Éva, like Anne Frank, was thirteen years old when she began her diary. She also wrote about the war's effects on her life and about relationships between people in her family. She also fell in love, only her Peter van Daan was named Pista Vadas. And, like Anne's, her diary also ended abruptly when she was taken to Auschwitz-Birkenau where she was later

killed. Éva's death occurred just a few months before Anne Frank died in Bergen-Belsen concentration camp in March 1945. The diary of Anne Frank was published by her father Otto Frank in 1947 in the Netherlands, and the same year saw the publication of Éva's diary by her mother, the journalist Ágnes Zsolt in Hungary.[1] Anne Frank's diary was widely popular in various Hungarian theatres in the late 1950s and was consequently published five times between 1958 and 1982 in book format. Éva's diary, however, was not widely available in Hungary during the same period – a second Hungarian edition was only published well after the fall of communism, in 2009. The goal of this article is to explore the possible reasons for the difference between the two publication histories.

Because of their similarities, both diaries offer insight into the nature of the violence perpetrated upon Jews during the Second World War. The communist regimes of Eastern Europe interpreted the war, primarily as a fight between fascism and anti-fascism. In the context of this ideologically defined struggle, the persecution of Jews (in other words, non-political victimhood) during the Second World War was never a primary focus. Some academics go as far as to assert that the memory of the Jewish Holocaust was mostly suppressed in the Soviet Union[2] and its Eastern European communist counterparts (Braham 1999, 51; Cohen 1999, 85–118; Steinlauf 1997, esp. 62–88). Specifically, the idea that the Holocaust in Hungary was a taboo topic during the socialist period is a long-held thesis in academia. Randolph L. Braham asserted, for example, that during the communist period, the Holocaust was 'for many decades sunk in an Orwellian black hole of history' (Braham 1999, 50).

While the tabooization thesis seems to hold true regarding the publication history of Éva's diary, it certainly does not apply to Anne's. Why was Éva's diary ignored when Anne Frank's was widely publicized? What can be learned from these examples about the memory politics of the Kádár regime regarding the Holocaust? This paper reassesses the development of Holocaust memory during the first decade of János Kádár's reign in Hungary, and demonstrates that the regime made rather clumsy attempts to create an ideological narrative of wartime violence for its own benefit. Partly owing to its willingness to allow public depictions of such violence, the Hungarian state was nevertheless unable to completely suppress the emergence of a Jewish Holocaust narrative that contrasted with its own.

Though there was no censorship process in the strict sense of the word in Kádárist Hungary,[3] all publications were produced by the state, and had to go through a review process coordinated by the Main Directorate of Publishing [*Kiadói Főigazgatóság*]. Similarly, plays were reviewed by 'trustworthy' insiders before their stage adaptation began. Press and journalism was also under party control through a complicated institutional structure.[4] Therefore, it is possible to highlight the main cultural policy considerations and propaganda goals with regards to Holocaust memory based on texts produced within these structures of control.

The diary of Anne Frank on stage and in book format

The dramatized version of Anne Frank's diary arrived onto the Hung-arian stage during a rather sensitive period, before the diary had been published in print. Its première in Budapest's popular Madách Theatre took place in October 1957, almost exactly a year after the outbreak of a revolution. Events that started in Budapest on 23 October 1956 as a peaceful dem-onstration to express sympathy towards Polish workers, who had risen in Poznań earlier that year, ended in a popular uprising and bloodshed. The revolution became increasingly anti-communist, and the Soviet leadership eventually decided to use military force to prevent Hungary's withdrawal from the Warsaw Pact and the possible dissolution of the Eastern Bloc. On 4 November 1956 Red Army troops marched into Budapest, the reform communist government that had been on the side of the revolution found temporary refuge at the Yugoslav Embassy but later some of its members, including Prime Minister Imre Nagy, were arrested and executed. János Kádár, himself a former member of the Nagy government, was placed in power by the Soviet leadership while the units of the Red Army stayed in Hungary until 1991.

In the immediate years following the establishment of the Kádár adminis-tration, cultural policies aimed at 'uncovering' the reasons behind what was referred to as the 1956 'counter-revolution'. Through these, the Hungarian regime intended to establish at least some semblance of legitimacy both in the eyes of international audiences and its Hungarian subjects. According to official publications, the outbreak of the 'counter-revolution' was linked to the infiltration of fascist elements from the West and the re-emergence of domestic Hungarian fascists from the interwar era and the Hungarian domestic far-right Arrow Cross [*nyilaskeresztes*] movement (Nyssönen 1999, 92–5). The February 1957 'Resolution of the Hungarian Socialist Workers'

Party with regards to Current Questions and Tasks' attributed the actions of the population to a smaller group of provocateurs (Kalmár 1998, 29). This harmful minority, the party narrative maintained, used 'the dissatisfaction of the masses caused by the previous party leadership's mistakes, aimed at confusing the working masses' class consciousness with chauvinist, nationalist, revisionist, anti-Semitic and other bourgeois counterrevolutionary ideas'.[5] In order to substantiate the interpretation of the 1956 revolution as being instigated by (domestic and returning foreign) fascists, Kádár's propaganda exaggerated their presence and influence during the interwar period.

Anne Frank's diary was a possible vehicle to remind Hungarian audiences of the evil of fascism. Thus, when the theatre piece opened in 1957, one reviewer commented that 'the whole drama is a sharp critique of the vandalism of the Nazi world'.[6] The person tasked with reviewing the book for publication supported it by emphasizing that Anne Frank 'condemns the monstrosities of the fascists with sharp ruthlessness'.[7]

Yet, the story of two families hiding from Nazi persecution did not lend itself easily to the communist ideological narrative, which simultaneously emphasized anti-fascist resistance. The Franks were not anti-fascist revolutionary fighters. For that very reason, the drama was banned from being performed on the Soviet stage for a while, because it 'propagated passive behaviour against the enemy instead of active battle against fascism'.[8] This problem did not escape the attention of Hungarian theatre critics. The apparent contradiction was papered over with the redemptive image of socialism. *Népakarat*, the official paper of the trade unions put this the following way:

> Hero or only a victim? [...] Both. But most importantly a hero – her life proclaims the same as those of the small soldiers of resistance: to believe in life, believe in humankind, believe in the fact that our life, which is offered as a sacrifice, is a memento and our death prepares the happiness of the future, the once coming triumph of humanity. And for this triumph, Anne Frank had to sacrifice her life the same way as the armed heroes of resistance did (Thurzó 1957).

By likening Anne Frank's death to those for whom combat against fascism was a choice of conviction, the reviewer suggests that the extermination of millions of people by Nazism was the victims' fight for the happiness of

future generations. Anne Frank's then already famous lines 'I believe that people are really good at heart' were turned into a political confession. This logic gave an ideological answer to one of the most debated questions surrounding the Holocaust: why did it happen? It provided an answer to this question not by looking at causes and roots of Nazi policies but by pointing to a future outcome. Anne Frank had to die so that socialism could triumph.

Other articles also gave the impression that Anne Frank's death was not without purpose because in the present, communists were protecting peace and fighting the re-emergence of fascism. In a personal reflection piece in the paper *Magyar Ifjúság*, journalist Rezső Bányász expressed this as follows:

> See, since you finished your youthful dreams forever, a new world has started to form here. There is a big and strong camp here, in which there are a thousand million people. And this camp is fighting against war and protecting peace. [It is protecting] the lives of Anne Franks, of small and big, young and old, white and black. The strength of this camp is unmeasurable (Bányász 1957).

Another commentator suggested that Anne Frank's white gloves in the theatre piece (which she puts on for her first date with Peter) symbolized the coming of a free, better world (Nagy 1958). That world, the reader could easily deduct, was the socialist present. In the interpretation of the contemporary Hungarian press, the main message of the play was that Anne Frank's death brought about the triumph of socialism that ensured that fascism would never return. This statement served a legitimizing function for the Hungarian Kádár regime as a bulwark against the return of 'fascist elements' that characterized the 1956 'counter-revolution'.

The Hungarian edition of Anne Frank's diary first appeared in book format in 1958 – a year after the play had been performed – with a print run of 10,000 copies,[9] and was quickly republished a year later. These first two editions were rather simple publications, little more than booklets, unaccompanied by any kind of explanatory note from the publisher or anybody else. In 1962, the diary was compiled with Polish Holocaust child victim Dawid Rubinowicz's diary and published 50,000 copies.[10] This third edition is more intriguing as an examination of state socialist propaganda and its uses of Anne Frank's diary. István Bart, who was an editor at Európa Publishing

House (the publisher of Anne Frank's diaries in Hungary), pointed out that if a translated foreign manuscript contained sensitive issues, it was the foreword or the afterword that was supposed to shape the message more clearly for the reader.[11] Indeed, a resolution of the Politburo of the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party from 1957 clearly stated that 'publications that are debatable or include incorrect thoughts should be accompanied by an appropriate Marxist foreword' (Vass and Ságvári 1973, 161).

There was no foreword to the 1962 edition but the afterword, written by writer Géza Hegedüs, emphasized the universality of the experience of persecution during the war.

> [I]s there even one family in Europe's broad area that does not have anything to mourn from those years? [... I]f Anne Frank's ancestors had not prayed to Jehovah, she could have also died under the ruins of a house of some German city, her relatives could have fallen on the battlefields of fascism (Hegedüs 1962, 430).

The message is clear: fascism's destructive force extended well beyond Jewish victims. This view matched the official narrative, which framed Jews as only one group of victims, as also expressed by the general secretary of the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party János Kádár at a Politburo meeting in 1960. Commenting on the then ongoing trial of the Nazi war criminal Adolf Eichmann, Kádár insisted that in the press reports about the trial, emphasis should be placed on the murder of 'hundreds of thousands of Hungarians'. The Nazis, asserted Kádár, 'did not only murder Jews, there were others there, too. This is not a Jewish question; this is the question of fascism and anti-fascism' (Kovács and Miller 2005, 218). Neither Hegedüs's afterword for the 1962 edition of the diary, nor the majority of the numerous reviews of the theatre adaptation in Hungarian newspapers concealed the fact that Anne Frank was Jewish and the she was persecuted because of that.[12] Thus, in contrast to the idea of an Orwellian black hole that simply erased the history of the Holocaust, the Hungarian state, while indeed promoting a different war-narrative, did acknowledge the death of Jews and thus allowed the story of the Jewish Holocaust to come to light.

Not all reactions to the diary were (or could be) controlled by the state administration. This becomes quite clear if one observes the reaction among Hungary's

Jews. This reaction was perhaps more important in Hungary than elsewhere in Eastern Europe because there remained a sizeable Jewish community in this country even after the war. The year 1945 saw about 190,000 survivors (Karády 2002, 68) and despite its steady decline thereafter, Jews in Hungary still amounted to about 150,000 people in the late 1950s, a considerable number.

Anne Frank's diary represented a particular Jewish experience not generally applicable to Eastern Europe, with Budapest as a possible exception. Though the city's Jews were forced into ghettos and hiding, and were severely persecuted by the Gestapo and their Hungarian Arrow Cross counterparts, they did not experience, just as Anne did not, extended periods of starvation and were somewhat shielded from the worst theatres of the war. Deportations of Hungarian Jews started shortly after the country's German occupation, in May 1944, in the provincial and border areas. The capital, Budapest, with its substantial Jewish population of about 250,000[13] was to be made *Judenrein* ('free of Jews') last. However, because of the worsening military position of the Germans, the mass deportations from Budapest never took place. The young theatre critic Anna Földes's review on the theatre adaptation of Anne Frank's diary in a weekly women's magazine reflected on these particular experiences.

> I should be writing a review, not an autobiography. But now, I am unable to start it in any other way. My name is also Anna and at the age of fourteen, after being persecuted and adrift, I spent weeks [hiding] with ten other people in a sixth-floor studio of a Budapest apartment house. On the blocked door, somebody wrote 'elevator shaft' [...] I wanted to read, see and re-live what I went through. In the battles of Anne Frank with the world, I was perhaps looking for my own teenage experiences; in her sad fate I was looking for a soothing balm for the pain of my own and my beloved (Földes 1957).

Anna Földes's memories, though they did not openly contradict the communist interpretation of the history of the war, did highlight a sensitive issue: the persecution of Jews specifically (who are not presented in her piece as ideological opponents of the political establishment) during the Second World War in Budapest.

Földes was not the only one whose memories were triggered by the play. The official periodical of the Hungarian Jewish community, *Új Élet*, declared its

intention in January 1958 to collect the diaries and memoirs of 'Hungarian Anne Franks' in order to preserve the memories of those Jews who died during the Second World War, as well as to document the persecution of Jews during that time. The journal expressed the intention of the leadership of the Jewish community to preserve these documents in the Jewish Museum, as well as to publish from them regularly in the paper.[14] Indeed, *Új Élet* published several excerpts from such diaries in 1958–59. These featured numerous details that did not correspond to the official narrative of the Second World War in Hungary.

For example, an article entitled 'An Anne Frank from Budapest' [Egy pesti Anne Frank] from June 1958 highlighted that the young Jewish woman who, like Anne Frank, had literary ambitions 'could not find in the city of millions a single soul who would have helped her'.[15] This remark was clearly not in line with the communist narrative, which preferred to emphasize the presence of anti-fascist non-Jewish 'helpers'. *Új Élet*, though emphasizing the 'anti-fascist' character of Anne's writing, failed to interpret her messages in a universal frame: an article inspired by the theatre adaptation asserted that

> Anna Frank's diary is a Jewish writing, but not because in one of the scenes we can hear the ancient melody of *Moaz Tsur* during Hannukah celebrations. But it is Jewish, because Anne Frank testifies about love, about her Jewish heart even during the most difficult days when she writes into her diary: 'And I still believe that people are really good at heart.'[16]

Even though the official paper of the Jewish community was under strict state supervision and all its issues had to be approved by representatives of the National Office of Church Affairs [Állami Egyházügyi Hivatal], it seems it was more able to provide room for alternative interpretations of Anne Frank's message than other papers were. One possible reason for this could be in the state administration's reluctance to antagonize a still considerable Jewish community but also the fact that the paper appeared in limited numbers and was almost exclusively read by Jews. This meant that the Jewish Holocaust narrative – with all its implications about the attitudes of non-Jewish society in general – was not likely to reach the broader Hungarian public, and thus did not weaken the official narrative of widespread anti-fascist resistance.

The diary of Éva Heyman – the untold story

When establishing why Éva Heyman's diary was not published, it is worth considering that the reason might simply be that it focused on the Hungarian Holocaust. However, this explanation proves insufficient because some other Hungarian wartime Jewish diaries were published during the period under investigation.

Edith Bruck's *Ki Téged így szeret* [Who loves you this much] was published by Európa Publishing House (the publisher of Anne Frank's diary) in 1964.[17] Bruck grew up poor, in a small village in the Subcarpathian areas of Hungary (today's Ukraine). In her book, Bruck wrote about her life before deportations, in concentration camps and her wanderings through Europe after the war. In Bruck's narration, the most important ideological dividing lines in wartime Hungarian society appear between the rich and the poor. When describing her deportation, she mentioned that 'the people of the village were standing in front of their houses, crying. Mostly the poor ones, because the rich have few tears' (Bruck 1985, 22). Throughout the book, she frequently suggested a certain solidarity between Jews and non-Jews among the poor. This was in line with the Kádár administration's interpretation that tended to portray the wartime Hungarian governments' discriminatory actions as targeting not only Jews, but also communists and the working class in general. Furthermore, Bruck presented the soldiers of the Red Army in post-war Budapest as friendly, and explicitly refuted rumours of rape.

> Coming out of the cinema, we saw three Russians on the corner of the street, they were chatting and they had a bottle. Margot was frightened and warned me not to stare but I did look at them. I did not believe the stories I was told. The Russians offered us the bottle and said 'vodka, vodka'. Margot and Eliz ran away. The soldiers waved a greeting and I waved back (Bruck 1985, 61).

The presentation of Red Army soldiers in a positive light played into the hands of the Kádár regime that sought to make post-1956 Soviet occupation more palatable for the population. Though Bruck described expressions of popular anti-Semitism during the war, her book repeatedly emphasized solidarity (especially among the poor) within wartime society which meshed well with communist interpretations of the Second World War as a class-based conflict where the reactionary ideology of fascism was mainly supported

by the petty bourgeoisie, but opposed by the working class that it sought to crush.[18]

In 1966 another diary book appeared entitled *A téboly hétköznapjai: egy diáklány naplójából* [The weekdays of insanity: from the diary of a schoolgirl]. The author Zimra Harsányi was, like Éva, from Transylvania and the same age as Éva and Anne when she wrote down her experiences. However, Harsányi started her diary where Anne and Éva left off: she wrote about life in Auschwitz, Płaszów and other camps. Her writing described in detail the horrors of the Nazi war machine, supporting communist ideological arguments against fascism. Nevertheless, Bruck and Harsányi, who survived the war and chronicled their experiences, both revealed in their diaries that they had been persecuted in Hungary during the war as Jews. Therefore, one must take a closer look at Éva Heyman's text to establish what in her writing might have appeared contentious to the Kádár regime and prevented the publication of her story.

Éva's diary highlighted the possible tensions between Jewish and non-Jewish memories of the war. As the journalist and novelist Béla Zsolt (who was also Éva's stepfather) emphasized in his review of the diary in 1947, 'Yes, with us [in Hungary] it is almost considered ill-mannered to remind the murderer: he has not always been this good of a democrat [as today], or that he has not always joined so piously behind the canopy during the procession but he used to kill women and children' (Zsolt 1947, 3). As Zsolt emphasized, Éva's diary questioned the behaviour of many non-Jewish Hungarians during the war and described contemporaneous Hungarian society as comprising of Jews and 'Aryans' (her expression). 'There always used to be a party on my birthday ... But grandma said she does not permit it anymore so that the Arians cannot say that Jews are showing off' (Zsolt 1948, 9). The societal division as depicted by Éva Heyman did not match with the official understanding of an ideological opposition between fascism and anti-fascism. On the contrary, it suggested that the Nazi-inspired racial categorization, which was adopted in Hungary as part of the anti-Jewish legislation from 1941, was reflected in actual social divisions between Jews and non-Jews.[19] Furthermore, Éva also attributed certain opposing political preferences to these two groups: she thought 'Arians' supported the political establishment while it was mostly the Jews who opposed it. For example, she described how very surprised she was when her stepfather explained to her that not only Jews could be communists and socialists (Zsolt 1948, 52). The

idea that Jews were over-represented among the communists, linked with the notion that the majority of Hungarian society (comprised of 'Arians', in Éva's words) was deeply inimical/anti-Semitic towards Jews was a very dangerous connection that the Kádár regime did not want to highlight. It would have undermined socialist claims for legitimacy and contradicted the official propaganda's assertion that Hungary's alliance with Nazi Germany during the Second World War was only the work of a few 'fascists' in power while most of the population engaged in an anti-fascist struggle.

Éva wrote detailed descriptions about the relations between Hungarians, Romanians and Jews in Oradea, which revealed social tensions between these groups as early as 1940 when the Second Vienna Award reassigned Northern Transylvania to Hungary from Romania. The question of territorial loss was a key element of Hungarian interwar politics as well as Hungarian national identity ever since it had occurred following the First World War. The Treaty of Versailles in 1919 inflicted severe territorial losses on the dissolving Austro-Hungarian monarchy, and as a result, Hungary lost about two-thirds of the territories that had previously constituted the Kingdom of Hungary. The main foreign policy goal of Admiral Miklós Horthy's conservative-Christian interwar political establishment was the revision of these territorial changes. The return of some territories to Hungary as a result of the arbitration of Nazi Germany in 1940 was greeted with huge popular support. However, Éva's description of the event highlighted how problematic this development was on a practical level:

> So, the Hungarians had been here for a few days then, and grandpa was very upset because they deported all the Romanian families within hours and they [the Romanian families] had to leave all their belongings behind [...] Grandpa called them [the Hungarians] 'parachuters from the mother-country' and grandma said that there were all these Arrow Cross-looking people walking around town. One day, grandpa was called to City Hall and the military commander told him that he could no longer be in the pharmacy [that he owned] because he is an untrustworthy Jew who likes Romanians (Zsolt 1948, 27–28).

The excerpt from Éva's diary highlighted Hungarian chauvinism, as well as anti-Semitism in the lower levels of state bureaucracy and state administration. The issue of widespread anti-Semitism among the Hungarian public and

lower-level authorities came up several times in Éva's diary. She described how a Jewish hotel-owner was arrested and robbed with the help of Hungarians (Zsolt 1948, 47), and suggested the widespread usage of anti-Semitic language among Hungarian authorities. When writing about the police confiscating her bike, Éva quoted one of the policemen saying that a 'Jewish child is not entitled to a bike from now on, not even to bread, because Jews are taking away the bread from the soldiers' (Zsolt 1948, 48).

Éva's diary, if published, might have highlighted many weaknesses in the official narrative of the Second World War. Her repeated implications of widespread anti-Semitism among Hungarians contradicted one of the regime's claims to legitimacy, namely that it was made up from and supported by a broad stratum of Hungarian society that had actively opposed fascist and Nazi ideas during the war. As opposed to Czechoslovakia or Bulgaria, the home-bred communist movement in Hungary had, in fact, been consistently quite weak and received little support from the population. The generic narrative of communists fighting a war against fascism was especially unsuited to the Hungarian context as opposed to Poland – a country 'without a Quisling and, in all of Nazi-controlled Europe, the place least likely to assist the German war effort' (Connelly 2005, 772 ff.). Hungary had entered the war on the side of Nazi Germany and remained its ally up until the abortive attempt to switch sides in 1944. Unlike Poland and Czechoslovakia, which both produced considerable resistance movements during the Second World War, Hungary only generated a weak and insignificant resistance (Deák 1995, 209–33). Until the country was invaded in March 1944, there had barely been any German soldiers on Hungarian soil for any resistance to fight against.

Conclusion

One reason for the relatively frequent publication of Anne Frank's diary was its political usefulness for the Hungarian communist regime. The diary was presented as an anti-fascist testimony, in accordance with the ideological interpretation of the Second World War as a fight between fascism and anti-fascism. Moreover, it was levied to warn against the resurgence of fascism, which was sought to support the Kádár regime's narrative of the 1956 revolution as the result of 'fascist instigation'. A redemptive image of communism was evoked to assure theatregoers and readers moved by Anne Frank's story that nothing similar would happen again because communists were strong security against fascism, new and old. The printed version of the

diary provided an opportunity for the regime to emphasize the universality of experiences of persecution during the Second World War instead of focusing on the Jewish Holocaust. This message became especially important in the aftermath of the trial of the Nazi war criminal Adolf Eichmann in 1961–62,[20] which, according to several scholars, marked the beginning of Holocaust memory around the world.[21]

An important reason why Éva's diary was not published was its presentation of sensitive issues of Hungarian national memory, which the communist establishment did not want to address. While it may have been acceptable to acknowledge that Hungarian Jews had died at the hands of the Nazis during the war, the regime had no interest in publishing a diary critical of Hungarian attitudes towards Jews. Éva's diary described in no uncertain terms that anti-Semitism was widespread in Hungarian society and that non-Jewish Hungarians sometimes benefitted from the persecution of Jews. Furthermore, Éva's diary highlighted that the generic communist interpretation of the Second World War as a fight between fascism and anti-fascism was particularly unsuited to Hungary, where the communist movement was especially weak, and resistance negligible.

Although the Hungarian state clearly controlled the interpretation of Anne Frank's story, the publicity of the play and the book brought about an increased interest among Hungarian Jews in similar testimonies. These were published in the official journal of the Jewish community, Új Élet, and though they only reached a limited Jewish public, they brought important aspects of the Holocaust in Hungary to the surface.

KATA BOHUS
Kata Bohus is a post-doctoral researcher in the Anne Frank Research Group at the Lichtenberg-Kolleg – the Göttingen Institute of Advanced Study, Georg-August-Universität Göttingen. She received her PhD from the Central European University in 2014. Her research focuses on state policies towards Jews, Holocaust memory formation and anti-Semitism during the state socialist period in Central Europe, and especially Hungary.

ENDNOTES

1   It is not clear how much of the text of the published diary is written by Ágnes Zsolt. For details, see Kinga Frojimovics, 'A nagyváradi gettó irodalmi bemutatása. Zsolt Béla Kilenc koffer című regénye' [The literary representation of the Nagyvárad ghetto. Béla Zsolt's novel,

Nine Suitcases], *Studia Judaica* XIII (2005), 201–10; Gergely Kunt, 'Egy kamasznapló két olvasata' [Two readings of a teenage diary], *Korall* 41 (2010), 51–80; Dániel Lőwy, 'A "magyar Anne Frank" naplójának eredetisége' [The originality of the diary of 'the Hungarian Anne Frank'], *Amerikai Magyar Népszava*, 27 March 2010, 14.

2   See, for example, William Korey, 'Down History's Memory Hole: Soviet Treatment of the Holocaust', *Present Tense*, vol. 10 (Winter, 1983), 53.

3   On the working mechanism of state control in the arts, see Miklós Haraszti, *The Velvet Prison. Artists under State Socialism* (London: I.B. Tauris, 1987).

4   On press and journalism in the Kádár era, see Róbert Takács, 'A sajtóirányítás szervezete a Kádár korszakban' [The structure of press control during the Kádár era], *Média-kutató*, 2009/3. Accessed 25 October 2016: http://www.mediakutato.hu/cikk/2009_03_osz/07_sajtoiranyitas_kadar

5   Minutes of the meeting of the Temporary Executive Committee, 23 November 1956. M-KS 288.5/4, Magyar Országos Levéltár [Hungarian National Archives, henceforth MOL], Budapest.

6   Lectoral report on Frances Goodrich and Albert Heckett's 'The Diary of Anne Frank'. File: Goodrich-Hackett: Anna Frank naplója, Madách Színház, 1957.X.19. Országos Színháztörténeti Múzeum és Intézet [National Museum and Institute of Theatre History, henceforth OSZMI], Budapest, Hungary.

7   Lectoral report on 'Het Achterhuis' by Lászlóné Frank, 22 April 1955, 5. File: Anne Frank Naplója lektori jelentései, Petőfi Irodalmi Múzeum [Petőfi Literary Museum], Budapest, Hungary.

8   Hungarian lectoral opinion of an article in Variety, 27 April 1957. File: Goodrich-Hackett: Anna Frank naplója, Madách Színház, 1957.X.19. OSZMI.

9   Letter from Európa Publishing House to the Main Directorate of Publishing about books at the Week of Books Festival, 14 April 1958. 16–8/1958, file 3, box 33, XIX–I-21-a, MOL.

10   Report from Európa Publishing House to the Main Directorate of Publishing, 10 January 1961. XIX–I-21-a, box no. 86. doboz, Európa Publishing House, 1961, MOL.

11   Author's interview with István Bart, 6 January 2015.

12   More than half (20 out of 37) reviews I found mentioned that Anne Frank was Jewish.

13   'Virtual Jewish World: Budapest, Hungary' in *Jewish Virtual Library*. Accessed 25 October 2016: http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/vjw/Budapest.html#5

14   'Magyar Anna Frankok' [Hungarian Anne Franks], Új Élet, 1 January 1958, 1.

15   'Egy pesti Anna Frank' [An Anne Frank from Budapest], Új Élet, 15 June 1958, 4.

16   'És mégis bízom az emberi jóságban' [And I still believe in the goodness of humankind], Új Élet, November 1957, 5.

17   Though she was of Hungarian origin, she wrote her books in Italian, thus the diary was a translation.

18   For more details, see David Beetham, ed., *Marxists in the Face of Fascism: Writings by Marxists on Fascism from the Interwar Period* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1983), 197–204; Léon Trotsky, *The Struggle against Fascism in Germany* (London: Pathfinder, 1971), 155–56.

19   The so-called 'third Anti-Jewish Law' of 1941 appropriated the racial definition of Jews as used by the Nazi Nuremberg Laws; it forbade mixed marriages between Jews and non-Jews and also punished sexual relationships between them.

20   The former Nazi SS-*Obersturmbannführer* Adolf Eichmann was captured in Argentina in 1960 and subsequently tried and executed in Jerusalem. During the war, he had been responsible of managing mass deportations of Jews from German-occupied Europe, including Hungary. During the trial, the Hungarian chapter of the Holocaust featured prominently, which the Kádár administration tried to reformulate, through Hungarian media coverage, to fit its own interpretation of the war. For details see: Kata Bohus 'Not a Jewish Question? The Holocaust in Hungary in the Press and Propaganda of the Kádár Regime during the Trial of Adolf Eichmann', *Hungarian Historical Review*, vol. 4, no.3 (2015), 737–72.

21   See, for example, David Cesarani, ed., *After Eichmann. Collective Memory and the Holocaust after 1961* (London and New York: Routledge, 2005); Michael Rothberg, 'Beyond Eichmann: Rethinking the emergence of Holocaust memory', *History and Theory*, vol. 46, issue 1 (February, 2007), 74.

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FROM ABSENCE TO LOSS: HOLOCAUST COMMEMORATION IN PRESENT-DAY POLAND

Marta Duch-Dyngosz
Institute of Sociology, Jagiellonian University, Kraków

ABSTRACT

In this article I argue that remembrance of the Jews and the Holocaust in Poland was subject to a conspiracy of silence in the local space of former Jewish communities and villages for many decades after the war. I am interested in whether and under what social conditions commemorating local Jewish communities in present-day Poland leads to coming to terms with painful memories and, by contrast, when it results in distorting such memories. I refer to the findings of qualitative research of case studies conducted in three towns: Bobowa, Dąbrowa Tarnowska and Rymanów.

The subject of my studies is commemorating Jewish communities in the local space of present-day Poland. It includes a wide variety of initiatives, from Jewish culture festivals and the restoration of former synagogues to monographs about Jewish inhabitants. Different types of memory actor – town residents, descendants of local Jews, representatives of Jewish communities – living in Poland initiate, become involved in or refer to these mnemonic practices (Olick 2008). In this article I analyse whether and under what social conditions commemoration can begin the process of confronting difficult memory of the Holocaust and its consequences, and when doing so it becomes impossible.

The dynamics of the memory of the Holocaust in Poland is determined by two facts. First, that the tragic events took place in German-occupied Poland, as evidenced by the siting of death camps in Auschwitz-Birkenau, Bełżec, Sobibór and Treblinka, which now function as places of memory. Secondly, it is estimated that almost 90 per cent of the three million Polish Jews, who comprised some 10 per cent of Poland's pre-war population, were murdered in the Holocaust (Stankowski and Weiser 2011, 15). This

catastrophe became associated with the territory of the Polish state by its material testimony on Polish land in the form of mass graves and memorial sites, as well as by the relics of former Jewish communities established over many centuries, such as synagogues, cemeteries, houses and items of everyday use (Kapralski 2015).

The various consequences of the Holocaust are important in determining the form that memory takes. Beginning with the demographics, entire Jewish communities, which accounted for more than half the local population in some smaller towns, ceased to exist. As a result, primarily in small towns, there was no one who could preserve any heritage that survived the war, foster remembrance of the murdered population and address or negotiate how their memory could be passed on to non-Jewish citizens after the war. The social and economic consequences of the Holocaust also need to be considered. Some among the non-Jewish population, primarily those from the lower middle class, enjoyed material benefits when, in various ways during and after the war, they took possession of the property that used to belong to local Jews (Grabowski and Libionka 2014) and occupied the now vacant social position in the social structure (Leder 2014).

From the perspective of the space where the Holocaust took place, its consequences for the identity of post-war Polish society and relations among and between various groups are extremely important. As a result of the wartime events and the emigration of Jews that followed, the two communities were separated from each other. Non-Jewish Poles were close to the events, but in Polish discourse this was described as being 'a witness', which is not a neutral term and does not reflect the many diverse attitudes among this population that could be observed during and after the war. In my studies I refer to Raul Hilberg's (1992) triad: 'perpetrators, victims, bystanders'. These categories are not clear-cut as, among others, they fail to reflect the complexity of attitudes and any changes that occurred in some individuals, and can give the impression that any given group is uniform in its attitude.

This is why I use the categories as a starting point only in order to define each one in more detail in any context. I am interested in the group of non-Jewish Poles whose position I describe as 'bystanders', for 'bystanding' (cf. Gross 2014) is the term that in Polish evokes the visibility of the Holocaust. Bystanding allowed for a variety of attitudes: active hostility, reluctant or sympathetic passivity, indifference or offering assistance (Kłoskowska 1988).

Different types of assistance can be distinguished, including freely given assistance and assistance at a price (Datner 1968). The heritage of difficult memory, the one that is shameful and requires that national identity be revised, includes post-war hostility towards survivors returning to their former homes, many of whom were murdered (Cichopek-Gajraj 2014, 77). The most tragic manifestation of this was the Kielce pogrom, which underlined that the Jewish minority was not welcome in post-war Poland, an otherwise almost entirely homogenous country ethnically (Gross 2008; Tokarska-Bakir 2013). Summing up, the nature of the Holocaust, including the less explored social aspects of the atrocity, such as direct, individual or mass executions carried out by the Germans and their sympathizers (Confino 2012, 127–8), involved local communities, something has not been accounted for or discussed until now and yet forms part of the memory of individual locations.

Apart from a brief post-war period when a group of intellectuals took up the subject of the Holocaust and the consequences of the anti-Semitic attitudes of the Poles (Michlic 2005), various aspects of these issues have been the subject of collective forgetting (Connerton 2008) and silence (Vinitzky-Seroussi and Tegger 2010) for a long time. There are several reasons for this. They include the nationalistic character of communism in Poland (Zaremba 2005), manifested in its policy of seeing Poland as a 'nation of victims and heroes' (see Huener 2004), in its sense of ethnicity and its suppression of any data that refuted it. What should be considered, however, is the marginalization of the Jewish community in the late 1940s by the communist elites, the shrinking of the population as a result of emigration, and self-censorship and concealing one's Jewish identity in many cases. But the most important issue was the resistance of a large part of society, who treated commemoration of the Holocaust as an extrinsic or inconvenient memory.

The dynamics of the memory of the tragedy of the Jews under communism was investigated, among others, by Michael Steinlauf (1997). What I emphasize though is the many levels within the memory of the Holocaust – first, those created by various group narratives, both the dominant and the minority group; and secondly, the relationship between official and unofficial vernacular memory. The latter is of interest to me in terms of the local space where the subject of Jews and what happened to them both during and after the war, including the hostile attitudes of the members of one's own group,

was raised in conversations, predominantly using anti-Semitic clichés and ste-reotypes, within the family, in exchanges with other residents, and sometimes in newspapers and journals. To a large extent, the vernacular memory was preserved thanks to the synagogues and cemeteries that survived, and both immovable and movable property which functioned as a perpetual link with the past, and was often the source of concern because of the possibility of property restitution, contributing to the framework of the aversion towards Jews (Stola 2007). From the perspective of official memory, a conspiracy of silence developed around the problematic aspects (Zerubavel 2006; and in the context of Polish–Jewish relations, see Tokarska-Bakir 2011). This category characterizes adequately memory in the local space where most inhabitants were aware of what had happened but their knowledge did not extend beyond the group and, what is more, was not dwelt on. The local memory of the place was characterized by 'repetition-memory' (Ricoeur 2007), which is confirmed by persistently high levels of anti-Semitism (Kucia 2015). There was no social space in which their memory could be challenged by alternative accounts of the past.

Today, in many places in Poland, various memory actors include the history and culture of local Jews in the official narrative of the past of a given place, but express an alternative attitude to the recognition of the Jewish memory. The phenomenon of commemoration, as I call it, which has recently come more to the fore in Polish towns, should be seen in the context of memory democratization (Ziólkowski 2001). In this process, which intensified after the overthrow of the communist regime in 1989, marginalized memory was revealed and voiced in debates about the shameful inheritance of 'standing by' during the Holocaust (Forecki 2013). Discussions about the Jedwabne pogrom, which introduced the Holocaust into Polish discourse on focusing attention on specific places and the attitudes of a local community, as well as the consequences of those tragic events, should be seen as symbolizing coming to terms with difficult memory (Melchior and Michlic 2013). What I am interested in is whether and in what way the initiatives related to local Jewish history and culture include or lead to reflection on the attitudes of bystanders and their consequences.

In this article I focus on whether and under what conditions commemora-tions in local Polish milieus make it possible to begin the process of facing up to difficult memory and, by contrast, when the opposite happens and circumstances from the past are repeated and reinforced, for example the

widespread image of a Jew as a threatening Other (Michlic 2006). I allude here to Adorno (1986), LaCapra (2001) and Ricoeur (2004) on working through difficult memory. What these authors have in common is a warning against defining this as a linear process, heading towards the point when its end can be declared. They all emphasize that, sometimes, matters that seem to be resolved become subject to the conflict of memory again. What they agree on as a general rule is striving to relate the past in the most accurate way possible, without brushing aside inconvenient and shameful facts for one's own group, becomes possible when the social space that opens up allows the memory of others to be expressed. The potential of the memory of the Holocaust in a given place is demonstrated, among others, by how its consequences are represented. If this is done through 'absence' (LaCapra 2001), a reference to abstract and ahistorical categories, the phenomenon comes closer to an 'abuse of memory', but if it is done through the 'loss' (LaCapra 2001) of concrete historical objects, such as people, places or events, there is then a great chance that the process of working through difficult memory can begin.

These considerations will be explored in more detail in the analysis of the phenomenon of commemoration. I will approach mnemonic practices concerning memory of the Jewish heritage from the perspective of the possibility of shaping the social space where various versions of memory may meet (see Lehrer 2014), while paying close attention to the situations when these practices lead to memory conflict (see Kapralski 2000). This is interpreted within the framework of the sociological theory of collective memory (Halbwachs 1992). I take the position that memory is not something we have but something we do (Olick 2008, 159), and I treat mnemonic practices and products as expressions of collective remembrance, which can include a reminiscence, representation, denial, apology and stories, rituals, monuments and historical studies (Olick 2008, 158). I propose that the duality of memory should be considered with reference to Giddens' (1984) theory of structuration – the duality of memory is expressed in the mnemonic practices and products initiated or taken up by memory actors with reference to the object of memory (for example, a past event, community or an element of cultural heritage). In this way participants employ all the resources and rules at hand, which are both the means and results of actions reproducing and shaping memory structures. In this article I focus on the mnemonic practices and products and characteristics of the memory actors involved.

Methodology

My material in this essay was assembled for my sociological research on three case studies determined by mnemonic practices and products related to the history and culture of the Jewish communities that lived in Bobowa, Dąbrowa Tarnowska and Rymanów before the Holocaust. I selected these three towns because of certain features they had in common: during Poland's partition they were part of Western Galicia; under German Occupation they were all in General Government territory, a district of Kraków; and they did not experience Soviet occupation in 1939–41. Today, Bobowa and Dąbrowa Tarnowska are in the province of Małopolskie, while Rymanów is in the province of Podkarpackie, in southern Poland. What is important is that in all three locations the local synagogues have been restored in the past decade, having been left in ruins in Dąbrowa Tarnowska and Rymanów, or in the case of Bobowa used as a workshop by the vocational school there until the late 1990s. The three synagogues now have different ownership status. The one in Dąbrowa Tarnowska belongs to the municipality, in Bobowa it is owned by the Jewish Religious Community of Kraków, while the owner of the Rymanów synagogue is Rabbi Abraham Reich, leader of the Congregation Menachem Zion Yotzei Russia of Brooklyn, New York. The synagogues in Bobowa and Rymanów perform religious services and are primarily used by the Hasidic Jews who come to visit the graves of the famous *tzadikim* (spiritual leaders) buried in the Jewish cemeteries there (Bartosz 2015). Finally, initiatives commemorating Jewish communities have been organized in all three locations for several years now.

The towns have been used as case studies because of the nature of the past contacts within and between groups, the type of Jewish settlements and the network of relations with the neighbouring villages and other locations that characterized the former *shtetls* (towns with large Jewish populations before the war; Orla-Bukowska 2004; Teller 2004). The features of these intergroup relations, linked with the nature of the Holocaust, are visible and involve non-Jewish inhabitants. I do not describe the history of each town in detail but I do highlight the facts that establish the framework of these relations. Bobowa, Dąbrowa Tarnowska and Rymanów were the towns in which Jewish residents of nearby towns and villages were resettled when the Germans set up ghettos there. The type of ghetto depended on the location and the stage of the war as Jews might be forced to live in a specific part of the town, as in Dąbrowa Tarnowska, or in the houses they occupied before

the war, as in Bobowa, but had to take in other displaced Jews (Kraemer 2012). In the small towns, non-Jewish residents were not completely cut off from Jews, some even lived inside the ghetto. The Holocaust, marked by deteriorating living conditions, forced labour, the brutality of the Germans and their supporters and mass executions until the final liquidation of the ghetto, was thus visible. Proximity to the events is confirmed by the accounts of survivors, local records and evidence given by Polish residents made in post-war investigations, and can be found in vernacular memory transmission in the following decades.

Importantly, it should be noted that the layout of these towns has changed little since the war. The buildings and town houses in the market square and the streets leading off it used to belong to Jews, Jewish cemeteries still exist and the synagogues have been restored. This infrastructure is testimony to the Jewish history of these towns.

My aim was to collect the material that represented various mnemonic practices and products that are part of both official and unofficial memory, and in Jewish and local memory, in order to explore the dynamics of the remembrance of Jews and the Holocaust. First, it comprises existing data, such as ethnographic studies, Jewish testimonies (located in the archives of the Jewish Historical Institute, Yad Vashem and the University of Southern California Shoah Foundation Institute's Visual History Archive), chronicles, journals, photographs, documentaries and their documentation, online sources as well as material objects, such as artefacts, property and monuments. Secondly, I used material obtained in qualitative studies, which included in-depth interviews with sixty-three individuals and five group interviews with the interviewees representing various types of memory actors, including memory leaders (people who initiated practices and were involved in them on a permanent basis), institutional players (for example, mayors, teachers, social activists, priests), local residents (born before and after the war, then school students), descendants of Jews and experts on the Jewish heritage in Poland. In addition, I took part in many commemoration events, such as memorial days, lectures and excursions. Exploratory research was carried out in 2010 in Bobowa. The next research field studies in the three towns were made between 2012 and 2015. The sources thus obtained are used in this article to identify what is subject to silence and the likelihood of overturning the status quo, among other things, due to the presence of memory actors who reflect on the past.

A meeting, nostalgia and concealment

What I consider to be indicators of progress made in facing up to the difficult past are mnemonic practices and products, because of the way they reflect the following areas: Polish–Jewish relations, Jewish history and culture, and the place of the Holocaust in the history of Poland and Polish national identity. Taking these into account, I have identified three memory discourses that differ in terms of their attitude to the Jewish perspective: the critical, the affirmative and the ethno-nationalistic. The critical approach is characterized by recognition of and space for the expression of the Jewish memory. The affirmative approach presents a positive image of one's own group and leaves no room for any aspects that cast a shadow over the group. What dominates the ethno-nationalistic approach is the point of view of one's own group while emphasizing distance from the Jewish memory, which is treated as alien. In any specific place these discourses often coexist, but it is possible to identify both which is the dominant one and is the reference point for most practices and trends with regard to change, for example when the minority discourse gains in importance. Progress can also be seen in what memory actors who initiate and participate in the practices under investigation actually do. This includes their motivations, where their knowledge comes from, their ability to reflect on difficult memory, and the various resources that make it possible to change the status quo. I am particularly interested in memory leaders because when they initiate the practices related to the Jewish past of a given place. Depending on the context, they come up against areas that have been subject to collective amnesia and silence. I discerned three such areas: a Jewish presence over many centuries, the Holocaust and its consequences, and the attitudes towards Jews, including the problem of anti-Semitism (this also applies to present times). All are rooted in local space, specific people, events and places. When analysing the commemoration, I explore the diversity, and often coexistence, of contradictory attitudes to the Jewish heritage in one place. For each case, I could see the dominant trend, which is presented using the example of three major mnemonic practices that I consider represent the type of commemoration in each town.

I start with Rymanów, where Days of Remembrance of the Jewish Community of Rymanów have been organized since 2008. This is a local event organized by the Association for Rymanów Encounters and the descendants of former Jewish residents. Some association founders told me they had been inspired by the Borderland of Arts, Cultures and Nations centre in Sejny and explained that 'the word "encounters" [is included] to create the

opportunity for meetings that will bring these communities closer', and stressed that 'we wanted it to focus on the borderland inhabited by Jews, Lemkos [a Ukrainian subgroup] and Poles and all those that lived here in this area' (interview with author, no. R46). Apart from the initiative focusing on the Lemko culture, in 2013 all other initiatives were related to the Jewish past of Rymanów and from the very start the memory leaders involved were looking for contact with the Jewish survivors and their descendants, developing activities and participating in them together. During the first remembrance days local residents were able to meet survivors who attended with their children and grandchildren. There was also a meeting with the owner of the restored synagogue, Rabbi Reich (access to the synagogue became more difficult later). In the following years, an informal group formed round the remembrance days. Either because they had family ties with Rymanów or due to their interest in Jewish heritage, they would meet at events and develop relations in everyday life. Representatives of the Rymanów memory leaders said that the most important practice was the Remembrance March, which took place on 13 August, the anniversary of the day the Rymanów ghetto was liquidated in 1942. This is representative of commemoration in Rymanów. The participants follow the same route that Jews were forced to take from the town centre to the train station in Wróblik Szlachecki, a few kilometres away, from which they were transported to the death camp in Bełżec. The participants include the descendants of Jews from Rymanów, memory leaders, their families and local residents. This is one example of a practice anchored in space that involves the bodies of the actors who participate in it, making it possible to develop an empathetic relationship with the victims that avoids pathos while being dignified in tone. It is an opportunity to meet and talk with others. Memory becomes located and formed by details. This can be seen in a speech delivered by one of the leaders at the train station in 2008:

> At 5 pm they walked out of Rymanów [...] On the way, they were beaten, humiliated and murdered. Here, in this place, a well-known physician from Rymanów, Dr Emanuel Frankel, sacrificed himself. He shouted at the Germans that they would be punished for the suffering of Jews [...] and before they managed to capture him, he took cyanide. Other people were left standing here for three days because the crowded carriages could not set off immediately. They were standing in this very place. People cried, shouted, they had no water or food.

The Rymanów commemoration takes the form of micro-history, looking at the lives of actual families, shopkeepers, daily life in the workshops and homes, events before and during the war, hiding places and the executions. All this was made possible by drawing on different perspectives from a variety of sources of knowledge, experiences and what is stored in memory transmission. What one finds here are non-Jewish memory leaders listening to family stories, collecting documents and photographs, as well as survivors and their families who want to know what happened to their relatives and what is left.

There are many memory leaders in Rymanów, among them descendants of the Rymanów Jews. One woman, a Polish-speaking Israeli citizen, is the daughter of survivors. She has become a Polish citizen and has bought a town house that belonged to her family before the war. During the 2014 celebrations a *mezuzah* (a piece of parchment inscribed with Hebrew verses from the Torah, and usually contained within decorative casing) was fixed to the doorframe of the 'Jewish house', as she calls it. She said in an interview that she thought of this house as a place to commemorate the local residents of Rymanów who died in the Shoah:

> My house became my house [...] This is to remember, to understand what happened [...] Sometimes me and my family, and my brother were sitting and thinking how was it. You know all the detail. Because the detail[s] make life. I wanted to know the everyday life, how it was, how did they go to the synagogue, and what happened (R40).[1]

Focusing on details leads to conversations about the most difficult subjects, such as when Jews in hiding were betrayed, help was refused or those who were murdered and their property taken after they had found shelter. These are the topics found in the vernacular memory of Rymanów. For some time now, these subjects have been added to the official memory, in a monograph on the Rymanów Jews, in which negative attitudes are described and the perpetrators referred to by their initials, or in Maria Zmarz-Koczanowicz's film *There Once Was a War* (2013), screened in Rymanów, which acknowledges the conspiracy of silence concerning negative attitudes to Jews. Deep consideration and a critical perspective among some memory leaders, who approach the memory of the nation making space for the Jewish perspective, remain crucial. I included the Rymanów commemoration in the category

of meetings. Although the local residents who participate are in a minority and its leaders have to cope with resistance, other affirmative and ethno-nationalistic memory discourses as well as various attitudes to community heritage within Jewish communities, the Rymanów commemoration creates a social space that makes it possible for diverse memory perspectives to meet.

I placed commemoration in Bobowa in the nostalgia category because of the dominating signs of its multiculturalism and the idyllic and romantic pre-war world of the *shtetl*. The town information board features the local synagogue alongside bobbin lace, which Bobowa is famous for; both are seen as symbolic of the town. The Jewish past is part of the town's image here. The commemoration memory leader in Bobowa is the mayor, who has been head of the local government there for over two decades and represents the town in contacts with its Jewish visitors. The largest group are Hasidic Jews originally from Bobowa who come from all over the world, as this is where a famous Hasidic dynasty has its roots and its founder, the renowned *tzadik*, Salomon Halberstam, is buried. When in Bobowa, Hasidic Jews worship in the synagogue located close to the market square, which seems to take the place back in time, owing to its small size, the cultural code of Hasidim and its closed character, as well as the metaphysical nature of their relationship with the space of Bobowa. This naturally leads to a nostalgic understanding of the past.

Unlike in Rymanów, which also has ties with a famous Hasidic dynasty, the local government in Bobowa places this romantic and mythical image of pre-war Galicia at the centre of its commemoration. The best example of this is the re-enactment of the famous wedding of Nechama Gold, daughter of Rabbi Ben Cjon Halberstam, in 1931. From Ze'ev Aleksandrowicz's photographs we know what it looked like. The event, 'How the *tzadik* arranged his daughter's marriage', was performed during the Bobowa Days with Jewish Culture organized by the local government in June 2013. Over the next years the initiative continued in the form of lectures and concerts. Actors from Tarnów performed in the re-enactment, with school students taking the role Hasidim and an anthropology professor, a religious Jew himself, acting as celebrant of the wedding ceremony. Just as it would have been several decades earlier, thousands of people attended the wedding ceremony, which was held in the town's streets. One of Nechama Gold's daughters, the granddaughter of *Tzadik* Halberstam, was a guest. The mayor

Enactment of
a Hasidic wedding,
interior of the
synagogue in
Bobowa, June
2013. Photograph
by Marta
Duch-Dyngosz

observed that 'It was very emotional and it seems that she also left, one might say, even more joyous – happier that we, here, respect the identity of others, that there is tolerance and there is memory above all and that this has become a permanent event on our agenda' (interview with author, no. R10).

This a very good illustration of how the Jewish past was included in the local heritage, but the terms are clear – the presence of Jews in Bobowa is shown as a closed chapter of the town's history, and evidence is presented of the harmonious coexistence of the two communities to confirm a positive image of one's own group as non-Jewish Poles. Commemoration in Bobowa is an example of what the historian Michael Meng (2011) calls 'redemptive cosmopolitism', as it serves the purpose of glossing over the consequences of the problematic and shameful past.

According to the sources, and endorsed by the testimonies of non-Jewish residents, the Holocaust in Bobowa was particularly brutal as the Germans and their sympathizers shot dead a large number of the Jews there in three mass executions at sites a few kilometres outside the town (see Kraemer 2012). After the war, representatives of the Jewish community marked the

graves and paid for monuments. These places, however, are not included in the local commemoration although they are present in oral memory transmission. The Holocaust is referenced during official commemorations as marking the end of the history of Jews in Bobowa. This can be seen in an excerpt from the lecture of one of the memory leaders, which was delivered during the Bobowa Days with Jewish Culture in 2013:

> In our town, 14 August 1942 changed the Jewish world to such an extent that not a single one of them, the Jews from Bobowa, has returned to live in their birthplace, which for many was the only place they knew, and had been their entire world.

In this vision of the past, evil comes from outside and leaves the community unchanged morally, although Jews have been absent ever since:

> Nothing could destroy our neighbourly relations, and for 207 years Jews lived in Bobowa unmolested and were left in peace, 'on Earth as it is in Heaven'. But when 'the masters of war' entered the town, the old world collapsed. Nothing was as it used to be. The image of Bobowa from that era lived on only in the pages of our town's chronicles.

I would emphasize that local memory leaders base their information on local sources that reproduce a stereotyped and one-sided image of the past. They cannot see the need to revise the image by incorporating the Jewish perspective or expert opinion from outside. By excluding the voices, experiences and faces of Jewish residents, confirmation of the positive image of one's own group becomes the principal purpose of commemoration.

Commemoration in Dąbrowa Tarnowska is best described using the category of concealment. It is dominated by the practices of institutional actors – the mayor and representatives from the town hall – which focus on restoring the monumental synagogue in Dąbrowa, inside which the Centre for the Meeting of Cultures was established in 2012. What I considered to be typical of commemorations in Dąbrowa was a performance based on Roman Brandtstaetter's play *The Day of Wrath* staged inside the synagogue in 2013 by the political Not Now Theatre. Members of Not Now explained in the performance programme why they decided to stage it:

Enactment of a Hasidic wedding in Bobowa, schoolchildren as young Hasidic Jews, June 2013. Photograph by Marta Duch-Dyngosz

Anger arose in response to political correctness which distorts historical truth and also from the start in recognition of the consequences of the increasingly frequent, disgraceful public references overseas to 'Polish concentration camps' or 'anti-Semitism bred in the bone'.

The programme exemplifies the ethno-nationalistic memory discourse with its characteristic features, among them equating the suffering of Poles and Jews, focusing on the martyrdom of the Polish nation as a whole, presenting assisting Jews as a common occurrence and references to Christian rhetoric about Judaism from before the Second Vatican Council.

Examples of the discourse are prominent in the exhibition in the synagogue. This is an excerpt from a description of the German Occupation period:

Only about 150 Jews survived. Most of them were saved by the local population. Despite the most dire consequences that one suffered for offering any kind of help to a Jew or hiding a Jew, some people were not afraid and resolutely offered assistance. Polish priests were also involved and issued fake baptismal certificates to Jews. Many local residents of

The Remembrance March at the railway station in Wróblik Szlachecki, Rymanów, 13 August 2014. Photograph by Marta Duch-Dyngosz

> Dąbrowa Tarnowska paid for this humanitarianism with their own lives. Within just a few weeks in 1942, sixty-two people were shot in Dąbrowa Tarnowska and its vicinity for helping to hide Jews. The world war tested Polish–Jewish relations, relations between neighbours – Jews and Poles. But the attitudes of many residents of Dąbrowa Tarnowska and its vicinity demonstrated that certain rules cannot be broken but rather reinforced the bond between the two cultures that inhabited the same territory over a long period.

In the commemoration in Dąbrowa Tarnowska, the experience of 'standing by' during the Holocaust leaves the community of non-Jewish residents not so much unchanged, which was the case in Bobowa, but rather confirms their virtues and, it might even be said, asserts that the community is better for it. The facts quoted in the description above, which are often referred to in local publications about the German Occupation, are not confirmed by historical sources, something that Jan Grabowski (2011), among others, endorses. He documented the 'hunt for the Jews' in the district of Dąbrowa Tarnowska and gives the names of the Poles who took part in round-ups to capture the Jews hiding in nearby villages and forests after the ghettos had been obliterated. His book was the subject of heated debate among local residents, because it referred to people whose families still lived in the area.

Yet many of my interviewees admitted that these events had taken place and the hunt for the Jews was mentioned in the exhibition, thanks to the intervention of the exhibition's consultant, but without giving details of who was responsible and how these hunts were undertaken.

In other parts of the exhibition the shameful collective past was masked by data on providing assistance to Jews, which was shown as widespread, while all the facts related to the Jewish community in Dąbrowa Tarnowska were reduced to a single image of a traditional pious man, and the Holocaust period was described in general statements, without any reference to specific people or places. What is more, the Jewish past was counterpoised with the history of the Christian residents of Dąbrowa; for example, alongside the history of the synagogue there was information about the history of local churches. The exhibition also included the debris of an aircraft shot down over Dąbrowa Tarnowska which was on its way to help the Warsaw Uprising in 1944 – an image of one's own group, the Christians, backing the image of resistance and suffering a noble death. After negotiations, some artefacts were included in the exhibition. Among them there was the Aron Kodesh (the Holy Ark, where the Torah scrolls are kept, on the eastern wall of a synagogue) from a small prayer meeting house that was in operation until the death of Samuel Roth, a religious Jew who lived in Dąbrowa after the war with his brother and his wife, an exceptional story nationally, which cuts through the abstract narration.

In conclusion, official commemoration in Dąbrowa Tarnowska exemplifies covert silence (Vinitzky-Seroussi and Tegger 2010), when 'what looks like commemoration may in fact be deliberate forgetting' (Vinitzky-Seroussi and Tegger 2010, 1,117). Jewish heritage is still undesired and inconvenient: 'There is quite strong resistance here regarding the response to Jewish culture in Dabrowa. This might be because people are still afraid that potential owners of former Jewish properties might return to the town and many of these properties have been usucapted [ownership legally confirmed by possession]' (interview with author, no. R25), one memory leader admitted. Despite efforts to conceal the Jewish past, the practices of groups of Jewish youth or representatives of Jewish communities, among others, who come and sometimes pray in the restored synagogue, make it impossible to forget this history.

There are some actors initiating memory practices in Dąbrowa Tarnowska who refer to the critical discourse, take a reflective approach to their own

group's past and maintain contact with today's relatives of the Jews of Dąbrowa Tarnowska. But to date they have not tried to break the local conspiracy of silence and introduce reflection on the uncomfortable collective memory into public space.

Conclusions

The space left after the Holocaust in Poland creates obstacles to reconciliation (see Pearlman, 2013). First, the perpetrators were not Poles, although it was on their territory that these tragic events occurred, as a result of which they have been seen as 'bystanders' and consequences related to this have arisen. It should also be remembered that the non-Jewish Poles were also victims of the German Occupation, but their experiences were different from those of the Jewish Poles. Secondly, after the war, the two communities were separated from each other and deprived of daily contact, which is one if the key factors determining the success of reconciliation. Thirdly, the process of working through difficult memory today concerns, by and large, the generations born after the Holocaust.

Therefore, I was interested in the potential that commemoration has to offer in this context, by introducing Jewish history and culture to the official discourse of local space, increasing the recognition of Jewish communities, whose influence on the fate and practices related to the cultural heritage of their ancestors is growing, and visits of the descendants of Jewish residents interested in the past. I have been considering the conditions that enable the creation of a social space where 'remembering well' (Sennett 1998, 12) is possible, which is shown in a precise account of what happened during the Holocaust in the context of local space. I begin with a description of the memory actors. I focus above all on their sense of agency (Giddens 1984), which I understand as taking responsibility for the Other (Bauman 2001), and in the belief that by doing something, an actor is able to change the status quo. What is more, actors are aware of the mechanisms controlling the dominating discourses, which is why they may choose the one they prefer (Kaplan 2005) or fashion a new discourse, one that is more appropriate for the local space. The latter is related to the actors' reflexivity, their ability to monitor their attitudes.

In this way one can overcome the models passed down by culture, such as anti-Semitism, the tradition of martyrdom that is foreign to the experiences of others, and the concept of Polishness related to it. A critical approach is

possible thanks to the continual confrontation of one's convictions from different perspectives or through contact with sources (testimonies, journals and photographs) or contact with Jews (survivors, descendants and Jewish communities living in Poland). The more diverse these voices are, the greater the chance that what is remembered will be true (Sennett 1998). There is a need to build informal relations based on everyday experiences. This makes it possible to involve ordinary people, and not only representatives of elites, in the process of coming to terms with a difficult past (Trimikliniotis 2013). This is the case with the Rymanów commemoration around which an informal group of Poles and Jews has formed who visit one another, help one another and spend their free time together.

The actors representing the non-Jewish perspective must remember that the Jewish memory should be expressed on equal terms, instead of being subordinated to the interests of their own group. This boils down to doing justice 'through memories, to an other than the self' (Ricoeur 2007, 88). From the perspective of non-Jews it is important to acknowledge the asymmetry of this relationship, aware that while examining one's own conscience one will not get a response from the other side. An important characteristic of memory actors includes what they do to confront the areas subjected to silence and collective forgetting. In order to be successful, individuals' activities must be transformed into collective activities. This is promoted by large numbers of reflective actors as the more people discuss the subject openly, the more difficult it is to deny the facts.

Various resources available to actors are important. This concerns situations in which the actors are independent of local structures and the status of 'epistemic authorities' (Rydgren 2007, 24) as people typically have more faith in the practices in which those who are considered authorities are involved. In small towns, these are often priests. In Rymanów, one of the important memory actors is the parish priest who participates in ecumenical prayers organized during the remembrance days. He encourages people to take part during the masses he celebrates and maintains relations with the Jews who visit Rymanów, including the Hasidim. The more people discuss publicly the issues that so far have been subjected to silence or collective forgetting, the greater the sense of the actors' agency becomes, which increases the likelihood of sticking to the decision made. At the same time, social pressure to maintain the status quo declines (Zerubavel 2006). It is thus important that actors representing different generations, experiences

and memory are involved in commemoration. They will not all be characterized by a high level of reflexivity. I have distinguished the institutional actors whose participation in commemoration impacts local inhabitants' approval of what they do. They are represented by the local authorities, schools, the Church and the NGOs active at the local level and beyond.

An important factor that influences the form commemoration takes is the absence of some types of actor; for example, the local priests do not take part in Dąbrowa Tarnowska. The participation of institutional actors is also important to ensure that the activities undertaken will be sustained as well as being comprehensive in nature. It is important to involve various institutions as they have to confront problems within their own structures. Practices related to difficult memory should focus on the details: specific events, places and people. Above all, they should include inconvenient and shameful facts from one's own group past. Thanks to historical details and where the events took place, the fallout of the Holocaust is presented as a loss, which makes it possible to establish an empathetic relationship, while distinguishing between the experiences of the victims and those of the bystanders (LaCapra, 2001). The consequences of the Holocaust must also lead to a consideration of contemporary attitudes, including anti-Semitism. Commemoration that fulfils these requirements may lead to the creation of a public space in which confronting difficult memory becomes possible.

When we turn to the case studies analysed here, in Rymanów an opportunity emerges for practices related to the Jewish heritage. While commemoration in Bobowa and, even more so in Dabrowa Tarnowska, is used to affirm the positive image of one's own group. The practices related to the culture and history of local Jews make it possible to conceal the areas subjected to collective forgetting and silence, which leads to dissonance between the vernacular memory and what is publicly accepted as true. Despite the fact that commemoration has established a new relationship between local residents and Jewish cultural heritage, the circumstances of the past, such as the image of a Jew as a threatening Other, are repeated.

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MARTA DUCH-DYNGOSZ
Marta Duch-Dyngosz obtained a MA in Sociology (2007) and European Studies (2009) at the Inter-Faculty Individual Studies in the Humanities at Jagiellonian University, Kraków. She is currently a PhD candidate at the Institute of Sociology, Jagiellonian University. She was awarded a Fulbright Junior Advanced Research Award (2012–13) and a research grant funded by National Science Centre in Poland (2014–16). She was appointed editor of the monthly journal Znak in 2011.

ENDNOTES

1   The interview was conducted in English and is quoted verbatim.

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PERSONALIZATION OF THE MEMORY OF HOLOCAUST VICTIMS IN POLISH CINEMA AND MUSEUM EXHIBITIONS AFTER 1989

Amelia Korzeniewska and Bartosz Korzeniewski
Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań

ABSTRACT

This article offers a description of an important strand in Polish memory of the Holocaust after the radical change of 1989, the personalization and individualization of remembering the victims, using as an example two cultural memory carriers: historical cinema and exhibitions. At museum exhibitions, such trends manifest themselves by, for example, 'putting a face' to genocide victims by showcasing photographs that document their private lives and histories from before the Holocaust. In cinematography, in turn, focus can be observed on the individual and unique experiences of the victims and emphasis placed on emotions, as well as presenting the internal complexity of the protagonists. This article aims to describe the multitude of manifestations of personalization in cultural memory, sketching the foundations and the factors conditioning this personalization against the backdrop of the transformation of the Polish cultural memory of the Holocaust.

After 1989 the way the Holocaust is presented in Polish memory changed considerably. In communist times the dominant trend was to 'Polonize' the Holocaust by focusing on the magnitude of the crime by emphasising its abstract nature and the anonymity of its victims. However, after 1989 that way of presenting the Holocaust was abandoned in favour of emphasising the individual fate of its victims accompanied by clear de-Polonization of the Holocaust. The individual-based approach to Holocaust victims has been appreciated in source literature where the trend is referred to as personalization (Szacka 2006, 148; Ziębińska-Witek 2006, 17; Heinemann 2011, 235; Kąkolewski 2014, 112) or antropologization (Thiemeyer 2015a, 83), the latter term understood as an aspect of the antropologization of the entire wartime experience. A similar phenomenon could be observed in the 1990s

with regard to the First World War (Frei 2005, 10; Thiemeyer 2015b, 71–76). Notably, antropologization refers to a change in research perspective consisting in the appreciation for the particular and individual as well as seeking an in-depth analysis of phenomena without divorcing them from their social or intercultural context and as such constitutes an expression of a broader trend that can be seen in the language of social sciences (Tarkowska 1992, 14), history or literature. Antropologization of history, for instance, refers to moving away from seeing the past from the perspective of general historical processes or event-based history and towards perceiving it on a micro scale, from the perspective of the daily lives of those who actually lived it.

On the one hand, it forces the researcher to focus on details and the desirable wariness of all generalizations and syntheses. On the other hand, comparative perspective gains special importance, primarily as regards intercultural comparisons, as well as unearthing the existential and subjective dimension of the actions taken in the past by those who lived it (Brocki 2009, 17). That aspect, that is the focus on the experience of individuals and the wartime generation in order to make an attempt at showing and comprehending the meaning of the war for ordinary people, is currently very visible in the narratives concerning the Second World War as seen in Polish art exhibitions and cinematography. The approach in question is influenced by the growing temporal and mental distance between the successive generations and that particular historical event (Schwan 2008, 353). Additionally, the more time passes, the more important media-mediated memory becomes for the historical awareness for the younger generations.

The process is based on the need to make young people interested in that chapter of Polish history, especially as surviving witnesses are passing away. This is the reason why attempts are being made to use new ways of communicating human experience through the media. Consequently, messages are adapted to the requirements imposed by visual culture where non-verbal aspects of information are key. As a result, content is less important than the conciseness, visuality, brevity and originality of the form when compared with other messages. This is of considerable importance when cinematic forms and museum exhibition scenarios are being developed. Individualization and antropologization are manifested through strengthening the private and intimate relation with the audience by focusing on the fate of ordinary people. Such a mode of experiencing the past becomes possible thanks to showcasing photographs, personal effects and other keepsakes, the main

objective being to transport the audience into the world of experiences made by the witnesses to those past events. That is also a way to recall persons who incarnate socially desirable values, which are worth upholding in the present, such as patriotism, being faithful to one's ideals or of an unbroken spirit. This facilitates embracing research that focuses on the role of multiculturalism as well as historical variables that contribute to wartime experiences in their diversity and multidimensionality. This new trend is seen particularly as regards the carriers of memory referred to above. Another aspect of personalization is placing much emphasis on the emotional side of wartime narratives, that is, explaining wartime events through the emotional engagement of persons who are the recipients of the message, as well as constructing the narrative in such a way as to affect the emotional side of the audience primarily, that is, shaping their attitudes through emotions.

Changes in the direction described above can be observed in the case of a number of memory carriers and various aspects of cultural memory. In this article, we showcase and discuss two: museum exhibitions and feature films.

Personalization in museums

From the very start of the post-war period, the most characteristic trait of Holocaust descriptions in Polish museums was, apart from their Polonization, a focus on making the visitor aware of the scale of the German crimes. Museums located at former concentration camp sites were to document the crimes committed by the Germans and testify to them. Consequently, their mass nature was placed to the fore, with its emphasis on the abstract dimension of the crimes, thereby keeping the victims anonymous.

After 1989 the trend has been to abandon both the Polonization of the Holocaust and the emphasis on the abstract nature of the crimes perpetrated, moving away from putting the stress on the anonymity of the Holocaust victims and their suffering. All this has been replaced with attempts to individualize and personalize the narrative about the victims.

Efforts to individualize and personalize that narrative in contemporary Polish museum exhibitions focusing on the Second World War take different forms. One of the most common is the attempt to 'putting a face' to the genocide victims. The earliest such attempts were made at martyrdom museums situated at former concentration camps. 'Putting the face back' consists of attempts to individualize the story about the war victims by

showing (most typically by means of photographs) their individual fates, including reconstructing their pre-war lives. The earliest example may be the exhibition that opened in 2001 in the building of the central sauna, or washroom, in the grounds of the former annihilation camp in Birkenau, entitled 'The history and functions of the central camp washroom. Before they were gone. Photographs found at Auschwitz'. Opened in late 1943, the central washroom has a symbolic dimension to it today thanks to its past function. It was a place where thousands of people of various nationalities, predominantly Jews, were brought from across Europe, and were received and registered as inmates of a Nazi concentration camp. It was there that the Nazis would start the process of dehumanizing their victims. The producers of the winning design for the exhibition moved visitors along the same route through the same rooms as both new arrivals to the camp and prisoners who were bound for bathing and disinfecting.

By following the movement sequence imposed on the inmates, visitors learnt about the function and history of the facility. As the building was positioned on the stretch where warehouses stored the personal items of the victims of this mass-death factory, as well as being close to the gas chambers and crematoria, its deadly role in the camp operation was highlighted. The final room for the visitor featured photographs found in the luggage of the Jews deported to Auschwitz and taken before being rounded up and deported before the Holocaust. The collection includes approximately 2,400 photographs, both individual and group portraits. They were found after the war at the former Auschwitz concentration camp and show people captured in situations close to anyone's heart: joyful because of a child's birth, in love, admiring the beauty of nature and taking part in important events in their private, professional and social lives. Thanks to these photographs, the beholder has the opportunity to look at the victims not through their absence, having been killed in the camp, but through their earlier lives. The visitor is thus given a chance to complete their biographies, and identify with them. The sense of the 'putting-a-face-back' process is explained by Anna Ziębińska-Witek who writes: 'Each recognized photograph takes anonymity away from those murdered, returns identity to them and helps the visitor identify with a single human being, a victim. It is difficult to identify with someone who due to the efforts by the Nazis was deprived of features differentiating them from other inmates; it is easier when one looks at photographs taken in situations familiar to all. It also brings life back to the victims, the life they led before the Holocaust, and does not allow

the visitor to perceive them only through their stay in the camp, suffering and death' (Ziębińska-Witek 2006, 17).

A similar direction was pursued in the current preparations for a new permanent exhibition at the Auschwitz-Birkenau Museum. While the existing exhibition focuses on the mass nature of the Nazi crimes, and to their enormous scale, the new narrative, its creators say, is going to take a broader view accommodating such aspects as the fate of particular persons as well as the individual dimension of the murder.

A similar example of using photographs of camp victims in order to give them back a human face is an exhibition at the museum situated at the former concentration camp in Belżec (Museum Memorial Site in Belżec, a branch of the State Museum of Majdanek), the youngest martyrdom museum located at a former camp and the only one established after 1989. Entering the exhibition hall of the museum featuring a historical exhibition entitled 'Belżec, a death camp', the visitor walks under enlarged photographs that hang from the ceiling, showing camp victims and taken before the Holocaust.[1]

Similar efforts aimed at 'putting a face' to the victims have been made at the museum in Sztutowo. In 2008 it initiated a project called 'Last Witnesses', which entails recording accounts of former inmates and collecting their photos. The material gathered in the project has been used for an open-air exhibition and two temporary ones, as well as to enrich the permanent exhibition. M. Owsiński (Owsiński 2013, 93) points out that the project can be seen as proof of the symbolic evolution of the site of the former concentration camp Stutthof from a cemetery towards enhancing the presence of its inmates, witnesses to history.

Yet another example of 'putting the face back' is the most recent exhibition at Pawiak Prison Museum (a branch of the Museum of Independence in Warsaw). On view since 2008, the biographical show 'Let us remember their faces' aims to: 'bring the history of the Pawiak prison in 1939–1944 closer through the individual fate of those murdered in prison, the Gestapo detention unit at Aleja Szucha, during executions or in camps, for whom photographs, snippets of accounts and keepsakes handed over by the families of the inmates have miraculously survived.'[2] The exhibition features a large black-and-white glass board set in the middle of the room showcasing biographies of five selected inmates called 'the heroes of the Pawiak prison'

(for example, Father Maksymilian Kolbe, Ludwika Uzarówna-Krysiakowa and Halina Jaroszewiczowa). Each of the boards features a life-sized photograph of a given inmate standing face-to-face with the visitor. They are lit by halogen lamps, which, combined with the milky white of the glass boards, make them resemble images of saints (Heinemann 2011, 225).

'Putting-the-face-back' efforts should be seen in the context of a broader trend present in museums of seeking to reduce the distance between the audience and the exhibition. This is one of the main premises of 'new museology'. Seeking to reduce the distance between the audience and the exhibition by attributing the former an active role aims at making it possible for the museum visitor to identify with those who are the focus of the exhibition. To that end, the creators appeal to the visitor's emotions and senses rather than their intellect, frequently using strategies to evoke emotions. This is particularly visible in modern narrative museums. As regards the Holocaust, two good examples are the Oskar Schindler's Enamel Museum in Kraków and the POLIN Museum of the History of Polish Jews in Warsaw. In the latter, the Holocaust is seen from the Jewish perspective,[3] whereby the creators of the museum believe that histories should be told through the voices of those who lived them. As a result, the historical realities are learnt through the eyes of witnesses to history. I. Kurz has aptly concluded: 'This is a very powerful effect, aiming not to impose an ahistorical perspective where we look at past inhabitants of Poland through what we know, but rather through their ignorance or uncertainty. This is at its most powerful in the gallery dedicated to the war and the Holocaust, which is consistently arranged from the perspective of people who do not know their destiny' (Kurz 2014b). In line with the objectives of modern narrative museums, through this exhibition we are supposed to not only learn more about history but also be transported back in time. That is why the structure of the gallery dedicated to the war and the Holocaust as well the selection of the exhibits and the way they are presented are supposed to invoke in the visitor the sense of tension, claustrophobia and oppression which all recur in the accounts of Jews crowded together in ghettos.

Interestingly, the above-described efforts to personalize and individualize history are part of a broader process related to the changing ways in which the war is commemorated, the phenomenon, concerning remembering victims of armed conflicts, of moving away from the national phase to the transnational one. As B. Szacka writes, one of the basic manifestations of that process is the individualization of the memory of the fallen expressed

by shifting the commemorative emphasis from stressing their anonymity (in the national phase) towards paying special attention to their individual fate (in the transnational phase) (Szacka 2006, 148). As the role of the national perspective diminishes, new opportunities open up to show the features in common for all war victims, which are at the same time linked to their private histories. The individualization and personalization of war victims may also be interpreted as a manifestation of memory privatization. Its shortest definition would be the widespread popularity of such references to the past where the bond of the individual with the past is established without being mediated through collective values (of the state, nation or society). Since 1989 the trend has clearly been visible also in Polish memory (Korzeniewski 2010, 162 n.). In the case of museum exhibitions, the process is marked by a changed strategy for wartime narrative building, which is moving away from emphasizing the anonymity of war victims towards making an effort to personalize their memory. The objective of those efforts is clear: to improve opportunities for the audience's identification with the fate of the people whom the exhibition concerns, and hence to reduce the distance between the visitor and the exhibition (Urzykowski 2014, 8).

Personal histories and the Jewish perspective in films

Nowadays, film narratives are becoming the predominant form of inter-generational war memory transfer. They are taking over the role of carriers of memory concerning the Poles' memory of wartime past, taking part in the living process of remembering the content and emotions related to it (Aleksander 2004, 22). One could risk the hypothesis that the image of the Second World War among the youngest generation of Poles is largely shaped by films. It is also because the war continues to be an important topic that is willingly taken up by directors three generations removed from the events while the motifs, stereotypes and symbolism conveyed in films shape the way the Second World War is discussed today.

One of the first Polish films to have made an attempt at showing the wartime fate of Polish Jews from the perspective of the main character was the 1990 film by Andrzej Wajda entitled *Korczak*. It is a fictionalized biography of Janusz Korczak, a guardian of Jewish orphans in the Warsaw ghetto. It was only forty-five years after the war that it became possible to make a film about him, although there were earlier attempts to tackle the subject, as evidenced by ready-to-roll scripts by Ludwik Perski and other Polish auteurs. This was due to the far-reaching breakthrough of 1989 which lifted censorship and

so guaranteed creative freedom to film directors. This changed the way Polish cinema looked at war, from its focus on the fight with the Germans, concentration camps and the German occupation shifted and opened up to subjects previously absent in both cinematography and public discourse, such as the Soviet assault on Poland and Soviet repressions, including the 1940 Katyn massacre of Polish officers executed by the People's Commissariat for Internal Affairs (NKVD), as well as the role of Soviet Russia in the war and its influence on the post-war communist system in Poland.

The film *Korczak* was made in late 1989 and early 1990, and premiered in 1990. Its artistry was appreciated, unlike Andrzej Wajda's *Holy Week* [*Wielki tydzień*] (1995) and *The Condemnation of Franciszek Kłos* [*Wyrok na Franciszka Kłosa*] (2000), the main goal being to take up subjects from Polish history that were difficult and absent in the cinema. *Korczak* is still considered a topical film. However, after its first screening at the Cannes Film Festival it was much criticized by foreign film critics, barring it from distribution outside Poland. The message of the picture was interpreted as anti-Semitic[4] since it showed the daily life of the ghetto taking its ordinary course despite the constant threat of death. The controversial scenes included the Jewish elite having fun listening to songs in Yiddish in a cabaret and speculators striking shady deals in the ghetto, as well as Jewish characters portrayed as resigned and passive, an image colliding with the idealistic and sacralizing vision of the ghetto entertained by foreigners.

The black-and-white film, which featured authentic archive images recorded by the Nazis in the ghetto that could not be distinguished from other fictitious scenes, aimed at lending authenticity to the history shown. This interpretation is also confirmed by the meticulous stage-setting in replicating the living conditions in the ghetto and references to remembered symbolic scenes described by witnesses such as the doctor's march with children at the *Umschlagplatz* (a holding area near a station) Wajda's attempt to show a true picture of life in the ghetto, and so make history more authentic, seems a targeted and conscious act of the film director against a falsified picture of the Jews ghetto, woven by successive generations who lacked a solid knowledge of the 'normal' way of life in the ghetto and who 'angelized' its inhabitants. And yet the director was charged with the opposite: presenting the Holocaust in an unrealistic manner, mainly because of the final scene whose mythical message was underscored by showing it in slow motion where – freed from a sealed train carriage – the children and their guardian joyfully move away into a foggy landscape. The suggestion contained in the

scene that the fate of the children could be positive (as the carriage gets disconnected from the rest of the train) was interpreted as an inadmissible lie and an attempt at presenting Treblinka as the redemption of the murdered Jewish children. Putting the charge of Christianizing the Holocaust aside, it was also raised that the film reduced the very character of the Jewish physician to a Catholic and Polish saint. The film shows the fate of Jewish children from Korczak's perspective, which is emphasized by first-person narration (quotations from Korczak's surviving diary).

Untypically for Polish films about the subject, it contained no references to national memory and its heroes. It also seems that the Holocaust was not the main theme of the film. Quite the opposite, its chief topic was the desire to invoke a personal history of a man who managed to defend himself and at the same time protect the children entrusted to him against the brutality of the world surrounding them. In the film, it was as if war and its cruelty determined the sequence of events and pushed the plot forward, yet it remained nothing more than a background for showing the world of children, their experiences and dreams. This explains the metaphorical ending of the film whose massage is optimistic, as the children's innocence has been saved.

Its message is that even in the difficult times of Nazism, when external circumstances conspire against it, it is possible to see a rebirth of the world of humanitarian values that can prevail over the havoc the war has wreaked in the spiritual world. Mostly thanks to finding positive aspects of Korczak's biography, the film helped trigger the process of grappling with the Holocaust trauma, both by its audience and director. It made an attempt at painting a picture of war with a positive message, offering to replace the conventionally negative (shocking) Holocaust images with positive replacements. The film showed the possibility of reconstructing collective consciousness, since the image of war shown from the perspective of an individual breaks down defence mechanisms and supports understanding and empathy. The film in question has contributed to deconstructing stereotypical visions of the Holocaust in public consciousness, particularly in the case of western audiences, although its plot was not structured in a way to highlight the complex context of the events (their moral overtones) it presented, as some plots do now (for example, in Agnieszka Holland's film *In Darkness*).

Another strength of the film is its stance in the dispute concerning acceptable forms of representing the Holocaust (Mąka-Malatyńska 2012, 270–73)

as well as possibilities in using film documentaries in feature films. Earlier documented attempts failed to discuss the fate of the Warsaw ghetto victims in a film, particularly through focusing on the fate of a single person, since the censors forced emphasis on national bonds. Aleksander Ford's film about Korczak, whose script was reworked numerous times, was ready as early as in 1947, and ultimately was made abroad as *You Are Free, Doctor Korczak* [German: *Sie sind frei, Doktor Korczak*], premiering in 1974.

Since 1989 there have been many Polish films featuring the Holocaust and the subject is tackled from various standpoints. Apart from *Korczak* by A. Wajda, such films include *Farewell to Maria* [*Pożegnanie z Marią*] (1993) by F. Zylber, *Germans* [*Niemcy*] (1996) by Z. Kamiński, *Love, Obviously* [*Oczywiście, że miłość*] (2002) by P. Gralak, *Pornography* [*Pornografia*] (2003) and *Venice* [*Wenecja*] (2010) by J.J. Kolski, *Summer Solstice* [*Letnie przesilenie*] (2014) by M. Rogalski, *Walpurgis Night* [*Noc Walpurgii*] (2015*)* by M. Bortkiewicz and series *Fame and Glory* [*Sława i chwała*], episode 7 (1997) by K. Kutz as well as *Time of Honour* [*Czas honoru*] (2008, TV broadcast 2008–2010) by M. Kwieciński and others. Notably, just two films try to actually present the Holocaust through strictly Jewish war experience*,* a rarity in Polish cinema.[5] These are *Europa, Europa* (1990) by A. Holland and *The Pianist* (2002) by Roman Polański.[6]

Both films show the wartime experience of their main protagonist's point of view. The scripts of both films are based on authentic recollections of survivors: the composer Władysław Szpilman in *The Pianist* and Sally Perel in *Europa, Europa*. By focusing on the individual fate of a Jewish fugitive and attempting to bring closer the dramatic experiences from the survivors' perspectives, including their emotions and sensitivity, both films fit in with the growing trend in Polish cinema to personalize and privatize memory of the Second World War. To that end, narration is subjectivized and accentuated by statements in the first person in Holland's film. The focus on details and the camerawork make viewers believe they are watching reality as if through the eyes of the main character of *The Pianist* (Mąka-Malatyńska 2012, 69–88). Such effects aim at enhancing the audience's impression of taking part in the events narrated. In this way, the directors recreate the emotional mood they think could have been felt by both men in hiding, even more so as Polański knew first-hand such sensations as fear or hunger.[7]

Showing events by means of the victim's perspective has also an ethical dimension, as it marks an attempt to break the dominance of the perspective

of the oppressors (Nazis), assumed in the case of most photographers or filmmakers, thus weakening the naturally shocking images of the Holocaust. In the case of Holland's work, attempts are made at interpreting the fate of the individual and the transformations of the main character's identity. From a broader perspective, it reflected the more general problem of European identity. That is why the director puts the main character at the very centre of the historical events occurring in occupied Europe (Jankun-Dopartowa 2001, 213; Mąka-Malatyńska 2012, 86). Interestingly, the tendency to personalize the Holocaust narrative through presenting the topic in the film from the perspective of Jewish victims aroused more interest in other minority memory narratives in Polish cinema.

One outcome of the trend to individualize and personalize the war narrative in Polish cinema over the past twenty-five years is to pay much more attention to the existential dimension of the war. The picture of the Holocaust in Polish memory is becoming increasingly polyphonic thanks to the personalization of the war narrative. In Polish collective memory, personal histories are allowed to be heard whose message is not always unambiguous in ethical terms, and that a broader social and historical context is shown of the aid given to the Jews in Poland during the German occupation. Given the multitude of Polish films taking up the subject of the Polish–Jewish relations during the war – and those made in the communist Polish People's Republic – a vital new trend is the increase in the number of films showing difficult or unprocessed aspects of those relations, which had previously been socially taboo because they were ethically contentious.

It is not just about the frequently discussed motif of the less-than-noble intentions of the Poles who helped Jewish fugitives. What is presented in these films is the various ways Poled participated in the Holocaust: through indifference, collaboration with the Germans, denunciation and co-participation in murdering Jews and the Poles who hid them by Polish neighbours, in particular when the murder was motivated by property theft and other deprivations during the war. Films tackling those topics since 1989 from the point of view of the main character's current situation – apart from the already mentioned films *Holy Week* (1995) and *The Condemnation of Franciszek Kłos* (2000) by A. Wajda – include: *Just beyond this Forest* [*Jeszcze tylko ten las*] (1991) by J. Łomnicki, *Warsaw 5703* [*Tragarz puchu*] (1992) by J. Kijowski, *Deborah* (1995) by R. Brylski, *Keep away from the Window* [*Daleko od okna*] (2000) by J.J. Kolski, *Edges of the Lord* [*Boże skrawki*] (2001) by J. Bogojewicz, *Joanna* (2010)

by F. Falk, *In Darkness* (2011) by A. Holland, *Aftermath* [*Pokłosie*] (2012) by W. Pasikowski, *Ida* by P. Pawlikowski (2013) and *The Just Man* [*Sprawiedliwy*] (2015) by M. Szczerbic, as well as the series *The Just Men* [*Sprawiedliwi*] (2009, TV broadcast in 2010) by W. Krzystek. These films show the variety in which the Poles behaved towards the mass murder of Jews on Polish soil perpetrated by the Germans. They also showed the evolution of their behaviour, from reluctant or plain anti-Semitic attitudes, which ultimately resulted in the highest sacrifice as they were unjustly executed as ordered by underground commanders (for example, *Joanna*) or even death at the hands of the German occupant (*Just beyond this Forest*). On the other hand, those films presented moments of dignity loss, encirclement, loneliness, threat to one's life, consequences of double identity or fear experienced by the victims (for example, *Deborah*, *Keep away from the Window* and *Edges of the Lord*). Films also reflect on how memory works and ways to come to terms with the heritage of the Holocaust, as well as generational-trauma transfer by the victims and also by their descendants (*Walpurgis Night*, *Aftermath*, *Ida* and *The Just Man*).

The personalization and antropologization of wartime experience goes hand in hand with the tendency to reveal uncomfortable facts from the past previously left unsaid. It not only deconstructs and supplements the previously simplified image of the Second World War, as already mentioned, but also confronts stereotypes and myths that abound in the general memory and historians' knowledge. The long tradition of making war a film subject in communist times has helped solidify a largely false picture of the Second World War in the Polish collective memory (Korzeniewska 2015, 170–77), and most certainly to the creation of myths, such as the 'good-Pole' myth, deeply rooted in the present-day Poles' collective memory (Steinlauf 2001; Preizner 2011, 38–49). Although the subject of the Holocaust was present in Polish films before 1989, its entanglement in the political context (Zwierzchowski 2013, 7–26, 135–232) deprived the Polish audience of an opportunity to grapple with the trauma related to it, including in particular the long-term consequences of having witnessed the murder of fellow Jewish citizens.[8]

The major change is marked in just making Polish guilt a film subject, guilt resulting from ambiguous attitudes towards the Holocaust, as these are aspects of the Polish history of the Second World War that have the potential of questioning the current positive self-image of the Poles at present. In the context of Holocaust remembrance, understood as not just an ethical duty but as the basis to critically appraise the past in relation to various victim

groups and historical responsibility, Dan Diner used the term 'antropologi-zation of suffering' for the first time (Diner 2003). By doing so, he stressed the need to discern the fundamental difference between the experience of the perpetrators and their victims. He concludes that the death of both the victims and those causing their suffering (for example, during bombard-ments of concentration camps by the Allies), who from that perspective could also be seen as victims, makes no difference to the dead, yet for the generations to come a qualitative differentiation between those deaths is of considerable importance. The phrase in question (the antropologization of suffering) focuses on the claims stemming from history and a sense of human justice: on the one hand, doing justice to the victims and, on the other, critically precluding the perpetrators from manipulating history (Diner 2007; Tillmans 2012, 63–65). It is also true for the co-perpetrators, who regularly became victims of the Nazis, too. The ethical challenge addressed here to the guardians of memory would consist in distancing oneself from self-understanding and perceiving contemporariness as obvious, since this carries the risk of the relativization and falsification of history.

Films created with the use of antropologization would focus on reconstruct-ing diverse attitudes to, as well as various ways of surviving in, the 'inhuman' world. Such films are characterized by being constantly in touch with the audience, offering subtly instructive messages that facilitate understanding. Such an interpretation of the Holocaust can be seen in *The Just Man,* a film with educational value yet not didactic. It tries to show a broad behavioural spectrum: of a Jewish victim and fellow victims – people whose lives are in danger too because they help the little Jew. The film director lacks the naive belief that intergroup conflicts can be avoided, sketches a clear divi-sion between the survivor, who belongs to another culture, and her saviours, but also shows a range of tensions and conflicts that exist inside the same group, and even between members of a single family. The film also tackles the issue of the identity of the contemporaries, where an important factor is their attitude to the past, thanks to the main character, a Jewish girl who does not feel any special gratitude towards the saviours and cannot really understand what they have suffered. It is only her conversation with other characters, and mainly a return to the intimate bond she forged in her childhood with Pajtek, one of her wartime guardians, that releases positive memories and reconciles her with the past. The presentation of a tragic history of a child embraced by a Polish family using plain simple language (the characters explain various aspects of the past reality to the survivor like

to a child and shed some light on the context that forced some actions but not others) refers to universal human experience and helps the audience to empathize. Showing the fate of an individual against the backdrop of her saviours' similar experiences in their struggle to uphold universal human values during the war (for example, the Jewish girl's relationship with Pajtek, who used money found in clothes once belonging to a Jew to save her, or the presence of another Polish orphan in the home who shared the Jewish girl's life experiences, which she learns about after the war) helps dilute the uniqueness of her situation and weaken her resentment. This is a conscious act on the part of the director, whose primary aim was to replicate this effect in the audience. The personalization of wartime narratives is supposed to serve, thanks to common experiences, building a transnational consolidating picture of the past and a better understanding between the Poles and the Jews.

Another film that confuses the issue of Polish guilt is *In Darkness* by A. Holland. It tells the history of a Pole who hides a group of Jews. It is a highly nuanced picture, which reflects the complexity of his motivation and of tragic human choices made during the war. In the same year, 2012, an original film was made that plays out like a dark crime story and uses clichés which amplify its tragic finale: W. Pasikowski's *Aftermath*, which refers to the Jedwabne massacre. Here, the fate of the Jewish inhabitants of the village and the motivation of the perpetrators are shown simultaneously, convincingly and realistically by means of reference to wartime clichés – shockingly powerful scenes and black-and-white characters intensify the dreadfulness of the crime and invite reflection. The context of the Holocaust is invoked to enhance the emotional message of both films. They both stirred controversy and continue to arouse heated debates: they brought reflection on not just the past and past attitudes of the Poles, but also on the current self-image of the Poles, primarily in the context of disputes around the Jedwabne events and charges of anti-Semitism. The trauma related to the Jedwabne massacre suddenly became a nationwide subject and polarized the public who revealed a whole gamut of attitudes, from the most basic defensive ones all the way to calls for a critical appraisal of the past. The latter were considered more progressive by some yet equally extreme (Czyżewski 2008, 125–38).

Among the films that tend to personalize and individualize the cinematic memory of the fate of Jewish victims during the Second World War is *Ida* by P. Pawlikowski, a 2013 drama, which in 2015 was the first Polish film

ever to receive an Oscar for the best non-English picture. The film shows the war through the devastation it wreaked in the lives of the protagonists, thus referring to the films *All Souls' Day* (1961) and *Salto* (1965) by T. Konwicki, yet it takes on the difficult Polish–Jewish relations caused by the war, proving that not everything has been said about it in Polish cinematography. And it does this by exploring both the Poles' guilt – their participation in murdering their Jewish neighbours and taking over Jewish property – and the Jews, who already after the war were active in the Stalin-era judiciary in delivering unjust sentences and condemning Home Army soldiers to death. For both the main characters who were saved from the Holocaust, a Jewish girl kept in a cloister and a Stalinist judge 'bloody Wanda', their journey in provincial Poland in search of Jewish roots becomes a painful experience of homelessness, isolation and loneliness, from which one returns to the safe haven of the cloister and the other commits suicide. This film has no intention to reignite the contemporary 'moral panic' in the Poles (M. Zaremba) or condemn the ideological stances taken by some Jews. On the contrary, this black-and-white film speaks of those issues quietly and subtly, thanks to using the metaphor of returning to old places and recalling snippets of private memories (Sobolewski 2013). The film poses important questions about Jewish identity: what it means to be a Jew in Poland, after the experiences of the Holocaust and communism, as well as showing the tragedy of the Jewish fate, not only given the dispersion and mass murders of the Jews by the Nazis during the war, but also Jewish participation in the building of a communist system hostile to the Poles. Critics focused on the film's artistic weaknesses and poor sound, and because the melancholy memory work is more important that the plot here, the film was considered boring, where literally 'nothing ever happens' (Wolniewicz 2015). Its harshest critics stressed that the film falsifies history: with no mention of the German occupation of Poland, the film suggests that it was Polish peasants motivated by their 'greed for profit' who were the Holocaust perpetrators.[9]

Other than *Ida*, Polish films since 1989 have failed to be a direct cause of public debate. This includes the films that focused on unearthing themes previously absent in Polish cinematography as their creators wanted to made up for what was missing in Polish films made in communist times and set right the history of the Second World War. The films are rather a consequence of the discussion caused by other works of culture. For instance, the film *Aftermath* was made a few years after the debate related to the publication of the controversial book by T. Gross entitled *Neighbours*. There is much

to suggest that Polish cinematography refers to the Holocaust and related topics that used to be a taboo mainly in an attempt to somehow restore 'normality' after forty years of communism. There is a desire to interpret wartime experience independently from ideological and political pressure. One factor which may play a role in the context of difficult relations with ethnic minorities and explain the 'delay effect' in Polish cinematography as regards its interest in the subject in question as compared with, for instance, literature, is 'fatigue' with topics that expose the need to undertake self-critical evaluation of events related to the Poles' doing harm to other nations. This opinion should be seen in the context of the widespread belief that much has been done since 1989 to explore Polish–Jewish wartime relations, not just in cinematography (Borodziej 2003, 85; Werner 2014, 276).

Closing remarks

Revisiting the settled interpretations of the past and by, yet again, sifting through the reservoir of collective non-memory (that is matters that are seemingly closed, settled and known) (Kwiatkowski 2009, 121–22) is noticeable in the most recent films. This has an impact on the aspects of the wartime past that still appear controversial or are forced into the sphere of collective non-memory, as their potential to create conflict and trauma is reduced this way (Esposito 2002; Hirszowicz/Neyman 2001, 24–48).

The tendency to personalize and individualize wartime film narratives is conducive to reflection and a better understanding of history and one's place in it as the cinema has the power to interpret controversial histories as well as to create alternative ones, analyse the motivations of the participants of past events and present a variety of views and stances. The reliability of such an interpretation of the past is ensured by its emphasis on the non-anonymity of the victims and presentation of their personal histories. Thanks to the empathy and understanding felt, that aspect of memory personalization and individualization helps distance oneself from one's own experience or views resulting from a collective family memory and offers an opportunity to process the past and find reconciliation. As the films discussed in this article trigger the therapeutic work of memory, supporting the process of critically confronting difficult problems including the individual's own past, they facilitate re-evaluation of both individual and collective identity (Schwan 2008, 345–74; Korzeniewski 2010, 177–81). It is notable, however, that it is very rare in Polish cinema for a film narrative to be offered exclusively from the perspective of a Jewish protagonist.

Films about the Holocaust, museum and educational projects and other ways of remembering the Holocaust, such as anniversary observance events, trigger debates that have an impact on the historical awareness of not just those who are directly interested but also on an entire society, and/or testify to the transformations that are broadening historical awareness. Notably, nearly all of the most recent films focusing on Jewish war victims have courted much controversy. This is similar to the reaction to museum exhibition projects. The controversy pertains mainly to a conflict between collective wartime imagery and how it is presented in the film (for example, *Ida,* directed by P. Pawlikowski) and in museums. A confrontation with memories of others and a different interpretation of past events (for example, the film version of the role the Poles had in the Jedwabne murder) can distance the film's audience from their own memories. It can also free them from the need to cultivate the family-based version passed down from their ancestors. Forgotten things from the past or those left unsaid may be revealed as a consequence of public debate and some issues tackled by films or exhibitions may also require responses at the level of biographical memory.

It should be remembered that the Poles upheld the memory of Polish martyrdom in non-official historical memory, which in communist times was motivated by the desire to regain state sovereignty. There is a particular focus on Soviet crimes that were tabooized before 1989; the crimes are looked at in the context of the history of Polish-Soviet relations, as well as in relation to the ethnically different communities of the Jews, Germans and Ukrainians. This was 'highly important for the development of the spirit of resistance against the Soviet dominance' and 'an important factor in maintaining the sense of independence' (Wóycicki 2003, 93). However, it also had some side effects in the form of focusing on Polish suffering and its heroization, national and religious matters, and the competition of victims in the context of the Holocaust. Such aspects may, and today do, find their expression both in films and museum exhibitions.

Enriching the knowledge of the Second World War with new content, such as, for instance, the participation of the Poles in the Jedwabne massacre, contributes to a major revision of the image of the Poles as victims. Family memory is breaking through with increasing force. After all, the intention of returning to the past expressed at the level of cultural memory is consistent – seventy years after the war ended – with the impulse of the wartime generation to bring more coherence to their own life experiences.

Wartime experiences fit in with living the biography of the witnesses, the final stage of which is coming to terms with one's wartime recollections in order to ensure the continuity of the biography (Kaźmierska 2009, 25–47). In the case of victims in particular, this may be the desire to recall and acknowledge those aspects of the past that so far have been suppressed so as to free them from the paralysing consequences of the experienced trauma. They can then move on to critically reflect on the wartime events and cope with the ethical challenges of the present day, in particular in relation to the trivialization of the past (LaCapra 2002, 127–30). This is why Polish writers, directors and curators are much less interested in event history and much more in reminiscing about 'factographic' history. Attempts to convey the emotions as survivors consolidate their biographies, and come to terms with the past of one's generation, calls for entering the mental world of the characters created. In this regard, films appear to be more successful than historiography that seeks objectivity and to keep its distance.

Films and museum exhibitions take on board both individual and collective Holocaust memories as well as attempting to reflect on memory and the mechanisms of its functioning. Film plays a vital role in revealing individual and family values and stresses the importance of personal testimony and individual fate. This is manifested, for example, in the sense of solidarity with war victims and the desire to remember and respect the dead, expressed by the desire to immortalize the wartime experience of past generations in film. This explains why films that focus on the period frequently feature dedications to one's nearest and dearest as well as in postscripts (as in Agnieszka Holland's film *In Darkness*). Footage of witness testimonies has become an integral and critical part of contemporary historical exhibitions focusing on Holocaust victims.

Translated from Polish into English by Mikołaj Sekrecki

AMELIA KORZENIEWSKA
Amelia Korzeniewska, PhD, is a philosopher and psychoanalysis theoretician, lecturer at the Adam Mickiewicz University of Poznan, chairperson of the I.J. Paderewski Scientific Society, 2002–3, a PhD assistant at the University of Mainz in Germany, Deutsche Akademische Austauschdienst (DAAD) bursary holder. Her research interests focus on the culture of remembrance in Central Europe, cultural memory and post-memory. She is an author and co-editor of inter alia: Druga wojna światowa w pamięci kulturowej w Polsce i w Niemczech – 70 lat później (1945–2015) *[The Second World War in*

*the cultural memory of Poland and Germany, 70 years later (1945–2015)],
Gdańsk 2015, and 'Research proposition on collective representations of the
past after World War II: A preliminary outline', in* Solidarity, Memory and
Identity, *edited by W. Owczarski and M.V.F. Cremasco, Cambridge 2015.*

BARTOSZ KORZENIEWSKI

*Bartosz Korzeniewki, PhD (Habilitation), is adjunct professor at the Institute
of Ethnology and Cultural Anthropology of the Adam Mickiewicz University in
Poznań. He focuses on collective memory and historical policy. His monographs
include:* Polityczne rytuały pokuty w perspektywie zagadnienia autonomii jed-
nostki *[Political atonement rituals in the context of individual autonomy], Poznań
2006*; Święta polityczne w zjednoczonych Niemczech *[Political holidays in
united Germany], Poznań 2007*; Transformacja pamięci. … *[Transformation
of memory. Revaluations of the memory of the past and selected aspects of the
functioning of public discourse on the past in post-1989 Poland], Poznań 2010.
He has edited collective works:* Przemiany pamięci społecznej a teoria kultury
[Transformations of public memory and theory of culture], Poznań 2006 and
Narodowe i europejskie aspekty polityki historycznej *[National and European
aspects of historical policy], Poznań 2007. Most recently, B. Korzeniewski has
published (with S. Bednarek),* Polskie miejsca pamięci. … *[Polish remembrance
sites. A history of the topography of freedom], Warsaw 2014.*

ENDNOTES

1 Accessed 18 November 2016: http://www.belzec.eu/articles.php?acid=79&mref=34

2 Accessed 18 November 2016: http://www.muzeum-niepodleglosci.pl/pawiak/
ekspozycja/zapamietajmy-ich-twarze/

3 See *1000 lat historii Żydów polskich. Miniprzewodnik po ekspozycji* [A thousand years
of the history of Polish Jews, exhibition miniguide], Warsaw 2014. http://www.polin.pl/pl/
system/files/attachments/miniprzewodnik_0.pdf, dostęp: 9 X 2015. It should be emphasized
that the Holocaust gallery in this museum is not intended to tell a comprehensive story of
this historical chapter; in line with the whole museum, it deals only with the Jewish experience
in this particular period, as part of the overall history of Polish-Jewry.

4 Accessed 18 November 2016: http://www.wajda.pl/pl/filmy/film29.html

5 M. Szczerbic's *The Just Man* (2015) is also such a film in that the plot is based on an
attempt to reconstruct memories and understand the past experiences of the main character,
a Jewish girl saved during the war by Polish families, as well as thanks to scenes seen by the
main character hidden in a trunk (and watching Pajtek act for her).

6 Polański was born in Poland and graduated from the National Film School in Łódź,
but in the 1960s left his country to live in the USA, then in France, so his cinematic career
and perspective may be more West European than Polish.

7 Polański spent his childhood in hiding in Poland.

8   The 'non-chargeable guilt', as this aspect of the Polish participation in the Holocaust is called by K. Piesiewicz, whose emotional consequences one feels despite having been unable to influence the course of action, is the focus of Krzysztof Kieślowski's *Decalogue, Part Eight*, a film from as late as 1988.

9   *Apel do dyrektor Polskiego Instytutu Sztuki Filmowej. Wymowa "Idy" jest po prostu anty-polska* [An appeal to the director of the Polish Film Institute. The message of 'Ida' is plainly anti-Polish]*,* 18 January 2015. Accessed 6 June 2015: http://wpolityce.pl/kultura/230130-apel-do-dyrektor-polskiego-instytutu-sztuki-filmowej-wymowa-idy-jest-po-prostu-antypolska

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HOLOCAUST MEMORIALS IN CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE: COMMUNIST LEGACIES, TRANSNATIONAL INFLUENCES AND NATIONAL DEVELOPMENTS

Marek Kucia

Institute of Sociology, Jagiellonian University, Kraków and Skalny Center for Polish and Central European Studies, University of Rochester, New York

ABSTRACT

The article analyses selected Holocaust memorials in several Central and East European countries. Using the approaches of historical and visual sociology, it identifies processes and agents that shaped the present-day memorials during communism and after. These were: commemoration by Jews; memorialization, marginalization, suppression and the obliteration of Jewish victimhood by the communist authorities; making minor or substantial changes to the existing monuments after communism and developing them; and creating new Holocaust memorials both public and private, and by domestic and foreign agents. The article concludes that the Holocaust memorials in the region are primarily a result of legacies of communist times. They were also shaped by transnational influences. By and large they are national developments.

Introduction

Memorials – monuments, plaques and other commemorative objects – belong to the most tangible manifestations of collective memory as understood by Maurice Halbwachs (Halbwachs [1925] 1992) and other scholars of social and cultural memory studies (Erll and Nünning 2008; Olick, Vinitzky-Seroussi and Levy 2011). The memorials are also the epitomes of remembrance or, to use the words of one of the most prominent memory studies scholars, the visible 'products of mnemonic practices' (Olick 2008). While mostly official and public, some are unofficial and private. Therefore, the study of memorials

best reveals the characteristics and development of collective memory and public remembrance of a given event by various social groups. This article will account for the main findings of a study of memorials to the Holocaust, that is, the persecution and murder of Jews by Nazi Germany, its allies and collaborators during the Second World War. The study concerned major Holocaust memorials in several countries of Central and Eastern Europe. It was carried out as a part of and a follow-up to a larger research project entitled 'The Europeanization of Holocaust memory in Eastern Europe' funded by the European Union, and in the context of the COST action 'In Search of Transnational Memory in Europe'.[1] The study was conducted from the perspective of historical and visual sociology. The author of this article carried out the study between 2013 and 2016, including extensive fieldwork – an on-site exploration and a written and photographic documentation of the selected Holocaust memorials, museums, and sites in selected countries of Central and Eastern Europe – in 2014–15. The main objective of the study was to account for the processes and agents that shaped the present-day Holocaust memorials in the region. This article will discuss some of the objects covered by the study that best illustrate the patterns discovered. They belong to or are the most important Holocaust memorials in their countries. All empirical evidence given in the article comes from the author's field research carried out in the spring and summer of 2014, unless otherwise indicated.

The region, countries and objects discussed in this article were chosen for three reasons. First, the Holocaust has had a special historical significance for Central and Eastern Europe. It is there that the murder of Jews largely took place. The vast majority of Holocaust victims were the Jews of Central and East European countries. Some states of the region and some people engaged in the Holocaust as accomplices or perpetrators. As a result of the Holocaust, Central and East European countries lost nearly all their Jewish populations. Coping with the Holocaust has been a major challenge for the people and states in the region. Secondly, the collective memory and commemoration of the Holocaust have been increasingly important for the countries and people in the region as they have for other countries and people, and, indeed, all humanity. These processes were accounted for in the social sciences theories capturing various aspects of transnational Holocaust memory and in the works of historians. Jeffrey C. Alexander (2002) showed that the Holocaust has come to be recognized globally as the epitome of the universal evil. Thus Holocaust memory has become universalized and globalized. Daniel Levy and Nathan Sznaider (2002) indicated

that following the development of national memories of the Holocaust in such countries as (West) Germany, Israel and the USA from the 1950s to the 1980s, Holocaust memory also became cosmopolitan in the 1990s and 2000s. The cosmopolitanization of Holocaust memory involved its universalization, de-territorialization, de-contextualization and mediatization. Authors such as Larissa Allwork (2015) and Marek Kucia (2016) highlighted the role of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA), the European Union (EU), and other international organizations for the internationalization and Europeanization of Holocaust memory. Kucia (2016) also analysed the impact of these processes on Central and East European countries. Authors in the volume edited by Jean-Paul Himka and Joanna Beata Michlic (2013) and others (e.g. Steinlauf 1997; Sniegon 2014) discussed the development of Holocaust memory in the counties of the region, particularly on the demise of communism. The third reason for studying Holocaust memorials in Central and Eastern Europe was that this is an under-researched topic. There were publications covering the most important Holocaust memorials, particularly ones in the region (e.g. Cole 2003; Kopówka 2002; Marcuse 2010; Milton and Nowinski 1991; Toronyi 2013; Young 1989, 1993, 1994). Holocaust memorials were also addressed in the broader studies of Holocaust memory or Holocaust sites, particularly those in Central and Eastern Europe (e.g. authors in Himka and Michlic 2013; Huener 2003; Kucia 2005; Wóycicka 2013). Several institutions have catalogued Holocaust memorials online (e.g. Foundation Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe, 2016; Topography of Terror Foundation, 2016). There does not, however, exist a publication that would comparatively and diachronically analyse the Holocaust memorials in Central and Eastern Europe during and after communism. This article will attempt to fill this gap.

The perspective that the article will take will be regional rather than national. The analysis of selected memorials in several countries of Central and Eastern Europe will aim at identifying patterns of Holocaust remembrance *common* to various countries of the region where the Holocaust happened, instead of comparing memorials in order to find differences in Holocaust (non-)remembrance among the various nations. Thus on studying national developments in Holocaust memorials, the article will try to show their transnational aspects. The article will look at Holocaust memorials in Central and Eastern Europe rather than across Europe or the wider (Western) world. The main reason for that will be to demonstrate the legacies of

communism upon Holocaust remembrance in the area where the Holocaust largely took place.

The article will proceed as follows. First, it will discuss the processes of Holocaust (non-remembrance) at the communist times, analysing cases of the present-day memorials and memorial sites of the Holocaust. Secondly, the article will highlight the processes and examples of transformations of the commemorative objects from the communist times after 1989–91 and the development of new ones ever since. In both periods, mnemonic agents will be identified. In the conclusions, the article will assess the role of various processes and agents for shaping the present-day Holocaust memorials and will discuss the relevance of some theories of transnational Holocaust memory in accounting for the memorials.

Holocaust (non-)remembrance during communism

Literature on Holocaust memorials (e.g. Milton and Nowinski 1991; Young 1989, 1993, 1994; Marcuse 2010) and that on Holocaust memory (e.g. Himka and Michlic 2013; Huener 2003; Steinlauf 1997) dealt with icons of Holocaust memorials located in Central and Eastern Europe that were created during communism, such as the Warsaw Ghetto Monument, the memorial in Treblinka or the International Monument in Auschwitz-Birkenau. At the same time, this literature conveys the view that there was little, hardly any or no remembrance of the Holocaust in the countries of Central and Eastern Europe under communist rule. This section will explore and attempt to both challenge and corroborate this view by identifying and discussing various processes and cases of Holocaust memorialization, marginalization, suppression and obliteration in those countries between the end of the war there in 1944–45 and the demise of communism in 1989–91.

Chronologically and analytically, the first process that took place throughout Central and Eastern Europe in the early years after the war consisted of attempts at commemorating the murdered Jews by Jewish survivors, the returning families and friends of the victims and the Jewish communities or organizations. Some of these attempts were spontaneous and unofficial. Others were organized and involved obtaining permission from the local authorities to create memorials. Many of the attempts were successful. Examples of successful memorialization included objects commemorating the mass graves of Jews on the sites of killings carried out by the *Einsatzgruppen* (death squads and local auxiliaries) in Nazi-invaded Soviet Union, such as

those in the Rumbula Forest near Riga in 1941, monuments of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising of 1943, the Jewish monument in the Auschwitz-Birkenau concentration and death camp, and a cemetery of the victims of the Budapest Ghetto.

The objects commemorating the victims of mass killings buried in the mass graves in Rumbula and other sites in the then Belarussian, Latvian, Lithuanian, and Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republics included memorial signs, piles of stones, wooden tablets and Stars of David (Young 1994). Most of these early memorials no longer exist. Many were torn down by the local authorities. Others decayed after the Jews who installed them and were looking after them had emigrated. However, photographs of many of these 'unofficial memorials' may be seen in literature (e.g. in Young 1994, 27–28) and in some exhibitions. For example, the early attempts at commemorating the Rumbula killings are documented in the exhibition 'Rumbula: Anatomy of a crime, 1941' in the Museum of the Occupation of Latvia in Riga.

Two monuments of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising of 1943 are the most remarkable examples of the early Holocaust memorials that last until today. They are located on a large square established on the ruins of the ghetto in the centre of the capital of Poland. The process to erect the monuments was initiated by the surviving and returning Polish Jews. The monuments were commissioned by the main Jewish organization in early post-war Poland – the Central Committee of Polish Jews [Centralny Komitet Żydów w Polsce], which was granted permission by the authorities. The first of the two monuments is little known. It was unveiled in 1946 to mark the third anniversary of the outbreak of the uprising. It is a modest tablet on a pedestal, created by the architect Leon Suzin (Photograph 1). On the tablet is an inscription in Polish, Yiddish and Hebrew. The powerful inscription reads: '19 April 1946 / To those who fell / in the unprecedentedly / heroic struggle / for the dignity and freedom / of the Jewish people, / for a free Poland, / for the liberation of man / The Polish Jews' [Tym, którzy polegli / w bezprzykładnie / bohaterskiej walce / o godność i wolność / narodu żydowskiego, / o wolną Polskę, / o wyzwolenie człowieka / Żydzi polscy]. Thus, the text defines the commemorated event by giving its starting date. Those commemorated are conceived as the fallen, fighters and heroes. The text also defines the causes of their fight referring to lofty universalist, Jewish national and Polish patriotic values. Lastly, those who commemorate are signed – 'The Polish Jews'.

The second of the two lasting early memorials is the famous Warsaw Ghetto Monument, referred to in Poland as the Monument to the Ghetto Heroes [Pomnik Bohaterów Getta] (Photograph 2). It was created by the sculptor Nathan Rapoport and the designer of the first monument, architect M. Suzin. The monument was unveiled on 19 April 1948, during an official ceremony marking the fifth anniversary of the outbreak of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising. Ever since, the memorial has been the site of official and unofficial, Polish and Jewish anniversary commemorations (Young 1989; Steinlauf 1997), which has become the main Holocaust commemoration in Poland. The monument resembles a wall, with a sculpture at the front and a relief at the rear. The sculpture, entitled 'The Fight' [Walka], shows insurgents. The relief represents the march of the Jewish men, women and children to their annihilation. The structure stands on a plinth, with two menorahs either side. A short inscription in Polish, Yiddish and Hebrew beneath the sculpture on the front of the monument defines the commemorating and the commemorated: 'The Jewish people – to its fighters and martyrs' [Naród żydowski – swym bojownikom i męczennikom].

The Central Committee of Polish Jews also initiated and succeeded in installing the Jewish monument in Auschwitz-Birkenau. The monument was erected by the ruins of one of the gas chambers and crematoriums in the former Birkenau part of the Auschwitz complex in 1948 (Huener 2003;

Kucia 2005; Wóycicka 2013). The memorial, however, does not exist any longer. It was dismantled during the construction of the current International Monument unveiled in 1967.

Although an organization of Polish Jews was successful in installing the Jewish monument at the largest site of the Holocaust, it failed in its attempts to memorialize the main killing site of the Jews of Poland – the death camp of Treblinka. Despite the organization's efforts, the authorities refused to grant permission for a monument that they believed would be 'too Jewish' (Young 1989; Wóycicka 2013).

The cemetery of Holocaust victims from the Budapest Ghetto (Photograph 3), located in the garden of the Dohány Street Synagogue complex, also referred to as the Great Synagogue, the main synagogue of Hungary, is another significant example of the early Jewish commemorative objects. It is a rare case of an unintended Holocaust memorial. The garden near a synagogue that had been in the ghetto became a burial place for some 2,000 Jews by order of the authorities in the first days after the liberation of the ghetto by the Red Army on 18 January 1945. This was against the Jewish tradition as it was impossible to use the Jewish cemeteries due to warfare. The makeshift graveyard, however, became perpetual; the corpses were never exhumed and transferred from the mass graves in the garden.

Over the years, the cemetery has become a Holocaust memorial site – 'the most authentic Holocaust memorial in Hungary' (Toronyi 2013, 1).

From the 1950s to the 1980s, the families of the victims, Jewish activists and organizations developed some of the earliest Holocaust memorials and created new ones. This process – like all aspects of social, political and economic life under communism – was controlled by the communist authorities. Much of this continued and new Jewish memorialization was confined to the Jewish community spaces. For example, in the late 1950s, the Jewish Museum in Prague made the Pinchas Synagogue into a Holocaust memorial by inscribing the names of almost 80,000 Czech Jewish victims onto its walls (Frankl 2013, 176). In Hungary, the cemetery of the Holocaust victims from the Budapest Ghetto in the garden of the Dohány Street Synagogue complex became the core of a growing Holocaust memorial site. Over the years, individual Jews and Jewish organizations placed various Holocaust memorial objects in the garden. Until the collapse of communism, these were: a plaque marking the exact spot where the Soviet troops first entered the former Ghetto, plaques and bouquets commemorating the identified victims buried in the mass graves in the garden and individual and group victims of other sites of the Holocaust of the Jews of Hungary, and a 'memorial wall' (Toronyi 2013). A white marble plaque with an inscription was affixed onto this memorial wall by the sculptor István Zana. The

inscription read: 'As an eternal reminder of the day forty years ago when the walls surrounding the only Ghetto remaining in Europe were broken down by the Soviet Army, liberators of our homeland. 18 January 1945 – 18 January 1985' [örök emlékeztetőül arra a 40 évvel ezelőtti napra, amikor az egyetlen megmaradt európai gettót körülvevő falakat lerombolta a hazánkat felszabadító szovjet hadsereg. 1945. január 18 – 1985. január 18] (Toronyi 2013, 7). Thus, this central memorial object placed in the hidden memorial garden lacked a reference to Jews and their Holocaust, and focused on the Soviet 'liberators', which was typical of most of Hungary's memorials of the Holocaust at that time (Cole 2003).

Alongside the Jewish spaces, Jewish memorialization also took place in more general, freely accessible public spaces. For instance in the Rumbula Forest, in the then Latvian Soviet Socialist Republic, the authorities granted permission to the Jewish community of Riga to install a monument that replaced the early commemorative objects. The monument that stands to this day is a simple medium-sized granite stone resembling a Jewish tombstone, with a carved inscription in Latvian, Russian, and Yiddish in the Hebrew script, the Soviet symbol of sickle and hammer and the years 1941–44 (Photograph 4). The Russian part of the inscription 'жертвам фашизма' translates 'To the victims of fascism', which is a typical way of universalizing Holocaust victims and referring to the perpetrators in the Soviet bloc at that time. Only the form of the monument and the Hebrew letters of one of the inscriptions evoke the Jewishness of the commemorated. The form and content of the monument exemplify the implicit character of most Holocaust memorials placed in public spaces during communist times. In the middle of the monument, there is a small metal plaque that must have been affixed after the fall of communism as the text on it in Latvian and English states, 'This monument was erected in 1964 under the Soviet totalitarian regime by activists of the Riga's Jewish community. It was the only Jewish memorial to the victims of Nazi terror in the territory of the USSR.' The plaque does not expound that the Jewish activists had to obtain permission from the authorities. It seems then that the implicit Holocaust references and Soviet symbols were a compromise between the two parties. However, explicit Holocaust memorials free from communist elements were also built in communist-ruled Central and Eastern Europe during that era.

The memorial at Treblinka, comprising a monument and a memorial park (Photograph 5), is the major of the rare examples of Holocaust

Photograph 4
The Jewish
monument from the
Soviet times (1964),
Rumbula, 9 July
2014. Photograph
by Marek Kucia

memorialization by communist authorities. Located in Poland, on the site
of the second largest former death camp (after Auschwitz) that claimed
the lives of some 700,000 to 900,000 Jews, the memorial at Treblinka is
considered 'the greatest of all Holocaust memorials' (Young 1994, 25). It
was commissioned by the Polish Ministry of Culture and Arts when various
events and sites of Poland's history were being memorialized, in a period of
monumentalization across the communist bloc. The Treblinka Memorial was
created by the architect Adam Haupt and the sculptors Franciszek Duszeńko
and Franciszek Strynkiewicz between 1959 and 1964. The monument was
dedicated by high representatives of the Polish government during a rally
attended by 30,000 people in 1964 as a sign of 'the nation's martyrdom'
(Young 1993, 188; cf. Rusiniak 2008, 51, 53), which was as an attempt to
include the murder of (mostly Polish) Jews into the usually Polish ethno-
centric narrative of suffering and death of Poland's nationals during the
Second World War. Since its dedication, the monument and the surrounding
memorial park are the major components of the Polish public institution
called the Museum of Struggle and Martyrdom in Treblinka [Muzeum Walki
i Męczeństwa Treblinka].

The monument and the memorial park in Treblinka are overt about the
Holocaust. At the entrance to the memorial park, there are six blocks with
inscriptions in different languages – German, French, English, Russian,

Yiddish and Polish. The inscriptions explicitly state: 'More than 800,000 Jews from Poland, USSR, Yugoslavia, Czechoslovakia, Bulgaria, Austria, France, Belgium, Germany and Greece were here murdered.' The monument and the surrounding memorial park are full of subtle yet overt Jewish symbolism (Young 1988; Marcuse 2010). The reliefs of the monument contain motifs used on Jewish tombstones, and a menorah. The blocks on which the monument is built bear resemblances to the Wailing Wall (the wall of the Temple of Jerusalem). The monument is surrounded by over 17,000 stones resembling Jewish tombstones, 213 of them bearing names of places in the surrounding districts from which the Jews were deported to the death camp (Kopówka 2002). Eleven stones show the names of the countries of deportation (Belgium, USSR, Yugoslavia, France, Czechoslovakia, Poland, Bulgaria, Germany, Austria, Greece and Macedonia). One stone commemorates 'the martyrs of the Warsaw Ghetto' [Męczennikom getta warszawskiego], and another the individuals: 'Janusz Korczak (Henryk Goldszmit) and children'. By the monument, there is a stone with the Polish inscription '*Nigdy więcej*' [Never again] and its translations into Hebrew, Yiddish, Russian, English, French and German. This is a universalist call, and critics could claim that it obliterates the Jewish history and symbolism of Treblinka. They may also claim that the inscription in such a place should be explicit, for example, 'To the memory of hundreds of thousands of Jews murdered at this site.' However, given the historical and remembrance context, the universalist

call of the inscriptions carved on the stone at the Treblinka monument has a Jewish meaning: it does not only refer to genocide but to the Jewish Holocaust. Overall, the memorial at Treblinka is the prime example of Holocaust memorialization.

Another process regarding Holocaust remembrance that may be identified consists of the marginalization and suppression of remembrance of the Jewish victims through their universalization, nationalization and internationalization in the memorials to the victims of the Second World War sponsored by the communist authorities and created in the 1960s and 1980s.

Universalization referred to the Jews murdered during the Second World War by means of general categories such as 'humans' or 'victims', without mentioning that the humans or victims were murdered as Jews and because they were considered Jewish. Universalization was also conveyed through the use of such terms as 'murder' and 'genocide', again without specifying that the murdered were Jewish. It also entailed the usage of the universalist call 'Never again!' without any reference to what and, especially, to whom it was meant to never happen again. Universalization also entailed the use of universalist visual representations of human suffering and death while no Jewish symbols were used. The most memorable examples of the universalist suppression or marginalization of the Holocaust included: the 'urn-monument' in Auschwitz-Birkenau (1955–66); the International Monument and, particularly, the multilingual inscriptions on the plaques there (1967–90); the monument 'To the memory of the victims [...]' on the site of the Belżec death camp (1963–95); and the abstract monument with a memorial tablet 'To the heroes of Majdanek [...]' on the site of the former concentration and death camp unveiled in 1969 (Photograph 6). Those monuments, no matter how artistic they are, were devoid of any Jewish symbolism. The text of the Auschwitz-Birkenau plaques was the best example of Holocaust suppression through universalization (and, as it proved, it also misrepresented the number of the camp's victims): 'Four million people suffered and died here at the hands of the Nazi murderers between the years 1940 and 1945.'

Nationalization in regard to the Holocaust comprised the commemoration of Jews not as Jews but as citizens of a given country. This way of suppressing the Holocaust was typical of the Soviet Union. The Soviet symbol of

Photograph 6
The monument with the universalist tablet with the inscription 'To the heroes of Majdanek' on its left (1969), Majdanek, 23 July 2014. Photograph by Marek Kucia

sickle and hammer engraved on the Rumbula monument of 1964 was an example of such nationalization by means of a symbol.

Holocaust internationalization represented Jews as citizens of various countries. This means of suppression was used at the Holocaust sites to which the Jews were deported from various countries of Europe, mainly at Auschwitz-Birkenau. The main monument there, unveiled on 19 April 1967, was called the International Monument to the Victims of Fascism in Brzezinka. Most of the nineteen languages used in the universalizing inscriptions on the monument's plaques were the main languages of the countries from which the deportees arrived. Most of the flags flown on the monument during commemorations were in the national colours of the deportation states. Some internationalization of the Holocaust also took place in Treblinka where the memorial acclaimed as the greatest Holocaust memorial had (and still has) stones cut with the names of the countries from which the Jews were deported.

Finally, a process relating to the Holocaust that took place in much of Central and Eastern Europe under communist rule was its utter obliteration. It seems that this process was the most widespread at that time. The authorities of the countries of the region did not memorialize the Holocaust in the many sites of camps and ghettos, deportations and executions. They also did not allow

the survivors, families and friends of the victims, Jewish and non-Jewish organizations or anyone to commemorate the dead. Thus, there were no or hardly any Holocaust memorials in the public spaces in such countries as Czechoslovakia, Hungary and Romania. For many years there were no commemorative objects in such former camps as Bełżec or Sobibór in Poland. Most former ghettos in this country were not commemorated at all, unless streets or squares in the former ghettos were named after the 'ghetto heroes', which referred to the Warsaw Ghetto rather than the local ones. The site of the former ghetto-camp of Theresienstadt in Terezin, then Czechoslovakia, was not commemorated. The deportation sites in post-war Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Poland and Romania were (on the whole) not memorialized. In the USSR, once the early memorials on the mass graves at the execution sites had decayed, new ones were not installed in most of these places.

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Given the evidence from the study of Holocaust memorials presented above, one may corroborate the view conveyed by literature on Holocaust memorials and Holocaust memory that there was no or hardly any Holocaust remembrance in Eastern Europe during communism. There was little, far too little, Holocaust remembrance in terms of Holocaust memorials given how many sites of persecution and murder of Jews called for commemoration over such a huge area covering so many countries. Although some of those sites, largely the most notorious ones, were commemorated through memorials of various kinds that were usually initiated by the surviving Jews, there was little, far too little, Holocaust memorialization initiated and carried out by the authorities of the nations of the region where the Holocaust largely took place. There was little, far too little, Holocaust remembrance in the sites where not only Jews suffered and died. The state-sponsored memorials too often universalized, nationalized, internationalized or even totally obliterated the Jewish Holocaust. There was no or hardly any Holocaust remembrance in the countries that had been wartime allies of the Third Reich and in some that had been occupied. In post-war Czechoslovakia, Hungary and Romania, Holocaust remembrance was by and large confined to the spaces used by the Jews. There were no overt Holocaust memorials in the public spaces there. Some important Holocaust sites throughout the region did not have any Holocaust memorial. This situation of absence or deficit of Holocaust remembrance changed only in the period on the demise of communism.

Transformations and development of Holocaust memorials after communism

Field research into the existing Holocaust memorials supported by the study of existing literature reveals several processes that unfolded after the communist regimes had been replaced by democracies in Central and Eastern Europe. These were: (a) making minor changes to the existing memorials; (b) developing the existing memorial sites; (c) removing the old commemorative objects and replacing them with the new ones; (d) supplementing the existing memorials; and (e) creating new Holocaust memorials.

The first process whereby minor changes were made concerns only a few, but important pre-existing memorials where substantial transformations either were not necessary (e.g. Treblinka) or were not considered as such (e.g. Majdanek). In Treblinka, no change was made to the monument and a few minor additions to the memorial park can be noticed. These include a stone for Macedonia added in 2008 to the pre-existing stones with the names of deportation countries; almost a hundred stones with the names of deportation sites outside post-war Poland were added in 1998 (Kopówka 2002) along with the Hebrew inscription '!אל דוע' on the *Nigdy więcej* [Never again] stone. More has happened in the area adjacent to the memorial. The museum is now housed in a refurbished and extended building. A new exhibition can be viewed there. A keystone was set for an educational centre. In Majdanek, the impressive abstract monument with the memorial tablet that universalized the victims still stands at the centre of the memorial museum of the former camp. However, new signs and inscriptions first placed in the early 1990s and the open-air exhibition arranged in the early 2000s adequately represent the history of the camp, including the murder of Jews there.

The second process consisted in developing the existing Holocaust memorial sites by creating new, additional memorials. This process concerned, *inter alia*, the three sites discussed above – the area around the monuments to the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising, the Budapest garden in the Dohány Street Synagogue complex and the memorial site in the Rumbula Forest by Riga. In Warsaw, the square where the two monuments sponsored by the Polish Jews have stood since 1946 and 1948, became a peculiar memorial park with objects placed by (ethnic) Poles rather than (Polish) Jews commemorating not the Holocaust, but people, organizations and events related to it and which were important from a (non-Jewish) Polish perspective. The objects

are: (a) the Tree of Common Memory of Poles and Jews planted in 1988; (b) stones marking the Memorial Route of Jewish Martyrdom and Struggle placed from 1988 to 1997; (c) an obelisk commemorating 'Żegota' – the Polish underground organization that rescued Jews – unveiled in 1995; (d) a monument to the West German Chancellor Willy Brandt unveiled in 2000 commemorating his famous Warsaw Genuflection [Kniefall von Warschau, in German] in front of the Warsaw Ghetto Monument in 1970: (e) a statue to Jan Karski – a Polish underground officer who first brought the news of the Holocaust to the Allies – unveiled in 2013; and (f) the sign 'Irena Sendlerowa Avenue' commemorating a Polish nurse who rescued approximately 2,500 Jewish children from the ghetto. The symbolic meaning of the square, once a part of the ghetto, with so many objects from a Polish perspective is somehow balanced by the spectacular building of the POLIN Museum of the History of Polish Jews opened in 2013.

In Budapest, the Hungarian Jewish community continued developing the garden of the Dohány Street Synagogue complex as a Holocaust memorial site. The most remarkable monument was dedicated in 1990 – a weeping willow tree made of steel whose leaves are engraved with the names of Holocaust victims (Photograph 7). It is the Memorial of the Hungarian Jewish Martyrs by Imre Varga, commonly called the 'Emanuel Memorial', which is a reference to its major donor (Toronyi 2013, 11). At the foot of the monument, there is a red marble stone with a golden inscription in Hungarian '*emlékezzünk*' [remember]. In 2008, another remarkable object was installed in the garden – a large glass window designed in 2004 by Claire Szilard for the Holocaust Memorial Centre in Budapest, but never used there (ibid.). In 2012, the Raoul Wallenberg Holocaust Memorial Park [Emlékpark] was established, with a tablet and a plaque commemorating the Swedish diplomat, who rescued thousands of Budapest Jews, and other Righteous among the Nations.

In the Rumbula Forest, the memorial installed by the Jewish community of Riga in 1964 became just one of many commemorative objects that created an exceptional memorial park. The objects, as the inscriptions indicate, were sponsored by various public and private, domestic and foreign agents. The access road to the memorial site is marked by a striking structure of steel and stones funded by a survivor. The memorial is to 'thousands of Jews' driven to death from the Riga Ghetto, including the named members of the family of the funder. At the entrance to the memorial park, there are two

pairs of memorial stones (Photograph 8). The first names the site in Latvian, Hebrew, English and German in a universalizing way as a 'Memorial to the victims of Nazi terror'. The stone also tells us about the reconstruction of the site in 2002 and lists public and private donors from Latvia, Israel, the USA and Germany. Another stone standing next it is 'in memory of the Jewish victims'. This memorial was unveiled by the presidents of Latvia and

Israel in 2005. Two further stones give information about the history of the site. Further up a road, obelisks and a menorah surrounded by smaller stones with names of the victims marks the place of executions. The Jewish memorial from the Soviet era stands by the stones.

The third process concerning many key Holocaust sites in Central and Eastern Europe consisted in removing the old commemorative objects that suppressed Holocaust memory and replacing them with new ones that are explicit about the murder of the Jews. These changes were made at such sites as Auschwitz-Birkenau, Bełżec and Sobibór. In Auschwitz-Birkenau, the tablets with multilingual inscriptions universalizing the Jewish and other victims that were unveiled with the International Monument in the former Birkenau part of the camp complex in 1967 were removed in 1990 and replaced with new ones in 1994 (Kucia 2005, 30). The changes were made by the Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum after its International Council had agreed the text. The new text remains universalist in its calling, but, at the same time, clearly referring to the Jews: 'For ever let this place be / a cry of despair / and a warning to humanity, / where the Nazis murdered / about one and a half / million / men, women, and children, / mainly Jews / from various countries / of Europe / Auschwitz-Birkenau / 1940–45'. In Bełżec, the old monument of 1963 was dismantled in the mid 1990s. Between 2002 and 2004 a new impressive memorial (Photograph 9) and a museum

were constructed through a joint project between the Polish government and the American Jewish Committee. In Sobibór, the multilingual plaques were replaced in 1993 by the newly established museum of the site. The commemorative objects from 1964 to 1965 – an obelisk, a monument and a memorial mound, all without a reference to Jews – still stand on the grounds of the former death camp. However, there are plans to build a new museum and to re-arrange the area of the former camp.

The fourth process consisted in supplementing the existing memorials and memorial sites with the commemorative objects overtly referring to the Jews and their Holocaust. This process concerned the sites where the murder of both Jews and non-Jews took place and where the remembrance of the former was either suppressed or utterly obliterated. Examples included Paneriai (Ponary) in Vilnius and the Ninth Fort in Kaunas – two of the most notorious sites of the victimhood of Jews, Lithuanians, Poles and others in Lithuania. At present, the execution site in the Paneriai Forest is a memorial cemetery with memorials to various groups and individuals erected at various times. The memorials were sponsored by different domestic and foreign agents. Among the memorials, there is a Jewish monument from 1991, with an additional plaque 'in memory of the Jewish victims' unveiled by the presidents of Lithuania and Israel in 2005. In Kaunas, the Soviet-time monument is surrounded by a lot of memorial tablets (Photograph 10), many of them

to different groups of Jews placed by various public and private agents, mostly foreign. Other examples include the Terezín Memorial in the Czech Republic and the Museum of Slovak National Uprising in Banská Bystrica in Slovakia. In Terezín, a large Star of David was erected in 1995 in the National Cemetery established in 1945 for the victims of the Gestapo prison in the Small Fortress, the Theresienstadt Ghetto and the Litoměřice concentration camp (Frankl 2013, 176). Later, the Museum of the Ghetto was opened; its provisional exhibition was replaced by a modern and permanent one in 2000 (ibid.). In Banská Bystrica, at the entrance to the monumental museum building of 1969, among various memorials from different periods, there is a memorial stone with the inscriptions in Slovak '*Obietiam / Holocaustu / na Slovensku / 1939–1945*' [to the victims of the Holocaust in Slovakia] and in Hebrew 'זוכר' [remember] (Photograph 11). The reopening of the Pinchas Memorial Synagogue in Prague in 1996 may also be included in this category. This synagogue, which had been transformed into a memorial by the Jewish Museum in the 1950s, remained closed for renovation, which, in turn, was boycotted by the communist authorities (Frankl 2013, 177).

Lastly, there was a process of creating Holocaust memorials at the hundreds of sites where there had been none. These memorials were sponsored by a variety of agents: domestic and foreign, central and local, public and private, collective and individual. In many cases, different agents cooperated with

Photograph 11
Banská Bystrica.
A wall of
commemorative
objects at the
entrance to the
Museum of Slovak
National Uprising
(left to right):
bricks with names
of nationalities
that fought in the
uprising (including
'Židia – The Jews'),
a stone 'to the
victims of the
Holocaust in
Slovakia', and
a stone 'to the
victims of the
Romani Holocaust
in Slovakia', 12
August 2014.
Photograph by
Marek Kucia

each other. The most significant examples of the new Holocaust memorials are government-sponsored or co-sponsored memorials in the public spaces of Bratislava, Bucharest and Budapest – the capitals of the countries that were allies of Nazi Germany during the war. In Bratislava, the memorial by Peter Žalman and Lucia Žalmanová comprises a sculpture with the motif of a Star of David. On the plinth, there are inscriptions 'Remember!' in Slovak [*Pamätaj!*] and Hebrew [רוכז]. Unfortunately, who and what should be remembered is not explained. The memorial, unveiled in 1996, is as implicit about the Jews and their Holocaust as many monuments from communist times. In Budapest, a moving Holocaust memorial was erected in 2005. It is the 'Shoes on the Danube Bank' by Can Togay and Guyla Pauer. Tablets with inscriptions in Hungarian, English and Hebrew explain that it is 'To the memory of the victims / shot into the Danube / by Arrow Cross militiamen / in 1944–45.' Who the victims were, however, is not specified, which is surprising given that the perpetrators are. The Bucharest memorial by Peter Jacobi unveiled in 2009 is the most explicit of the three (Photograph 12). The main plaque with inscriptions in Romanian, English and Hebrew reads: 'Government of Romania / Memorial to the victims of the Holocaust in Romania [...]' A large information panel next to it gives an overview of the main facts regarding the persecution and murder of Jews (and Roma) by 'the Romanian state'. Other smaller panels explain the history and meaning of the artefacts and the symbols comprising the memorial. The large and smaller information panels, however, were only placed in response to severe criticism following the unveiling of the monument.

Conclusions

The current appearance of Holocaust memorials in Central and Eastern Europe is primarily a result of the processes that unfolded under communism – the Jewish commemoration, rare state memorialization and frequent marginalization, suppression or utter obliteration of the Jewish victims of the Second World War. It is these processes that produced such lasting legacies from communist times: modest and more significant Jewish memorials; huge state-sponsored monuments to the Holocaust and other atrocities; organizations dealing with remembrance; ill-judged monuments that later called for dismantling and empty spaces that required proper commemoration. The agents of Holocaust (non-)remembrance were mostly domestic at that time. The work of Jewish individuals and organizations gave way to that of the communist authorities and their agencies, whose became increasingly predominant.

The processes that have transformed the existing memorials and developed new ones since the fall of communism have an important but on the whole a secondary role for what Holocaust memorials in Central and Eastern Europe look like now. In some countries and at certain sites, however, their role has been paramount.

The agents of transformation and development of Holocaust memorials after communism were many and varied. There were numerous foreign, transnational agents such as Jewish diaspora organizations and private Jewish foundations, particularly from such countries as the USA and France. There were the State of Israel and its agencies. There were German and American governmental, non-governmental and private agents. There were international organizations such as the IHRA and its member state delegations. There were domestic agents: government ministries and agencies that ultimately took decisions regarding the memorials, regional and municipal authorities, public and non-governmental organizations dealing with Holocaust memory and Jewish heritage and Jewish communities and organizations. Lastly, there were individuals in or from Central and East European countries, including survivors.

Much of the agency in the transformations and development of Holocaust memorials after communism may be explained through the transnational influences of the universalization/globalization, cosmopolitanization,

internationalization and Europeanization of Holocaust memory, as understood by Alexander (2002), Levy and Sznaider (2002), Allwork (2015) and Kucia (2016), respectively. The changes in Central and East European Holocaust memorials, however, also show limitations of the transnational theories. The universalist idea of 'the Holocaust as the ultimate evil' that highlights the Jewish dimension of a war crime helped overcome the universalization, internationalization and nationalization of the Jewish victims characteristic of many Central and East European war memorials from communist times. At the same time, some new Holocaust memorials referred to the commemorated Jews in universalist terms only as if the old universalization was superseded by the new one of the same kind. The cosmopolitan ideas of a universal, de-territorialized, de-contextualized, and media-conveyed Holocaust memory prompted much of foreign and a fair amount of domestic memorialization agency. However, the transformed, developed or newly created memorials were particular, territorial, contextual and tangible. The EU, the IHRA and other international organizations produced norms regarding Holocaust remembrance that the Central and East European countries incorporated into their practices. Ultimately, however, Holocaust remembrance days were instituted by particular nations and observed in their countries at their Holocaust memorials on country-specific dates. Thus, although the Holocaust memorials in present-day Central and Eastern Europe combine old communist legacies and new transnational influences, they are on the whole national developments.

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MAREK KUCIA

Marek Kucia is associate professor at the Institute of Sociology of the Jagiellonian University in Kraków. In the academic year 2013–14 he was also Marie Curie Fellow at the Centre for European Studies of Lund University. In the spring term of 2015–16, he was visiting professor at the Skalny Center for Polish and Central European Studies of the University of Rochester. He studied in Kraków and Oxford. He holds a MA in Political Science and a MA, PhD and venia legendi *[Habilitation] in Sociology. He serves as chairman of the Council of the International Centre for Education about Auschwitz and the Holocaust at the Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum in Oświęcim.*

ENDNOTES

1   COST is the longest-running European framework supporting transnational cooperation among researchers, engineers and scholars across Europe.

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'THE SPIRIT OF THE TIME LEFT ITS STAMP ON THESE WORKS': WRITING THE HISTORY OF THE SHOAH AT THE JEWISH HISTORICAL INSTITUTE IN STALINIST POLAND

Stephan Stach
Institute for Contemporary History of the Czech Academy of Sciences in Prague

ABSTRACT
The Jewish Historical Institute in Warsaw was probably the only research institution in the Soviet Bloc and one of very few that undertook research on the Shoah during the 1950s. This article analyses the institute's research and working conditions against the background of the general political regime under Stalinism in Poland. It argues that despite sometimes heavy-handed political biases in its publications, the institute made an important contribution to research on the Shoah. Its work also came to the attention of Jewish centres outside the Soviet Bloc, though it was seen through the prism of the Cold War.

Introduction

Das Amt und die Vergangenheit [The Ministry and the past] (2010) summarizes the work of an international research group, which studied the involvement of the German Foreign Ministry in the mass murder of European Jews over several years. The findings, which attracted wide public attention, erased the myth that the *Auswärtiges Amt* [German: Federal Foreign Office] had been a clandestine refuge for Nazi opponents. Instead, it exposed the active participation of the Foreign Ministry in preparations for and its conduct during the Holocaust (Conze et al. 2010). In 1953 Artur Eisenbach had revealed the involvement of the Foreign Ministry in the Holocaust in the Nazi policy of extermination of the Jews though this work was not as comprehensive (Eisenbach 1953). His study is also one of the first monographs ever published on the Shoah.[1] Although forming the larger part of the research on the Shoah conducted at the Jewish Historical Institute (JHI:

Yidisher historisher institute/Żydowski Instytut Historyczny) during the first half of the 1950s,[2] Eisenbach's book received little attention. The reasons for this are many. The institute published in Polish and Yiddish, and both these languages were little known in the West outside East European Jewish émigré circles. Also, interest in the Holocaust had been fading after an initial phase of intense interest in the late 1940s. The most important reasons are, however, the political distortions of Stalinism and the thoroughly Marxist methodology, especially in Eisenbach's case.[3] During the Cold War such politically biased texts were read with hostility by readers in the West. The Yiddish press in the United States and Israel thus called the Warsaw Jewish historians derogatively 'Yevsec historians' or 'Stalinist slaves' whose work consisted more of a falsification of history than of history writing. Such assessments, which neither considered the political context of the JHI's publications in the first half of the 1950s nor assessed their scholarly value, using the political jargon of the time, found their way into the Western historiography of the Shoah[4] and can still be found in recent publications. A telling example is Sven-Erik Rose's 2011 article on the perception of Yehoshue Perle's 'Khurbn Varshe' [The destruction of Warsaw] in the early 1950s. In his illuminating contribution on Perle's radical witness account of the mass deportations from the Warsaw Ghetto in summer 1942, Rose refers to the JHI historians as 'Jewish Stalinists',[5] and so overlooks the vast literature on the situation of Jews in Stalinist Eastern Europe (Grüner 2008; Rubentstein and Naumov 2001).[6]

In this article I provide such a contextualization and discuss the potential and boundaries of research on the Shoah in Stalinist Poland. I begin with a short introduction on the JHI and its formation in the early post-war years. Then I shed light on the Stalinization of the institute in 1949–50 and analyse the impact Stalinism had on the activities and the publications of the JHI, against the background of general developments in Poland and how this was perceived in the West, especially in the Yiddish context. Finally, I examine the repercussions of anti-Semitism in the late Stalinist period for the JHI researchers and publications.

The emergence of the JHI
The JHI came into being in October 1947, when the Central Jewish Historical Commission [Centralna Żydowska Komisja Historyczna] was transformed into a permanent research institution. The commission had been founded in late 1944 in Lublin by the Jewish historian and Holocaust survivor Philip

Friedman (Grüss 1946, 6).[7] In 1945 it was relocated to Łódź and then to Warsaw in spring 1947. Its purpose was to document and research the mass murder of Polish and European Jewry. To that end, the commission began to gather and assemble 'all printed, handwritten or other materials, photographs, illustrations, documents and exhibits' before the end of the war.[8] The commission also drew up sources that documented the Jewish perspective on the German Occupation of Poland: interviews with thousands of survivors, both adults and children, were recorded. Today, more than 7,000 testimonies are stored in the JHI archive.

The best-known and most valuable collection is the secret archive of the Warsaw Ghetto, produced by the Jewish historian Emanuel Ringelblum and his underground Oyneg Shabes group. It is in two parts; the first was unearthed from the ruins of the Ghetto in September 1946.[9] This served as an important impetus not only for the Commission's work but also for the transformation of the Central Jewish Historical Commission into a permanent research institute.[10] A year after the first part of the Ringelblum Archive was found, the Central Committee of Jews in Poland [Centralny Komitet Żydów w Polsce],[11] a self-governing body of the then quasi-autonomous Jewish community in Poland, made the decision to turn the commission into the JHI.[12] This took place in a period of relative political liberalism in Poland – at least as far as the Jewish community was concerned. Many Polish Jews that had survived the Shoah in German-occupied Poland or the Soviet Union still believed it was possible to restore Jewish life in Poland. Many Jewish institutions, such as Yiddish theatres and schools, newspapers and a printing house, were established at that time.[13] In this context, the JHI could have filled the role of a scholarly institution of and for the Polish Jewish community. As such it would research the whole history of Polish Jews from the early Middle Ages onwards. However, the central topic of the work would remain the documentation of the Shoah.

The first public opportunity for the JHI to present itself was the fifth anniversary of the Warsaw Uprising in April 1948. The anniversary was an international event, attended by many Polish, Polish-Jewish and international officials as well as by delegations from Jewish institutions. The festivities, which were prepared with the support of the JHI staff, began with the opening of the institute's Museum of Jewish Martyrdom and Fight [Muzeum Martyrologii i Walki Żydowskiej] on the eve of the anniversary, and closed with the unveiling of Natan Rapaport's monument dedicated to the Heroes

Investigators of the JHI in Warsaw checking the Ringelblum archive documents (Oneg Shabbat) that were concealed in metal vessels in Warsaw. They were discovered in two parts: the first in September 1946 and the second in December 1950. Left to right: Adam (Rosenberg) Rudkowski, Bernard (Berl) Mark, unidentified person, Tatjana Bernstein and Eivan Hirsch (a Jewish poet from Łódź), Warsaw, December 1950. Unknown photographer, Yad Vashem, ID 31319, archival signature 1792/1

and Martyrs of the Warsaw Ghetto the next day (Kobylarz 2009, 39 f.).[14] Also in 1948 the JHI began to publish its Yiddish journal, *Bleter far geshikhte* [Folios for history],[15] which addressed an international, Yiddish-speaking readership. However, in the second half of 1948, the political situation became tense. Within a year, the façade of Jewish quasi-autonomy of Jewish in post-war Poland was dismantled. Jewish activists from the Polish Workers' Party (known from late 1948 as the Polish United Workers' Party, PZPR) took over the Central Committee of Jews in Poland and all larger Jewish institutions. Other active Jewish parties were marginalized and subsequently dissolved (Grabski 2015, 199–202, 226–48). In summer 1949 the director of the JHI was sacked and the pre-war communist journalist and PZPR member Ber Mark was appointed to replace him.[16] As a result, many former staff members, among them Nachman Blumental, the first director of the institute, and Rachela Auerbach, one of the few survivors of Ringelblum's Oyneg Shabbes group, decided to emigrate.[17]

The transformation of the JHI into a Marxist-Leninist research institute

As the Stalinist grip on Poland tightened including within the Jewish sphere, Mark speeded up the ideological redirection of the institute. The aim was to catch up with the process of ideological transformation, which had begun

in Polish universities and research institutions two years earlier (Górny 2011, 43 f.). Mark quickly steered the institute on to a course that clearly followed the party line. This was characterized by an open adherence to Marxist-Leninist theory in historical research as well as the use of history as propaganda – especially of the Second World War and the Shoah – to legitimize communist rule in Poland and the position of the Soviet Bloc in the confrontation with the West. To underscore his commitment to communist ideology, Mark published a programmatic statement in the newly established Yiddish information bulletin of the JHI. In 'Our Aims', published in November 1949, he emphasized his ambition to transform the JHI into a Marxist-Leninist research institution: 'The Jewish Historical Institute in Poland has the ambition not only to be the scientific centre of research on the most recent period of our history, the period of unprecedented annihilation, heroic resistance and rebirth, but also to become a centre of Marxism-Leninism applied in research on Jewish history.'[18] This also meant, as the text continues, that the situation in the ghettos had to be analysed from the perspective of class struggle, and the character of the mass murder of Jews by the Germans in turn had to be explained as a consequence of the capitalist order in its imperialist guise.[19]

Mark's articles suggested that his appointment as director was a radical break in the JHI's work. However, although it was certainly a break, it was not especially radical. Mark, who was alleged to have a 'too friendly attitude to people' to become an influential communist functionary in post-war Poland,[20] did not purge the ranks of the JHI. All staff members, including those who chose to emigrate, were allowed to keep their positions until they left and they remained on good terms with Mark after their departure. In September 1950 Mark exchanged letters with his predecessor, Nachman Blumental, and the former vice director, Józef Kermisz, who had settled in the Kibbutz Lohamei haGettaot. When they informed him of their plans to continue their research work in Israel, Mark congratulated them and assured them of his willingness to cooperate.[21]

Most of the historians who remained were members of the Polish United Workers' Party (PZPR). Besides the directors – Ber Mark and Adam Rutkowski – there were Artur Eisenbach, Fraim Kupfer and Tatjana Berenstein. The only nonpartisan senior researcher who remained at the JHI was Szymon Datner, but Danuta Dąbrowska and Albert Nirensztein (Aaron Nirenshtayn in Yiddish), who joined the institute in 1951, were nonpartisan too.

It is also worth noting that although Mark had been a member of the Communist Party of Poland (KPP; Komunistyczna Partia Polski) since 1930, he had never been considered among the ideologically unimpeachable Jewish Party activists. Especially in the Soviet Union, where he spent the war years, he had been treated with suspicion by the authorities and also by some of his Jewish comrades. Shortly after he secured a position as a staff writer at *Eynikayt* [Unity], the official organ of the Jewish Antifascist Committee, Mark was accused of 'Jewish nationalism' and fired, something that made his situation precarious.[22] After he returned to Poland in 1946, holding important functions within Jewish social life, Mark faced similar accusations. The most serious was at a meeting of the Jewish Fraction of the Polish Workers' Party in October 1948, when Szymon Zacharisz – the leading figure among the Jewish Communists and architect of the Stalinization of Jewish life in Poland – accused him of being tainted by 'national-Jewish ideology'.[23] That Mark became director of the JHI at all underscores the lack of trained personnel among the Jewish Communists. For Mark, however, it was a chance for probation; he certainly did not want to fail.

JHI Publications during Stalinism

The politicization of the institute's publications was in line with general developments in Polish historiography at this time. Shmuel Krakowski, head of the institute's archive from 1966 to 1968, described the situation in the 1950s:

> [U]ntil 1956 there was a quite stringent interference by the Party and others, and the course this took is called Stalinist. So it is natural that tight limits were imposed on Jewish – and not only Jewish – historians. But not only were certain limits imposed, which one was not allowed to exceed, there was also a certain language and methodology [...] I would even say a certain party dialect – with very harmful ramifications for scholarly work. Another method was to simply force historians to falsify history and accept certain non-existent facts in order to exaggerate the importance of the Communists.[24]

The elements mentioned by Krakowski were typical of Polish – and not only Polish –historiography during the Stalinist period. This meant quoting frequently from Stalin's and Lenin's works, the use of Marxist-Leninist terminology, which often appeared artificial, and drawing

a clear line between 'progressive' and 'reactionary' elements in history (Stobiecki 2007, 58 f.). Notably in works on the Second World War, the Soviet Union and especially the Red Army had to be praised as liberators and the Communists as the main pillars of resistance. Typical of the intensifying confrontation between the two power blocs were also commentaries on current political developments, such as the Korean War and the colonial conflicts.[25]

In its scholarly publications the JHI under Mark was under pressure to meet the political requirements. This was demonstrated in several ways. For example, in the Yiddish *Bleter far geshikte* translations of methodological articles by Soviet historians,[26] such as Arkady Sidorov and Piotr Tretiakov, appeared, which emphasized the importance of Stalin's works for historiography. Both had been members of a delegation to the Congress of Polish Historians in 1948.[27] Szymon Zachariasz also submitted ideological articles to *Bleter far geshikhte*, among them a tribute to the life and struggle of Feliks Dzieryżyński, a non-Jewish Pole, who founded the Soviet secret police, the *Cheka*. Another emphasized the role of the KPP in the defence of Polish independence (Zakhariash 1951 and 1952). Neither article was related to Jewish history. However, the translations from Soviet scholars constituted a basic feature of East-Central European academia under Stalinism. They had also been published in Polish and many other languages spoken in the Soviet Bloc.[28] Zacharisz's contribution in turn served to emphasize the ideological reliability of the JHI and the fact that the institute was not drifting into 'Jewish nationalism'. Equally, it was surely a concession by Mark to his critic Zacharisz.

The principles of Stalinist-style history writing were also applied to the institute's own research publications. The communists in the ghettos were portrayed as the driving force of Jewish resistance. Uprisings in ghettos and camps were described as the Jewish contribution to the 'great liberation war against German fascism'. The situation in the ghettos was described as a specific form of class struggle where the collaborators of the *Judenrat* suppressed the working masses and the resistance movement. On the Bialystok Ghetto Mark wrote: 'There was a clear division [...] in the ghetto: *Judenrat* and resistance. There was [...] no compromise and no "third way" between these two forces, which were mutually exclusive' (Mark 1952b, 4). The insurgents were, needless to say, 'brought up in the best traditions of the workers' movement, in the struggles of the KPP, in the revolutionary ideas of Marxism-Leninism'.[29]

The exaggeration of the communists' role in the resistance is especially blatant if one compares Albert Nirensztein's article on the resistance movement in the Kraków Ghetto, which appeared in the third issue of the *Biuletyn*, in 1952, and a publication of the Central Jewish Historical Commission, which had appeared six years earlier. In his article, Nirensztein claims: 'There were two principal groups in the Kraków underground: the communist (then PPR) and the members of the Akiba; the latter recognized the indisputable political supremacy of the communists' (Nirensztein 1952c, 184 f.). Referring to members of the underground movement, Betti Ajzenstajn described the situation somewhat differently. In *The Resistance Movement in Ghettos and Camps*, she writes:

> The mentioned organizations [Akiba and the PPR] cooperated in a number of anti-German actions, despite the fact that there was huge ideological gap between them (which more than once produced frictions and disharmony) (Ajzenstajn 1946, 82).

The corrections, which aimed to harmonize history with the ideological foundations of the PZPR, also affected source editions, which made up a large part of *Bleter far geshikhte*, the *Biuletyn* and other JHI publications. The best known example is Emanuel Ringelblum's notes from the Warsaw Ghetto. They appeared in a Yiddish edition in 1952 and as a Polish translation in the *Biuletyn* (Ringelblum 1952a).[30] In both, passages critical of the Soviet Union or of Polish–Jewish relations were deleted, as well as references to religious aspects, Zionism and non-communist resistance. While data that emphasized the conflict between the *Judenrat* and the 'Jewish masses' did appear, other parts which did not fit the class-struggle paradigm were omitted, for instance, corruption in the house committees of the Ghetto. What was omitted, however, differed in the Polish and the Yiddish versions. This was especially true of what Ringelblum wrote about Poles attacking Jews, which was included in the Yiddish paper but not the Polish. But similar differences can also be found in cases that might have been disadvantageous from a Jewish perspective. While in the Yiddish version the collaboration of certain Jews with the Gestapo was noted, it was left out in the Polish version.[31] In the introduction to the Polish version the editors – most probably Mark and Eisenbach – stated that 'notes and expressions that were unclear or not significant for the topic of the research' were omitted,[32] but to anyone willing to read between the lines, this was an indication that the significance for research might have been dependent on the political situation.

Another publication from the second part of the Ringelblum Archive, un-earthed in December 1950, sparked a fierce debate within the Yiddish community and across the Iron Curtain (see below). This was Yehoshue Perle's report 'Khurbn Varshe' [The destruction of Warsaw]. Perle described the situation in the Warsaw Ghetto during the mass deportations in summer 1942 and harshly criticized the *Judenrat* and the Jewish police for assisting the Germans. He also criticized the victims themselves for their lack of resistance ('Khurbn Varshe' 1951, 101–40). Whether the text, which had been published anonymously as the author had not yet been established by the JHI's researchers, had undergone a similar editing process remains unclear.[33] It appeared roughly a year after it was found in late 1951 or early 1952, as the editorial introduction mentions the 'American aggressors, who for seventeen months have been murdering the Korean people'.[34]

Such comments can be found in many JHI publications, as well as in other scholarly journals in Poland between 1950 and 1954. The introduction to 'Khurbn Varshe' [The destruction of Warsaw] is an especially rich example, as it refers not only to the Korean War but also to the negotiations between German Chancellor Konrad Adenauer and Nahum Goldman, president of the World Jewish Congress, which began in December 1951 and would result in the Luxemburg Agreement in 1952 on reparations from Germany to Israel. In an allusion to this, the editorial mentions the 'non-Jewish and Jewish agents of imperialism, who make pacts with yesterday's Nazis [...] those who are repeating the traitorous politics of the Jewish councils'.[35] Elsewhere one can find critical comments on colonialism and discrimination against blacks in the United States (Mark 1951a, 25; Nirensztein 1952a, 184–89). In a similar vein, the exhibits in the JHI's museum link the history of the Shoah and the Warsaw Uprising with a call for the struggle against imperialism (Rutkowski 1951, 127–29).

As we have seen, in the early 1950s JHI publications were punctuated with references to Marxist, and often more bluntly Stalinist, methodology and political biases. They had – especially in the case of sources – undergone a process of censorship in order to make them fit current political needs. While praise of Stalin's genius and attacks on supposedly Western warmongers make these publications read like a caricature from today's perspective, such a readiness to adjust the history of the Shoah to the party line was the only way possible for the JHI to publish its research at all[36] and to make documents like those of the Ringelblum Archive accessible outside the institute.[37]

The JHI's reception in the Yiddish world

Despite the 'party dialect' which dominated the publications of the JHI after late 1949, they continued to be read in the West, especially those in Yiddish. Mark's earliest statements in the *Yedies* in November 1949 were closely monitored. The *Wiener Library Bulletin* (WLB) wrote in early 1950:

> The recent far-reaching changes in the structure of Polish Jewish organizations, now taken over by nominees of the Government, are reflected in the journal of the Jewish Historical Institute, Warsaw [...] A programmatic statement makes it clear that from now on research will be proceeding exclusively along Marxist lines [... T]he tragic story of Polish Jewry, under German occupation in particular, is now going to be presented from the point of view of 'class warfare in the Ghetto'.[38]

This was nevertheless a neutral description of the institute's work in a non-Marxist Western journal. The WLB had committed itself never to comment on political matters. Even when Albert Nirensztein attacked the WLB and accused it of 'only pretending to be progressive, while in fact they do not unmask the true sources and forces of the neo-Nazism in Western Germany, but abide by the principle of old, bankrupt bourgeois ideology',[39] the WLB did not respond. However, it vigorously refuted Nirensztein's assertion that the journal would ignore research literature from outside the Western hemisphere. The dispute resulted not only in an exchange of letters,[40] but finally in a comprehensive report on the JHI's activity in the next WLB issue.[41] This example shows that the JHI, despite its political comments or even attacks on Western institutions, was keen to stay in contact with such institutions, as it clearly sent all its available publications and detailed information to the WLB. It stands to reason that the main intention in criticizing the WLB in *Bleter far geshikhte* was to justify to the Polish authorities its subscription to the Western press.[42]

However, in the Yiddish press in the United States or Israel, the JHI could not count on the same sensibility the WLB showed. Distrust of Jewish scholars in communist Poland was deeply rooted on the other side of the Atlantic. This is not hard to understand considering anti-communist sentiment there at the time and the pro-American orientation of the vast majority of American Jews on the one hand and the anti-American propaganda, which infiltrated the institute's publications, on the other. When in

December 1950 the second part of the Ringelblum Archive was unearthed from the ruins of the Warsaw Ghetto, the news soon spread around the Jewish world. But while the London-based *Jewish Chronicle* reported the fact in almost neutral terms,[43] in New York's *Morgen zhurnal* Aaron Tseytlin's commentary was far more critical. In his view, it would have been better if the material had never been found than falling into the 'unkosher hands' of Warsaw's 'Yevsec historians', as it would only give them fresh material for their 'absurd horror story that a class struggle took place behind the Warsaw Ghetto Wall' (Tseytlin 1951). Similar comments could be found in Tel-Aviv's *Di naye velt*, *Arbeter-vort* [The new world, worker's word] from Paris, *Ha-Dor*, the mouthpiece of the Israeli Mapai Party or the *Bulletin* of the New York Jewish Labour Committee, as 'Arkhivarius'[44] lamented in Warsaw's *Yidishe shriften* [Jewish scriptures]. It made him especially embittered that, as he wrote, the critics do not even wait for the publication of material in the *Bleter far geshikhte* before they start to criticize the supposed falsifications of the institute (Arkivarius 1951).[45]

However, even when Western reviewers read the JHI's publications and attested to their scholarly value, it did not mean that they spared criticism of the institute. This can be seen in a review of Ringelblum's *Notitsn fun varshever geto* [Notes from the Warsaw Ghetto], which appeared in the Bundist *Lebns-fragn* [Vital Issues], Tel-Aviv. For almost half the text the author, Eliahu Shulman, dwells on the fact that 'the [Jewish] Historical Institute has been bolshevized – and the whole history of the Jews during Nazi occupation is falsified' (Shulman 1953, 17). He even attacked the JHI's researchers without exception. 'After all, Berl Mark, Efraim Kupfer, [Artur/Aaron] Eisenbach and the other staff members of the institute are Stalinist slaves – and if their communist lord commands them to falsify – they will falsify' (Shulman 1953, 18). However, his review of the book with Ringelblum's notes was very constructive. Shulman called it authentic and a 'principal historical and human document of the Ghetto period in Poland' (Shulman 1953, 18).

The review gives a good insight into the misconceptions on the part of readers, or rather reviewers, outside the Soviet Bloc, who received publications on the Shoah produced at the JHI. In the political climate of the Cold War all publications from the other side of the Iron Curtain came under a general suspicion that they were falsified. Such falsification was perceived as a complete and wilful distortion of the 'historical truth' in order to

meet the political requirements of the Polish government and Soviet camp. This, however, was based not so much on a highly critical study of the JHI's publications but on political – mainly anti-communist – convictions. However, the falsification of sources and the misrepresentation in historical interpretation functioned differently. The publications appeared within a framework of Stalinist academic methods, censorship, self-censorship and political control. Even so, there were no fixed boundaries on what could be written and published. The publication of a source that touched politically controversial or sensitive issues – as Ringelblum's diary did – was unfeasible without deleting or editing those parts that obviously contradicted the political 'truths' of the day. The aim of such manipulations was not to send a politically correct message, but to get the writing published at all. Thus, they usually did not change the author's overall intention and remained subtle enough that any such change was not immediately apparent.[46] That is why, despite many changes, the text remained 'authentic' for Shulman and many others. His strident condemnation of JHI staff as 'Stalinist slaves' who falsified whenever they had to, however, shows his inability to acknowledge that an institution he regarded as politically hostile could nevertheless make a valuable scholarly contribution.

As mentioned above, another source from the Ringelblum Archive – 'Khurbn Varshe' [The destruction of Warsaw] – sparked a debate in the Yiddish press in 1952. After the text, published in *Bleter far geshikhte* accompanied by a strongly politically biased editorial, reached the West, the Yiddish poet and journalist H. Leyvik bluntly accused the JHI of having fabricated the document. In his article in *Der tog*, he denounced 'Khurbn Varshe' as 'blasphemous nonsense' (Leyvik 1952).[47] What angered Leyvik were the many accounts of the part the Jewish Ghetto police and the *Judenrat* played in the deportations. In his opinion, all Jews murdered in the Shoah were martyrs, while, as he passionately wrote, the author of 'Khurbn Varshe' depicted that 'what took place in Warsaw was a thoroughly self-inflicted Jewish extermination'.[48] In his view, such a text, published in the Soviet Bloc and written by an anonymous author, must have been a forgery.[49]

Leyvik's attack not only sparked a debate in the American Yiddish press,[50] but also prompted a reaction from Mark himself. In a lengthy reply titled '*Judenrat* love of Israel', Mark proved the authenticity of 'Khurbn Varshe' [The destruction of Warsaw], referred to a similar account of the Jewish councils by Ringelblum and others in his group and identified its author

as Yehoshue Perle, a well-known pre-war Jewish writer. In Mark's view, Leyvik's understanding of universal Jewish victimhood had the intention of whitewashing the Jewish councils and Ghetto police, thereby concealing 'the internal treason in the ghettos' (Mark 1952b, 114).[51] In an allusion to the Luxemburg Agreement, Mark called Leyvick one of 'all those in the United States, who require the rehabilitation of the *Judenräte* […] for their current politics' (Mark 1952b, 114).[52] Mark's article was not only a reply to Leyvik, it also addressed the Jews in Poland and served as another proof of its political correctness. Therefore, it was published not only in *Bleter far geshikhte* but also as a four-part series in the Polish Yiddish newspaper *Folks-sztyme* [People's voice],[53] which had a much greater readership among the Jews in Poland. Only a couple of months later, the *Folks-sztyme* text would play a role in the denunciation of Mark and the JHI.

The JHI – a threshold of Jewish nationalism in People's Poland?

In autumn 1952 it seemed that late Stalinist anti-Semitism, with the Soviet campaign against rootless cosmopolitism and the imminent Slánský trial in Prague, was about to reach Poland. The fear that Warsaw too could become the venue of a show trial against a supposed Zionist conspiracy was escalating among the Polish Jews, and it was not unfounded. After Slánský had been arrested in late 1951, accused of leading a 'Trotskyite-Titoist-Zionist' conspiracy, the pressure on the Polish government to 'uncover' a Zionist conspiracy in its ranks increased. Although the Polish President, Bolesław Bierut, continued to resist such pressure,[54] in November 1952 investigations within the power apparatus began. During these investigations, the Polish security service visited the JHI and took articles from the Western Yiddish press, written by high-ranking members of the state administration (Rayski 1987, 173–80). On 26 November, as the Slánský trial was coming to its conclusion, an employee of the Israeli Embassy was arrested, accused of espionage (Szaynok 2012, 219). All these events were not directly connected to the JHI. Nevertheless, Mark, who must have known that many of his former colleagues from the Soviet Jewish Anti-Fascist Committee had disappeared in the late 1940s, was well aware that the Institute and especially he himself could soon become a target in the search for Zionist conspirators. His worries proved well founded.

On 24 November, A. Sztark Wrocław, a correspondent of *Folks-sztyme* in Lower Silesia, obviously encouraged by the newspaper coverage of the Slánský trial, sent a hand-written letter and a densely typed eight-page report

on the ideological foundation of the JHI to President Bierut. Sztark wrote that after lengthy consideration, he had decided it was his duty as a party member to inform him about the ideological transgressions of the JHI.[55] In the report, however, it became clear that Sztark's motivation was personal not political: Mark had reviewed and rejected a manuscript written by Sztark for the publishing house *Yidish* bukh [Jewish book]. The principal point of Mark's critique was that the Jewish Council and its chairman were referred to in Yiddish terminology as *Yidn rat* and *Yid elterer*, which he considered was wrong, as Sztark quoted the opinion that 'this institution was not Jewish but an enemy agency'.[56] Sztark presented this to Bierut as proof of Mark's ideological deviation: in his view, the Jewish councils had been as Jewish as the Pétain government in France was biased, both representing a certain sector of their respective societies.[57]

Referring to Mark's answer to Leyvik in *Folks-sztyme*, he wrote:

> The dispute between comrade Mark and the American Jewish reactionary H. Leyvik is limited to the following: while the reactionary Leyvik embraces all Jews murdered by the Nazi occupants with a holy Tallit [prayer shawl ...] Mark shows in his four articles mentioned above that the members of the Yidnrat and Jewish policemen in the ghettos were heinous traitors of the Jewish people, and this is why we have to denounce them and throw them out from among the holy Jewish Tallit.[58]

Sztark thus accused Mark of adopting only a slightly modified model for interpreting the Shoah than Leyvik. In his view, a proper analysis of the class struggle in the ghettos would include the role of other bourgeois Jewish parties and non-communist actors. According to Sztark, Mark also 'tries to featherbed the fight of Zionists against the communist resistance and reduces its importance'.[59] In his view, the most important task in the history of Polish Jews and Jewish ghettos in Poland during the Nazi occupation is to bring to light the full activity of Jewish bourgeois parties of all hues, with their clerical, Zionist and Bundist ideologies and their mercantilist, brutally egoist world views. They prepared the ground among the Polish Jews before the occupation and during the occupation they made millions of Polish Jews walk to the slaughter with their wives and children under the guidance of the Yidn-rat and without offering resistance, despite the heroic fight of the communists and the groups they mobilized.[60]

Sztark accused Mark of being unable to correctly analyse the situation in the ghettos from a Marxist point of view and even more dangerous for the latter, of Jewish nationalist views and pro-Zionist sympathies. There is no doubt that he was aware of the serious implications this could have for Mark during a show trial against alleged Zionist conspirators in Prague.

Sztark's attempt nevertheless failed to initiate a purge in the JHI. The office of President Bierut forwarded his letter to Szymon Zachariaz, who worked in the organizational department of the Central Committee of the PZPR and was responsible for Jewish affairs. Though Zachariasz had also been critical of Mark's proximity to Zionist views in the past, he had decided to protect him. He replied to Sztark in a long letter, dismissing his critique in detail. Zachariasz however did add: 'We don't want to say that there had not been any mistakes in the works of the authors grouped around the JHI, including those of comrade B. Mark',[61] but,

> the publications [...] which have appeared in recent years are constantly aligning the old, false [political – St.St.] line [...] An important step forward in correcting the falsifying mistakes [*falszywych bledow*] will be the new work on the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising, which will appear on its tenth anniversary.[62]

When Zachariasz wrote to Sztark – on 22 December 1952 – he was taking care that Mark's new book on the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising would fulfil this promise. It is unclear how much Zachariasz told Mark about what was going on. The publications of Mark and the JHI, which appeared in spring 1953, however, are proof that he at least passed on the reality of a serious threat. Abruptly, in no time, the JHI had been added to the anti-Zionist propaganda of the Soviet Bloc, at least in its Polish publications. In the second issue of the institute's *Bulletin* of 1952, which appeared in early 1953, the density of anti-imperialist key words, references to Stalin and Lenin and attacks on the 'American supporters of the Jewish councils'[63] and 'the Zionist government of Israel [...] supporting the genocidal plans of the Anglo-American Aggression Bloc' are apparent (Eisenbach 1952, 304). One article in the journal, F. Kupfer's 'On the Genesis of Zionism. A Contribution to the Problem: Zionism in the Service of Imperialism',[64] was a condemnation of Zionism. From the correspondence between Mark and Szymon Datner, it becomes clear that Mark put pressure on his employees to introduce such phrases into their articles,[65] just as he was under pressure from Zachariasz and recent

Building of the JHI on the opening day of the exhibition devoted to the 10th anniversary of the uprising in the Jewish ghetto in Warsaw. Unknown photographer, The Emanuel Ringelblum JHI Archive in Warsaw, no. 2159

developments. On 13 January 1953 the Soviet News Agency TASS had announced the arrest of 'murderer-physicians' which, on behalf of the 'foul Zionist espionage organization'[66] Joint, had attempted to assassinate members of the Soviet government,[67] it alleged; the Warsaw *Folks-sztyme* reported the news on 14 January.[68] So Mark added Joint to the list of those to be attacked and included such an assault on Szymon Datner's article, without the author's knowledge or consent.[69] When Datner protested and demanded a correction in April 1953, he was immediately fired from the JHI with a note stating that, regarding his 'ideological strangeness', he was incapable of intellectual work.[70]

Mark's book on the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising had been copy-edited by Szymon Zachariasz and went to print on 15 January 1953,[71] two days after the doctors' conspiracy had been made public. Its lengthy introduction not only contained portrait photographs of Stalin and Bierut,[72] it is also full of praise of Stalin, who, as the text suggests, almost single-handedly defeated Nazi Germany. At the same time it vehemently condemned Israel and Western Jewish organizations, especially the Luxembourg Agreement:

> One of the most disgusting scenes [...] is the rehabilitation of the neo-Nazi regime of Konrad Adenauer by the World

> Zionist Organization, by the Jewish-nationalist organization Joint and by the reactionary government of the State of Israel. The leaders of global Zionism and the reactionary government of Israel desecrate the memory of six million victims, murdered by the genocidal Nazi murderers and disgrace the holy memory of the Ghetto insurgents, acting as lackeys of the American imperialists (Mark 1953, 12 f.).

Throughout the text all references to Zionist activists in the underground movement were deleted, even though they were known to Mark. In the Yiddish edition of the book, which appeared in 1955 and which has an identical structure, their names do appear, while the strident attacks on the Israeli government and the Joint, as well as the many references to Stalin and his character, disappeared from the Yiddish edition. It contains only one insignificant quotation from Stalin in the introduction (Mark 1955).[73]

It seems that Mark intentionally withheld the Yiddish edition of his book until it became possible to publish it without anti-Zionist remarks, not least because the JHI's contribution to the anti-Zionist propaganda of 1952–53 is restricted to its Polish publications. The last issue of *Bleter far geshichte* of 1952 does not contain any such statements. In order to express the JHI's loyalty, it contains a Yiddish translation of Stalin's article on economic questions (Stalin 1952). The article was obviously added to the issue only after typesetting had begun, since it uses Roman numerals in its pagination. The first issue of 1953 in turn is dedicated to a Yiddish translation of the minutes from the Warsaw trial of Jürgen Stroop, who had commanded the German forces during the Uprising.[74] It seems that Mark was attempting to withhold the anti-Zionist slogans of Western Jews, who did not understand the political situation in Poland at the time.

This is mirrored in the reaction of a foreign visitor to the JHI's exhibition of the Uprising, which had also been reorganized in early 1953. The last part of the exhibition was meant to present the 'ideological legacy of the insurgents', which Adam Rutkowski, co-curator of the exhibition, characterized as 'the hate of genocidal imperialism, the struggle for a free, powerful and independent People's Poland [Polska Ludowa], the fight against warmongers for permanent peace' (Rutkowski 1953b, 224). When in 1954 Ian Mikardo, a British Labour MP, visited Warsaw, he also went to the JHI. He described his tour of the museum for the *Jewish Chronicle*:

> At the moment the two top floors at the Jewish Historical Institute are occupied by a magnificent exhibition recounting the story of the Warsaw Ghetto and the Uprising. When you get to the end of it there is a series of panels (which the director did not appear anxious for me to see) based on the theme that the post-war warmongers are behaving in exactly the same way as the pre-war warmongers. In juxtaposition with pictures of the Nazi leaders, Franklin Roosevelt, and Neville Chamberlain there are pictures of Eisenhower, Churchill, Ben-Gurion, and Sharett. The centrepiece is a mural representing 'warmonger' Harry Truman receiving the gift of a Sefer Torah from warmonger Chaim Weizmann.[75]

Soon after Mikardo's visit, and possibly even before his report in the *Jewish Chronicle* appeared, this part of the exhibition had been removed after a formal complaint by the Israeli embassy, because it had become 'politically obsolete' (Szaynok 2012, 266 f.). Taking Mikardo's report into account, Mark was not unhappy about this. Indeed, when in the second half of 1954 the political situation in Poland was relaxed – the anti-Zionist campaign had stopped soon after Stalin's death – politicized comments disappeared from the institute's publications altogether. In the revised Polish edition of his book, which appeared in 1958, Mark even made a vague allusion to its political bias in the introduction: 'However, the spirit of the time left its stamp on these works. Some insufficiencies and ground topics gave the works of 1953 and 1954 a certain one-sidedness' (Mark 1958, 9).

Conclusion

There is surely no period in the history of Socialist Poland when history – and scholarly research in general – were more politicized and politically exploited than during Stalinism. Many of the writings that appeared in this period contained severe political distortions, which from the outside can even seem absurd. In Poland during the early 1950s, however, everyone, even those who had not been committed communists, knew how to read the texts, written in the 'party dialect' and sometimes containing 'non-existent facts', as Shmuel Krakowski put it. Even after Stalinism ended, Polish researchers knew how to handle texts written in this period. In 1957 the historian K.M. Pospiechalski from Poznań's West Institute (Instytut Zachodni) wrote to Artur Eisenbach that for one of the publications, he wanted to refer to a passage from Eisenbach's *Hitlerowska Polityka Eksterminacja Żydow*. However,

since he suspected that Eisenbach would have written this passage differently now, after the end of Stalinism, he decided to ask him to, removing the strong political bias.[76] Readers outside Poland often did not know about the situation of Polish academia and lacked an understanding of the political demands placed on historical research. For that reason, the reputation of the JHI had been severely undermined by its publications of this period, which has been reproduced in historiography and even today compromises researchers like Ber Mark.

When evaluating the historiographic value of the JHI's publications, the political circumstances should be taken into account. Despite many shortcomings and biases, these works are an important contribution to early Holocaust historiography. Without using classic Stalinist propaganda their works could not have been published. This is also true for important sources on the Shoah, originating in the Ringelblum Archive and other sources. Furthermore, if Mark and his colleagues had not adapted to the political situation, it would probably have placed the existence of the institute at risk. Without the JHI, however, its archives would have been uncertain and it is doubtful that they would have been made accessible to the public.

Acknowledgement

STEPHAN STACH

Stephan Stach is a postdoctoral researcher and member of a research group at the Institute for Contemporary History of the Czech Academy of Sciences in Prague which is examining the reintegration of Jews into Czechoslovak and Polish society after the Second World War. He is currently preparing a monograph on the Jewish Historical Institute in Warsaw and knowledge about the Shoah between 1947 and 1989. In 2015 he presented his PhD thesis on interwar Polish nationality policy at Martin Luther University of Halle-Wittenberg. He co-edited Gegengeschichte. Zweiter Weltkrieg und Holocaust im ostmitteleuropäischen Dissens *[Counter-history. Debates on the Second World War and the Holocaust in the dissent of East Central Europe] (with Peter Hallama, Leipzig, 2015) on the recollections of East and Central European dissidents.*

ENDNOTES

1 The first was Leon Poliakov, *Le Bréviaire de la haine. Le IIIe Reich et les Juifs* [The harvest of hate. The 3rd Reich and the Jews] (Paris, 1951).

2 *Inter alia* on the role of the Wehrmacht, the exploitation of Jewish workers in the ghettos or on the Holocaust in the Reichsgau Wartheland, see Datner 1952, 86–155; Brustin-Berenstein 1953, 3–52; Dąbrowska 1955, 122–84; Pohl 2010, 165 f.

3 Eisenbach's *Hitlerowska polityka eksterminacji Żydów* was based on his dissertation, supervised by Stanisław Arnold, chairman of the Marxist Historians' Union.

4 See Dawidowicz 1981, 100 f.

5 Rose 2011, 184 f. Similarly, David Roskies ignores the political situation in Poland, calling Ber Mark a 'loyal servant' of the Polish communist regime, see Roskies 2012, 89.

6 On Poland, see Grözinger and Ruta 2008.

7 On the commission, see Jockusch 2012, 84–120; Aleksiun 2007, 74–97.

8 *Archiwum Żydowskiego Instytutu Historycznego* [Archive of the Jewish Historical Institute, hereafter AŻIH], signature 303/XX, folder 1, n.p.

9 On Ringelblum and Oyneg Shabbes, see Kassow 2007.

10 Such plans had already been launched by Philip Friedman in the early days of the commission, see AŻIH, 303/XX, folder 3, Statut Centralnej Żydowskiej Komisji Historycznej w Polsce przy Centralnym Komitecie Żydów Polskich [Statute of the Central Jewish Historical Commission at the Central Committee of Jews in Poland], § 6.

11 On the committee, see Grabski 2015.

12 AŻIH 303/I, folder 8, minutes of the board meeting of the Central Committee of Jews in Poland, 27 September 1947.

13 On the Jewish cultural life in post-war Poland, see Grözinger and Ruta 2008.

14 AŻIH, signature 310, folder 8, n.p., minutes of the JHI board meeting, 9 January 1948. The archive collection of the JHI is currently being reorganized. The files referred to in this text with the signature AŻIH 310 might now be found in another folder.

15 The title *Bleter far geshikhte* [Folios for history] is a reference to a journal edited by Emanuel Ringelblum before the war, which bore that title.

16 AŻIH, signature 303/1, folder 17, minutes of the board meeting of the Central Committee of Jews in Poland, 29 July 1949.

17 For more details on this period, see Stach 2008, 402–14.

18 'Undzere tsil' [Our aims], *Yedies: Byulletin fun yidisher historisher institut in poyln* [News: Bulletin of the Jewish Historical Institute in Poland], November 1949, 1. The statement is not signed, however, there is little doubt that it was by Mark.

19 Ibid.

20 Sommer Schneider 2014, 244.

21 Kibbutz Lohamei haGettaot Archive, holdings registry 14859,6, Mark's letter to Blumental and Kermisz, 30 September 1950.

22 Nalewajko-Kulikov 2010, 205–26, on the Soviet Union, 211–15.

23 Ibid., 218.

24   Interview with Stefan [Shmuel] Krakowski, Oral History Archives of the Oral History Department of the Institute of Contemporary Jewry, Hebrew University Jerusalem (0050)0031, 7.

25   Such elements were also present in the exhibition at Auschwitz-Birkenau, see Hansen 2015, 208–22.

26   These were Sidorov 1950, 3–28; Pankratova 1950, 135–61; Tretiakov 1950a, 162–86 and Tretiakov 1950b, 187–97.

27   Górny 2011, 82.

28   *Kwartalnik Historyczny* [Historical Quarterly] published extensive digests of Tretiakov's articles, regretting that these texts had already been published elsewhere in Polish; see *Kwartalnik Historyczny* 1950–51b, 3–12; *Kwartalnik Historyczny* 1950–51b, 13–38.

29   Ibid., 267.

30   In Polish 'Notatki z warszawskiego getta' [Notes from the Warsaw Ghetto], BŻIH, vol. 2 (1951), 81–208 and BŻIH, vol. 3 (1952), 46–83.

31   On the differences between the Polish and the Yiddish versions see Person 2012, 59–76, especially 70–4; Nalewajko-Kulikov 2013, 385–403.

32   Translation: Person 2012, 69.

33   The editorial introduction noted that the document could often not be deciphered; see 'Khurbn Varshe' 1951, 101.

34   As the Korean War was declared in late June 1950, the editorial must have been written in December 1951; 'Khurbn Varshe' 1951, 101, English translation, Rose 2011, 186.

35   Ibid. Contrary to Sven-Erik Rose's assertion that the Jewish parties involved in the Luxemburg Agreement reiterated the policy of the Jewish councils, this was not unique to communist propaganda, but was widely used in Israeli politics, including by the political right parties; see Michman 2010, 316.

36   As Katarzyna Person points out, some of these publications are still the only accessible ones on these matters available in Polish; see Person 2012, 68.

37   The available English and French translations of Ringelblum's diary are both based on the Institute's Yiddish edition of 1952 and not on the more comprehensive and less censored edition of 1961–63. Furthermore, Jacob Sloan's English translation (on which the French is based) contains many unnecessary errors.

38   'Jewish Historical Research in Communist Poland', *Wiener Library Bulletin*, vol. IV, no. 1 (January 1950), 4.

39   Nirensztein 1952b, 169–75. Quote from the English abstract at XIV.

40   See criticism from the East, *Wiener Library Bulletin*, vol. VII, nos. 3–4 (May–August 1953), 16; 'The *Wiener Library Bulletin* under Fire. Strictures in a Warsaw Learned Journal', *Wiener Library Bulletin*, vol. VII, nos. 3–4 (May–August 1953), 127.

41   'The Jewish Historical Institute in Warsaw', *Wiener Library Bulletin*, vol. VII, nos. 5–6 (September–December 1953), 39.

42   A similar article appeared in the Polish *Biuletyn*, Rutkowski 1953a, 53–72.

43   It only briefly acknowledged that the material might have been distorted for political reasons; 'The Warsaw Ghetto Archives. List of Traitors Found', *Jewish Chronicle* (6 January 1951).

44   The pen name Arkhivarius was apparently used by one of the institute's employees. It might have been Artur Eisenbach, then director of the institute's archive.

45   Thanks to Agnieszka Żołkiewska for drawing my attention to this text.

46   Kermish (1953) and Blumental (1953) recognized the changes only due to their broader knowledge of the original. Both had taken part in the preparation of Ringelblum's diary before their emigration from Poland in 1950.

47   English translation of the quote is from Rose 2011, 187.

48   Ibid., 209.

49   On the controversy, see ibid.; for a shorter but more balanced portrayal of Mark's role in the dispute, see Schwarz 2015, 118–20.

50   For a discussion, see Rose 2011.

51   Translation: Rose 2011, 188.

52   Ibid., 188.

53   Mark, 'Yudenratishe "ahaves yisroyl" (an entfer oyfn bilbl fun H. Leyvik)' [Judenrat 'Love of Israel' (A reply to H. Leyvik's Defamation)], *Folks-sztyme*, vol. 125 (6 August 1952), 127, (9 August 1952), 128, (12 August 1952), 129, (13 August 1952). The text appeared in both the journal *Bleter far geshikhte* and the newspaper *Folks-sztyme* under the same title. In *Folks-sztyme* it appeared in four parts.

54   Shore 2004, 42 f.

55   Archiwum Akt Nowych [Archive of New Documents – AAN], Komitet Centralny PZPR, Kancelaria Sekretariatu, 237/V-98, 73.

56   Ibid., 74.

57   Ibid.

58   Ibid.

59   Ibid., 77.

60   Ibid., 78 f.

61   Ibid., 87.

62   Ibid.

63   Datner 1952, 153.

64   Kupfer 1952.

65   AŻIH, Szymon Datner, personal file, 76.

66   This description was used by Izvestiya in her article of 13 January 1953; Rapoport 1991, 79.

67   An English translation of the TASS statement can be found in ibid., 74 f.

68   *Folks-sztyme*, 14 January 1953.

69   AŻIH, Szymon Datner, personal file, 74.

70   Ibid., 79 and information supplied by Datner's daughter, Helena Datner.

71   This date is mentioned in the imprint, see Mark 1953, 4.

72   Stalin is situated between pp. 8 and 9, Bierut between pp. 12 and 13.

73   The only Stalin quote is on p. 10.

74   The trial was held in Warsaw in July 1952 and ended with a death sentence, which was carried out on 6 March 1953.

75   *Jewish Chronicle*, 22 October 1954.

76   AŻIH 310/184AR, 201–300 K.M. Pospiechalski, letter to Eisenbach, 16 February 1957, n.p.

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CONSTRUCTION OF IDENTITY IN ROMANIA IN RELATION TO ITS PAST: THE CASE OF THE SHOAH IN HISTORY TEXTBOOKS IN SECONDARY EDUCATION

Maria-Philippa Wieckowski
Université libre de Bruxelles, Brussels

ABSTRACT
Teaching about the Holocaust and the role of the Romanian state in these events is still a recent happening in Romania: the process has followed a tortuous path, between denial and distortion. In 2004 an official change to school syllabuses and the publication of a report by the International Commission on the Holocaust in Romania aimed to improve teaching about the Shoah in Romanian schools. This article aims to determine to what extent the national identity of Romania is built in relation to its past, especially to the Holocaust. The research focuses on four Romanian history textbooks used in the tenth class (ages sixteen to seventeen at secondary school). Our research analyses the discursive strategies used in history textbooks published since 2004. It concentrates on the roles assigned to different actors involved in these events. Who are the victims? Who are those responsible? How are their actions depicted? Are they underplayed or exaggerated?

Introduction

The process recognizing the Romanian state's involvement in the events linked to the Shoah began in 2003, when Ion Iliescu, then the President of the Republic of Romania, founded the Elie Wiesel National Institute for the Study of the Holocaust in Romania. This institute aimed to investigate the facts related to the Holocaust in Romania and subsequently to publish a report on the subject, which was to include recommendations on how to better educate the public on this topic (Friling, Ioanid and Ionescu 2005). Teaching about the Shoah had been officially included in the syllabuses since 1998; however, until 2004 the facts were presented in an incomplete and distorted way and anti-Semitism was hardly mentioned (International

Holocaust Remembrance Alliance 2014). The majority of textbooks followed the earlier, communist line of teaching, which had avoided the subject of the Holocaust (Livezeanu 2002, 936).

Certain authors have shown that revisionist currents existed among the Romanian elite and academic circles (Geissbuhler 2012, 128), and have made a connection between these attitudes and school education (Padeanu 2012). The link existing between education and the construction of identity is crucial, insofar as historians, and by extension history teachers, hold a special place in society, and are often seen as the bearers of historical truth (Anderson 2007, 277). The processes of producing and teaching historical knowledge can then be influenced by the visions of these researchers and teachers, so creating a double hierarchy – production and transmission (Anderson 2007, 286); this double hierarchy is coupled with a lack of critical thought on the part of pupils when receiving content, often encouraged by their teachers (Anderson 2007, 285).

This research belongs to the constructivist approach. Our readings on the themes of memory and historical narrative both place the accent on the changing (Hodgkin and Radstone 2003, 23) and created character of memory and narrative (Gillis 1994, 169), as well as on the central role of memory in the building of historical narratives of identity (Hodgkin and Radstone 2003, 169). Because of this, national identities are ideological constructs taken from the historical processes of nationhood (Billig 1995, 24). By national identity, we understand a way of conceiving of one's own nation, one's own group, in a particular way, opposed to that of conceiving of foreigners and elements outside this nation or group (Billig 1995, 61). Henry Tajfel has shown that stereotypes, that is, cultural descriptions pertaining to social groups, are used to distinguish 'us' from 'them', and so define the unique character of a group of reference – or, in our case, of the nation (Tajfel et al. 1964, 192). These conceptions of foreign elements are formed historically and socially, passed on to individual members and shared through social channels of influence (Tajfel 1982, 42). And so the notion of identity ought then to be understood as the product, perpetually changing, of a collective action, and not as a fixed and immutable concept (Brubaker 1994, 9).

Romania is no exception to this process of national construction. Starting from the 18th century, the Romanian national identity forged itself insisting on several elements, such as rurality, its Latin roots, the direct link with

Dacians, the common origins of Romanian citizens and, as a consequence, the homogeneity of the Romanian nation (Mihailescu 1991, 82; Capelle-Pogacean 2000, 105). This construction proceeded under the union of Greater Romania,[1] and in the following years, the element of ethnic purity was added to a centralizing logic (Mihailescu 1991, 106–7). The communist regime reinforced these trends of national union, homogenization and centralization, while institutionalizing Romanian nationalism – via a classification of ethnic citizenship (Brubaker 1998, 286). The latter was used in favour or, on the contrary, against some groups, such as Jews or Roma (Brubaker 1998, 287). Under Nicolae Ceauşescu (1965–89, as ruler of Romania), we can even talk about a 'State folklorism' (Thiesse 1999, 282), as the ruler developed the themes of tradition, national unity and the undisputable Dacian origin of Romanians, as well as using a romanticized version of the founding peasantry (Capelle-Pogacean 2000, 109). During the communist years in Romania, the nation found itself at the centre of an 'us' versus 'them' dichotomy (Verdery 1993, 195, 197). Moreover, the Romanian national historiographies stressed the narratives presenting Romanians as being the victims of other nations (Verdery 1993, 195) – a victimization process that prevented collective accountability (Capelle-Pogacean 2000, 113).

The fall of the communist regime led to a loss of identity reference points, and opened the way for the use of myths about origins, of the Romanian national memory (Mihailescu 1995, 85), as well as to the rise of nationalism and anti-Semitic trends (Florian 1997, 67). Indeed, the political discourse in post-communist Romania seems to still be focused on the nation and its characteristics (Capelle-Pogacean 2000, 111). Nationalist and revisionist discourses have been, and still are, declaimed rather freely, especially those presenting Romania's leader Ion Antonescu, from 1940 to 1944, as a saviour and a national hero, contrary to what is argued in studies dealing with the Shoah in Romania (Florian 2011, 19). Indeed, in Romania it was portrayed that the Holocaust was only a result of external causes and not inherent to the Romanian state; a concept deeply linked to the nationalistic communism in Romania, whereby all problems had foreign causes (Florian 2011, 19).

In contemporary Romania, the denial of the Holocaust still occupies an important part of public belief (Florian 2011, 20). This denial is visible in mass-media and TV shows (Eskenazy 2011, 10), but also in more subtle ways. For instance, when young producers are denied the funds for projects dealing with the Holocaust in Romania, the refusal comes from well-regarded

institutions and organizations – including the Romanian Television (Eskenazy 2011, 11). Generally, it is hard to measure the impact of shows or documentaries about the Shoah on the public (Eskenazy 2011, 12). Historian Victor Eskenazy argues that this constant denial can be attributed to three factors. First, anti-Semitic attitudes are still deeply rooted in Romanian society – historian Andrei Oisteanu published a detailed study of the stereotypes attributed to Jews in Romanian, some of which are still in use today (Oisteanu 2012). Secondly, the enduring refusal of popular intellectuals to take part in debates on television, when it comes to the Shoah; when they do take part however, the trend is to question any proven historical piece of information. Thirdly, the limited access to books on this topic as well as their high cost for the average citizen impede the spread of new information (Eskenazy 2011, 10–12).

As regards history teaching in Romania, several studies have also been carried out linking the teaching of history and identity. Catalina Mihalache and Speranta Nalin have examined the teaching of history in Romania. The former notes that the teaching method encourages pupils to conform to the official historical truths (Mihalache 2012, 1975–77). The latter examines the problems linked to educational reforms and school syllabuses for the teaching of history. She shows what impact the centralization of the educational system can have on the presentation of historical facts in textbooks (Dumitru Nalin 2002, 40–46). Thomas Misco has studied how the Shoah is taught in Romania, as well as the relationship between this teaching and the construction of a Romanian national identity. He highlights the teacher's freedom when it comes to choosing which textbooks to use, as well as what issues to study. Beyond the optional courses that are solely focused on the Holocaust, Misco argues that it is hard for a history teacher to discuss in detail all the aspects and implications of the Shoah, considering their short time frame (Misco 2008, 6–20).

Training sessions for teachers are held in Romania, by the Ministry of Education (Ziarul de Garda 2014) as well as by the Elie Wiesel National Institute for the Study of the Holocaust in Romania (Elie Wiesel ... 2016). However, figures show that the number of teachers attending such training sessions is low, compared to the total number of history teachers – around 10 per cent (Misco 2007, 4). Moreover, some teachers are still in denial about the Holocaust, which affects the sources they choose and the way they teach. Social scientist Thomas Misco concludes that a tool for measuring pupils'

knowledge of the Holocaust does not yet exist, and that the way in which the contents are taught suffers from the influence of the communist period (Misco 2008, 6–20). However, statements about how to teach about the Holocaust do exist. One of them includes practical aspects – how to create a positive teaching environment, why and how to use direct testimonies, etc. – and theoretical aspects as well – how to define the Holocaust in the first place (International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance). Yet, this statement is notably a general one and does not go into detail about how the state is addressing its past, in relation to the Shoah.

Given that changes happen over time, we wish to study how the Romanian 'we' is built when placed in relationship to its past, and more particularly to the episode of the Shoah. Our research question is defined as follows: 'How is the Romanian identity of today defined by its relationship to its past, through the specific case of the Shoah?'

We proceed in a deductive fashion, by first setting out our hypotheses before applying them to our case study. On the basis of our first observations, carried out during exploratory readings on the links between the construction of identity and education in the post-communist period, we establish as a first hypothesis that the Shoah is hardly or not mentioned at all in secondary school history textbooks in Romania. Where it is mentioned, our second hypothesis is this: 'The link to the past presented in Romanian history textbooks shows how present-day Romanian identity is beset by conflict in relation to the episode of the Shoah in Romania.' This conflict is reflected, on the one hand, by acknowledging and accepting responsibility attached to the Shoah, and, on the other hand, underplaying the Shoah in Romania and the responsibility of Romanian society in these happenings. Thus the way Romanian identity has been constructed can either integrate this episode into its history, or, on the contrary, show a tendency to hide it. Our hypotheses establish from these facts a link between the representation of past events – here, the Shoah – and the construction of the identity of the Romanian nation, which does not appear in the studies and exploratory readings that we had consulted beforehand.

Methodology

In order to answer our research question, we chose to apply a method inspired by authors who use critical discourse analysis (CDA) approaches – and by Ruth Wodak in particular (Wodak 2001, 63–94). CDA, with its focus

on a problem, and in the case of this article, using a discourse-historical approach, allows several elements to be shown, such as the creation, preservation and change of contextual constraints – like dominance, power or ethnocentrism within a discourse (Van Dijk 1985, 5). These discourses are interpreted historically, and placed spatially and temporally. As for the structures of domination, they are justified by the ideologies of the most influential groups (Wodak 2001, 3). In our present case study, we identify these influential groups as the authors of textbooks, who are often teachers within the secondary or higher education system, and therefore keepers of knowledge. We adopt the definition of the discourse established by Ruth Wodak, who explains it in these terms: 'a complex bundle of simultaneous and sequential interrelated linguistic acts, which manifest themselves within and across the social fields of action as thematically interrelated semiotic, oral or written tokens, very often as "texts" that belong to specific semiotic types, i.e. genres' (Wodak 2001, 21–22); we include the texts of school textbooks within this definition. We can further state that knowledge and the control of knowledge shape our interpretation of the world (Van Dijk 1993, 258). This justifies our wish to analyse the discourses found in the textbooks, which have as their main purpose the construction of this knowledge and its transmission to pupils.

We apply this method to a corpus of four textbooks of Romanian history for secondary schools (*clasa a X-a* [tenth year – ages sixteen to seventeen]), published in or after 2004. Three of them are meant for general teaching (Balutoiu 2007; Barnea et al. 2008; Selevet et al. 2008), whereas the fourth (Petrescu 2007) has been specially designed for an optional course on the Holocaust (Ministry of National Education and Scientific Research 2004, 2), and published on the initiative of the Ronald S. Lauder Romanian Foundation (Lauder Reut Educational Complex 2014). In these four textbooks we want to analyse how the Holocaust is represented, concentrating on the discursive strategies used by the authors to present the facts relating to the Shoah in Romania. By discursive strategy we mean what Ruth Wodak defines as 'a more or less accurate and more or less intentional plan of practices (including discursive practices) adopted to achieve a particular social, political, psychological or linguistic aim' (Wodak 2001, 73). Specifically, we analyse which decisive events are mentioned or concealed: who is held to be responsible for these events and how their actions are presented – exaggerated or understated; how the victims are presented, and whether they are portrayed as an integral or separate part of the Romanian nation.

Analysis

While the events studied are the same in each of these textbooks, there are considerable variations as to how they are presented, through the syntactical structures, the importance given to certain protagonists and the inclusion or exclusion of the victims of the Romanian nation. We have been able to identify four elements common to all four textbooks.

First, with few exceptions, all present the same events, generally in chronological order – anti-Jewish legislation (1940–42), policy of Romanianization[2] and national homogenization (1940–44), the pogroms of Dorohoi (July 1940) and Iasi (June 1941), deportation, extermination in Transnistria, the case of the Jews of Transylvania, etc. However, the way in which these events are presented differs. For example, only one textbook – that is intended for use within the special optional course – mentions the policy of Romanianization in its entirety (Petrescu 2007, 78–81), while two others focus only on the economic aspect of this policy (Balutoiu 2007, 114; Barnea et al. 2008, 108). The fourth textbook does not mention this policy at all (Selevet et al. 2008, 98–99). Moreover, only one of the textbooks intended for general teaching makes a reference to the Bucharest pogrom of January 1941 (Balutoiu 2007, 114), although the context in which this pogrom took place is mentioned in all three general textbooks (Selevet et al. 2008, 98; Barnea et al. 2008, 108; Balutoiu 2007, 114). Only the textbook for the optional course deals with this topic and includes photographs of it (Petrescu 2007, 78–79), but the involvement of a certain number of Bucharest citizens in this event is not mentioned. The way in which the events are presented is equally varied when it comes to the case of Transylvania. Three of the textbooks refer to it in a neutral and somewhat superficial way. However, one of the textbooks meant for general teaching makes a clear distinction between the Romanian and Hungarian situations at the time, emphasizing the difficulties that the Romanian state had to face: 'While the Romanian army found itself in a difficult situation at Stalingrad, and while Romania was suffering heavy human and material losses, Hungary had only part of its army engaged in the war against the USSR and was guarding Transylvania' (Balutoiu 2007, 115).

Secondly, we would like to underscore an important point. The choice of language and grammatical structure plays an important role in the presentation of historical facts. We have found in all the textbooks that sentences are constructed actively for those responsible, and passively when talking of the victims; these constructions tend, on the one hand, to accentuate the

responsibility of the guilty, and, on the other, to accentuate the victim status of the deported. For example, it is written that the Jews 'were evacuated', 'were deported', 'were killed', whereas in the case of the protagonists of these acts the language is different: 'Antonescu and his legionnaires began the removal of Jews from the economic structures of the state' (Barnea et al. 2008, 108) and the Iron Guard 'conducted an anti-Semitic policy, encouraged street violence, rewoke the animosity of the Romanians against the Jewish population' (Selevet et al. 2008, 98).

Thirdly, we have also found in the textbooks that quotation marks are used extensively, distancing the authors from the statements or actions cited. For example, when reference is made to the 'reforms' initiated by Antonescu during the process of Romanianization (Petrescu 2007, 79); when the authors mention the 'cleansing of the land' carried out during the years 1941–42 (Barnea et al. 2008, 108); or again when they cite the 'arguments' advanced by Romania to justify its policy (Balutoiu 2007, 114).

Fourthly, all the textbooks analysed make reference to the positive actions of the Romanian people, leading some of them to receive the title of Righteous among the Nations. However, the way in which these actions are presented differs from one textbook to another. In the textbook for the special optional course, a whole chapter is devoted to Romanian individuals who helped save Jews, in a detailed and unbiased way. In the three textbooks meant for general teaching, these people are mentioned briefly – five lines more or less for them all (Barnea et al. 2008, 109; Balutoiu 2007, 105; Selevet et al. 2008, 98). Valentin Balutoiu's book is explicitly positive in referring to these actions, when he writes, 'In such difficult times during the war, many Romanians proved their great humanity and compassion towards the Jewish population. For this reason, some of them received the title of "Righteous among the Nations"' (Balutoiu 2007, 115). It is important to stress this, given that only one of the three textbooks intended for general teaching refers to the negative actions perpetrated by Romanian civilians during the pogroms and/or massacres (Barnea et al. 2008, 108) – in addition to the special option textbook (Petrescu 2007, 83). Implicitly, the textbooks that do not deal with this subject reject the notion of individual responsibility. One of the textbooks in particular insists several times that it is impossible to hold a nation responsible for the events that unfolded during the Shoah, so exonerating the Romanian nation and preventing all debate upon the subject: 'the responsibility cannot be attributed to a people, but must be

charged to the state apparatus and to those who conceived and applied the plan of extermination' (Selevet et al. 2008, 98–99). The affirmative and imperative tone of this sentence leaves no room for either reflection or debate on questions of responsibility, particularly for those episodes where it has been claimed that part of the civilian population of different countries is guilty of crimes against the Jews (Dean 2004, 120–40). Paradoxically, the only textbook that invites pupils to reflect on this notion of responsibility – national, state – is precisely the one among them that makes no mention of the involvement of Romanian civilians (Balutoiu 2007, 116). It is in the same textbook that the syntactical separation between the Jews and the Romanian nation is most evident. In the other textbooks, the integration of the Jewish victims in the nation is ambivalent, by the more or less regular use of phrases or adjectives that link them, such as 'Romanian Jews' 'Jews of Romania' or again 'Romanian citizens of Jewish race'.

As regards the integration of victims in the nation, the three general textbooks, without exception, marginalize the Roma people, their deportation and extermination, literally and figuratively. Only about one to four lines are given to what happened to the Roma people during the Second World War. Only one textbook includes the description of the events in the main text (Selevet et al. 2008, 99); another places the description of the happenings in the margin of the page (Balutoiu 2007, 114), while in the third textbook of general history, the paragraph devoted to the Roma people is separated from the main body of the text by an exercise (Barnea et al. 2008, 109). Only the textbook for the optional course gives them a larger place in the presentation of the facts by including extracts about them, which are nonexistent in the other three textbooks. The selected extracts include a history of their population in Romania, photographs and a final exercise referring exclusively to the Roma people (Petrescu 2007, 105–7, 113–17).

In addition, all the textbooks analysed point to the responsibility of the state and the personal responsibility of Ion Antonescu for the events unfolding during the Shoah. Two of the textbooks focus almost exclusively upon this aspect; this is evident in the presentation of facts in the main text – they either emphasize and demonize him or underplay the will of the leader in eliminating certain categories of the population: 'Antonescu's regime made use of the army, the militia, the police and public functionaries to initiate the Holocaust and put it into practice' (Selevet et al. 2008, 99), 'the Romanian authorities, Ion Antonescu in particular, are considered guilty of the death of between

280,000 and 380,000 Jews' (Balutoiu 2007, 114). Antonescu often appears as the subject of phrases given in these textbooks that reinforce his guilt. The choice of the extracts reproduced in these books – which more or less put forward Antonescu's responsibility – is another component of the prominence, or not, of Antonescu. All these textbooks underplay the civilians' role.

Three of the four textbooks also cite and/or include extracts of the report published by the International Commission on the Holocaust in Romania (Selevet et al. 2008, 99; Barnea et al. 2008, 107–8; Petrescu 2007, 104) – in the margins or in the main body of the text, for example, when it is written that 'the International Commission on the Holocaust in Romania confirms that a holocaust took place in Romania; the Antonescu regime and extremist groups were responsible for these crimes' (Selevet et al. 2008, 99). Clearly all the textbooks follow the conclusions made by the same commission concerning the principal actors responsible for the events taking place during the Holocaust, namely the Romanian authorities and the leader Ion Antonescu (Friling, Ioanid and Ionescu 2005, 381). The report of the commission does, however, present the facts relative to the involvement of civilians (Friling, Ioanid and Ionescu 2005, 383), which some of the textbooks conceal, as we have already mentioned.

Conclusions

Following our analyses and comparisons, we can say that, as for our first hypothesis, the Shoah is indeed mentioned in the history textbooks in Romania. In fact, each of the four textbooks analysed includes three to four pages on the Holocaust in Europe and in Romania – two whole chapters in the case of the optional textbook. The Romanian history textbooks reveal an ambivalence in the construction of present-day Romanian identity in relation to the episode of the Shoah in Romania. While all the textbooks tackle the Holocaust, we have been able to show that the presentation of the facts varies, between distancing, concealing or giving an unbiased view as possible. A conflict in the construction of Romanian identity is clear: on one side, there's a recognition and acceptance of these events and the responsibility attached to them, and, on the other, the Shoah in Romania and the responsibility of Romanian society in the events is underplayed. We have shown in this article that this construction of identity can either integrate or conceal the episode of the Shoah in Romanian history. Our results can fit into the existing literature on the study of the formation of identity through education and school textbooks, in a general sense, as well

as those that focus on the study of the Shoah in Romania. Earlier analyses, like that of Waldman (Waldman 2010), have studied the representation of the Holocaust in Romanian school textbooks, marking a difference between the periods before and after 2004, the year in which the government's attitude officially changed towards these events. This is when the Romanian school syllabuses were changed, with the aim of giving greater importance to the study of the Shoah in the classroom. Other studies have analysed the way in which the Shoah is presented and studied in Romanian classrooms: Thomas Misco's 2007 ethnographic study (Misco 2007) showed the poor level of knowledge, of both pupils and teachers, on this subject. However, no study, to our knowledge, links these elements to the construction of a national identity in Romania, as we have proposed to do in the body of this paper. Our article allows us to bring to light the differing representations existing within a sample of Romanian school textbooks as well as linking these to the construction of Romanian identity.

Our article allows us to establish that ambivalences exist in the way facts linked to the Romanian past, in particular the Shoah, are presented and as a result the way the facts are transmitted and taught to Romanian secondary school pupils. We have aslo made evident the interconnections between teaching, school textbooks and the construction of a national identity. This allows us to state that these different representations and ambivalences are assimilated by Romanian pupils during their education, and that this assimilation becomes an integral part of their identity as Romanian nationals.

Translated from French into English by Ailsa Campbell

MARIA-PHILIPPA WIECKOWSKI
Maria-Philippa Wieckowski was born in 1992. She graduated with a MA in Political Science, specializing in the politics and society of Central Europe, Russia and the Caucasus. Her centres of interest include the construction of identity and the relation to memory and the past in Romania after 1989. She divides her time between France and Romania.

ENDNOTES

1   Process of unification that began in 1859 and ended in 1918. Greater Romania existed until 1940.

2   'Policy followed by the Romanian authorities between 1940 and 1944, consisting of dispossessing Jews and eliminating them from Romanian society' (Petrescu 2007, 174).

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HOLOCAUST MEMORY AND THE LOGIC OF COMPARISON

Heidemarie Uhl
**Austrian Academy of Sciences in Vienna,
University of Vienna and
University of Graz**

ABSTRACT

The positioning of the Holocaust in post-war European memory was set by two strategies: suppression, externalization and the projection of blame on Germany in countries occupied by Nazi Germany and collaborating regimes and of a comparison with other crimes in the form of totalitarianism or fascist theory as a transnational-European argument in the era of the Cold War. Recognition of the Holocaust as a singular 'break with civilization' that took hold at the end of the 20th century in Europe and in Western societies presupposed the incomparability of the Nazi murder of Jews. With the enlargement of the European Union (EU) in 2004, which included former Eastern Bloc countries, came the challenge of integrating communist crimes in a common European memory – this entailed the renewed discussion of the issue of comparability.

Introduction

At the start of the new millennium, Europe seemed united by a common memory. The historical and political myths of post-war Europe lost their binding force in the 1980s. This was a phase of intensive redefinition of national views of history, which were intensively redefined and gained additional momentum with the end of the Cold War and the epochal year of 1989. In the memory wars of the late 20th century, the Holocaust also became a central historical reference point at the national and – with the intensification of EU integration – at the European level. 'Already the catastrophe in Europe is a starting point for cross-border solidarity,' stated sociologists Daniel Levy and Natan Sznaider in 2001 in their highly noted publication *Erinnerung im globalen Zeitalter: Der Holocaust* [Recollection in the global age: the Holocaust] that is based on the hope for a universal

human rights morality no longer bound to a 'we' community of a nation: 'Memories of the Holocaust allow the formation of supra-national cultures of memory at the start of the third millennium, which, in turn, are the basis for a global human rights policy' (Levy and Sznaider 2007, 11). A key event for universalization of the Holocaust was the Stockholm International Forum on the Holocaust with the adoption of the Stockholm Declaration in January 2000 (Eckel and Moisel, 9 f.; Radonić and Uhl 2016, 10 f.).

This European remembrance consensus, however, would soon face new challenges. With the accession of eight countries of the former Eastern Bloc to the European Union in 2004, the question of the relationship between the crimes of National Socialism and communism appeared on the agenda EU-European policy on history and remembrance culture. The Gulag memory[1] of post-communist European countries now competed with the Holocaust memory and the issue of the relationship between these competing memories has since dominated debates on European memory. Thus, the assumed singularity of the Holocaust was called into question. Several years after the political codification of the Holocaust as a singular crime against humanity in the Stockholm Declaration, a discussion on comparison was back on the agenda.

The historical comparison, as a central category of historical academic insight,[2] had, however, lost its innocence in relation to the Holocaust. Each comparative effort reactivated the post-war defensive tradition by equating it with other state crimes. The intentions of comparison in Germany and Austria lay in a relativity of its 'own crimes' by pointing to its 'own suffering', which had been inflicted on 'us'. During the Cold War, expulsion and bombing were arguments that entitled the Federal Republic of Germany to its own victim status (Kettenacker 2003).

Now, under the new aegis of integration, the question of a comparison with the communist dictatorship experience in a common European memory was revived. The result of the struggle for recognition of the Holocaust as a European place of memory and the prevailing belief in the late 20th century that the murder of the Jews was a singular historical crime had to be legitimized and justified anew after 2004 given its equation with the crimes of communism. This challenge marks current debates about the universalization and relativization of the Holocaust.

Stockholm 2000: codification of the Holocaust as a singular 'break with civilization'

From 26 to 28 January 2000, around 600 delegates from forty-six countries, including more than twenty heads of state, gathered at the Stockholm International Forum on the Holocaust, one of the first high-level international conferences of the new millennium. The symbolic date of the anniversary of the liberation of the Auschwitz-Birkenau concentration and extermination camp had only been assigned as a memorial day several years earlier (Kroh 2008, 111 f., 128 f.).[3] The Holocaust as a singular historical event and reference point for a European and potentially global culture of memory was first recognized at a senior political level at this conference. In the Stockholm Declaration, a final document based on the model of UN World Conferences, this commitment was not only morally, but also politically codified:

> The Holocaust (Shoah) rocked civilization to its foundations. The unprecedented character of the Holocaust will for all time be of universal significance. [...] The extent of the Holocaust planned and executed by the Nazis must remain forever enshrined in our collective memory. [...] Since mankind is still marked by genocide, ethnic cleansing, racism, anti-Semitism and xenophobia, the international community shares a solemn responsibility to fight these evils. [...] It is entirely appropriate that this first major international conference of the new millennium declare its commitment to plant the seeds of a better future in the soil of a bitter past.[4]

The International Task Force for Holocaust Education, Remembrance and Research (ITF, renamed International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance [IHRA] in 2012) that was founded during one of the precursor meetings of the Stockholm conference in 1998 was to be the body to apply these principles. One of the entry criteria for the thirty-one member states is a commitment to the Stockholm Declaration and the establishment of a Holocaust Memorial Day.[5]

The road to Stockholm: the end of the great narratives of modernity and memory wars at the end of the 20th century

The Stockholm Declaration is a result of a social and cultural transformation process in the 1980s that ties two strands of development: recognition of the Holocaust as a singular 'break with civilization' – this term was coined in 1988 by historian Dan Diner (Diner 1988) – and memory as a leitmotif of the

late 20th century. French historian Pierre Nora, one of the pioneers of the memory boom, spoke at the Vienna conference 'Memory of the Century' in March 2001 of a 'global conjuncture of memory'.[6] The 'era of remembrance' is supported by a 'movement' that is 'so general, so profound, so powerful' that it entails a fundamental change in the collective consciousness.[7]

The factors for this profound social and cultural change are manifold. Paramount is the loss of key categories and thought patterns that had previously determined the self-understanding of modern societies: the 'dwindling meaningful strength of the nation',[8] 'the end of grand narratives' about rise and progress,[9] and depletion of a vision of the future. Optimistic expectations of progress focused on the future in the post-war decades. Now, the 'utopian energies' of modernity were beginning to erode (Habermas 1985, 141–63), the ideological guiding differences that dominated the political imagination since the 19th century and structured areas of social conflict began to fade. The end of the Cold War and of the competition between the two totalitarian systems – Nazism and communism – with their clear bogeymen accelerated the perception of a new era. 'Since the 1980s, it seems that the focus has shifted from present futures to present pasts,' stated literary scholar Andreas Huyssen, who spoke of a cultural and social change requiring explanation:

> One of the most surprising cultural and political phenomena in recent years has been the emergence of memory as a key concern in Western societies, a turning toward the past that stands in strong contrast to the privileging of the future so characteristic of earlier decades of 20th century modernity (Huyssen 2000, 21).

In the post-modern, post-utopian, neo-liberal and globalizing world, the past has been a resource for meaning and the search for identity. The need for commemoration could no longer be fulfilled by the traditional narrative of a glorious and heroic history of the nation in a post-ideological and post-national era.

The official narratives of time before 1945, on which the historical identity of European countries based itself since the end of the Second World War, were in exactly this tradition. The national self-presentations also varied according to their different involvement in the Nazi regime. They are seen as variants of a reasoning pattern that historian Tony Judt – in the hot phase of historical-political debate in 1992 – called post-war Europe political myths.

He characterized them as follows: after 1945, the official historical narrative about the recent past in practically all European countries, even communist (naturally with the exception of West Germany), was marked by an exclusion of historical guilt that remained fairly stable until the 1980s. The intent was to present their 'own people' as an innocent victim of cruel suppression by a hostile external aggressor, to honour heroic national resistance and to hide issues of collaboration. With a retrospective construction of a society that was not involved in Nazism, these narratives fulfilled the function after 1945, which should not be underestimated, of overcoming civil war situations during the Second World War and of integrating societies deeply divided politically during Nazi rule (Judt 1993, 87–120). However, this was only possible by concealing the involvement of parts of their own society in the conduct of the regime and in Nazi crimes.

The thesis of Austria as the 'first victim' of Nazism was only one, albeit probably the weakest legitimate variation in the range of European post-war myths, because Austria after it was annexed to Nazi Germany (the so-called '*Anschluss*') in March 1938 was not an occupied country, but a genuine component of the German Reich.[10] In West and East European countries occupied by or allied with the German Reich, the focus on suppression by 'foreign' Nazi rulers on the one hand and of national or anti-fascist resistance on the other could, of course, refer to a higher level of evidence.[11]

Jewish victims of the Nazi extermination policy only played a minor role in the heroic master narrative of post-war myths. The question of guilt and responsibility was projected onto Germany, or the Federal Republic, while the murder of Jews was not brought to the fore. The memory of the victims of 'racial' persecution was particular, mostly confined to Jewish communities. They launched the first initiatives for memorials, which, compared to the monumental projects for memorials to national resistance, hardly received any public attention. In Vienna, a simple plaque donated by the Jewish community was mounted in 1946 in the vestibule of a synagogue on a side street of the first district – the only synagogue that was not destroyed in the November pogrom. It commemorated the 'Jewish men, women and children who lost their lives in the fateful years 1938–1945' (Uhl 2016, 3–4).

The status of victim found no recognition in the narratives of the struggle for freedom against Nazism in post-1945 Europe. Jewish survivors were even admonished for not actively taking part in the 'anti-fascist struggle'. This was

the proclamation of the Austrian Concentration Camp Association on the tenth anniversary of the liberation in 1955 under the motto: 'to be human – is to be anti-fascist'. According to a post in *Der neue Mahnruf*, the journal of the Communist Party, close to the association: 'The vast majority of victims were not active political opponents of fascism. How many of the millions of people murdered in the gas chambers of Auschwitz were there, who probably regretted their tragic error in the last agonising minutes of life [...]?'[12]

Numerous studies have focused in recent years on the question of how the Holocaust returned from the periphery of historical perception – as a sideshow of the Second World War and as a part of the history of Nazi Germany – to the centre of a global memory. The murder of Jews did not play a primary role at the Nuremberg trials of German war crimes and crimes against humanity. Milestones of a change in perspective were the Eichmann trial in 1961[13] and the West German Frankfurt Auschwitz trial in the 1960s.[14] Awareness of the meaning of the Holocaust increased only gradually,[15] as shown by the reception of historian Raul Hilberg's pioneering book *The Destruction of the European Jews* (1961). After completing the manuscript, it took six years until a small publisher in the United States agreed in 1961 to publish the study. In 1967, the Rowohlt editor Fritz J. Raddatz refused a German edition because of an already 'heavy burden from non-fiction [...]' (Aly 2006).

An actual turning point was the broadcasting of the NBC miniseries 'Holocaust' in the United States in 1978 and in the Federal Republic of Germany and Austria in 1979. The first transnational popular key cultural event[16] was followed by intensive reporting – the news magazines *Der Spiegel* (Germany) and *Profil* (Austria) each issued a sequence of three cover stories. Previously distanced terms like 'final solution' for the murder of Jews now received a name in which a new emotional dimension resonated. The overwhelming response to the 'Holocaust' in Germany and Austria demonstrated new memory needs that obviously could not be fulfilled by the heroic pathos of post-war myths. 'Holocaust' led to empathy for the fate of the victims to a royal moral imperative: the obligation to remember the victims (Margalit 2004).

The paradigm shift from a heroic to a victim narrative would prevail in the 1980s.[17] Attention shifted from the now perceived formulaic rhetorical representations of patriotic or ideological anti-fascist motivated resistance to the harrowing testimonies of Holocaust survivors. Central historiographical and literary works were only now appreciated as important. Raul Hilberg's

The Destruction of the European Jews, a complete history of the Holocaust, was published in a German translation in 1982 by the small publishing house Olle & Wolter and in 1990 as a Fischer paperback (Hilberg 2008). Imre Kertesz's *Fateless*, published in Budapest in 1975 after an initial rejection, only found recognition in a new edition in 1985 and appeared in German translation in 1990.

The fall of the Iron Curtain ended the threat of the communist Eastern Bloc, the source of evil during the Cold War, and the fear of a nuclear Third World War. These thoughts dominated the collective imagination of the West into the 1980s, as shown in the film *The Day After* (1983) in which an incident in Berlin triggers a nuclear war with catastrophic consequences. The elimination of competition of the two totalitarian systems and, therefore, the ultimate 'other' that threatened Western democracies, and at the same time defined it, left a vacancy. Against this background developed the 'incredible phenomenon' that the Shoah 'became a symbol of evil in [...] Western civilization in the last two decades of the 20th century' (Bauer 2001, 10). A key stimulus for the re-evaluation of the Holocaust as a singular crime against humanity was generated by the founding of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, DC, which was initiated by President Carter in 1978.[18]

At the start of the 21st century, the Holocaust gained broad recognition as 'negative remembrance' (François 2006, 295) with European and global relevance. This new understanding falls within the term 'Auschwitz's break with civilization' expressed as follows: the Holocaust is not only a landmark of German and European history, but is also the deepest cut in the history of modernity, as it symbolizes the radical other in human and civil rights, the fight against racism, anti-Semitism and xenophobia-based values. In 2005, Tony Judt assessed the importance of this historical foundation for contemporary Europe. 'Recognition of the Holocaust has become a European entry ticket',[19] and the European project was built 'from the crematoria of Auschwitz' (Judt 1993, 934).

This paradigm shift is, as historians Jan Eckel and Claudia Moisel stress, 'as astonishing as in need of explanation'. The 'profound change of the traditional relationship with the past'[20] was not triggered by a political turning point, but rather it was a simultaneous generational phenomenon that ensued in countries with such a different relationship to the murder of the Jews as the 'perpetrator societies' of Germany and Austria, the 'victim country' Israel and the 'liberator' USA. In addition to the previously mentioned global phenomena, other explanatory factors worthy of mention are the end of the Cold War

and East–West confrontation and system competition, along with the loss of the belief in progress and a better future. In Germany and Austria, it can be assumed the question of involvement in crimes of the Nazi regime could take a new form with the ageing and demise of the affected generation, especially those who actively took part in the crimes. As the new generation were not directly influenced by National Socialism, this augured well for change.[21]

The radical nature and pace of the break with those official narratives and political myths that determined historical thought in these two countries since 1945 is nevertheless remarkable. In 1983, on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the Nazi seizure of power on 30 January 1933, the conservative historian Herrmann Lübbe defended the silence – the 'asymmetrical discretion' – regarding the Nazi disposition of the 'majority of the people' as a 'socio-psychological and politically necessary medium for transformation of the post-war population to citizenry of the Federal Republic of Germany' (Schildt 2013). Two years later, during the commemoration of the end of the war, German President Richard von Weizsäcker designated 8 May as a day of liberation, a statement that until then belonged in the semantics of the anti-fascist GDR version of history. Von Weizsäcker thus adopted a normative change in perspective. The view of 1945 no longer defined as a day of defeat seen whenever possible by Lübbe's 'majority of the population' (Kirsch 1999).

In 1986 historian Ernst Nolte triggered a so-called historians' dispute in his assertion that the 'class murder' of the Bolsheviks was the logical and actual precursor of the 'racial genocide of the Nazis', that the 'Gulag Archipelago preceded Auschwitz' (Nolte 1986). Renowned intellectuals and historians rejected this comparison as an unacceptable trivialization of Nazi extermination policy as well as not being a category for comparison overall (Herbert 2003). The thesis of the singularity of the Holocaust gained significant traction in the historians' dispute (Steinbach 2012, 18f.). At the same time, the category of comparison came under general suspicion, because as a rule the underlying intention was relativization, offsetting one category of suffering against another, and the associated trivialization. The 'prohibition on comparison' (Herbert 2003, 104) represented a caesura: in the post-war decades, the comparative offsetting of 'German suffering' – the expulsion of the so-called 'ethnic Germans' from Eastern Europe – against 'German guilt' for murdering the Jews had virtually become a state doctrine in the German Federal Republic (Beer 2005, 369–401, Hammerstein 2016, 76–77).

Meanwhile a calmness still reigned in Austria on the 40th anniversary of the war's end in 1985 and the idea of Austria as the 'first victim' that had nothing to do with Nazism continued to be the official line on history. A year later, the debate over the wartime past of former UN Secretary General and presidential candidate Kurt Waldheim shattered the victim thesis of that narrative with which the Second Republic in 1945 successfully unleashed itself from its Nazi past. The struggle of the generation of memory against the 'historical lie' of being the 'first victim' of National Socialism ended with the election of Kurt Waldheim to the presidency. Austria's image in the international press was now that of a Nazi country with a strong right-wing populist Freedom Party under Jörg Haider (elected in Innsbruck in 1986 as party chairman). This eventually led to official renunciation of the claim to victimhood. In 1991 Chancellor Franz Vranitzky conceded Austrian responsibility for the crimes of National Socialism; it was deemed appropriate in view of the negotiations for EU membership (Uhl 2011, Lehnguth 2013).

In France, historian Henry Rousso's analysis of the 'Vichy syndrome' (the absence of a critical confrontation with the collaborative Vichy government regime, 1940–44), in 1987 raised the question of responsibility of the French collaborationist government in the deportation of Jews (Rousso 1987).[22] In the last decade of the 20th century, virtually all West European countries that had been under Nazi German occupation dealt with collaboration and participation in crimes of the Nazi regime and, in particular, the Holocaust.[23] After the fall of the communist regimes, corresponding discussions also began in Eastern Europe. Probably the most probing debate in a post-communist country occurred in Poland, triggered by the book *Neighbors. The Destruction of the Jewish Community in Jedwabne, Polan,* by Princeton University historian Jan T. Gross in 2001. The murdering of the Jewish population of Jedwabne by fellow Polish citizens was an act attributed to the German occupiers before this book was published. However, Gross's book confronted the image of the pure 'victim nation' in history, revealing the presence of widespread anti-Semitism in Poland and the Poles complicity in the Holocaust (see Polonsky and Michlic 2004).

Change of perspective in the 1980s: from exclusion to inclusion of the Holocaust in European memory

Debates about the 'repressed' took place within a national framework. The discussion was based on critical analysis of each nation's 'own' history under Nazism and its subsequent exclusion from historical genealogy after 1945.

However, a prerequisite for a change of perspective was a reframing of the past: post-war political myths focused on the nation – at the constitutional level the claim of 'rape' and occupation by the National Socialist German Reich as the aggressor is still valid, even in the case of the *Anschluss* of Austria in March 1938 (see Botz 1989). However, when the views are centred not on the nation, but on society, a completely different picture emerges: only through participation or at least acquiescence of large parts of the population could Nazi persecution policies be carried out. This was a new issue because in post-war decades the lessons from history in the Federal Republic of Germany and Austria mainly related to the causes of the Nazi seizure of power in 1933 or 1938, and not on social involvement in the Nazi regime when in power. Accordingly, the question of guilt focused on which political forces resisted or, on the contrary, did little to resist the 'seizure of power' in 1933 or the *Anschluss* in 1938. Until the break caused by the Waldheim debate in 1986, the conflict over the Austrian past dealt with the question of which of the two major political camps – the Social Democrats or Social Christians or their successors, the Socialist Party of Austria (SPÖ) and the Austrian People's Party (ÖVP) – bore greater guilt for annexing the state in March 1938. The period of Nazi rule in Austria from 1938 to 1945 was not disputed, however, since these years were not viewed as Austrian, but rather as part of the history of the National Socialist German Reich.

In the Federal Republic of Germany, the situation was not fundamentally different, despite the assumption of responsibility for Nazi crimes and incipient prosecution of Nazi criminals in the Ulm Einsatzgruppen trials of 1959. Critical perspectives on the Nazi past focused on the failure of political and social elites and democratic parties to prevent the rise of the Nazi party. The question of who brought Hitler to power and in which ideological camps and classes belonged the supporters and voters of the National Socialist German Workers Party (Nationalsozialistische Deutsche Arbeiterpartei or NSDAP) was controversially discussed (Falter 1991). At the fore of the guilt debates, as in Austria, was the time *before* the establishment of the Nazi dictatorship. After the 'seizure of power' by a dictatorial regime operating with terror and violence, democratic parties were eliminated and incapacitated. The crimes of the Nazi regime were attributed to a small elite, which had suppressed 'its own people' by terror.

The 'discovery' of public involvement in the Holocaust and the intellectual confusion relating to the suppression of this entanglement after 1945 was

a European generational experience, whereby the Federal Republic of Germany from the mid-1980s has assumed a pioneering role in the 'processing' of a 'displaced' past. Increasing interest in local and regional history, as well as in oral history and everyday life now has also yielded specific knowledge on the execution of Nazi crimes locally. Not only victims, but also the perpetrators have been named and in rare cases they have even be held accountable for their actions.

At the same time the Holocaust won a universal relevance no longer limited to the 'perpetrator nation', as expressed in Dan Diner's term 'break with civilization'. Sociologist Zygmunt Bauman argues similarly, but in a different light: the Holocaust was not a relapse into barbarism, but a result of the ambivalence of modernity (Bauman 1992). The two positions produce an immediate relevance because the Holocaust was planned and carried out in those social structures that also exist in the current social order. Destruction is considered the most radical counter-model to liberal democratic values but remains a possibility of all modern societies. The moral imperative of the Stockholm Declaration must be understood against this background: the Holocaust is an unprecedented event of universal significance that 'rocked civilization to its foundations'. Thus, mitigation of the moral and ethical meaning of the Holocaust would require a fundamental change in Western civilization.

The formation of the generation of memory in Europe took place against the background of a disturbing transnational experience of irritation: how could it be that an event now regarded as the most profound negative turning point in the history of civilization only several years ago – that is, even during the course of its own educational socialization – occupied only a marginal place in the historical narrative. Also how could it be that the actual execution of this unparalleled crime was locally concealed and hushed up? The social energies of the generation of memory were now primarily directed at a rectified and dignified commemoration of 'forgotten' groups of victims – Jews, Gypsies, victims of euthanasia, homosexuals, deserters – and the visibility of places of the Holocaust and Nazi crimes.

In the last two decades, a new topography of Holocaust remembrance has arisen: memorials, commemorative plaques and 'stumbling blocks' in public spaces, memorial museums and documentation centres, as well as memorials at historic sites. The former concentration and extermination camp Auschwitz-Birkenau has increasingly become a supranational memorial site. Commemoration of the 60th anniversary of the liberation for the

first time assumed the nature of a European, if not global, event through the participation of numerous heads of state and live transmission by many European broadcasters. In November 2005, the UN General Assembly adopted a resolution marking 27 January as the International Holocaust Remembrance Day.[24] On 27 January 2005, the EU Parliament voted this date to be the Holocaust Remembrance Day.[25]

Post-2004 Europe: a new division in European memory

The idea of a teleological passage from national memory repositories to a universal 'cosmopolitan' humankind memory as a basis for a global human rights morality, as so euphorically described by sociologists Levy and Sznaider in 2001, soon had to be revised. The former Latvian Foreign Minister and Commissioner-designate Sandra Kalniete initated a new dissonance in the remembrance space of Europe in her much-noted speech at the opening of the Leipzig Book Fair in 2004. Kalniete affirmed a shared memory of the new post-1989 Europe, but placed the singularity of the Holocaust into question:

> After the Second World War, Europe was cut by the Iron Curtain into two halves, which not only enslaved the people of Eastern Europe, but also erased the history of the entire history of the continent. Europe had just freed itself from the scourge of Nazism; and after the bloodshed of the war it was totally understandable that only a few people had the strength to look the bitter truth in the eye – in particular, the fact that terror continued in one-half of Europe, where behind the Iron Curtain, the Soviet regime committed further genocide against the peoples of Eastern Europe and even its own people.

The 'history of the victors of the Second World War' dominated for fifty years. 'Only after the fall of the Iron Curtain did researchers have access to archived documents and personal stories of the victims. These confirm that the two totalitarian systems – Nazism and communism – were equally criminal.'[26] Kalnietes's rhetoric already contained the main arguments of a historical policy that was represented by deputies from post-communist countries in the European Union: 1) an explicit equation of the crimes of Nazism and communism, 2) a reactivation of the concept of totalitarianism, a term of struggle during the Cold War.[27] This was also a politically charged counter-argument in Western Europe against the Marxist-oriented theory of fascism of the generation of 1968: while the theory of totalitarianism equated

the two totalitarian systems, National Socialism and communism, the fascism theory posited a close nexus between National Socialism (and other fascisms) and capitalism; and 3) the charge of 'genocide against the peoples of Eastern Europe' that Kalniete addressed in a highly influential semantic context.

The term genocide was only politically relevant again in the 1980s as a key concept in the debate on comparability of the Holocaust and other state crimes, on the one hand, and in stressing ethnic or national victim status, on the other (Pohl 2016). The meaning of the term lies in the logic that it elicits: clearly, mostly ethnically defined victims and collectives of perpetrators face each other in a genocide. The genocide of the Armenians and, above all, the Holocaust as genocide as such constitute paradigmatic historical case studies. 'Genocide' therefore implies a completely innocent collective of victims that is defenceless against the genocide of the culprit. Thus, a new viable formula was found for those arguments that already served as a basis for the strategy of excluding social responsibility in the political myths of post-war Europe. This had now been vehemently adopted by post-communist states for themselves: their own people as the innocent victim of the occupying Soviet Union, a brutal aggressor from the 'outside'.

The battle for European remembrance in the EU was reopened with Kalniete's speech in the year of the accession of eight post-communist states – memory now became a cultural guiding difference in the new Europe. The different cultural patterns of the Gulag and Holocaust memory – so termed by Stefan Troebst for the competing positions of European remembrance (Troebst 2005) – reproduced the boundaries between East and West, which should have been overcome by the project of a common European memory. Political scientist Ljiljana Radonić shows how equating the two totalitarian regimes is implemented in concrete terms in the exhibition practices of the post-socialist memorial museums, as exemplified in the museums dealing with the Nazi occupation in the Baltic countries and the House of Terror in Budapest: 'What begins as an equation of the two regimes ends as an abridged description of the Nazi period, with the intention to present the communist era as all the worse for the comparison.' In Poland, after the victory at the polls of the right-wing conservative Law and Justice Party (PiS), work on the Museum of the Second World War was halted only few months before its scheduled opening, because it was deemed 'too international in its orientation and too self-critical' (Radonić 2016). The head of the Law and Justice Party, Jarosław Kaczyński, stated:

> We shall defend Polish interests, the Polish truth. We will change
> the concept of the World War Museum so that the exhibition
> reflects the Polish standpoint. The education of young Poles must
> not be grounded on a feeling of shame, such as is the case today.
> Rather, it must be anchored in a sense of dignity and pride.[28]

In the post-communist societies of Europe, public or official memory ori-
ented itself naturally towards those forms of identity formation through
the externalization of dark sides of the past. These – similarly to Tony
Judt's term of 'post-war myths' – can be described as the political myths of
post-communism: the notion of one's own society as an innocent victim of
communism presented as imposed foreign rule, the issue of blame projected
on 'others', that is the Soviet Union. The involvement of one's own society
in communist rule is negated. The Iron Curtain has been history since 1989,
but it has remained as a dividing line in the sense of history and the morality
of the history of post-2004 Europe.

After the 'Eastern enlargement' of the EU, the question of dealing with the
experience of dual dictatorship was now on the agenda of EU-European
politics of history. The European Parliament or Council of Europe became
the stage for the 'Memory Wars in the "New Europe"' (Stone 2012). Efforts
to effect post-communist history policy at a European level succeeded in
the establishment of a second pan-European remembrance day. On 2 April
2009, the European Parliament agreed by a majority on a resolution made
by centre-right oriented deputies to declare 23 August as the European Day
of Remembrance for Victims of Stalinism and Nazism. The resolution 'on
European conscience and totalitarianism' was adopted with 553 votes in
favour, 44 votes against and 33 abstentions.[29] The decision was preceded by
a process manifested in June 2008 with an international conference in Prague
on 'European Conscience and Communism'. The conference culminated in
the Prague Declaration, which called for 'recognition of Communism as an
integral and horrific part of Europe's common history'. The seventeen-point
programme starts with the postulate of equating of the crimes of Nazism
and communism under the name of totalitarianism. The goal is:

> reaching an all-European understanding that both the Nazi
> and communist totalitarian regimes each to be judged by their
> own terrible merits [*sic*] to be destructive in their policies of
> systematically applying extreme forms of terror, suppressing

all civic and human liberties, starting aggressive wars and, as an inseparable part of their ideologies, exterminating and deporting whole nations and groups of population; and that as such they should be considered to be the main disasters, which blighted the 20th century.[30]

The Prague Declaration proposed, among other things, the founding of 'an Institute of European Memory and Conscience', the establishment of a 'pan-European museum / memorial for victims of all totalitarian regimes', a conference 'on the crimes committed by totalitarian communist regimes with the participation of representatives of governments, parliamentarians, academics, experts and NGOs', further integration in 'European history textbooks so children can learn and be warned about communism and its crimes in the same way as they have been taught to assess Nazi crimes'.[31]

Equation of communism and Nazism was to be primarily recognized through the establishment of a European Day of Remembrance analogous to the Holocaust Remembrance Day on 27 January. Point 9 is required: 'the establishment of 23 August, the date of the signing the Hitler-Stalin Pact, known as the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact, as a day of remembrance of the victims of Nazi and communist totalitarian regimes in the same way Europe remembers the victims of the Holocaust on 27 January.'[32]

According to German literary scholar Albrecht Koschorke's draft political narrative theory, the recognition of victim status, as in a civil war situation, is not primarily dependent on experience itself, but on the nature of its explanation. This can also apply to the recognition of past victim status: anyone who tells his story 'wrong', that is 'falsely' defining himself as a victim, can be cut off from the symbolic resources of memory cultural recognition (Koschorke 2009). The Prague Declaration can be read in so far as an attempt through the appropriation of narratives and cultural forms of the (Western) European Holocaust memory to legitimize the totalitarianism assumption of post-communist politics of history – it is obvious that the Stockholm Declaration here serves as a model. The crimes of the Nazis, however, are not mentioned in any of the paragraphs of the Prague Declaration and there is no explicit mention of the Holocaust. The goal is rather to ascribe the same criminal character of the Nazi regime to communist dictatorships. Above all, the moral value that is part of the memory of the Holocaust is missing. The breakdown of civilization in Auschwitz renders human and civil

rights a universal moral orientation for the present and future (Alexander 2009). The legacy of the Holocaust experience is seen in the fight against racism, anti-Semitism and xenophobia.[33] An analogous moral and ethical obligation cannot be inferred from the post-communist policy statements regarding the memory of communism and totalitarianism.

The European Parliament's justification for the establishment of a European remembrance day for the victims of totalitarianism states is this: 'Europe will only be united if it is able to arrive at a common view of its history, to recognize communism, Nazism and fascism as a "common legacy" and to hold an "honest and profound debate" on all totalitarian crimes of the past century.'[34] The conservative Polish daily *Rzeczpospolita* welcomed the initiative for a new European day of remembrance as a success in the political confrontation not only with 'Moscow' but also with the European left:

> In this case the aim is to underscore the true role of the Soviet Union, which was initially an ally of Nazi Germany, in the division of Europe and only changed to the other side in the ensuing battle over the spoils of war. The myth portraying the Soviet Union as victor over the Third Reich not only served Moscow well in its domestic policy. It was also used for many years to justify the Soviet Union and the Communist parties receiving special treatment in Western Europe. Honouring the victims of Stalinism along with Hitler's victims will represent a fundamental condemnation of Stalinist Communism. For the majority of Europe's Left – even today – this is an act that is barely acceptable.[35]

This comment refers to political-ideological connotations and interests that often relate to the memory of the victims of communism. In viewing current historical-political conflicts in post-communist societies attempts have been made at a revisionist rewriting of history in Hungary, Slovenia and Croatia (Luthar 2013; Wölfl 2016; Radonić 2013). It is clear that the memory of the victims of communism is accompanied by delegitimizing the anti-fascist resistance and in many cases rehabilitating the partisans and collaborators with Nazism.

The stated aim of the history policy related to the remembrance date of 23 August is to view communism and Nazism as 'equally criminal'. This argument is directed at a 'shared' and harmonized view of European history that integrates experiences on both sides of the Iron Curtain (Leggewie and Meier

2012).[36] However, the strategy of placing Nazism and communism under the umbrella term of totalitarianism seems hardly suitable. Redeployment of the totalitarianism concept from the arsenal of the system competition of the Cold War has neither academic nor social resonance. The culture of remembrance for the Holocaust is characterized by 'negative remembrance' (Koselleck 2002), an internalization of responsibility of one's own society. This approach specifically presupposed the overcoming of the functionalization of comparison between the two systems for the purpose of equating and thus relativizing them. The theory of totalitarianism determined Western European political history during the Cold War and its goal was the historical-political struggle against communism through its equation with Nazism. A counter-model was developed with the theory of fascism that rendered fascism a continuity of capitalist-bourgeois social forms. The political instrumentalization of historical comparison in both concepts, however, had not only served as a weapon against political or ideological opponents in foreign and domestic politics, but also concealed the dark sides one's own history's past.

The Holocaust and Gulag remembrance dates of 27 January and 23 August, therefore, relate not only to different historical reference points, but also reflect different opinions about what the opposing memories should serve in a society. European Holocaust remembrance combines a negative commemoration that inquires about the participation of a nation's own society in a guilty past and on this basis sets moral and ethical standards in the present (Barkan 2001; Olick 2007). Gulag remembrance as is currently manifested, in turn, has those functions underlying the construction of European 'post-war myths' after 1945: the presentation of one's own society as a victim of foreign powers and the 'externalization' of one's nation's own involvement in a regime and its crimes.

Timothy Snyder's *Bloodlands. Europe between Hitler and Stalin* (2010) brought the question of the comparison between National Socialist and Stalinist dictatorship to centre stage in the debate in the United States. A central role is played in the controversies surrounding *Bloodlands* with questions of comparison and equation, the externalization of guilt and the construction of national and ethnic victims' narratives. The book by the Yale historian received an ambivalent reception: euphoric reviews speaking of a magisterial work that sets new benchmarks contrast with critical voices.

Here I mention three positions put forward by renowned historians. First, the historian of Eastern Europe Stefan Troebst found the justification for

the geographical construction of the 'pathos formula *Bloodlands*' hardly convincing, falling very short of the mark of Stalinist crimes. Moreover, the claim made that the work is based on totally new research findings and archival sources is inappropriate given the current state of international research on this region (Troebst 2011). Secondly, historian Omer Bartov ('The book presents no new evidence') also refers to that, and his main criticism is that Snyder fails to take into proper account the 'complexity and ambiguity' in the period of Soviet and German occupations from 1939 to 1944. Rather, the occupied populations are described 'largely as victims'. Violence within and between the ethnic groups, collaboration, denunciation and the involvement of the local population in local massacres of the Jews are seen in the context of earlier Soviet crimes or are largely blanked out. No mention is even made of the Jedwabne pogrom of 1941, which has become the iconic location of the murder of Jews by their Polish neighbours since the publication of *Neighbors* by Jan T. Gross in 2001. Instead, Poland and Ukraine appear rather as victims of this 'titanic clash between two brutal regimes'. Finally, 'Soviet and Nazi occupation, Wehrmacht and Red Army' are equated as 'similarly criminal for similar reasons' (Bartov 2011, 427–28). Dan Diner's main point of criticism targets the equating of the Holocaust and Stalinist crimes as the leitmotif of *Bloodlands*. Diner points to the fundamental difference: Poland and Ukraine fell victim to both occupation regimes, but were not threatened by collective extermination. 'By contrast, for the Jews death was the rule [...], survival was the exception' (Diner 2012, 131).

Towards overcoming of division in European memory?

The question of how to overcome this division in shared memory has led to different considerations and concepts. Cultural studies scholar Aleida Assmann sees the way to a common European culture of remembrance in a 'dialogical commemoration' that avoids victim competition, political instrumentalization and exclusion from guilt (Assmann 2007). Political scientist Claus Leggewie seeks to view the asymmetry of European memory in seven concentric circles with Auschwitz as the first memory circle and the 'anchor and vanishing point of a supranational and transnational memory' (Leggewie 2011, 15). The 'competition and hierarchy between [...] Holocaust memory and Gulag memory', however, persists even in this model (Leggewie 2011, 24).

Does the problem of shared European memory lie in the 'perception blockade' of the West (Leggewie 2011, 26), which fails to recognize the

importance of the Gulag experience for Europe, or is unable to integrate it meaningfully? For sociologists Daniel Levy and Natan Sznaider it is, above all, a clear distinction between 'good' and 'evil', 'guilt' and 'innocence' that allowed the Holocaust to be a 'moral leitmotif' and 'global reference point of remembrance' (Levy and Sznaider 2001, 149–150). Or, is the centrality of the Holocaust in the event itself, which defies comparison?

This argument is made by historian Yehuda Bauer. Its equation with the crimes of communism 'not only trivializes and relativizes the genocide of the Jews perpetrated by the Nazi regime, but is also a mendacious revision of recent world history' (Bauer 2016). This criticism is aimed against the use of the term 'genocide' for Stalinist crimes. Bauer can rely on the findings of the Latvian Historical Commission: 'In any case, it was brutal oppression, but genocide it most certainly was not.' Both regimes were totalitarian, but nevertheless somewhat different. 'The greater threat to all of humanity was Nazi Germany, and it was the Soviet Army that liberated Eastern Europe. [It] was the central force that defeated Nazi Germany, and thus saved Europe and the world from the Nazi nightmare.' Bauer summed up:

> One certainly should remember the victims of the Soviet regime and there is every justification for designating special memorials and events to do so. But, to put the two regimes at the same level and commemorating different crimes on the same occasion is totally unacceptable (Bauer 2016).

In 2000 historian Charles M. Maier raised the question of why the memory of the Holocaust and Stalinist crimes has a different 'political half-life'. Why has 'the Holocaust become so central to the memory of the century', why did 'the Gulag Archipelago not have as deep an internal effect?' (Maier 2001/2). Maier cites several arguments: the Nazi regime extended its reign of terror until the fall, while communist states have decades of a 'post-totalitarian phase' of normalization. A further difference is that racist Nazi terror was specifically directed at a clearly defined group of victims, whereas Stalinist terror was random, unpredictable for the individual and often lacked any apparent reason. The real 'reason that the memory of Nazism and genocide may not cool,' however, is the question of 'complicity.' 'The Nazi past and other past genocides pose the question to each person of how he would have acted.' This 'almost universal question' does not let the memory of Nazism cool, but still puts us 'existentially to the test.' This challenge does not distance

over time away from the event itself, quite the contrary: 'shame grows over time.' The first generation was under moral pressure of justification toward those who resisted or went into exile. The 'awareness of complicity, of co-perpetration' unfolded only in the generations of children and grandchildren.

At the beginning of the 21st century stood the vision of a memory over-arching borders in the era of a post-national globalization – Europe today, as in the past, is shaped by the struggle over memory. The front lines of that struggle do not run only between Western and 'post-communist' Europe, but also between the two different stances in dealing with the legacy of National Socialism and communism, Holocaust and Gulag. On one side, the understanding of memory and remembrance as a critical project, one that seeks to deal with and confront the entanglements of one's own society in totalitarian rule; on the other, the continuation of the narratives of the national myths of the hero and victim. To that extent, memory in the post-ideological era that has supplanted the 'age of extremes'[37] and the bipolar world of the Cold War becomes the seismograph of moral-ethical positionings: 'A society becomes visible in its cultural heritage: to itself and for others. What past [...] it allows to become visible there says something about what that society is and what it wishes to become' (Assmann 1988, 16).

HEIDEMARIE UHL

Heidemarie Uhl, born in 1956, is a senior researcher at the Austrian Academy of Sciences in Vienna and lecturer at the University of Vienna and the University of Graz. She was a guest professor at Strasbourg University, the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Andrássy University Budapest and Stanford University. Uhl is a member of the Austrian Delegation to the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA), a member of the scientific board of the Haus der Geschichte Österreich (vice chairperson) and the Militärhistorische Denkmalkommission at the Austrian Ministry of Defence (vice chairperson). She is currently directing a project on the reconceptualization of the Austrian Hero's Monument.

ENDNOTES

1   Troebst 2005, 381–400; Uhl 2009, 59–72.

2   Kaelble 1999.

3   On the Holocaust Memorial Day, see Schmid 2008, 178.

4   Declaration of the Stockholm International Forum on the Holocaust. Accessed 13 December 2016: https://www.holocaustremembrance.com/de/about-us-stockholm-declaration/erkl%C3%A4rung-des-stockholmer-internationalen-forums-%C3%BCber-den-holocaust.

In the Stockholm Declaration, government representatives undertake, among others, to call for Holocaust education in schools and to establish Holocaust remembrance days in their countries.

5   Kroh 2008, 75 f., 214 f. Accessed 13 December 2016: https://www.holocaustre-membrance.com/member-countries

6   'It is as if there was a flood of memories throughout the world and in general a close tie was made between the past and the feeling of membership, collective consciousness and individual feeling, memory and identity.' Nora 2001/2, 18.

7   Ibid., 23.

8   Levy and Sznaider 2001, 225.

9   Lyotard 1979.

10   M. Rainer Lepsius notes Austria – as well as the GDR – as successor states to the German Reich. Lepsius 1989, 247–64.

11   See Lagrou 1999; see articles on the national configurations of European memory in Flacke 2004; also, Knigge and Frei 2002; Sapper and Weichsel 2008.

12   *The New Reminder*, February 1955, cited in Bailer, Perz and Uhl 2008. Accessed 13 December 2016: http://www.doew.at/cms/download/errer/endbericht_gedenkstaette_aus-chwitz2.pdf

13   See Lipstadt 2011; Gross 2012, 186–191.

14   See Gross and Renz 2013; Pendas 2006 [German: 2013].

15   Fritz, Kovács and Rásky 2016; Bankier and Dan Michman 2008.

16   Classen 2004. Accessed 13 December 2016: http://www.zeitgeschichte-online.de/thema/die-fernsehserie-holocaust

17   For the latest critique of victim orientation and related thoughts, see Assmann 2013; Snyder 2014/15), 131–56.

18   See Linenthal 1995; Rosenfeld 2015 (English: 2011), 53–92; for a critical view, see Novick 2001 (English: 1999), 278–84.

19   Judt 1993, 934.

20   Nora (2001/2), 18

21   See for Germany: Frei 2008, 71–86; on the connection with research on con-temporary history and generational experience as exemplified in Austria see Mattl and Uhl 2003.

22   See also, Burrin 2005.

23   On the transformations in national European memory culture in regard to the paradigm shift at the end of the 20th century, see Bauerkämper 2012 (included here are Germany, Austria, Italy, France, Norway, Denmark, the Soviet Union, Poland, Czechoslo-vakia, Hungary, Romania, Spain, Sweden and Switzerland); Flacke 2004; see also Knigge and Frei 2002 (Israel and the US are also taken into account here); Sapper and Weichsel 2008; Troebst 2010; for West Europe, see Lagrou 1999.

24   Accessed 15 December 2016: http://www.un.org/en/holocaustremembrance

25   Accessed 15 December 2016: http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+TA+P6-TA-2005–0018+0+DOC+XML+V0//DE dated 27.01.2015

26   Sandra Kalniete, 'Altes Europa, Neues Europa'. Speech at the opening of the Leipzig Book Fair, 24 March 2004. Accessed 13 December 2016: https://phinau.de/jf-archiv/archiv04/154yy21.htm (dated 2.4.2004); http://www.spiegel.de/kultur/literatur/eklat-bei-buchmesse-eroeffnung-das-hoere-ich-mir-nicht-an-a-292272.html (dated 24 March 2004).

27   Rabinbach 2009; Leggewie 2006.

28   Florian Kellermann, 'Polens Regierung schreibt Geschichte. Museen vor Neuausrichtung', *Deutschlandradio Kultur*, 18 April 2016. http:goo.gl/jN0Ixz

29   Pressemitteilung. 23. August zum Gedenktag für Opfer totalitärer und autoritärer Regime machen (Press report. Make August 23rd a memorial day for the victims of totalitarian and authoritarian regimes). Accessed 14 December 2016: http://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/expert/infopress_page/019–53246–091–04–14–902–20090401IPR53245–01–04–2009–2009-false/default_de.htm (dated 2 April 2009)

30   http://www.ustrcr.cz/data/pdf/konference/sbornik-svedomi-en.pdf (dated 3 June 2008), 159–160.

31   Ibid., 160.

32   Ibid.

33   This commitment is central to the Stockholm Declaration. Since mankind is increasingly affected by genocide, ethnic cleansing, racism, anti-Semitism and hostility to foreigners, the public community has enormous responsibility in combatting this evil. Accessed 13 December 2016: https://www.holocaustremembrance.com/de/about-us-stockholm-declaration/erkl%C3%A4rung-des-stockholmer-internationalen-forums-%C3%BCber-den-holocaust

34   Accessed 13 December 2016: http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+TA+P6-TA-2009–0213+0+DOC+XML+V0//DE

35   Eurotopics press review, 'A European day of remembrance', *Rzeczpospolita*, 23 September 2008. Accessed 14 December 2016: http://archiv.eurotopics.net/en/home/presseschau/archiv/results/archiv_article/ARTICLE36282-A-European-day-of-remembrance

36   Aline Sierp represents the opposite view that indeed discussion of different positions at the EU level creates a common transnational communications room. Sierp 2014.

37   Hobsbawm 1994 [German: 1995].

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II. MISCELLANEA

WORK-IN-PROGRESS REPORT: RESEARCH PROJECT – THE ECONOMIC PLUNDERING OF THE JEWISH POPULATION IN WÜRTTEMBERG AND HOHENZOLLERN

Benedict von Bremen
Alte Synagoge Hechingen
Träger- und Förderverein Ehemalige Synagoge Rexingen
Geschichtswerkstatt Tübingen
Verein für ein Lern- und Dokumentationszentrum zum Nationalsozialismus

ABSTRACT

The research project 'Wirtschaftliche Ausplünderung der jüdischen Bevölkerung in Württemberg und Hohenzollern' [The Economic Plundering of the Jewish Population in Württemberg and Hohenzollern] is a joint project by state archives, memorial societies and individual researchers in the Federal German State of Baden-Württemberg. It examines National Socialist policies and actions to show the various participators and perpetrators in the economic plundering of German Jewish citizens. It provides an insight into how commercial and ideological interests, as well as state legislation and actions, were intrinsic to the discrimination, disenfranchisement and persecution of Jewish people in this part of south-west Germany.

Introduction

Economic measures against Jewish businesses were an important component of the discrimination, disenfranchisement and persecution of Jewish citizens during the 'Third Reich' [German: 'Drittes Reich'].[1] The boycott of Jewish businesses on 1 April 1933 marked the beginning of Nazi policies against Jews. It was followed by the Nuremberg Laws [Nürnberger

Gesetze] of 1935, which marked an important step in anti-Semitic legislation. Actions such as 'Aryanization' ['*Arisierung*'] – the forced sale, well below market rate, of Jewish property and businesses to the members of the 'Volksgemeinschaft' – 'the People's Society' – did not begin until after the Crystal Night of 9 November 1938; rather, the economic disenfranchisement of Jewish business-owners was among a protracted sequence of actions. 'Wirtschaftliche Ausplünderung der jüdischen Bevölkerung in Württemberg und Hohenzollern' [The Economic Plundering of the Jewish Population in Württemberg and Hohenzollern] examines Nazi policies and actions in what is today the German state of Baden-Württemberg. It is a joint project of the Central State Archives of Stuttgart,[2] Ludwigsburg State Archives,[3] Sigmaringen State Archives,[4] the Association of Gäu-Neckar-Alb Memorial Societies [Gedenkstättenverbund Gäu-Neckar-Alb e.V.][5] and individual researchers from local archives and memorial societies.

The project examines a variety of businesses, from textile manufacturing to livestock dealers and law firms once located in cities in the region of Württemberg-Hohenzollern, from the university town of Tübingen and rural Rexingen to the urban and industrial city of Stuttgart, the location of the main tax and revenue office of the region. The aim is to show the involvement of various participators and perpetrators in the economic plundering of German Jewish citizens, including members of the National Socialist German Workers' Party [NSDAP; German: Nationalsozialistische Deutsche Arbeiterpartei], government tax and revenue officials and 'Aryan' business competitors. It will also provide an insight into how commercial and ideological interests, state legislation and actions were intrinsic to the discrimination, disenfranchisement and persecution of Jewish citizens in this region of Germany.

After a short overview of the current research concerning the economic plundering of German Jews between 1933 and 1945, this work-in-progress report traces how the project is run. It then presents a preliminary outline of the planned publication.

State of the research[6]
The first German study to deal with the exclusion of Jews from economic activity in the Reich was Helmut Genschel's *Die Verdrängung der Juden aus der Wirtschaft im Dritten Reich* [The expulsion of Jews from the Third Reich's economy] (1966). Over the course of the next thirty years, there were, with

Detail from a multi-page list of carpets plundered in Mühringen (today part of Horb). Handwritten on top of the typewritten Jewish owners' names are the respective tax and revenue offices involved in the plundering (Freudenstadt, Hirsau, Rottenburg and Herrenberg). Sigmaringen State Archives, 126/7 T 1 Nr. 31

the exception of Avraham Barkai's *Vom Boykott zur Entjudung: Der wirtschaftliche Existenzkampf der Juden im Dritten Reich 1933–1943* [From boycott to dejudaization: the economic struggle of Jews in the Third Reich] (1988), which took a national perspective, only a few, mostly regional and local studies tackled this topic; these included Barbara Händler-Lachmann and Thomas Werther's *Vergessene Geschäfte – verlorene Geschichte. Jüdisches Wirtschaftsleben in Marburg und seine Vernichtung im Nationalsozialismus* [Forgotten business – forgotten history: Jewish economic life in Marburg and its annihilation during National Socialism] (1992). Frank Bajohr's seminal study *'Arisierung' in Hamburg: Die Verdrängung der jüdischen Unternehmer 1933–1945* ['Aryanization'

in Hamburg: the expulsion of Jewish businessmen 1933–1945] (1998) was a beacon in an era of more thorough research that continues to this day. Bajohr set the local example of Hamburg in the wider context of anti-Jewish German discriminatory and exploitative policies. However, works in the years that followed, such as the 2002 edited volume *'Arisierung' und Restitution: Die Rückerstattung jüdischen Eigentums in Deutschland und Österreich nach 1945 und 1989* ['Aryanization' and restitution: reimbursement of Jewish property in Germany and Austria after 1945 and 1989] and the 2003 edited volume *Raub und Restitution: 'Arisierung' und Rückerstattung des jüdischen Eigentums in Europa* [Robbery and restitution: 'Aryanization' and reimbursement of Jewish property in Europe] look at the topic from an international and comparative position. Case studies of the history of individual Jewish businesses, such as Simone Ladwig-Winters' *Wertheim – ein Warenhausunternehmen und seine Eigentümer: Ein Beispiel der Entwicklung der Berliner Warenhäuser bis zur 'Arisierung'* [Wertheim – a department store business and its owners: an example for the development of department stores in Berlin up to the era of 'Aryanization'] (1997) and the involvement of individual German companies and financial institutions, such as the edited volume *Profiteure des NS-Systems? Deutsche Unternehmen und das 'Dritte Reich'* [Profiteers of the Nazi system? German businesses and the 'Third Reich'] (2006) were also published. A recent example of a local study is Christina Fritsche's extensive *Ausgeplündert, zurückerstattet und entschädigt: Arisierung und Wiedergutmachung in Mannheim* [Plundered, reimbursed and restituted: Aryanization and compensation in Mannheim] (2013). Also published in 2013, Christiane Kuller's *Bürokratie und Verbrechen: Antisemitische Finanzpolitik und Verwaltungspraxis im nationalsozialistischen Deutschland* [Bureaucracy and crime: anti-Semitic fiscal policy and administrative practice in National Socialist Germany] focuses on the role of the German tax and revenue offices.

As these works reveal, 'Aryanization' is a thorny topic (e.g. Goscher and Lillteicher 2002, 10; Rappl 2004, 17–30), not only because it is a Nazi term but also, according to some, because it denotes only certain aspects of the economic plundering of German Jews. This is examined in the introduction to the final edited volume of 'The Economic Plundering of the Jewish Population in Württemberg and Hohenzollern'. A good definition of 'Aryanization' and how it can encompass the various Nazi measures taken against German Jews and the economic plundering of them as envisaged by the project is presented in the introduction of the 2004 edited volume *München arisiert: Entrechtung und Enteignung der Juden in der NS-Zeit* [Aryanized

Munich: disenfranchisement and dispossession of Jews during the National Socialist era]:

> 'Aryanization' is the comprehensive and systematic theft of a certain sector of a civic society in modern history. The National Socialist state, by means of its party organizations, public authorities and a network of private and public interested parties, seized every type of Jewish asset – properties, companies, craft businesses, cash, financial stocks, life insurance certificates, furniture, antiques, precious metals, books, art works and much more. The result of this plundering was not only an 'Aryanized' and 'Jew-free' Munich but also many citizens, companies, institutions and administrative bodies who actively promoted the expropriation of their Jewish neighbours, Jewish companies and Jewish competitors or who knowingly profited from this process [...] The term 'Aryanization' was introduced by National Socialist administrative agencies in the 1930s and was – formally and bureaucratically – used to account for a process that transferred Jewish property into 'Aryan' hands. In hindsight, we now know the precise circumstances and the vast scale and consequences of these concerted actions against Jewish Germans, and we understand 'Aryanization' as the expulsion from the economic realm, the deprivation of rights, the misappropriation, the plundering and, finally, the extermination of Jewish citizens and their livelihood (Baumann and Heusler 2004, 10 f.).[7]

Moreover, as the studies cited above and titles like that of the edited volume *'Arisierung' im Nationalsozialismus: Volksgemeinschaft, Raub und Gedächtnis* ['Aryanization' during National Socialism: people's community, robbery and memory] (2000) show, the often problematic restitution of Jewish property after the war is now also under investigation, not least because this tells us something about how Germans have dealt with this aspect of their history (Baumann and Heusler 2004, 15).

The economic plundering of the Jewish population in Württemberg and Hohenzollern[8]

The proposal for the research project had been mooted for years and began in earnest in 2014. Since then, most of the participants have been meeting

from time to time in the Central State Archives of Stuttgart, while smaller groups, such as the participants from the Association of Gäu-Neckar-Alb Memorial Societies, have got together more regularly to discuss their methods and findings.

The research project wants to add to the discussion of the economic plundering of German Jews, the legal framework, how it was undertaken and the participators – both perpetrators and victims – involved. The region investigated is the NSDAP party administrative district [*Gau*] of Württemberg-Hohenzollern,⁹ and the cities represented range from Bad Mergentheim in the north to Rottweil, south of the Prussian province of Hohenzollern, and from Schramberg in the west to Ulm in the east. This encompasses the large industrial city of Stuttgart which, as the state capital, was also an important administrative centre; medium-sized cities, such as the university town of Tübingen; and small rural villages, such as Rexingen. The Jewish businesses considered are also wide-ranging, from livestock dealers to law firms and manufacturing companies.

The participators are looked at from different perspectives. The perpetrators – NSDAP party organizations, local authorities, administrative offices and private individuals deemed part of 'the People's Society' ['Volksgemeinschaft'] – participated in the economic plundering of their fellow Jewish citizens on varying, but often interlinked levels. The research project also sheds light on the response, and lack of response, of the victims.

The sources used for the most part are held in the State Archives of Baden-Württemberg. The State Archives of Ludwigsburg, for example, houses tax and revenue office records from Bad Mergentheim, Heilbronn and Schwäbisch Gmünd as well as from the regional tax and revenue office [*Oberfinanzdirektion*] of Stuttgart up to 1945. These files are invaluable because many records were destroyed in the war. The documents provide insight into how the disparate processes functioned and who the revenue officials involved were. For the years after 1945, the State Archives of Ludwigsburg houses records on restitution cases – almost a whole kilometre of recompensation [*Wiedergutmachung*] files alone. Other sources are located in the Sigmaringen State Archives: these include the tax and revenue office records of Horb. Here, as well as in Ludwigsburg, denazification records [*Spruchkammerakten*] are available, although these have to be examined very critically as many of the testimonies have been whitewashed. Moreover,

the sources used include first-person files, largely from the victims' point of view, such as autobiographies[10] and interviews. Contemporary sources, such as newspapers[11] and municipal registers of land ownership, have also also been taken into consideration.

The final publication opens with a preface by the editors setting out the basic processes of the economic plundering of German Jews in Württemberg-Hohenzollern as well as giving an overview of the major participators. It also defines the concepts used, and explains why the term 'Aryanization' is not used. The introductory chapter by Martin Ulmer (Gedenkstättenverbund Gäu-Neckar-Alb e.V. and Geschichtswerkstatt Tübingen e.V.)[12] summarizes *völkisch* [nationalist] and NSDAP ideology and agendas before 1933, with a special focus on the 1920 NSDAP party manifesto as well as calls for boycotts of Jewish businesses and legislative initiatives taken before 1933. Another introductory chapter written by Martin Burkhardt (Economics archives of Baden-Württemberg)[13] outlines the economic status of Jews in Württemberg and Hohenzollern in 1933, providing data on the range of professions and trades they practised and the percentage of Jews in selected professional fields. The main chapters are organized in five parts in chronological order. Opening sub-chapters elaborate on the larger context of anti-Jewish practices in the 'Third Reich', followed by respective case studies.

The first part deals with the time period from the Nazi seizure of power ['*Machtergreifung*'] on 30 January 1933 to the Nuremberg Laws of September 1935. Nicole Bickhoff (Central State Archives of Stuttgart) provides an overview of the legal actions taken by the National Socialist government during this time period. The new regime was able to add to the laws and ordinances issued by the Weimar Republic, such as the 1931 Reich Flight Tax [*Reichsfluchtsteuer*], which attempted to stem the flight of capital, but it also introduced its own legislation, such as the April 1933 Law for the Restoration of the Professional Civil Service [Gesetz zur Wiederherstellung des Berufsbeamtentums]. Another summary is planned to be written by Martin Häusermann (Ludwigsburg State Archives) on the topic of the immediate National Socialist actions that the Nazi government took against Jews as soon as they came to power in 1933. These included the exclusion of Jews from local councils [*Gemeinderäte*] and registered associations [*Vereine*] in addition to the 1 April 1933 boycott of Jewish shopkeepers, lawyers and doctors.

The first local case study is a jointly co-authored article by Hartwig Behr (Bad Mergentheim)[14] and Barbara Staudacher (Träger- und Förderverein Ehemalige Synagoge Rexingen e.V.)[15] who detail the sudden expulsion of Jewish butchers from the Württemberg meat market because kosher butchering was outlawed by the 21 April 1933 Law on the Butchering of Animals [Gesetz über das Schlachten von Tieren]. Jochen Faber (Ludwigsburg) sheds light on the economic demise of Jewish agriculturalists in Hoheneck, near Ludwigsburg. Benedict von Bremen (Geschichtswerkstatt Tübingen e.V., Initiative Alte Synagoge Hechingen e.V.[16] and Träger- und Förderverein Ehemalige Synagoge Rexingen e.V.) provides a comparative analysis of the destruction of small Jewish textile merchants in Tübingen, Hechingen, Horb and Reutlingen. Irene Scherer and Welf Schröter (Löwenstein Forschungsverein e.V. Mössingen)[17] present their findings on the Pausa textile company of Mössingen. Plans for taking over this enterprise were in place before 1933; putting these into effect after 1933 resulted in the early flight of the owners, the brothers Arthur and Felix Löwenstein and their families into exile in Britain. Winfried Hecht (Verein Ehemalige Synagoge Rottweil e.V.) investigates the rapid liquidation of the *Schwarzwälder Bürgerzeitung* [Black Forest citizen's newspaper] in Rottweil. He describes the *Bürgerzeitung*'s loss of status as the official register of Rottweil and the following swift collapse of its economic basis. Carsten Kohlmann (Schramberg) looks into the acquisition of the Schramberg cinema, founded by Hollywood pioneer and Schramberg native Carl Lämmle by NSDAP members and the role of film as an important Nazi propaganda tool. The situation of Jewish lawyers is examined by Martin Ulmer, taking the examples of Dr Simon Hayum (Tübingen), Dr Manfred Scheuer and Dr Siegfried Gumbel (both Heilbronn), and other practitioners in Stuttgart. The first part ends with Gisela Roming's (Verein Ehemalige Synagoge Rottweil e.V.) paper on the dissolution of the Jewish community in Rottweil between 1933 and 1940 and how they were excluded from the city's economic and social life, resulting in their early flight into exile.

The years between the passing of the Nuremberg Laws of 1935 and mid 1938 and the further radicalization of anti-Jewish Nazi policies is the subject of the second part. Nicole Bickhoff's introductory sub-chapter surveys the legislative foundations, such as the 1935 Law of the Reich Citizen [Reichsbürgergesetz], introduced under the Nuremberg Laws, which categorized German citizens as Reich citizens [*Reichsbürger*] of 'German' blood or other citizens of 'foreign' racial status, and also an inventory of all Jewish-owned

property as the basis for the full-blown deprivation of rights and theft from German Jews to come. The pivotal role of the NSDAP and the mediation centre [*Vermittlungszentrale*][18] in making the German economy 'Jew-free' and in the forced sale of large corporations as well as the participation of trade associations and the auditing firm Swabian Trustee Inc. [Schwäbische Treuhand AG][19] are the focus of Martin Ulmer's paper. Peter Müller (Ludwigsburg State Archives) examines the role played by the Economic Bank [Wirtschaftsbank] foundation in the economic plundering of Jews.

The local case studies open with Doris Astrid Muth's (Sigmaringen) paper on the expulsion from Hechingen of the three leading textile manufacturing companies – Julius Levi & Co., Karl Löwengart, and Hermann Levi – and their subsequent 'Aryanization'.[20] Karl-Heinz Rueß (Göppingen) also looks at textile manufacturing in his study of A. Gutmann & Co. GmbH, a spinning and weaving company based in Göppingen. A different sector of the economy is examined by Martin Ulmer in his paper on the liquidation and forced transfer of Jewish-owned banks in Tübingen, Horb and Stuttgart. Claudia Kleemann's (Stuttgart) account of the Landauer (Stuttgart, Ulm and Heilbronn), Schocken (Ulm and Pforzheim) and Hermann Tietz (Stuttgart) department stores provides insight into the boycotts and forced sales and transfers in the commercial sales sector. Susanne Rueß (Stuttgart) writes an article on the fate of Jewish medical practitioners in Württemberg. How three female Jewish women – a department store owner, a social worker and a bourgeoise of independent means – from Stuttgart fared is Fabienne Störzinger's (Stuttgart) subject.[21] Martin Ritter (Freundeskreis ehemalige Synagoge Affaltrach e.V.)[22] investigates the Adler-Brauerei [Eagle Brewery] in Heilbronn. The section is anticipated to end with Amelie Fried's (Munich) research on the Pallas footwear store and how its Jewish owners, Fried's relatives, fought to save their business.[23]

The third part covers the years 1938–1941 with the registration of all Jews, the 1938 pogrom, the start of the Second World War and the ghettoization of the German Jewish population. The introductory paper discusses preparations for and enactment of the November 1938 terror and its implications. The capital levy on Jewish Germans ['*Judenvermögensabgabe*'] played an important part in funding Nazi Germany's preparations for war. Jews were banned from carrying out independent economic activities. Other anti-Jewish decrees, such as wearing the yellow Star of

David, Jewish-only shops, obligatory residence in Jews' houses ['*Juden-häuser*'] and forced relocations continued and exacerbated discrimination against Jews.

The first paper is co-authored by Hartwig Behr and Barbara Staudacher, who describe the economic demise of all Jewish cattle merchants in the region.[24] Jupp Kleegraf (Stuttgart) examines the ghettoization of Jews in Stuttgart's '*Judenhäuser*', 'the attitude of 'Aryan' landlords and potential purchasers of Jewish property as well as the role played by the city of Stuttgart in the 'Aryanization' and restitution of Jewish-owned real estate. The forced sale of the Schramberger Majolika-Fabrik [Maiolica Factory, Schramberg], the flight of its owners, the Meyer family, and the company's restitution after 1949 are the subjects of Carsten Kohlmann's contribution. Another paper is expected to deal with the role of the Stuttgart, Heilbronn and Laupheim municipalities in the forced expropriation and eventual sale of Jewish property. Bettina Eger (Verein Ehemalige Synagoge Rottweil e.V.) closes this section with the history of Max Blochert's and Wilhelm Wälder's businesses as examples of the forced transfer of Jewish property in Rottweil.

The fourth part deals with preparations for and execution of the deportation and mass murder of Jews. The years from 1941 to 1945 signalled the final phase of economic plundering, ending in the financial (and often actual) death of Jewish citizens. Martin Ulmer surveys the part played by the state tax and revenue office [*Oberfinanzbehörde*][25] in Stuttgart and the local tax and revenue offices [*Finanzämter*]. Cooperation between the state tax and revenue office, a local tax and revenue office, and the secret state police, or Gestapo, are exemplified by Heinz Högerle (Gedenkstättenverbund Gäu-Neckar-Alb e.V., Träger- und Förderverein Ehemalige Synagoge Rexingen e.V.) with the example of Horb, depicting the participators and profiteers of Jewish deportations from state agencies, Nazi party organizations and, through direct sales and public auctions, the local populace. Hartwig Behr examines the role of Gottlob Belzner, a tax and revenue officer from Bad Mergentheim. A topic that came to the attention of the German public in 2013 following the case of the art collector Cornelius Gurlitt is the Nazi theft of works of art. Concentrating on Stuttgart art historian and arts dealer Dr Morton Bernath, Anja Heuß (Stuttgart) deals with this aspect of economic plundering.[26] Joachim Hahn (Plochingen)[27] has been asked to provide an article on the forced sale of synagogues and the appropriation of Jewish cemeteries.

The fifth and final part deals with the years after 1945. The first paper introduces the concepts and realities of restitution and compensation. The early post-war years saw uncoordinated restitution for concentration and death camp survivors. Heinz Högerle shows how the tax and revenue office in Horb acted on this in 1945 and 1946. Barbara Staudacher also provides examples from Horb of the failure of restitution: the Wälder family returned from exile in France but had no chance of restitution, while the Esslinger family's case failed because evidence was withheld. It is planned to give an example of a successful case of restitution as well.

Next

The research phase of this project is scheduled to end in 2017, with the publication of its findings in an edited volume planned for 2018. An accompanying travelling exhibition of the project is planned to begin shortly afterwards.

BENEDICT VON BREMEN

Benedict von Bremen studied Modern History and American Studies at Eberhard Karls Universität Tübingen. He has published articles and given talks on memories of war in Germany, recollections of the American Civil War and aspects of the conventional arms race between NATO and the Warsaw Pact. He works for the Initiative Alte Synagoge Hechingen e.V. and the Träger- und Förderverein Ehemalige Synagoge Rexingen e.V. He is a member of the Geschichtswerkstatt Tübingen e.V. and the Verein für ein Lern- und Dokumentationszentrum zum Nationalsozialismus e.V. Tübingen as well as an associate of the Gedenkstättenverbund Gäu-Neckar-Alb e.V.

ENDNOTES

1   'Drittes Reich' ['Third Reich'], 'Arisierung' ['Aryanization'] and 'Volksgemeinschaft' ['the People's Society'] are National Socialist terms. In this article National Socialist terms have been placed within quotation marks.

2   Landesarchiv Baden-Württemberg. Accessed 18 January 2016: http://www.landesarchiv-bw.de/web/49689/

3   Landesarchiv Baden-Württemberg. Accessed 18 January 2016: http://www.landesarchiv-bw.de/web/49677/

4   Landesarchiv Baden-Württemberg. Accessed 29 February 2016: http://www.landesarchiv-bw.de/web/47267/

5   Gedenkstättenverbund Gäu-Neckar-Alb e.V. Accessed 18 January 2016: http://www.gedenkstaettenverbund-gna.org/

6 For an extensive historiography of research on 'Aryanization' and other National Socialist economic measures against German Jews, see Fritsche 2013.

7 English translation of original German text.

8 I am indebted to the minutes taken by Bettina Eger, Fabienne Störzinger and Martin Ulmer at various meetings of the project, as well as to Martin Ulmer for compiling the list of articles for the Table of Contents.

9 Before 1945 Württemberg was a German state and Hohenzollern was part of Prussia.

10 One example is Tübingen lawyer Dr Simon Hayum, see Hayum 2005.

11 For example, 'Hechingens Marktplatz judenfrei', *Hohenzollerische Blätter* ['Hechingen's market square now Jew-free', *Hohenzollern Papers*] (Hechingen), 10 November 1938, quoted in Otto Werner, *Deportation und Vernichtung hohenzollerischer Juden* [Deportation and extermination of Hohenzollern's Jews] (Hechingen: Verein Alte Synagoge Hechingen, 2011), 29–30.

12 *Geschichtswerkstatt Tübingen e.V.* Accessed 2 November 2016: http://www.geschichtswerkstatt-tuebingen.de/

13 Universität Hohenheim, *Wirtschaftsarchiv Baden-Württemberg*. Accessed 18 January 2016: https://wabw.uni-hohenheim.de/

14 See the website on Bad Mergentheim in *Alemannia Judaica* for references to Hartwig Behr's previous research: Joachim Hahn, *Alemannia Judaica*. Accessed 18 January 2016: http://www.alemannia-judaica.de/synagoge_mergentheim.htm

15 *Träger- und Förderverein Ehemalige Synagoge Rexingen e.V.* Accessed January 18, 2016, http://www.ehemalige-synagoge-rexingen.de/

16 Manuel Werner, *Synagoge Hechingen*. Accessed 25 November 2016: http://alte-synagoge-hechingen.de

17 *Löwenstein Forschungsverein e.V.* Accessed 18 January 2016: http://www.initiative-loewensteinverein.de

18 The Stuttgart *Vermittlungszentrale* worked for the government of Württemberg, the city of Stuttgart, the NSDAP and individual companies. It was present at negotiations with the Jewish owners of larger factories and properties, determining in large part the terms of sale, the buyer, purchase price, and so on. Martin Ulmer's email to author, 2 February 2016.

19 The Schwäbische Treuhand AG appraised and rated Jewish-owned companies. Martin Ulmer's email to author, 2 February 2016.

20 See Muth 2013, 47–64.

21 See also Störzinger 2016.

22 *Freundeskreis ehemalige Synagoge Affaltrach e.V.* Accessed 2 February 2016: http://www.synagoge-affaltrach.de/synagoge.html

23 See also Fried 2008.

24 See also Kaufmann and Kohlmann 2013.

25 The *Oberfinanzbehörde* was the regional intermediate authority between the *Reichsfinanzministerium* [Reich tax and revenue office] in Berlin and the local tax revenue offices of the local administrative county districts (known as *Oberämter* until 1937, then *Landkreise*). See Martin Ulmer, email to author, 2 February 2016.

26 See also Heuß 2008, 68–81.

27   Joachim Hahn, *Alemannia Judaica*. Accessed 19 January 2016: http://www.ale-mannia-judaica.de/

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GERHARD RICHTER: 'POST-REMEMBERING' THE HOLOCAUST IN GERMAN CONTEMPORARY ART

Kris Belden-Adams
University of Mississippi

ABSTRACT

Dresden-born artist Gerhard Richter (b.1932) was aged between nine and thirteen years old during the Holocaust. Nonetheless, it had a formative and conflicting influence on Richter. His black-and-white 'photopaintings' from 1965 raise questions about the role of photography as a means of remembering, forgetting, recontextualizing and expressing the traumatic acts committed to – and by – his own family members, even, on each other. This paper studies exemplary 'photopaintings' as a manifestation of Richter's expression of a German 'postmemory' condition. In sum, this is a story about remembering, forgetting and denial – and photography as an agent exploring those phenomena.

Comparative literature professor Marianne Hirsch coined the term 'postmemory' to describe the relationship that the generation that came 'after' the perpetrators of the Holocaust and the Second World War experienced following those traumatic events. She argues that this group's memories are comprised of the stories and images they remember, combined with the behaviours they witnessed in others during their youth. That is to say, their memories are second-hand inheritances of stories about an event that largely occurred before their adult consciousness.

One such member of the 'postmemory' generation, Dresden-born painter Gerhard Richter was aged between nine and thirteen years old during the Holocaust and the Second World War. Both had a profound and conflicting influence on his family. Less than one week after Richter's thirteenth birthday, British and American planes dropped more than 500,000 bombs on Dresden, killing more than 25,000 people and putting Richter's immediate

family in danger.[1] Richter was a junior member of the Hitler Youth. Two of his uncles served in the German army and were killed during the war. Richter's father was an official Nazi Party supporter, served in the war and survived. He was forever scarred by the experience – which included being captured and kept as a prisoner-of-war by American soldiers. The Nazis, in their campaign to eliminate all citizens with mental illnesses, exterminated Richter's schizophrenic Aunt Marianne. Moreover, recent research has implicated Richter's father-in-law (through his first wife) in the death of Aunt Marianne.

In black-and-white 'photopaintings' from 1965 – such as *Uncle Rudi*, *Aunt Marianne* and *Mr Heyde* (Figs 1–5) – Richter addresses his personal 'post-memory' of the impact of the Second World War on his family and himself. While photographs are often regarded as surrogate witnesses to events, family snapshots are springboards for second-hand narratives that change over time, from context to context, and from viewer to viewer. Vernacular photographs are 'social' objects. They prompt the sharing of family folklore while inherently challenging the status of the photograph as an objective document. Thus, one finds only conditional truth in a family photograph. (Roland Barthes famously ceded this in the influential book *Camera Lucida*, but only after an unfruitful search for something vital and essential about his recently deceased mother in a photograph of her as a child.)

Richter's use of family photography as the basis for this body of paintings also raises questions about the purpose of remembering events and associations that one would rather see fade from memory. In July 2015, Richter announced that he had 'disowned' this period of his painting career. He purposefully excluded all of these artworks from the comprehensive catalogue raisonné of his life's work, claiming that he did not like the style in which he rendered his subjects (Neuendorf 2015). This essay argues that Richter had other reasons for wishing to forget these paintings. His family's role in perpetrating and falling victim to the Holocaust are evoked by the subjects of his paintings during this phase.

In addition, Richter's photopaintings prompt viewers to think about photography's adequacy to represent the Holocaust or war, or facilitate any real understanding of it. This paper will take a closer look at those issues, through a study of exemplary photopaintings as a manifestation of Richter's expression of a German postmemory condition.

Post-remembering Uncle Rudi

Rudolf Shönfelder was more than an uncle to Richter. He was a role model. Art historian Robert Storr noted that '[Uncle Rudi] is not a monster but the average, ordinarily enthusiastic soldier. On the other hand, he was the apple of Richter's mother's eye.' Storr quotes the artist: '[Uncle Rudi] was handsome, charming, tough, elegant, a playboy, [and] he was so proud of his uniform.' As a boy, Richter was impressed by Shönfelder, who was a paragon of masculine virtues (Storr 2003, 57–58).

To make this photopainting of his Uncle Rudi, Richter selected a family snapshot of Shönfelder smiling and wearing a full National Socialist uniform. The figure was centered in the canvas, echoing the conventions of vernacular family snapshots. As the photograph was enlarged from about 10 cm in height to fill nearly a metre-tall canvas, Richter added details where they had previously not existed in the photograph. These images once conveyed what Barthes has called a 'that-which-was' (or, a photographic naturalism), enhanced by Richter's additions. While the paint was still wet, Richter smeared those carefully painted details with a horizontal drag of a homemade squeegee, challenging the previously realistic painting's ability to make indexical reference to his Uncle Rudi. He pulls paint, and the details it conveys, from the canvas. He marks, and obliterates. He 'cleans' – or tries to 'clean' – the image from the canvas, using a process he calls 'mechanical sweeping'.

What remains on the canvas is what we see here: a blurred image of Richter's uncle that still 'reads' with the familiarity of a snapshot. But this image is no longer intimate in size, nor in its function as a publically shared artwork. Horizontal smudges of streaked oil paint attempt to wipe away the proud, young Uncle Rudi, along with his innocence and folklore-ish glorification by Richter's family members. This is entirely appropriate. Rudi's memory would forever be ruined by his Nazi affiliation. Uncle Rudi thus is, to Germans, an immediately recognizable, but after the war, a seldom-discussed typology: 'The Nazi among us.' Moreover, he revealed, in Richter's hindsight view, the enduring presence of the Second World War and the Holocaust in everyday life.

As Richter acts against social norms to 'out' 'the Nazi in his family' to the masses, the artist also refers affectionately to Shönfelder as 'Uncle Rudi'. While 'Rudi' is a term of familiarity and endearment, it is also a diminutive, belittling form of Rudolf. Schönfelder's image lacks clarity, perhaps as a metaphor to the struggle of reconciling Rudi, the heroic pre-war family

myth, with Rudi 'the Nazi'. Uncle Rudi is given no family name. Thus, he is simultaneously disavowed as a relative, yet shared with all of us – as 'The Nazi in *All of Our* Families'. Thus, Uncle Rudi is a specific historical person from Richter's family whom the artist embraces and rejects, simultaneously.[2] When asked about the fate of his uncle by Storr, Richter said, 'He was young and very stupid, and then he went to war and was killed during the first days' (Storr 2003, 57–58). Thus, the proud, charming young man who represented a role model for Richter is quickly deflated and defeated at the Normandy landings in 1944, as a member of 'a generation that willingly participated in its own destruction, and the destruction of millions it tried to dominate' (Storr 2003, 57–58).

But Rudolf Shönfelder was hardly alone. Schönfelder's brother Alfred – and Richter's father, Horst – all served in the German army during the Second World War. Horst Richter was a teacher, and was a member of the National Socialist Party. Although, 'as Gerhard remembers it, his father never bought into its ideology. In fact Richter does not recollect that anyone in either of his parents' families was an avid supporter of Nazism. Like so many other German families at the time, the Richters and Schönfelders were apolitical,' according to the curator Dietmar Elger (Elger 2009, 5).[3] (This characterization

of Horst Richter's political passion, it should be mentioned, contradicts Richter's earlier statements.) Richter's father returned from war and was never able to find his footing again. As a former Nazi soldier, Horst Richter was not allowed to return to his school-teaching post, nor did he ever fully reintegrate back into his family (Storr 2003, 32).[4] According to the artist, his father 'shared most fathers' fate at the time […] nobody wanted them' (Storr 2003, 32).

Richter, who became accustomed to his father's absence, recalls being an active member of the Hitler Youth, and found a means for expressing his restless preadolescent aggression through it: 'I was very impressed by the idea of soldiers, of militarism, maybe [by] Hitler, that was impressive' (Storr 2002, 19). Richter's statements in other interviews convey a different story, or memory, of being a member of the group, which, he recalled, 'was too tough for me. I don't like fighting games, I wasn't very sporty.' Richter also explains: 'When you are twelve you're too little to understand all that ideological hocus-pocus, but even though this might sound funny now, I always knew I was something better than they were' (Storr 2003, 25). According to Elger, Richter claimed he 'managed to avoid most of the odious paramilitary field exercises and tent camps thanks to his mother, who willingly filled out and signed his absence forms, claiming illness' (Elger 2009, 5).

But when the war came to his back yard (during the Russian occupation), he curiously welcomed the soldiers. While military trenches were being dug behind his house, squadrons of American planes dropped propaganda leaflets from above, and Russian MiGs flew low overhead hunting for German army trucks. Richter recalled, 'There were weapons and cannons and guns and cigarettes; it was fantastic' (Storr 2003, 10). When the campaign ended, he and his friends found discarded weapons and held target practice in the woods (Elger 2009, 6). Richter recalled: 'That was the most exciting time of my life, and I think of it fondly' (Elger 2009, 5).

Richter thus grapples with his own memories and shifting viewpoints. As art historian Benjamin Buchloh has suggested, Richter's work offers an 'analogue to postwar Germany's own conflicted relation to its past (which it must both disavow and work through)' (Buchloh 1996, 62). With this body of work, Richter addresses the collision of photographic facticity, family folklore and his boyhood memories, which were augmented by hand-me-down stories and shaped by history. The photopaintings address conflicts within that family, too.

Fig. 2
Marianne
Schönfelder and
Gerhard Richter,
1932. Unknown
photographer,
Gerhard Richter
Studio Archives,
Cologne
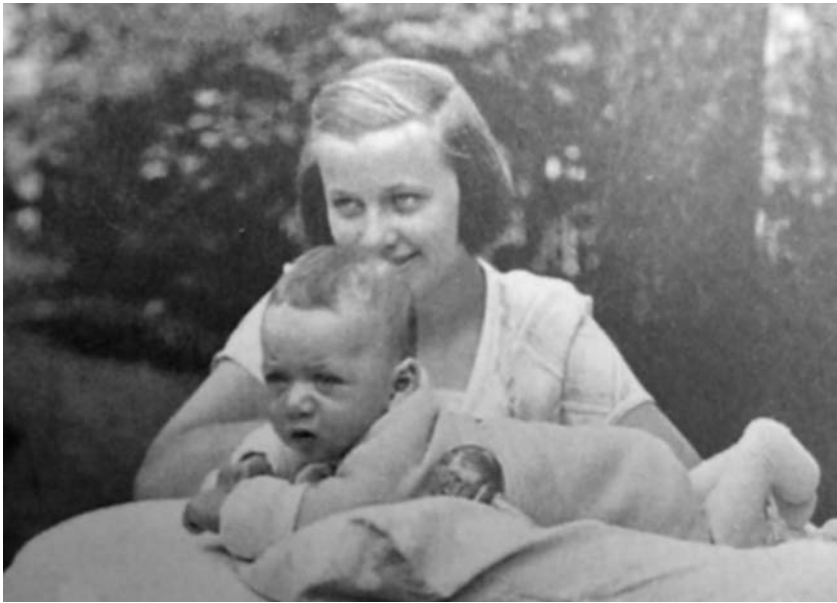
In one of Richter's family photographs (Fig. 2), a teenaged version of Richter's Aunt Marianne hovers above the artist, who was less than a year old at the time the picture was taken. Marianne was, in family lore, the antithesis of Rudi and her sister, Richter's mother. She was committed to a mental institution from the age of eighteen, and was diagnosed as schizophrenic. Richter recalls that: 'Whenever I behaved badly I was told "You will become like crazy Marianne"' (Harding 2006).

In 1939, at the start of the Second World War, Hitler backdated the T4 euthanasia programme authorizations to call for the systematic mass murder of the mentally ill. They were declared 'unworthy of life' and of contributing to German culture and the gene pool. Mental-institution patients were forcibly sterilized and starved, and then given an intentionally fatal drug overdose at the state institute Großschweidnitz. By the end of the war in 1945, at least 3,272 patients, including Richter's Aunt Marianne, had been murdered here. At the time when Richter painted this picture of Aunt Marianne, he knew her fate had been terrible, but claimed that he did not know all the details (Fig. 3).

In 1959 police apprehended Werner Heyde, the man who created the 'strategic euthanasia programme' and killed about 100,000

people – including those at Großschweidnitz (Figs 4–5) (Schreiber 2005, 245). In the ochre-tinted photopainting *Mr Heyde*, Richter provides a portrait of Marianne's executioner, who was working under Hitler's mandate. Heyde pioneered the gassing techniques employed in the 'Final Solution'. After the war, he continued to practise medicine under a false name until he was exposed. Heyde committed suicide five days before his trial (Storr 2003, 58).

When interviewed in 2002 about the painting *Mr Heyde*, Richter claimed that it was intended to speak to the paranoia inspired by discovering that one's neighbours – seemingly ordinary people – helped perpetrate the Holocaust. He stated: 'Who would ever have guessed? Who can we trust among us?' (Leight 2002). In a different interview, Richter mentioned that he saw no conscious connection between Heyde's programme and his aunt's death: 'It did not exist. There are no conscious connections within me at all. [He chuckles] But I am certain that I knew of it because I read it somewhere' (Leight 2002).

Fig. 4
Gerhard Richter,
Mr Heyde, 1965,
oil on canvas,
55 × 65 cm.
Private collection

In 2006 journalist Jürgen Schreiber revealed a startling revelation: that Richter's first father-in-law, Heinrich Eufinger, a prominent physician of the Third Reich, had been assigned to the clinic where Marianne was institutionalized and killed. Eufinger was responsible for the sterilization and euthanasia of the mentally ill. Richter and former wife Ema claimed to have known nothing of his involvement until it was made public in 2006 (Elger 2009, 131). Although Marianne's death occurred before Richter met and married Ema, it seems quite unlikely that they never swapped family stories and discovered that her father worked at Großschweidnitz – the same hospital to which his aunt was committed and executed.

Richter's photopaintings *Uncle Rudi, Aunt Marianne* and *Mr Heyde* thus close the gaps between personal experience and public reality, between a traumatic family past and a present predicated on selective memory. These paintings testify to German society's repression, reticence and denial. Richter attempts to reconstruct its remembrance and family histories from within the social and geopolitical world in which the atrocity was committed (Buchloh 1999, 127). However, as Richter denies these paintings' existence and excludes them from documentation projects related to his life's work, he attempts

to erase these figures – and his family's first-hand involvement in the First World War and the Holocaust – once more. As time passes, the sources connecting him to his family's conflicting stories of war, mass murder and atrocity have passed, too.

Robert Braun has suggested that memory transforms into history, losing its connection to the personal stories of its perpetrators and victims – which eventually are forgotten. Histories thus become less 'real' and more 'abstract'. Memories of the atrocities of the Second World War thus may become part of a general cultural history, rather than an individualized actual Richter-family-specific story (Braun 1994, 176). Richter's denial of this phase of work is a conscious effort to let these intensely personal family stories become less 'real' (as they are not attached to actual family figures), and more 'abstract'. Ultimately, perhaps, they can fade completely – along with the guilt experienced by the Richter family.

KRIS BELDEN-ADAMS

Kris Belden-Adams is Assistant Professor of Art History at the University of Mississippi (USA) and specializes in modern/contemporary art, and the history of photography. She received her PhD from the City University of New York – Graduate Center in 2010. In addition to researching Gerhard Richter's 'photopaintings', she studies social-media photography. Dr Belden-Adams's recent scholarship also examines the intersections of sewage and photography in the decades following the medium's birth. Her work has been published by the Metropolitan Museum of Art, and in Photographies; Afterimage; Southern Studies; The International Journal of Technology, Knowledge and Society *and* Cabinet.

ENDNOTES

1 The attack on Dresden, was about 60 miles away from Waltersdorf, where Richter then lived. However, Richter's aunt and grandmother were then living in Dresden and survived the bombing. Robert Storr, *Gerhard Richter: Doubt and Belief in Painting* (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 2003), 3.

2 Philipp Alexander Ostrowicz 2005–6, n.p.

3 Dietmar Elger, *Gerhard Richter: A Life in Painting* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009), 5. This differs from other accounts, such as Storr's. See n.1.

4 Storr also cites Stefan Aust, *The Bader-Meinhof Group: The Inside Story of a Phenomenon* (London: The Bodley Head, 1985), 58.

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POPULAR AWARENESS AND ILL-INTENT OR PASSIVITY OF THOSE IN POWER: MEMORY OF THE HOLOCAUST IN RUSSIA AND UKRAINE IN THE 21ST CENTURY

Alexander Gogun
Free University of Berlin
Hadassah-Brandeis Institute, Waltham, Massachusetts

ABSTRACT
Sociological surveys have shown that the majority of the population of Russia and Ukraine has a correct understanding of the nature of the Holocaust, or Shoah. However, a section of the population does not understand this crime against humanity; some believe that accounts of it are unjustifiably exaggerated. At the same time, knowledge of similar or comparable crimes – the Gulag, the Holodomor (or Great Famine) and the genocide of the Armenians – is lacking in the population as a whole. The inhabitants of these two countries are sometimes even less aware of these crimes than they are of the Shoah. Among Russians and Ukrainians awareness of the major European 20th-century crimes against humanity seems more considered, perhaps even more objective when compared to people in the West. Nevertheless, among the population of the former Soviet Union, there remains considerable scope for education in this field and there is a special need to improve living standards and the quality of life.

Regardless of the fact that political development in Ukraine and Russia in the 21st-century differs significantly, there is as yet no basis on which to say that the mass memory of the genocide of the Jews and the population of these two countries essentially differs. On the whole, their inhabitants are aware of what the Holocaust was. However, the conduct of those in power differs somewhat: in Moscow there are conspicuous attempts to use this atrocity in order to smear 'traitors' and neighbouring East and Central European countries, while in Kiev this method is used to a lesser degree on an official level. Instead, indifference or only symbolic attention is paid to this crime against humanity.

The results are similar: a tendency for the mass awareness of the nature of the Holocaust to be limited, if not altogether lacking. One of the indicators of this is the fact that there is no worthwhile research into this question, and the significant lack of statistics on what this kind of research might be based. This paper is based on two sociological surveys conducted in Russia,[1] a piece of sociological research[2] and a whole piece of field research in Ukraine,[3] selected mass-media publications and also my questions to a number of experts in leading Ukrainian and Russian organizations that carry out research and educational work in relation to the Holocaust.[4]

As an introduction, in the USSR the genocide against the Jews was never completely hushed up, but it was downplayed, distorted in every way and deliberately given little attention in official political history. Emphasis was placed on the triumph of the Soviet people rather than on the tragedy. In cases where the victims were discussed, in the years between 1941 and 1991, stress was placed on the anti-Slavic racism of the Nazis and in cases this was even exaggerated.

During the period of democratization from the end of the 1980s and the 1990s, the possibility of a change of attitude emerged. First, tens of millions of people who had seen or experienced this atrocity held it within living memory. Not only those who suffered directly, war veterans, for example, but also their descendants, friends and acquaintances. In this way, under conditions of freedom, a section of society was willing to undertake research into this atrocity, and also work to educate the population on the subject. Secondly, there was a widening of links with humanitarian circles, funds and official bodies in western countries. These aimed to raise the level of study and awareness of the Holocaust among the peoples of Eastern Europe to that of North America and the European Union.

An undoubted change, when compared to the Soviet period, is that the Holocaust was introduced into the curricula of schools and to some extent universities,[5] and appeared in sections of textbooks in both countries. During the incredibly pluralistic and 'flexible' system of education in the 1990s, a mass of different school and university textbooks appeared, all containing an 'approved' stamp from the Ministry of Education.

I will cite from personal experience. I left school in Russia in 1997, and graduated from university in 2001. In courses on national and international

history, both our teachers and lecturers told us about the genocide of the Jews. If in Russia the Holocaust had originally entered the school curriculum as a recommendation, from 2012 the tragedy entered the curriculum as a compulsory subject (Gladilin 2012). In Ukraine this had occurred two decades earlier. This is probably explained by the fact that the number of victims was a lot higher than in Russia, and many times higher if we take into account the number of victims of the genocide of Jews in relation to the total population of these two predominantly Slavic countries. In other words, Ukraine suffered from the Holocaust much more severely than did Russia.

Nevertheless, regardless of all the attempts by sections of society and western organizations, the effect in Russia was limited. In 2013 the sociologist Boris Dubin stated: 'The Holocaust does not exist as a theme in mass Russian culture' (Dubin 2013). He took into account cinema and television in particular, as well as the more popular newspapers and journals and popular literature. It seems that the population of Russia knows less about the Holocaust than did the inhabitants of the Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic (RSFSR). This is indirectly shown by the survey conducted by the Levada-Center in Moscow where Dubin worked.[6] The overall knowledge index was not low: between 75% and 87% of Russians know about the Nazi extermination of the Jews, and an absolute majority give a balanced overall evaluation of this atrocity.

The population of Russia is much better informed about the Holocaust than the Armenian genocide.[7] This is, however, to be expected. First, the annihilation of Jews took place twenty-five years later than the slaughter in Ottoman Turkey, and people remember recent events more clearly. Secondly, the mass murder of Armenians, compared to the Holocaust, took place entirely outside the borders not only of the present Russian Federation, but the then Russian Empire. Thirdly, the number of victims of this atrocity was several times lower than in the Shoah.

Russians know less about the genocide of Armenians than they do about the Holocaust, regardless of the fact that the number of Armenians in Russia is seven times higher than that of Russian Jews.[8] This shows that prominent social groups (intellectuals, entrepreneurs and so on), including ethnic minorities, have an insignificant impact on the formation of the collective historical memory of broad layers of the population. The

Survey of a representative selection of the population of Russia, 1,600 people of 18 or over, carried out 19–23 October 2007	Total	Age				Education			
		18–24 years	25–39 years	40–54 years	55 years and above	higher	secondary, special-ized	secondary	lower than secondary
Number of those questioned	1,600	233	430	482	455	330	430	465	375
HAVE YOU HEARD OF THE HOLOCAUST, AND IF SO, DO YOU PERSONALLY THINK IT IS TRUE THAT IN GERMANY AND...									
1. In those years they definitely destroyed an entire nation	62.5	50.1	61.6	63.7	68.6	69	63.6	57.9	61.4
2. Stories about this are significantly exaggerated	12.3	10	12.7	13.7	11.6	13.4	13	12.1	10.6
3. I have never heard anything about it	12.9	25.2	13.4	10.6	8.3	9.5	10.6	16.4	13.9
4. I have difficulty in answering	12.3	14.7	12.4	12	11.5	8.2	12.8	13.6	14

government's priority lies in creating a public awareness of history and, to an extent, general values; it has a limited interest in how the Russian people view the Holocaust.

The above table indicates that the younger the respondent the less they tend to know about the genocide of the Jews. There are two likely reasons for this. First, the evident post-Soviet deterioration of the education system and the general decline in the study of the humanities among school and university students. Secondly, the Holocaust is closer in time to the older generation and hence they know more about it. It is a positive sign that among the younger generation the section who state that the Holocaust is significantly exaggerated is the smallest (10 per cent). Probably people who grew up in a capitalist and pluralist world have a more flexible understanding of humanity's realities than those who were educated under a planned economy and single-party system.

In Vienna in May 2015, during the preliminary discussion of the report[9] that served as a basis for this paper, a panel of colleagues noted that the combined share of inhabitants of Russia who in 2007 had thought that accounts of the Holocaust were exaggerated or who had heard nothing at all about the atrocity, consisted of a quarter of respondents. And if we add

Family Income					Size of the town in which you live				
low (less than 6,000r)	middle to low (6,000–10,000r)	middle to high (10,000–18,000r)	high (above 18,000r)	hard to say	Moscow	more than 500,000	from 100,000 to 500,000	town of less than 100,000	village
314	286	247	222	531	117	348	304	438	394
...ITS OCCUPIED TERRITORIES THE JEWISH PEOPLE WERE DELIBERATELY ANNIHILATED DURING THOSE YEARS?									
65.7	61.2	57.9	67.4	61.5	60.3	66.8	59.2	63.8	60.6
7.4	11	21.9	12.4	11.3	20.6	14.1	13.5	9.2	10.6
15.1	16.1	8.8	9.1	13.2	6.2	10.3	13	12.9	16.9
11.8	11.8	11.4	11.1	14	12.9	8.8	14.3	14.1	11.9

those who were completely unable to give an intelligible response, then the share comes to 37.5 per cent. The attitude of this group was considered a definite problem.

While this gives possible cause for concern, we have to note that both interviewers were from developed capitalist countries, and it is not out of the question that they did not take into account the prevailing Russian reality. To evaluate the opinion of the 37.5 per cent – and this is around forty million people – is it not important to take into account their state of health, both physical and mental? Insofar as millions of immigrants live in Russia, where the authorities do nothing to aid their integration, is it not worth considering that a section of these people – sometimes not badly educated – simply have insufficient command of the Russian language to understand the question?

Among those who assert that accounts of the Holocaust are significantly exaggerated, the largest section consists of people with no more than a secondary education (with a so-called 'dangerous half-knowledge'), who are older than middle aged, with an average family income (although not beggars, they are poor) and living in the capital, that is, exposed to luxury that they cannot reach. Moscow is a city of contrasts and visible social stratification

		Sex		Age			
Survey of a representative selection of the Russian population: 1,602 people aged 18 or over. carried out 22–25 May 2015	Total	Male	Female	18–24 years	25–39 years	40–54 years	55 years and older
Number of those questioned	1,602	721	881	221	459	429	492
HAVE YOU HEARD OF THE HOLOCAUST, AND IF SO, DO YOU PERSONALLY THINK IT IS TRUE THAT IN GERMANY AND...							
1. In those years they definitely destroyed an entire nation	74.2	73.8	74.6	55.8	66.5	82.8	82.2
2. Stories about this are significantly exaggerated	5.8	5.1	6.4	3.6	9.2	4.6	4.7
3. I have never heard about it	8.2	10.1	6.6	23.2	7.2	5.7	4.6
4. Hard to say	11.7	11.0	12.4	17.4	17.0	6.9	8.5
HAVE YOU HEARD OF THE GENOCIDE OF THE ARMENIANS IN THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE BETWEEN 1914 AND 1923... THOSE YEARS OR ARE STORIES ABOUT IT EXAGGERATED?							
1. In those years they definitely destroyed an entire nation	50.8	49.4	52.0	34.0	42.6	53.7	63.6
2. Stories about this are significantly exaggerated	10.8	10.9	10.8	7.8	15.1	9.2	9.6
3. I have never heard about it	21.5	22.5	20.7	40.6	23.0	21.6	11.5
9. Hard to say	16.8	17.2	16.4	17.6	19.3	15.5	15.2

that often breeds frustration, resentment and prejudice. A run-of-the-mill ignorance is commonly found among people with a lower standard of education and income, in small towns and villages.

But in any case, even the ability to read and write and earn your own living is not synonymous with well being, and as a consequence, psychological harmony. Anyway, on balance, we can be almost certain that the life of these 37.5 per cent is far from easy, and needs to be changed not only in respect of knowledge of the Shoah and the understanding of this tragedy.

It is significant that when I got in touch with the Levada-Center to obtain this data, their spokesman told me that it was possible that they would soon carry out another similar survey. They invited me to formulate some questions for future research.[10] The survey in 2007 was an initiative of the Levada-Center; it was not commissioned by anyone, including the state. The survey was repeated, taking into account the interest of the present author,

Education				Consumer status			Size of town in which you live				
higher	second-ary. specialist	second-ary	lower than sec-ondary	only on food-stuffs	on food and clothing	I can buy durable goods	Moscow	more than 500,000	from 100,000 to 500,000	town of 100,000 or less	village
483	549	263	307	254	881	467	137	377	307	382	398
...ITS OCCUPIED TERRITORIES THE JEWISH PEOPLE WERE DELIBERATELY ANNIHILATED DURING THOSE YEARS?											
77.7	71.4	69.3	77.8	65.5	77.3	73.3	81.0	76.8	76.3	67.8	74.0
4.7	7.5	6.6	3.9	8.9	6.0	3.8	10.1	1.8	2.4	10.0	6.8
6.9	7.3	13.0	8.2	11.1	6.1	10.5	5.0	9.2	8.4	7.8	8.7
10.8	13.8	11.0	10.1	14.5	10.6	12.5	4.0	12.2	12.8	14.4	10.6
...AND IF SO, DO YOU THINK THAT THEY DELIBERATELY DESTROYED THE ARMENIAN NATION IN TURKEY DURING											
56.1	50.6	38.9	52.2	45.3	50.1	55.3	69.3	60.0	55.3	36.8	45.6
9.4	12.3	15.9	6.2	9.2	10.7	12.0	16.5	4.4	5.9	10.6	18.9
17.2	19.6	31.4	24.2	25.5	22.2	18.2	9.3	18.7	23.0	26.6	22.7
17.2	17.5	13.8	17.3	20.0	17.1	14.6	4.9	16.9	15.8	26.0	12.8

and this time the population knew a little more about the Holocaust: in seven and a half years there had been an increase of almost 12 per cent.[11] Public awareness of the Armenian genocide increased by approximately the same figure.[12] As can be seen, the continuation of social and economic polarization in Putin's Russia during these seven and a half years has meant that more people are feeling poorer than before, and have become more ignorant and prejudiced.

It may be assumed that the growth of general popular awareness of these two terrible genocides is an indirect consequence of the 'historic war' of the Kremlin, and the deliberate exploitation of these two historical events in the country. How the Holocaust has been used against some has already been discussed above, but from 2008 to 2015 Russian-Turkish relations deteriorated and Russia made efforts to strengthen its influence in Armenia (where it was traditionally strong even without trying). Thus the Armenian Genocide is exploited by the Putin regime in a no less a sophisticated way than the Holocaust.

But no less important are two anniversaries for which Putin's propaganda machine began to prepare in advance – the seventieth anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz and especially the victory in the Russo-German war (9 May 2015) and the 100th anniversary of the Armenian genocide (24 April 2015). It is very likely that this increased knowledge among the peoples of Russia about the Holocaust and crimes of the Ottoman Empire will be a short-lived surge caused by the wave of television programmes, films and publications relating to the subjects during the first half of 2015. It is unlikely that this level of knowledge is stable.

Young people's awareness of the Holocaust remains the lowest – in 2015 it had increased a little compared to equivalent indices in 2007, but it did not come close to the indices of awareness of the Holocaust of the older generation in 2007, or to the awareness of older people in 2015.

While noting the commendable growth of 12 per cent in seven and a half years, unfortunately we cannot completely trust these positive dynamics. Is this a question of actual historical education, or a transformation of the electorate's historical picture? In Russia the increase in awareness of one historical question at the expense of other important historical events, including mass murder, cannot be ruled out. We simply do not have the information to evaluate this complex question, and even if we had, the scope of this article would not permit such an analysis.

There is no reason to believe that, when it comes to popular memory of the extermination of the Jews, mass consciousness is radically different in Russia and Ukraine. After all, as we have seen, the basic perception was formed during the Soviet era, when state propaganda about the war was identical in both Ukraine and Russia. We may add that in Ukraine there were more people who have witnessed the mass atrocities, predominantly in western regions, but also in the other regions.

The overall picture is close to the Russian one, as indicated in a survey by the All-Ukrainian Sociological Service conducted in Ukraine from 18 to 27 June 2009. We note that the time of the study – around 22 June – was the anniversary of the start of the Soviet-German war in the Second World War and this probably artificially heightened the awareness of people interviewed about the Holocaust. After all, traditionally the anniversary of the outbreak of war is marked by a wave of media publications relating to

this confrontation and the general policies of the Third Reich – including the genocide of the Jews.

In answer to the question 'What does the Holocaust mean to you?', there were four possibilities to choose from: 39.4 per cent stated that it was a genocide, while 39.3 per cent said that it is a tragedy for the Jewish people, 24.5 per cent – a tragedy for Ukraine, 3.8 per cent called it a fiction and 1.4 per cent gave a different answer.[13] Unfortunately, this information is difficult to compare with the aforementioned data from the Russian public opinion survey, as the Kiev and Moscow researchers worded their questions differently. In addition, the choice of answers offered in Ukraine had a different format, which gives a blurred picture. It is obvious that the assertion that the Holocaust is genocide does not in any way contradict the fact that this was a tragedy for the Jewish people, which in turn may also be – and is – a tragedy for Ukraine. Overall, the vast majority of Ukrainians, like Russians, have an awareness and understanding of the Holocaust.

In 2008 a group of historians under my guidance conducted field research on a related topic in the villages of Central and Eastern Ukraine, on the border with Belarus and Russia. There, the older generation remembers well the murder of their former neighbours; sometimes witnesses stated that local police were involved in these crimes.[14]

Elena Ivanova, research professor of Kharkov University, undertook a study of Ukrainian students (born between 1983 and 1989) in various regions of the country about their knowledge of the Holocaust. She speaks of the close connection between the memory of the genocide and local events. Her study included seventy-four respondents in Lviv (western Ukraine), seventy-four in Poltava (central Ukraine) and eighty-nine in Kharkiv (the eastern part of the country) (Ivanova 2008). The author used the method of free-style essays, in which students had to write what they knew about the Holocaust. In western Ukraine, the genocide of the Jews is largely perceived as a phenomenon of local history, whereby the students describe what happened in their area, while in central and eastern Ukraine it is talked about as a historical phenomenon, an event that does not concern them directly and is less a part of local memory. This is probably connected with the fact that the percentage of Jews in western Ukraine before the war was far higher than in the central and eastern regions of the country. In addition, the proportion of people who directly or indirectly approved of the

atrocity was slightly higher in the centre (14.9 per cent) and the east (14.6 per cent) of the country than in the west (5.4 per cent) (Ivanova 2008, 19).

For lack of sociological data, at the beginning of April 2015, I conducted this micro-study with the help of Google. The Ukrainian word 'Holokost' had 101,000 entries; the Russian 'Kholokost' had 616,000. Roughly half the population of Ukraine speaks Russian, so if we assume that 100,000 also enter 'Kholocaust' in Russian as this spelling appears in Ukrainian media and blogs, you get a figure of around 200,000 references in the Ukrainian media space against 516,000 in the rest of the Russian language. We take into account that the population of Russia is three times higher than that of Ukraine, and Russian is also spoken in Kazakhstan, Belarus and parts of the Baltic States. Thus in Ukraine the Holocaust is not less known to the population than in other regions with an eastern Slavic population, and probably even more known.

Words that depict communist crimes of comparable value are found with very similar frequency: 'Holodomor' – 619,000 hits and 'Gulag' – 566,000 hits. Both of these words are written the same way in Russian and Ukrainian. For comparison, if we type the same words in Latin letters into Google, the Holocaust is found 52 million times, the Gulag five million times and the Holodomor only 400,000 times. In other words, if we are to believe Google, memory and public opinion is more balanced between Communist and Nazi crimes in countries where the Cyrillic alphabet is used, than in the countries where the Latin alphabet is conventionally used, that is, in the West.

Returning to Ukraine and Russia, where we have seen that the Holocaust is generally known about, the genocide of the Jews is certainly not a marginal topic in mass consciousness. In both countries in intellectual and academic circles, there are many capable researchers of this historical theme, which could not have been the case in the Soviet Union. But state policy is selective in this regard. The Putin regime seeks to use the Holocaust to smear opponents of the Stalinist regime, nationalists or collaborators, 'traitors to the Motherland' (Gogun 2013).

In Ukraine, the government pays no more than ceremonial attention to this issue, but at least it does not stand in the way of those public and western institutions that research and conduct educational work in this field. It is significant that in both Russia and Ukraine the basic structures that are

engaged in similar work in this area are non-profit organizations (NGOs). We are talking about three organizations in Moscow, Kiev and Dneprop-etrovsk. In Russia there is the Holocaust Research and Educational Center in Moscow under the dual chairmanship of the Ukrainian Il'ya Al'tman and the Russian Alla Gerber.[15]

Among other things, the centre is known for the publication of *The Encyclopedia of Holocaust on the Territory of the Soviet Union.* The research perspective of this organization represents a compromise between the perception of history formed during Soviet times and a liberal approach. The Holocaust Center is funded in part by western grants, partly by donations from wealthy Russian businessmen who are known to be dependent on the government, and partly by state contributions. However, despite the fact that the policy of the centre cannot in any way be called oppositional, it has recently experienced a lot of difficulties (Kashevarova 2015). It is a public organization, and the attitude of the authorities towards the public is well known in Russia.

In the past five years Oleg Budnitskii, director of the state organization the International Centre for the Study of History and Sociology of the World War II and Its Consequences has come to dominate Russian media space in relation to the theme of the Holocaust.[16] Budnitskii has never studied the Holocaust, and neither is he researching it now. He appears in all government-controlled media on this subject and many others about which he has no scientific publication to his name. Since the 'rise' of this man has been literally phenomenal, mass media has expressed the hypothesis that he is a representative of the ubiquitous Russian special services (Grabovskiy 2012). It is well known that they monitor international contacts with Russian public and scientific communities most carefully.

In Ukraine we name first and foremost, the Ukrainian Center for Holocaust Studies in Kiev under the leadership of a duo – the Ukrainian Anatolii Podolskii and his deputy, the Crimean Russian Mikhail Tyaglyy.[17] This organization is distinguished by a liberal, classical western approach to the study of the history of the Holocaust. It is funded with the help of American and European grants and occasionally with grants from Israel. In the entire post-Soviet region, it is this centre that publishes the most professional scientific journal *Holokost i Suchastnist* (The Holocaust and the present), in which articles are published in both the Russian and the Ukrainian language.

The second no less significant organization is the Ukrainian Institute for Holocaust Studies 'Tkuma' [Revival] in Dnepropetrovsk. Its director is Igor Shchupak. Overall, the institute characterizes the conservative Ukrainian approach to the study of the Holocaust, and its collaborators include, among others, the wealthy North American Ukrainian diaspora, well known for its traditional character.

If we look at the main competing themes in mass consciousness, then in Ukraine it is primarily the memory of communist crimes, especially the Holodomor. This competitor is also added to the memory of the Holocaust in Russia, plus a further heroic competitor: victory in the Second World War. This feat partially overshadows the tragedy.

If we try to predict the further development of the ways in which the Holocaust is remembered in Ukraine, it is most likely that in the coming years we shall observe the same process: – the efforts of various public groups and the West along with occasional polite signs of attention by the state, all of which, taken together, are unlikely to bring the Holocaust into the historical and cultural mainstream for the masses.

Besides obtrusive Russian neo-Soviet chauvinism, and the considerable popularity of the Communist Party, now oppositional Russian conservatism is gaining strength, placing an emphasis on domestic – that is, Bolshevik – crimes and their assessment and reassessment. This also makes it unlikely that the Holocaust will raise its profile in popular culture in the future. However, a return to the monochrome Soviet past is unlikely to occur, so not only will there be a general awareness of the Holocaust among educated people, but also and more importantly, a balanced understanding of this atrocity will be both possible and likely under any regime.

Translated from Russian into English by Caroline Watson

ALEXANDER GOGUN
Alexander Gogun is currently pursuing his work at the Free University of Berlin and is research associate at the Hadassah-Brandeis Institute, Waltham, Massachusetts. He previously taught at Potsdam University (2010–12), and held the Fellowship of the Institute for War, Holocaust and Genocide Studies (NIOD) in Amsterdam (2007), the Diane and Howard Wohl Fellowship at the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum (2012–13), a postdoctoral fellowship at

the International Institute for Holocaust Research Yad Vashem (2013) and a research fellowship at the Brandeis-Genesis Institute for Russian Jewry (2015).

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STEALTH ALTRUISM: REFLECTIONS ON A NEGLECTED ASPECT OF THE HOLOCAUST

Arthur B. Shostak
Drexel University, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

ABSTRACT
Throughout the Holocaust certain Jewish victims tried to care for less fortunate others at the risk of their own lives, as their acts of 'stealth altruism' were fiercely forbidden. As of 2015 over forty Holocaust museums around the world had paid little attention to this Help Story, although evidence abounds in survivor memoirs and video interviews. The focus was almost exclusively on the Horror Story. Groundbreaking museums are now exploring commemoration that combines both stories, and makes a fuller narrative possible. Many reforms are available to further this overdue re-storying process, and European Holocaust museums may yet point the way.

Like a puzzle with an infinite number of answers, the Holocaust 'keeps turning up new stories, different angles, fresh versions of events we thought we knew already' (Applebaum 2006, 33). Not surprisingly, then, seven decades after its end in 1945, we continue to seek fresh insights into the struggle of European Jews against the unprecedented persecution of the Third Reich.

Certain European Jews defied Nazi prohibitions against helping other Jews. I call their high-risk efforts 'acts of stealth altruism' (aka stealth caring, stealth support), and I call those involved 'Carers' (aka Righteous Jews). Theirs was a bizarre world in which redemptive help and murderous horror were inextricably intertwined.

Professor Alvin H. Rosenfeld, after identifying the Holocaust as 'one of the most copiously documented crimes in history', goes on to explain 'for all of that it continues to present massive problems in understanding' (Rosenfeld 2011, 2). What, for example, can we understand of acts of stealth altruism, and what about it should we pass down through the generations? Why? And how?

Museums and the media for the past seventy years have focused attention on what I call the Horror Story, a terrifying account of atrocious things perpetrators did to Jewish victims. Haim Ginott, speaking for many fellow survivors, will never forget having seen 'what no man should witness: Gas chambers built by learned engineers. Children poisoned by educated physicians. Infants killed by trained nurses. Women and children shot and burned by high school and college graduates' (Wegner 1998, 167).

Alongside the well-known Horror Story is another one far less familiar, and I call it the Help Story, an inspiring account of what Jewish victims did for one another. We need both stories – Horror and Help – in a revised Holocaust Narrative. Together they provide a more accurate history of Holocaust realities and bolster our appreciation of human potential.

Livia Bitton-Jackson, in her 1997 account of the several years spent in Auschwitz, tells stories 'of gas chambers, shootings, electrified fences, torture, scorching sun, mental abuse, and constant threat of death'. She also tells 'stories of faith, hope, triumph, and love. They are stories of perseverance, loyalty, courage in the face of overwhelming odds, and of never giving up' (Bitton-Jackson 1997, 11). Similarly, Manya Frydman Perel, a survivor of six years of struggle at eight concentration camps, tells of her reliance on stealth altruism: 'We resisted in every way we could. Our weapons were our bare hands, our minds, our courage, and our faith. I resisted by stealing bread and potatoes to share with my friends. I resisted by risking my life time and time again. The Nazis could not crush our spirit, our faith, or our love for life and humanity' (Perel 2012, 80).

I heard first-hand of acts of stealth altruism participated in or witnessed when I talked directly with survivors, or listened to Shoah Foundation tapes. I have also found evidence of the Help Story in almost all of the 195 memoirs authored by 178 male and female (94/84) survivors I have studied. Holocaust scholar William Younglove notes that, while such books necessarily probe 'the depths of deprivation, degradation, desolation, destruction, and death', they also with fidelity explore the 'heights of helpfulness, honorableness, honesty, humor, and humanity'.[1]

A small number of Holocaust scholars have highlighted the Help Story.[2] Writer Tzvetan Todorov, for example, concluded in 1996 that in the German

camps acts of kindness, moral courage, and even sacrifice on behalf of others were far more common than non-participants might expect (Fischel 1996, K-4). Professor Nechema Tec, a survivor/scholar, after interviewing hundreds of fellow survivors over several decades, noted in 2003:

> practically all prisoner accounts, oral and written, mention clusters of friends who made life more bearable. I have not come across a single Lager [camp] autobiography that does not mention bonding of some kind as a part of the prisoners' experiences (Tec 2003, 183, 379).

Unfortunately, I found no comparable attention paid in study visits to forty-three to forty-eight Holocaust museums and education centres worldwide, ten of which were on the sites in Europe of former Nazi camps.[3]

Philosophy Professor Yoram Lubling, an Israeli-born son of survivors, contends that the Nazi period of history (1933–45), with its 'unspeakable violation of personhood and total elimination of life', has made Holocaust research and memory 'one of the most burning issues of our time. How we remember, use, document, and teach this period [...] will determine the moral space of our collective future' (Lubling 2007, 12).

To improve tomorrow's 'moral space' requires ending our neglect of the Help Story. Many precedents exist in Judaism for improving its key stories, e.g. the ancient Passover Narrative (*Haggadah*) is now available in feminist, gay, 'green', meditative and even vegetarian adaptations. Likewise, sponsors of an updated Hanukah Narrative believe their redesign 'gives [disaffected] Jews a reason to reconnect' (Simon and Zimmerman 2011, A-1). Similarly, the Purim Narrative, long criticized by some as sexist, exists now in a feminist reformulation popular with members of both genders.

Where the Holocaust Narrative is concerned, arguably the prime faith-related story of modern times, many improvements have been made in it, e.g. overdue attention now goes to the previously sidelined experience of women throughout the Holocaust. Similarly, where we once thought the Holocaust had been a taboo subject for postwar American Jews, we now understand certain Jewish groups and synagogues made empathic concern a central mission (Diner 2010).

With these and many other examples of change as a beckoning guide, we are in a position to confront what Israeli Professor Yehuda Bauer considers 'a crucial problem – how to anchor the Holocaust in the historical consciousness of the generations that follow' (Bauer 1978, 45). Six reforms that may help accomplish this and also promote overdue recognition of the Help Story are discussed below.

1. Help Stories. In 1993 Mordecai Paldiel, then a Yad Vashem specialist regarding 'Righteous Gentiles', asked a telling question:

> If we see so much evil on TV, in the movies, and in stories, and if we write so much about Mengele and Hitler and the Demjanyuks [notorious guards in Nazi camps] and so on, wouldn't it be a measure of justice to be fascinated by those who did acts of goodness? (Paldiel 1993, 49).

A valuable way of gaining such warranted attention is to have survivors tell about their 'acts of goodness', especially their acts of stealth altruism. By the time of our meeting in 2013, a 92-year-old survivor, Dora Aspan Sorell, had told her story 522 times in hospitals, schools, synagogues, etc. Her 1998 memoir recounts much personal involvement in the Help Story, e.g. when she was a 22-year-old Auschwitz prisoner, Sorell helped drag an exhausted girl out of their barrack and into the courtyard for roll call. She then held the girl up without being noticed, despite knowing this would have got both of them severely punished and likely to be sent to be gassed.[4]

As with Dora Sorrell's example, other survivor speakers and memoir writers should be encouraged to share their Help Story experiences. Guidance is available in the 2007 edition of the 'Oral History Interview Guidelines' prepared by the US Holocaust Memorial Museum (USHMM), which includes such prompts as, 'What were the relationships between people [in the ghetto and/or camp]? Did you have any good friends? Did anyone ever help you? Did you help anyone?' (Ringelheim 2007). On a special website, the USHMM also offers a videotape example of survivors discussing acts of stealth altruism.[5]

Survivors should also be encouraged to tell their story to audiences of volunteers and professional guides at Holocaust museums. These individuals would be better 'educators' if able to draw artfully on stories of forbidden

care they heard the directly from a Carer.[6] Likewise, museum staff could collect such Help Stories for a special book that could be offered for sale to visitors, with profits conspicuously earmarked for helping impoverished survivors. This book could also be given as a special gift to Bar and Bat Mitzvah youngsters during the ceremony.

2. Help Story Employ. Certain key 'Shapers of the Memory' have finally realized that 'the last thing people want to do is take on a heavy dose of depression', and these policy-makers are discretely thinning their use of and dimming their focus on the Horror Story (Glazer 2015). Yad Vashem Museum, for example, has, since its renovations in 2005, been telling two stories, Horror *and* Help.

During a visit in 2005 to the newly enlarged museum, I noticed a small placard that informed visitors, 'The life of the solitary inmate resembled an arena of savage struggle in which violence and evil ruled. *Yet even within this dark reality there were manifestations of humanity and fraternity, especially between inmates who shared the same language origin, or religious or political creed.*' [Italics added.] While there was no related artwork, no display case items, nor any educational video running nearby, the small placard's novel presence was a welcomed advance in bringing the Help Story forward.

Avner Shalev, the museum's chairman, noted in 2005 that a new approach offered 'real stories of people who tried to keep their human dignity and their human values', people whose ranks undoubtedly included many Carers (Wollaston 2005, 74). Personalized stories of European Jews (murdered victims or survivors) were used to restore individuality to the mass, and attention went in a low-keyed way to examples of forbidden care.

In 2012 Yad Vashem, which largely determines the central theme each year for Israel's Yom HaShoah [Holocaust Remembrance] Day commemoration, broke new ground with its choice of 'My Brother's Keeper: Jewish Solidarity during the Holocaust'. Its promotional material indicated 'mutual help and a commitment to the other were actually quite common'. High-risk examples included youth movement members who opened communal kitchens and fed the hungry, and former townspeople who shared what little they had in the camps. All such behaviour showed 'the individual had little chance of survival without the sense of togetherness, and this Jewish unity [...] is what carried people and helped them endure another day' (Behar 2012).

Four less prominent, but no less dynamic Holocaust museums are also pioneering in bringing the Help Story forward, specifically, the world's only children's Holocaust museum (Yad La Yeled) at Beit Lohammei HaGetaot (Ghetto Fighters' House) in Israel; the Ravensbrück Camp Museum outside of Berlin; the Resistance Museum in Lyon, France; and the Theresienstadt Museum in the Czech Republic. As three of the four are in Europe, one may hope museum directors and curators elsewhere will soon travel to them to adopt what I call the 'European Advance'. Outstanding in this regard is the Ravensbrück example: it abounds in creative and engaging display material linked to the Help Story. Completely redone in recent years by its staff with whom I consulted beforehand, this camp museum more than any other in Europe shows the way.

3. Commemoration and Education. Since its establishment by Israel on 21 April 1951, Yom HaShoah has been noted for doleful expressions of anguish and grief, as conveyed by formulaic speeches, routinized salutes to aged survivors and ritualistic candle-lighting ceremonies.

Most recently, however, some innovative speakers have taught listeners there are actually two stories, Help and Horror, not just one. For example, in Philadelphia on 11 April 2010, the keynote speaker, Trinity College (Hartford, Connecticut) history professor Samuel D. Kassow urged attention be given to forbidden care. He spoke specifically of the outlawed high-risk schools operating in ghettos, and the clandestine high-risk religious services that were conducted in the camps. Professor Kassow closed his challenging talk by contending such altruistic efforts 'transcended events and inspire us to this day'.[7]

Equally welcome was another Yom HaShoah event that occurred on 28 April 2015 in Tel Aviv. The second annual, youth-focused memorial ceremony included the reading of nine selections from survivor memoirs, three of which were Help Story accounts.[8] In my own brief invited talk I suggested that the event's main focus, the death marches, were also 'life marches', in that many Jewish prisoners secretly helped others survive at risk of their own lives.

At the same time another novel Yom HaShoah event was taking place in ten widely scattered Israeli sites. Introduced after three years of planning, thirty attendees at each site engaged in dialogue overseen by a skilled moderator.

The event's developer, Israeli Professor Michal Govrin, readily admitting her 'opposition to and revulsion from victimization', wanted to 'deconstruct [Holocaust] memory into something that promotes life, [something] through which growth is possible' (Glazer 2015). Professor Govrin's format redefined 'heroism' to include not just fighters but also 'those [non-militant Carers] who taught, those who prayed, those who painted portraits of the people around them, those who documented events' (Glazer 2015). Believing the history of the Holocaust remains 'unresolved', she and her colleagues sought to 'wrestle Yom HaShoah away from the glorification of annihilation, and consider what we can take from it for the future, what meanings it possesses. To break with the fixation of worshiping death' (Glazer 2015).

In like manner, Israel announced on Yom HaShoah in 2015 that it was revising its mandatory Holocaust curriculum. Beginning with kindergarten, it will now downplay 'scary' [Horror Story] material, such as archival photos, so as not to overwhelm or traumatize youngsters. By middle school (typically aged eleven to thirteen) it will explicitly cultivate the art of empathy [Help Story material], and in the eleventh grade (typically aged sixteen to seventeen) the new curricula will explore ways European Jews dared to care for one another, despite Third Reich opposition (Grave-Lazi 2014, 1). Emulation by teachers elsewhere of this Israeli educational innovation cannot come soon enough.[9]

Attention grows to a relatively new social science, Positive Psychology, supporters of which boast it helps 'give altruism back its good name' (Piliavin 2009, 211). It includes the study of altruism, compassion, creativity, empathy, integrity and resilience, all of which are integral features of the Help Story. As pupils should 'be able to enter the dark cavern [of Holocaust studies] without feeling there is no exit', this curriculum has much to offer (Fallace 2008, 3).

4. Museum Message. A perturbed writer asks: 'What if, walking through the haunted halls of the Holocaust Museum, looking at evidence of the destruction of European Jewry, visitors do not emerge with a greater belief that all men are created equal but with a belief that man is by nature evil?' (Rosenfeld 2011, 23). In like fashion if museum visitors, especially impressionable youngsters, confront only pictures of unrelieved torment and victimization might they emerge with an unbalanced and unduly dark view of the European Jewish experience?

Writer Susan Sontag was twelve years old when she first saw such horrific images. Over forty years later she distressingly asked, 'what good was served by seeing them?' Sontag understood as a child 'there was nothing she could do to change the circumstances or relieve the suffering'. Nevertheless, when she looked, 'something broke. Some limit had been reached, and not only that of horror. I felt irrevocably grieved, wounded, but a part of my feelings started to tighten; something went dead, something is still crying' (Sontag 1989, 19–20). In 2004 Sontag wrote: 'Harrowing photographs [...] are not much help in the task to understand. Narratives can help us understand. Photographs do something else: they haunt us' (Levinson 2011, 3).

Since there are well over two million Holocaust photos in the archives of over twenty nations, the curators of museums should have no problem finding high-quality Help Story substitutes for many of the iconic Horror Story photos.[10] As Rachel Korazim, an Israeli Holocaust educator, has pointed out, 'we have managed to place images like barbed wire and crematoria as central Jewish images. This is not Jewish history, this is Nazi history.'[11]

5. Cultural Message. Performances could be held in museum auditoriums of cultural material with Help Story content. The Defiant Requiem Foundation, for example, has $20,000 grants to support bringing to college campuses events such as a live performance of *Defiant Requiem: Verdi at Terezin*, and/or the screening of the documentary film *Defiant Requiem*, both of which ably present aspects of the Help Story.[12]

Student and/or community theatre groups could draw on the catalogue of over 600 Holocaust-related plays available from the National Jewish Theater Foundation, many of which can be expected to make aspects of the Help Story more understandable through uniquely theatrical insights. Especially promising is the coordinated reading of Holocaust-related plays conducted annually by the Holocaust Theater International Initiative worldwide in hundreds of communities a day or two before Yom HaShaoh. Such theatre can illuminate forbidden care sharing in an invaluable way.[13]

Finally, campus and community film festivals could highlight Help Story scenes in such films as *Bent*, *Fateless*, *God on Trial*, *Jakob the Liar*, *My Mother's Story*, *Schindler's List*, *Son of Saul*, *The Boy in the Striped Pajamas*, *The Counterfeiters* and *The Shop on Main Street*, among many others.[14] Other links to the Help Story are available in documentaries, novels, poetry and short stories,

for example, the Holocaust-related poetry of Paul Celan, the prose of Elie Wiesel or Primo Levi 'renounces beauty and cleverness in the name of more sustaining values like humility and truth'.[15] Cultural allies, in short, exist with which to try to counterbalance seven decades of being Horror-story focused.

6. Interactive 3D Hologram 'Survivor'. Easily the most daring and far-reaching of reforms is a project known as New Dimensions in Testimony (NDT), an ongoing effort of the Shoah Foundation Institute (SFI) and its Silicon Valley partners. They are developing permanent 3D simulations of different types of Holocaust survivors. This could not be timelier since in just over a decade the youngest survivor will be eighty-two, and death annually takes a high percent of the world's remaining half a million elderly survivors (average age, seventy-nine).[16]

In March 2015, the Shoah Foundation began public demonstrations at Illinois Holocaust Museum in Skokie of a hologram of Pinchas Gutter, an 83-year-old Jewish survivor of several different camps from aged eight to thirteen, and a death march.[17] Months earlier over the course of thirty intensive hours of interviews, Gutter had answered over 2,000 wide-ranging questions thought highly likely to come from hologram onlookers, questions that will trigger relevant spoken answers from his 3D representation.

'Pinchas' is now a fifteen-minute long product similar to the iPhone's personal assistant Siri and the Android platform's Google Now.[18] Thanks to cutting-edge computer software a full-size hyper-photorealistic image of Pinchas Gutter is complete with human gestures and expressions. It can even understand and answer a wide range of spoken questions when put orally to him by dazzled human beings, including questions especially related to the Holocaust.

A second NDT product near completion draws on a survivor, Anita Lasker-Wallfisch, who, as a prisoner at the Auschwitz-Birkenau Concentration Camp, was a member there of one of the camp orchestras. A Death March took her to the Bergen-Belsen Concentration Camp from which she was liberated. In 2015 eleven other survivors were in the process of being 'transformed' into a 3D hologram.[19]

Although very expensive to develop, this brow-arching NDT product may yet enable its developers to become, in essence, *the* most consequential 'Shapers of the Memory' of modern times. If widely adopted in Holocaust

museums and education centres worldwide, as would seem likely, our relationship to the Narrative – as artfully recounted by survivor doppelgangers – will differ in as yet unknowable, though undoubtedly significant ways. (Access to a demo was available in 2016 at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AnF630tCiEk)

Sceptics worry that turning survivors into an illusion makes them more artificial than lifelike, and this could undermine the impact of their stories. They dismiss NDT holograms as a tasteless gimmick, at best an artificial entertainment device and not a serious medium for high-quality educational use, and better still 'digital reincarnation'. Enthusiasts, however, insist the experience of interacting with a warm and engaging 'Pinchas' is incredibly close to the real thing. They maintain his rich memories and emotional responses effectively, blurring the line between illusion and reality. Enthusiasts are confident a memorable educational and ethical engagement is possible (Lokting 2015, 24–25).

It is to be hoped the Help Story will be included in the software (natural-language technology), that is, in the spoken reminiscences and responses of a 3D 'survivor'. The Shoah Foundation Institute could invite relevant Holocaust scholars and concerned survivors to review hologram 'scripts' *before* final installation.[20] This sort of good-faith 'due diligence' can assure that the stories told by 'Pinchas' counterparts will have Help/Horror integrity. For in the last analysis, content trumps its mode of delivery.

7. Opposition to Change. Some opponents of change fear that bringing attention to the Help Story will result in Holocaust deniers saying this 'proves' the Holocaust was not all that bad. We would make a costly mistake to let Deniers set the agenda. Their twisted version of the past – text without evidence, details without support, and endless trauma – merits no deference.[21]

Other opponents of change value the prominence of the Horror Story for its ability to elicit sympathy for survivors and support for Israel. Some, however, privately understand the Horror Story also brings out fear-driven reactions to events, rather than Judaism's highest ideals. It promotes an atmosphere of menace and a loss of perspective.

Alternatively, we can leverage *two* stories – Horror *and* Help, as together they can earn time-honored sympathy and support while *also* earning overdue admiration for forbidden care sharing, for noble high-risk stealth

altruism: 'We will remember, but will be hale. Scarred, but whole, balanced' (Burg 2008, 233).

Finally, some status quo supporters cannot find 'the resourceful human spirit in the face of the Holocaust disaster' (Langer 1991, xi). To be sure, calling attention to the Help Story must not be allowed to mitigate rage against unforgivable savage acts.[22] At the same time, however, attention *is* owed the finding that:

> most prisoners simply found themselves helping each other, as if by instinct, as if in answer to a need [...] Smallest favors saved lives time and again [...] In extremity, behavior of this kind [stealth altruism] emerges without plan or instruction, simply as the means to life [...] Prisoners in the concentration camps helped each other. That in itself is the significant fact (Des Pres 1976, 132–35, 147).

Summary

Taken together the reforms make possible a redemptive Holocaust memory, one that emphasizes altruism, rather than atrocities; care, rather than cruelty; and valour, rather than victimization. It is time to repurpose Holocaust memorialization and achieve a different, a more Jewish way to remember the assault on European Jewry. For memorialization is 'a sacred act that elicits a double mandate – to expose the depth of evil *and* to raise goodness from the dust of amnesia' (italics added; Schulweis 1994, 157).

What is at issue here has been most eloquently put by filmmaker Pierre Sauvage, himself a 'hidden child' survivor:

> If we remember solely the horror of the Holocaust, we will pass on no perspective from which meaningfully to confront and learn from that horror. If the hard and fast evidence of the possibility of good on Earth is allowed to slip through our fingers and turn to dust, then future generations will have only dust to build on (Garber 1988, 118).

ARTHUR B. SHOSTAK
Arthur Shostak is an Emeritus Professor of Sociology at Drexel University, Phila-delphia, Pennsylvania. He earned his BS Degree in 1958 from Cornell University,

and his PhD in Sociology in 1961 from Princeton University. He taught at the Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania from 1961 to 1967, when he joined the faculty of Drexel University in 2003. He has written, edited or co-edited 34 books and over 160 articles. A member of the Association of Holocaust Organizations, he has related published articles at www.stealthaltruism.com.

ENDNOTES

1   Used with permission given in a private e-mail correspondence with William Younglove, 30 May 2012. Bill used these words in his PowerPoint presentations following his USHMM Mandel Fellowship training year (1999–2000).

2   I draw with appreciation on non-survivor academics like Professors Yehuda Bauer, Michael Berenbaum, Ronald J. Berger, Ruth Bondy, Harry James Cargas, Inga Clendinnen, Terrance Des Pres, Henry Greenspan, Marcia Landy, Lawrence L. Langer, Robert Jay Lifton, Jack Nusan Porter, Joan Ringelheim, Alvin H. Rosenfeld, John K. Roth, Joseph Rudavsky, Tzvetan Todorov and Lenore J. Weitzman, among others. Scholar/survivor ranks include Shamai Davidson, Meier Dworzecki, Yisrael Gutman, Sara Nomberg-Przytyk and Anna Pawelczynska. Especially well-known survivor authors include Jean Amery, Elie A. Cohen, Tadeusz Debski, Eugen Kogon, Primo Levi, Paul Martin Neurath, David Rousset and Nachema Tec, among many others.

3   My wife Lynn Seng and I made study visits to ten far-flung Concentration Camp Museums: Auschwitz, Buchenwald, Dachau, Mauthausen, Płaszów, Ravensbrück, Sachenhousen, Theresienstadt, Westerbork and the newest Concentration Camp Museum in Europe, the Jasonevac Camp Museum outside Zagreb. (Staff were interviewed at Ravensbrück, Saschenhausen and Jasonevac.) I have also been to Yad Vashem many times, the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum (USHMM) in DC, The Memorial de la Shoah in Paris; The Holocaust and Intolerance Museum in Albuquerque, New Mexico; Brooklyn, New York; Farmington Hills, Michigan; Manhattan, New York; Skokie, Illinois; St Petersburg, Florida; Israel's Ghetto Fighters' House Museum and also the Children's Holocaust Museum, both in Kibbutz Beit Lohamei Haghetaot; and Museums in Estonia and the Netherlands; three Holocaust galleries in major museums in Kyoto (Kyoto Museum for World Peace), Ritsumeikan University – opened in 1992, the first peace museum in the world to be established by a university – and Osaka, Japan. We have also visited the Anne Frank House in Amsterdam, the third most visited museum in Europe.

4   Dora Sorrell always refused to take payment for her talks, as she did 'not want to make money off a tragedy'. She also turned over to a charity the $10,000 in restitution funds given to her by the German government. Dora Aspan Sorell, *Tell the Children: Letters to Miriam*, 1998, 94. See also Meredith May, 'Holocaust Survivor Speaks Up', *San Francisco Chronicle*, 22 April 2014. E-1.

5   http://www.ushmm.org/exhibition/personal-history/theme.php?th=camps

6   During a visit to a Midwest Holocaust Museum, I watched with dismay while a volunteer proved unable to draw fascinated school-age youngsters away from a model of a camp Gas Chamber to see pre-war photos of the lives of Jewish victims of that same murderous facility in an adjacent gallery. When I later mentioned this setback to a high-level staff member, I was told with rue that the training of volunteers was a never-ending challenge.

7   I was present on 11 April 2010, at a downtown annual Philadelphia ceremony honouring *Yom HaShaoh*. Some 500 people were in attendance, including perhaps 50 survivors. I attended almost every year from about 1961 to 2003 when I relocated in California.

8   Executive Director of The Israel Forever Foundation, and a Birthright Guide on the Poland Trip. See http://Israelforever.org (accessed 5 November 2016). Dr Heideman explained that including Help Story material was a result of her ongoing study of the European Jewish experience and many talks she has had with survivors living in Israel.

9   Counterparts of this Israeli reform *may* soon be underway in America. In June 2014, for the first time in the last 20 years, the state of Pennsylvania joined five others in requiring Holocaust Studies, this time as part of the study of Holocaust, genocide and human rights violations. Sponsors of the Pennsylvania development to whom I have sent material about stealth altruism assure me attention will go to it and other aspects of the Help Story.

10   See in this connection, Marianne Hirsch, 'Surviving Images: Holocaust Photographs and the Work of Postmemory', *Yale Journey of Criticism*, vol. 14, no. 1 (2001), 8; Elie Wiesel, 'For the Dead and the Living', in *Bearing Witness: Stories of the Holocaust*, ed. Hazel Rochman and Darlene Z. Campbell (New York: Orchard Books, 1995), 8. Constrained by vexing cross-pressures (the need to satisfy conflicting constituencies, attract heterogeneous crowds, earn return visits, offer competitive staff salaries, etc.), Holocaust museums operate at risk of freezing the narrative and thereby sidelining higher goals.

11   As cited in Rachel Silverman, 'Steadfast Message to Educators: Best to Pinpoint Shoah's "Key Issues"', *Philadelphia Jewish Exponent*, 30 November 2006, 8.

12   James R. Oestreich, 'A Holocaust Story in the Music of Verdi', *New York Times*, 8 March 2015, AR-16. On 8 November 2014, the El Paso Holocaust Museum and Study Center sponsored the first-ever American chorale and orchestra presentation of *Verdi's Requiem: Resistance and Redemption – A Story of the Holocaust*. Advance publicity noted that original performances in the Thereseinstadt Transfer Camp were credited by camp survivors for giving them the hope and strength to struggle on. See in this connection, www.elpasoholocaustmuseum.org

13   See http://htc.miami.edu/about-holocausttheater-archive/ (accessed 5 November 2016). See also such plays as *Etty*, a one-woman production based on the Westerbork Camp diaries and letters of Etty Hillesum, murdered aged 29 in Auschwitz/Birkenau; and the Gurs Cycle (a multimedia performance) that marks the transport of over 7,500 Jews from Germany to the Gurs Transit Camp in France. Apropos the Gurs Cycle, see http://www.mercurynews.com/2011/05/03/trimpins-gurs-cycle-revisits-the-holocaust-in-music-words-and-kinetic-sculpture/ (accessed 7 December 2016).

14   Helpful in this regard is Rabbi Dr Bernhard H. Rosenberg, *The Holocaust As Seen Through Film: A Teacher's Guide to Movies, Documentaries, and Short Films that Will Impact Your Students, and Spark Dynamic Classroom Discussion* (NJ: Beth el-Press, 2014).

15   Adam Kirsh, 'The Age of Bad Holocaust Novels', *Tablet*, 7 May 2015. Accessed 5 November 2016: http://www.tabletmag.com/jewish-arts-and-culture/books/190761/bad-holocaust-novels. As regards art and artists the content of whose work stirs controversy regarding the Holocaust, see Dr Yvette Alt Miller, 'Mocking the Holocaust', 14 February 2015. Accessed 5 November 2016: http://www.aish.com/jw/s/Mocking-the-Holocaust.html

16   It is estimated that 6 to 10 per cent of the world's 500,000 or so survivors (about 120,000 of whom reside in the USA) pass away annually, and the last may pass away as soon as 2025. The estimate is from the San Francisco Tauber Library. Cited in Leslie Katz,

'Tech Culture: Holograms of Holocaust Survivors Let Crucial Stories Live On', 11 February 2013. Accessed 5 November 2016: https://www.cnet.com/uk/news/holograms-of-holocaust-survivors-let-crucial-stories-live-on/

17   Stephen Smith, 'Blog: Through Testimony', 28 March 2014. Accessed 10 November 2016: http://sfi.usc.edu/blog/stephen-smith

18   Devin Coldewey, 'Holograms add new dimension in Holocaust Survivor's Story', *TODAY*, 12 May 2015. Accessed 5 November 2016: http://www.today.com/series/are-we-there-yet/holograms-add-new-dimension-holocaust-survivors-story-t20511

19   Ibid.

20   Candidates include the likes of Professor Henry Greenspan, survivor Magda Herzberger, Israeli activist Haim Roet and Professor Nechama Tec.

21   The spring 2012 issue of *Prism*: *an Interdisciplinary Journal for Holocaust Educators*, boldly focused on both Help as well as Horror Stories. *Prism* editors noted 'the works herein do not challenge the primary significance of the grim fact of the murder of six million Jews; they do not imply that all Jews resisted, or that defence and defiance were the primary responses of the majority of Jews in the Holocaust, no matter where they were; they are not presented as if the "triumphant human spirit" can mitigate the murderous actions of the Nazis; and they do not serve as the "happy ending" to the Holocaust'. Karen Shawn and Jeffrey Glanz, 'Introduction', *Prism* (Spring, 2012), 3.

22   'We cannot let the camps become storehouses for moral examples, because so much of what happened there makes morality collapse' states David Mikas in 'Why We Keep Reading about the Shoah', 16 April 2015. Accessed 5 November 2016: http://www.tabletmag.com/jewish-arts-and-culture/books/190260/reading-about-the-shoah

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EUROPEAN REMEMBRANCE – LECTURES, DISCUSSIONS, COMMENTARIES, 2012–16

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