**Sites of Tension: Transformations in Holocaust Memory in Europe: Origins, Causes and Consequences**

**Abstract**

Our team of international interdisciplinary Holocaust research experts, led by Prof. Arieh Kohavi, head of the Weiss-Livnat International Center for Holocaust Research and Education at the University of Haifa is proposing a three-year comparative research project on the changes taking place in Holocaust memory in France, Germany, Hungary, Poland, and the United Kingdom.

Each of these countries carries a distinct Holocaust legacy and all five of them face contemporary political, economic and immigration-related challenges. The intersection of past and present is expressed in a surge in nationalism, revisions to WWII narratives, including Holocaust distortion, and increases in antisemitism and delegitimization of Israel beyond the scope of legitimate political disagreements. These phenomena appear to be related, but the exact relations among them have not yet been methodically examined and thus require empirical study. To this end, we have established an Israeli-led team of international experts from five countries to jointly collect and compare datasets from three cultural arenas:

1) National-political public discourses regarding WWII and Holocaust memory, both independently and in conjunction with antisemitic discourses and delegitimization of the state of Israel. This will include an analysis of parliamentary debates and traditional media reporting on these issues over the course of one year from the start of the project.

2) Attitudes of Holocaust educators on Teaching and Learning about the Holocaust (TLH for short) will be examined using an innovative comparative Holocaust Education Attitude scale which we developed and validated, and supplemented by in-depth interviews with teachers from each country.

3) Social media discourses from platforms including Twitter and Facebook will be examined, using a progressive time-point design to categorize and correlate references to the Holocaust, Jews, nationalism, and Israel, and to identify the spread of such trends geographically and temporally.

The 3x5 analysis between and within the countries and sites of memory will enable us to draw data-driven conclusions about the correlations among changes in Europe and contemporary Holocaust memory, antisemitism, and attitudes towards Israel. This, in turn, will allow us to make appropriate recommendations to Israeli and European policy makers and educational leadership for minimizing and even reversing the harm being rendered to Holocaust memory, to Jews worldwide, and to the standing of the state of Israel in Europe.

1. **Scientific Background and State of the Art**

In 2000, representatives of 31 states signed the Declaration of the Stockholm International Forum on the Holocaust, expressing their joint commitment to “uphold the terrible truth of the Holocaust against those who deny it” (IHRA, 2000). However, the 18 ensuing years have seen a frightening erosion of this consensus. On both sides of the former Iron Curtain, nationalist, alt-right, and counter-nationalist voices have been touting revised versions of their nations’ roles in WWII and the Holocaust (Herfroy-Mischler, 2016; Ofer, 2018). With immigration from developing countries to Europe surging, polls show increases in anti-immigration attitudes, antisemitism (ADL, 2018; Green, 2018; FRR, 2018) and anti-Israeli sentiment (ADL Global, 2015; Israel Ministry of Diaspora Affairs, 2017).

While criticizing the policies of the Israeli government is not inherently antisemitic, delegitimization of the state of Israel's right to exist often relies on antisemitic motifs (Lipstadt, 2019). According to the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (2016), claiming that Israel’s existence is a racist endeavor, demanding that Israel behave differently than other democratic nations, or comparing Israeli policy to that of the Nazis can all be considered cases of antisemitism. Antisemitism and hostility to Israel constitute a feedback loop (Cohen et al., 2009) and we will explore their relations to Holocaust memory revisions.

European communities of memory are struggling with changing narratives of WWII and their respective countries’ conduct during the war as part of the efforts to reshape their political and judicial landscapes. The exact character of these struggles depends on the perceived and historical role that each nation played during the Holocaust, whether as victims, perpetrators, collaborators, bystanders, resistors, helpers or liberators. While these categories overlap historically, and no nation played a single role during the Holocaust, collective memory often simplifies complex social categories. We are interested in collective *perceptions* of these Holocaust roles, and on their effects on attitudes towards various ‘others.’

We plan to study changes to Holocaust memory in five European countries, each with a distinct Holocaust legacy. Our proposal builds on memory studies, Holocaust education research, political science and social media studies. We will briefly describe the state of the art in each in the following sections:

* 1. **Memory studies and the Holocaust in the context of national social-role legacies**

Collective memory forms the analytic backbone of this project (Halbwachs, 1950; Olick, Vinitzky-Seroussi & Levy, 2011; Poole, 2008; Roediger & Abel, 2015). Collective memory refers to public discourse and institutionalized past and symbols in the public sphere (Olick, 1999), and reveals a shared identity that unites a social group, such as a nation, despite its internal diversity (Confino, 1997). Originating in the humanities, collective memory studies have expanded in recent years to include social scientific testing of their hypotheses, making the field particularly suitable for this interdisciplinary study.

The Holocaust is one of the most heavily studied collective memory events, with some studies focusing on its global, transnational quality (e.g., via new and social media: see Kansteiner, 2017), and others on its local, fragmented nature (Assmann, 2010). In this comparative project, we hope to unravel its *glocal* strands: that is, to identify how the universal and the particular interact to transform Holocaust memory.

We have adopted Olick’s (2007a) “process-relational” model which emphasizes the changing process of remembering. According to this model, memory is not made by politics, but rather shapes political meaning. This process owes a great deal to formal education of group members, which enables them to access the meaning behind history and to interpret the present in terms of the past. Assmann (2015) suggests that in the context of WWII and Holocaust memory, there are three leading transmission frames: identification, ethics and empathy. The choice of which to use is closely aligned with Holocaust role legacies.

In nations emphasizing the perspective of the victims, a common transmission frame emphasizes *identification* (Assmann, 2015). However, victimhood post-factum can be a seductive category; collaborators and bystanders as well as victims are susceptible to also engaging in *competitive victimhood* (Noor, Halabi, Shnabel & Adler, 2013; Young & Sullivan, 2016), a process by which groups prefer the status of a weak but morally blameless victim over that of a strong but morally reprehensive perpetrator. This often serves as a strategy allowing for *denial of responsibility* (Bilewicz & Stefaniak, 2013). Competitive victimhood can lead to *collective narcissism* (Golec de Zavala & Cich bocka, 2012), or *denial* (Smelser, 2004), and *selective amnesia* (Schnytzer, Zubkowitch & Gorica, 2017).

The *ethics* frame of transmission, characterizing societies that are coming to terms with a *legacy of perpetration* (Assmann, 2015), is based on collective shame or guilt (Meseth & Proske, 2010; Olick & Perrin, 2010) and a *politics of regret* (Olick, 2007a; Tebbe, 2008). Often preceded by a *return of the repressed* (Olick, 2007b), the ethical stance involves taking responsibility for the outcome, *working through* the trauma of the collective shame (LaCapra, 2001), and learning of and from a shameful national past. Such processes may also lead to counter-narratives of *defensive pride* (Mach, 2018).

Collective memories involving helping victims and resistance often reflect individual cases and have unique patterns of generational transmission (Midlarsky, 2005; Press, 2012). They can also result in unexpected effects on the collective, including suppression and obscuring, due to conflicted feelings elicited in those who did not act so selflessly (Laub, 2013). Rescue on a collective level may lead to *moral witnessing* (Greenspan et al. 2014), *righteous indignation* (Stier, 2009) a sense of national pride and an *ethos of redemption* (Novis-Deutsch, Perkis, Granot-Bein & Shaked, in press).

Finally, it is possible to transcend social role legacies of the Holocaust somewhat by favoring a transmission frame that emphasizes cross-cutting *empathy* (Assmann, 2015).

Explorations of collective memory involve analyzing *primary sites of memory* (Nora, 1989), such as national monuments, museums, memorial days, and symbols. They also entail studying *agents of memory*,such as teachers and political leaders, and investigating the *paths of transmission* by which collective memories spread and metamorphose, such as social media. This project examines all three of these areas.

* 1. **Sites of memory: France, Germany, Hungary Poland, and the United Kingdom**

The five countries selected for this study are currently undergoing economic and social upheavals regarding patterns of immigration and migration (Geddens & Scholten, 2016). While collective memory of the Holocaust has functioned as a point of reference for a post-fascist Europe, immigration to Europe has complicated and fragmented its unified narrative (Rothberg & Yildiz, 2011). The five countries also share the dubious attribute of being listed on the ADL’s 2018 list of top European countries with rising antisemitism (ADL, 2018). To explain our choice of countries for this study, we briefly review each:

* + 1. *France*

Holocaust memory in France combines a collaborator legacy, due to the Vichy regime, and a resistor legacy stemming from the résistance movement. Considered one of France’s least impressive periods, the Holocaust is met with an implicit desire to have that period in France’s history forgotten. Meanwhile, in France today, anti-Jewish acts have reached a level not seen since WWII, in part due to increased Muslim immigration and in part due to an Islamophobic reaction which has sparked generalized xenophobia. In 2014, anti-Jewish acts numbered 1,662, more than half the total number of racist acts and threats in the nation that year (Zawadski, 2017). In a 2018 CNN poll, one of every five French adults up to age 35 said that they had never heard of the Holocaust. A recent large poll (FRR, 2018) found that 90% of French Jews had experienced expressions of hostility on the street. The recent murder of an 85-year-old Holocaust survivor was the eleventh antisemitic murder in France in the past 12 years (ADL, 2018).

* + 1. *Germany*

The history of Germany’s post-WWII memory culture shifted from a brief victimhood narrative, followed by a period of repression (Olick, 2007a), to a struggle for normalcy vacillating among several paths: taking responsibility, embraced by political leadership and termed “institutionalization of a ritual shame” (Fulbrook, 1999) or *politics of regret* (Olick, 2007a); *Holocaust fatigue*, a more subversive discourse expressing a desire to relativize the Nazi crimes (Niven, 2006) or simply to “move on” (Ozyurek, 2018); and a discrepancy between official, public memory and family memories as imagined in the third generation (Welzer, Moller & Tschuggnall, 2002). Some argue that the need to avoid feelings of responsibility among perpetrator nations constitutes a secondary source of antisemitism (Welzer, Moller & Tschuggnall, 2002), which may explain why antisemitism is on the rise in Germany (ADL, 2017), although less so than in other countries in Europe. The difficulty of carrying the burden of a perpetrator legacy was demonstrated in a study (Welzer, 2002) in which only 6% of German participants believed that their families had been pro-Nazi during WWII, while a full 26% believed that their ancestors had helped the persecuted. Studies show that German Jews are concerned about the rise of the far-right AfD party, the third largest party in the country today (ADL, 2018).

* + 1. *Hungary*

Hungary’s history of minimizing or avoiding Holocaust memory traces back to the end of WWII, and even today, “the details of this apocalyptic chapter in the history of Hungary have not yet sunk into the national consciousness of the Hungarian people” (Braham, 2016, p. 7). A dual memory of the Holocaust exists in Hungary today: part commemoration, considered necessary for belonging to “liberal Europe,” and part self-victimization and dismissal of any Hungarian responsibility for the Holocaust (Gyáni, 2016; Kovács, 2016). Although Holocaust denial is forbidden by law, there is official rehabilitation of MiklósHorthy and his fascist legacy, while antisemitism is soaring to levels double the European average, making it the most antisemitic country in Europe today (Green, 2018). Competitive victimhood seems to play an important role in this; in a recent study, 65% of surveyed Hungarians agreed with the statement: “Non-Jewish Hungarians suffered just as much as Jews during the war” (Kovács, 2016, p. 239).

* + 1. *Poland*

Over the past three decades, Polish leaders have been advocating a Polish victimhood narrative which eschews responsibility for the fate of Jews in the Holocaust (Bilewicz & Stefaniak, 2013). This includes either a *rivalry of suffering* rhetoric (“We are worse off than other victims”) relieving the Polish people of guilt or shame while justifying current misdeeds towards others (Bilewicz & Stefaniak, 2013; Wohl & Bransombe, 2008; Wohl, Branscombe & Klar, 2006), or an *absolute victimhood* rhetoric (“We are always the victims”) absolving Poland from any responsibility for its wrongdoings (de Zavala & Cichocka, 2012). The accumulating evidence that Polish people actively participated in massacres of Jews, such as the Jedwabne massacre, have caused public strife and debate, gradually leading to public polarization (Sulek, 2011). This process peaked with the enactment of a libel law making illegal claims that the Polish nation was responsible for Nazi crimes, passed by the Polish government in 2018. Concurrently, levels of antisemitism in Poland have been rising (ADL, 2017), and a recent CNN poll (Green, 2018) found a clear link between Holocaust narratives and antisemitism in Poland. In one study, half of the Polish respondents said that Israel uses the Holocaust to justify its actions, with only one in five disagreeing. However, a minor strand of subversive narrative can be found among public intellectuals who are critically assessing the Polish national past, serving as a possible sign of cultural renewal (Michlic, 2017).

* + 1. *The United Kingdom*

Having led the Allies against Nazi Germany in WWII, the United Kingdom carries not a burden of guilt for the Holocaust events, but rather a legacy of moral pride. Until recently, extreme and radical right parties in the United Kingdom were unable to match the success such parties have been enjoying in other European countries (Goodwin & Dennison, 2017), nor was antisemitism a problem for the Jewish population. However, in recent years, the number of antisemitic incidents has been increasing (CST, 2016), the radical right has enjoyed a surge of popularity (Goodwin & Dennison, 2017), and the Labour Party under Jeremy Corbyn’s leadership has been towing an increasingly aggressive anti-Israel line (Lipstadt, 2019). The Left’s delegitimization of Israel is raising various academic speculations (Rich, 2016; Topor, 2018; Wistrich, 2011) and critiques (Newsinger, 2017), but their possible link to the British national Holocaust legacy has yet to be examined empirically. In 2018, British Jewish leaders called for a public demonstration promoting the slogan “Enough is Enough” to protest the constant stream of antisemitic incidents in the Labour Party (ADL, 2018).

* 1. **Agents of memory transmission: Holocaust educators**

Educators are particularly important agents of memory, transmitting knowledge, lessons and values to the next generation. We therefore draw on research on Teaching and Learning about the Holocaust (TLH), a burgeoning field seeking to collect information from educational sites in Europe (Eckmann, Stevick, & Ambrosewicz-Jacobs, 2017a, 2017b; Foster et al. 2016; Gross & Stevick, 2015; Nesfield, 2015).

There are distinct effects of national context, teachers’ personal Holocaust legacies, and

culturally implicit curricula on how the Holocaust is taught, what its goals and messages are, and what is considered “good Holocaust education” (Eckman & Stevik, 2016; Novis-Deutsch, Perkis & Granot-Bein, 2018, in press; Schweber, 2004). For example, a study on the link between Holocaust educational practices in Poland and the Polish tendency towards victimhood narratives found that the Holocaust is not only often neglected in the Polish educational system, but that some governmental representatives have attempted to distort the historical truth about Polish Holocaust perpetration in order to diminish Polish responsibility for atrocities (Winiewski, Beneda, Ambrosewicz-Jacobs and Witkowska, 2018). In this study, we plan to explore these important findings in a wider cross-cultural setting.

**1.4 The spread of antisemitism, Holocaust denial and anti-Israel sentiment via social media**

The role of social media in contemporary life cannot be overstated. In 2016, 2.7 billion social network users worldwide spent an average of 118 minutes per day on them (Vigo, 2017). Studies conducted on the role of social media in propagating Holocaust memory, as well as antisemitic ideas, Holocaust denial and delegitimization of Israel attest to the popularity of this channel for such ideas (Goldberg & Hazzan, 2015; Jakubowics, 2017; Kohn, 2013; Oboler, 2016; Oksanen et al., 2014; Shandler, 2017).

In 2016, 154,000 Facebook posts, 33% of them in Germany, included symbols or signs about anti-Semitism, the Holocaust or Hitler’s regime, and the meme “Gas the Jews” became a symbol on Instagram. Twitter recorded 63% of all antisemitic discourse (242,000 posts), with 9% (22,000) calling to actively harm hurt Jews, and 660 antisemitic tweets and 60 calls to hurt Jews posted daily on the site (Vigo, 2017).

Holocaust denial is less common than anti-Semitism, but still of sizeable proportions on social media. In 2016, there were 14,000 posts denying the existence of the Holocaust or claiming that the Jews were exaggerating the descriptions and the number of the victims in the Holocaust. Although networks claim to delete posts denying the Holocaust, such posts were found in 2016 and in previous years in all social networks, often tagged under the popular hashtag #Holohoax.

Israel delegitimization is widespread on social media, with 3.3 million posts expressing hatred against Israel recorded in 2016. A recurring theme refers to Israelis as a group that is dangerous to other people (Vigo, 2017). One study analyzing antisemitic items on social media found that incitement to violence and death to Jews constituted 5% of the sample; Holocaust denial, 12%; traditional antisemitism, such as conspiracy theories, 49%; and delegitimizing the state of Israel, 34% (Oboler, 2016).

Studies such as these clearly indicate that social media plays a role in Holocaust denial, antisemitism and anti-Israeli sentiment. However, nuanced revisions to Holocaust memory on social media as well as their relation to immigration and nationalism, the channels by which they spread and their national segmentation in Europe have yet to be explored. We plan to provide data on all these issues in our study.

**2. Research Hypothesis, Research Questions, Objectives and Specific Aims**

We hypothesize the existence of a vicious circle of nationalism, anti-immigration sentiment, revisions to Holocaust memory, antisemitism and delegitimization of Israel in various countries in Europe, which manifests itself differently according to the particular national Holocaust legacies. We further hypothesize that formal educational programs are not matching these national collective memory patterns, reflecting either the education’s ineffectuality or the powerful effect of alternatives to formal education, such as popular and social media, regarding Holocaust-related attitudes. There is support for various parts of this hypothesis. Studies have found that anti-Israel sentiment predicts antisemitism in some European countries (Bilewics et al., 2013; Frindte, Wettig, & Wammetsberger, [2005](https://onlinelibrary-wiley-com.ezproxy.haifa.ac.il/doi/full/10.1111/pops.12024#pops12024-bib-0028)), and that there is a statistically significant link between anti-immigration sentiment and higher rates of antisemitism as well (Kaplan & Small, 2006). Support also exists for the link between antisemitic sentiment and rejection of Holocaust commemoration. Recently, one third of Europeans said that commemorating the Holocaust distracts from other atrocities today, 28% said most antisemitism in their countries was a response to the actions of the state of Israel, and 18% said antisemitism in their countries was a response to the everyday behavior of Jewish people.

To test our hypothesis, we will integrate data from three cultural arenas of Holocaust memory –political, educational and social - and compare them among five European countries in order to clarify how Holocaust memory interacts with current political upheavals, and how it is reflected in antisemitic and anti-Israel rhetoric. We will do this working through an international and interdisciplinary collaboration of researchers over the course of three years. Our research questions are:

1. Can shared and distinct patterns of Holocaust memory revisions be identified in countries which are characterized by different WWII and Holocaust legacies?
2. What are the effects of collective memory patterns on Holocaust memory 74 years later?
3. What are the consequences of the political and educational changes in Holocaust memory and of the delegitimization of Israel’s existence as a Jewish state for the Jewish communities in these countries?
4. What cross-cultural patterns, shared and distinct, can be identified in Holocaust education attitudes among educators in Europe?

**3. Methodologies**

**3.1 Research design**

We will employ a multi-disciplinary research design which incorporates an innovative integration of humanistic-historical insight with social-scientific rigor. We will examine the changing narratives of Holocaust memory in five key countries on both sides of the former Iron Curtain — France, Germany, Hungary, Poland, and the United Kingdom — and chosen for reasons described in the previous section. Within each country, our data collection will focus on three goals: 1) obtaining a clear picture of the political Holocaust-related discourse in that country; 2) clarifying educational attitudes and goals of Holocaust educators; and 3) identifying links in the public imagination among the Holocaust, current antisemitism, and Israel, as these issues are expressed in social media platforms.

To realize the first goalof analyzing major changes and trends in each national political discourse, three datasets that are accessible to the public will be used: parliamentary debates, public discourse in traditional media, and addresses of political leaders which touch upon the Holocaust. In addition to analyzing Holocaust-related political discourse in these datasets, we will explore references to antisemitic comments and anti-Israel rhetoric where the Holocaust is being discussed.

For the second goal of understanding Holocaust educators’ attitudes and goals, we will collect data using stratified samples of 300 teachers per country (n=1500). Data collection will employ our recently developed and validated Holocaust Education Attitude Repository (HEAR) ( Novis-Deutsch, Simo, Ambrosewicz-Jacobs and Ninhos, in press; see Pilot Results section for details). The scale has a three-factor structure reflecting attitudes about TLH: universalist, minimizing, and mythologizing. This scale will allow us, for the first time in TLH research, to identify “national TLH fingerprints” that can be compared across countries. We will also test the teachers’ value priorities using the well-validated PVQ value scale (Schwartz et al., 2012) and correlate them with the teachers’ educational TLH goals. Extensive demographic data will be collected from participants, allowing us to explore questions such as the effects on TLH attitudes of the teachers’ Holocaust legacies, experienced levels of prejudice in life, and personal relationships with Jews. We will also hold in-depth interviews with 20 teachers from each country (n=100), to probe their current experiences of TLH and understand the underlying reasoning for their teaching choices. We recently successfully piloted our interview protocol with 31 TLH educators.

For the third goal of identifying popular trends, grassroots sentiments and subversive narratives regarding the Holocaust, Jews and Israel, we will collect data from social media sources, focusing on Twitter (main source) and supplementing this with Facebook (public sites only), blogs and personal websites (secondary sources). We chose to focus on Twitter for several reasons. First, Twitter is the world’s fourth most popular social network, with 310 million monthly active users. Second, Twitter is an exceptional social network in that its users are socially active opinion shapers. This creates a major indirect effect, as journalists follow Twitter messages closely and publish them, creating a resonance and an impact on traditional media and the public. Third, Twitter is easily accessible to researchers and does not involve any of the issues which analysis of private Facebook pages can incur.

We will employ a mixed qualitative-quantitative sampling and coding scheme to categorize and correlate references to the Holocaust, Jews and nationalism, and attitudes towards immigration. Our design will allow us to identify and compare trans-national trends cross-sectionally and to trace the spread of posts, comments, blogs, and tweets over a six-month period, by plotting data at set time-points. We will use the services of Vigo, a data company with experience in monitoring antisemitism on social media (Vigo, 2017).

**3.2 Data analysis**

Following data collection (see detailed timeline in proposal), we will analyze the intersection of public discourses, teachers’ attitudes and social media trends. This analysis will allow us to compare and to contrast each arena of Holocaust memory, within and among countries.

**4. Modes of Cooperation Among the Research Groups**

This project will be the product of cooperation between researchers from five countries, led by the Israeli team based in the Weiss-Livnat International Center for Holocaust Research and Education at the University of Haifa. The Center aims to make a critical contribution to international discourse on the Holocaust and its memory by advancing high quality research and education on the topic. In addition to initiating and implementing research projects, our activities include: an international, highly-acclaimed MA program with over 150 alumni and multi-lingual experts on Holocaust research from 22 countries; publishing *The Journal of Holocaust Research*; a historical documentation center of archival resources; serving as an academic home for scholars; holding conferences, seminars and more. The Center has vast experience conducting international studies and collaborations, such as the “Multiculturalism in Europe: Immigration, racism and antisemitism” series of international seminars we conducted in cooperation with universities in London and Paris in 2016-2017.

This project’s two senior researchers are Prof. Arieh Kochavi, head of the Center and a well-published, distinguished historian of WWII, and Dr. Nurit Novis-Deutsch, a social psychologist and educational researcher who has published on Holocaust education and managed large international studies.

Our primary partnership in this study is with the UNESCO Chair for Education about the Holocaust at the Institute for European Studies of the Jagiellonian University in Poland. Our main research partner at the Jagiellonian University will be Professor Jolanata Ambrosewicz-Jacobs, who has extensive and longstanding experience in researching, teaching, and publishing on Holocaust memory and education in Europe, and specifically in Poland. In addition to cooperating at all stages of planning, running, analyzing, and publishing this study, Prof. Ambrosewicz-Jacobs will oversee the Polish section of our study.

Several outstanding scholars, all with extensive publications in the field of Holocaust Studies, from four additional academic and commemorative institutions will be participating in this study:

* Prof. Wulf Kansteiner, Associate Professor of Memory Studies and Historical Theory at Aarhus University, Denmark will lead and analyze the social media and Holocaust memory section of this project, which is one of his fields of expertise (see Kansteiner, 2017).
* Dr. Sarah Gensburger, Deputy Director of the Institut des Sciences Sociales du Politique, Nanterre University, Paris, will oversee data collection and its analysis for the French and UK sections of our study.
* Dr. Verena Lucia Nägel, a member of the Center for Digital Systems of the Freie Universität Berlin will oversee data collection and its analysis for the German part of this study.
* Dr. Zsuzsanna Toronyi, director of the Hungarian Jewish Museum and Archives, Budapest, will oversee data collection and its analysis for the Hungarian part of our study.

Our modes of cooperation include: an international team meeting at the onset of data collection to ensure agreement on research procedures and goals; a pilot data-collection phase followed by a pause to allow us to review and implement meaningful changes in procedures if necessary; a second international team meeting at the start of the analysis phase to ensure that we reach agreement on main conclusions; and bi-monthly Skype meetings to follow progress and ensure that any problems are addressed early on. We will also establish monitoring and evaluation tools for each phase of the study.

We plan to work with our graduates around the world, all highly trained and with diverse language skills, to collect data, while also offering them direct Holocaust research experience. We attach special importance to this study being centered in Israel, enabling us to view the issues from an Israeli perspective and to examine how transformations in Holocaust memory affects Israel and local Jewish communities.

**5. Anticipated Benefits and Future Development**

This project’s applied objectives are to counter distortions to Holocaust memory and promote historically informed policymaking through a transnational research endeavor. We expect the project to have a positive impact as a direct result of disseminating its findings, our reports and publications and holding an academic seminar. Our primary target groups are: academic scholars and institutions; political and educational policy makers; and educational implementers, such as Holocaust educators and program writers. We will influence these groups by disseminating the results of our study in prestigious academic publications and ensuring that they receive high visibility by using our Center’s website and extensive social media and alumni networks. We propose to write an educational report directed at educators, available on our website.

Our secondary target groups are members of the media and the general public. We will utilize our public relations offices to obtain interview and media appearance opportunities. To further reach this audience, we will organize a one-day academic seminar titled “Holocaust Memory in Europe” at the University of Haifa, presenting our research and inviting other researchers on the topic to share theirs.

**5. Importance, Innovation and Advantages of the Proposed Research**

The four main innovative aspects of this study are: the juxtaposition of past and present trends in collective national memories, which has not been systematically applied to Holocaust memory studies to date; our specific “vicious circle” hypothesis, hitherto untested; our ability to compare sets of data across diverse settings, made possible by rigorous calibration of our data collection tools, so that their reliability and validity extend cross-culturally; and the triangulation of data methodologically and cross-disciplinarily, allowing for a more comprehensive understanding of this complex and relevant phenomenon.

This project should be of interest, importance and relevance to all those involved with teaching, commemorating and researching the Holocaust worldwide, directly or indirectly through policy making. Thus, beneficiaries will extend beyond the five countries studied, due to the global nature of academic research and because the study’s insights will be pertinent for other countries facing similar challenges. Specifically, we expect researchers, educators and policy makers in Europe, the United States and Israel to be interested in and benefit from our study. Israeli policy makers in particular will benefit from empirically based systematic data from five European countries pertaining to Israel’s standing, the situation of the Jews, and the state of Holocaust education and memory in those countries.

Michael Berenbaum (1990, p. 16) once wrote: “Only a part of memory involves the past. The past image is projected on a screen of the present with which it interacts, and this new image in turn sheds light on the future. In addressing the authenticity of memory, we must examine both its source and its projection.” We embark on this project convinced that in our troubled times, Holocaust memory can become a source for growth, inclusivity and hope across the globe. We see this project not only as a contribution to the world of research but as an important source of input for policy makers, program writers, educators, and political leaders worldwide seeking to preserve the memory of the Holocaust.

**6. Preliminary Results**

Over the past two years, we have been developing and testing the HEAR scale, which includes 24 items (on a 0-6 Likert scale) that reflect important educational dilemmas. Should TLH be used for character education or be presented only as a historical series of events? Is its most important lesson a universalistic one (the importance of human rights) or a particularistic one (the Jews need a state of their own)? Should the Holocaust be taught to very young children? Should it be presented alongside other genocides or kept unique? Some sample items include:

* It is a good idea to show students some documentary footage and photos of the horrific nature of the Holocaust;
* The Holocaust is not the right context for teaching students about bullying or being kind to others;
* The Holocaust is a sacred topic; it should not be taught like other episodes in history but approached with reverence and awe.

Pilot results were obtained using a sample of 827 consenting Holocaust educators, of which 594 were retained for analysis due to missing data and response times. Participants included 123 from Israel, 190 from Poland, 79 from Spain, 124 from Portugal, and 31 from other countries. Among teachers, 18% described their legacies as that of victims, 1.8% as perpetrator/collaborators, 13% as bystanders, 10% as resistors, 14% as helpers/liberators, 52% as having no Holocaust legacy, and 8% as having more than one legacy. The mean age of participants was 50.7 (sd=10.3), 29.1% were male, 70.5% female and 0.4% other. Politically, 61.3% self-defined as liberal, 38.8% as center, and 13.7% as conservative.

Range and variability for all items were acceptable. A preliminary set of Factor Analyses with Principal Axis Factoring and Varimax Rotation found that a three-factor solution yielded parsimonious and meaningful scales. This supported our theoretical structure of three sub-scales: 1) universalist/humanist perspective (alpha=.67); 2) minimizing perspective (alpha=.64); and 3) mythologizing perspective (alpha=.63). All subscales varied significantly by country and by religion. For example, on the universalist scale, differences among countries was significant at p<.000 (F=53.86, df=8,536), driven by differences such as that between Polish teachers (M= 5.5, sd=.81) and Israeli teachers (M=3.8, sd=.79).

We also successfully piloted our interview protocol for Holocaust educators, eliciting their life-stories, identity categories, in-depth introspection about TLH attitudes, and the way they teach the Holocaust in school in a series of 31 in-depth 1-2.5 hour interviews. Findings from these interviews have been published (Novis-Deutsch, Perkis & Granot-Bein, 2018, in press). We are eager and excited to test this interview protocol and the promising new HEAR scale on teachers in the European countries of this study.

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