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Our memory of the past and for the future

Jerusalem, Israel, 15-21 September 2003



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Our memory of the past and for the future

Based on the proceedings of an international forum
in Jerusalem, Israel
15-21 September 2003

Edited and compiled by Richelle Budd Caplan

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The Council of Europe's Project on Teaching Remembrance

This volume, which includes sample classroom lessons and educational tools, has been written within the framework of the Council of Europe's project, Teaching Remembrance: Education for the Prevention of Crimes against Humanity.

In October 2002, the ministers of education of the Council of Europe member states decided to set aside a day of remembrance as of 2003 in all schools in their respective countries to commemorate the Holocaust and give thought to ways of preventing such events from recurring. Referring to Section 6 (Teaching and Remembrance) of the Appendix to Committee of Ministers Recommendation (2001), Article 15 on history teaching in twenty-first century Europe, adopted on 31 October 2001, and committed to foster remembrance efforts and to ensure that all of the devastating events that marked the twentieth century – the Holocaust, other genocides and crimes against humanity, ethnic cleansing and massive human rights violations – were taught to the young generations, asked the Council of Europe to help train teachers and prepare teaching materials in the framework of this task.

The objectives of this project are four-fold:

- To encourage Council of Europe member states to mark a day of remembrance to commemorate the events of the Holocaust with an emphasis on the prevention of crimes against humanity
- To produce teaching material to enable teachers to prepare for the day of remembrance
- To conduct teacher-training seminars
- To monitor and publicise events and activities related to the day of remembrance in all member states

For further information about the project, please contact:

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Yad Vashem

Yad Vashem, the Holocaust Martyrs' and Heroes' Remembrance Authority, was established in 1953 by an act of the Israeli Parliament. The name of Yad Vashem is taken from the Book of Isaiah, Chapter 56, Verse 5, "And to them will I give in my house and within my walls a memorial ... an everlasting name [a 'yad vashem'], that shall not be cut off."

Since its inception, Yad Vashem has been entrusted with documenting the history of the Jewish people during the Holocaust period, preserving the memory and story of each of the 6 million victims, and imparting the legacy of the Holocaust for generations to come through its archives, library, school, museums and recognition of the Righteous among the Nations who risked their lives to help Jews during the Holocaust. Among the tasks that the law assigns to Yad Vashem are to establish memorial projects; to gather, research and publish testimony of the Holocaust and its heroism and to impart its lessons; to grant commemorative citizenship to the victims; and to represent Israel on international projects aiming to perpetuate the memory of the victims of the Holocaust and of the Second World War.

Situated on Har Hazikaron, the Mount of Remembrance in Jerusalem, Yad Vashem is a vast campus, including classrooms, exhibits, archives, monuments, sculptures, information systems and memorials. The archive collection, the largest and most comprehensive repository of material on the Holocaust in the world, comprises 60 million pages of documents, nearly 263 000 photographs along with thousands of films and videotaped testimonies of survivors. The library houses more than 88 000 titles in many languages, thousands of periodicals and a large number of rare and precious items, establishing itself as the most significant Holocaust library in the world. The Hall of Names is a tribute to the victims by remembering them not as anonymous numbers but as individual human beings. The "Pages of Testimony" are symbolic gravestones, which record names and biographical data of millions of martyrs, as submitted by family members and friends. To date Yad Vashem has computerised 3.2 million names of Holocaust victims, compiled from approximately 2 million Pages of Testimony and various other lists.

The International School for Holocaust Studies is the only school of its kind in the world. With 17 classrooms, a modern multimedia centre, resource and pedagogical centre, an auditorium and over 100 educators on its staff, the

school caters annually to over 100 000 students and youth, 50 000 soldiers, and thousands of educators from Israel and around the world. Courses for teachers are offered in eight languages other than Hebrew, and the school also sends its professional staff around the world for the purpose of Holocaust education. The team of experts at the school is developing a variety of educational programmes and study aids on the Holocaust including advanced multimedia programmes, maps, books, cassettes and other educational aids. The International Institute for Holocaust Research co-ordinates and supports research on national and international levels, organises conferences and colloquia and publishes a variety of important works on the Holocaust. The Encyclopedia of Communities ("Pinkasei Hakehillot") is a historical-geographical encyclopedia of the Jewish communities destroyed or damaged during the Nazi regime. These volumes contain entries on every Jewish town and community, the aim being to commemorate each and every one of them.

Opening remarks of Mr Gabriele Mazza, Director of School, Out-of-School and Higher Education, Council of Europe

It is an honour and a great pleasure for me to open this international forum organised by Yad Vashem in close co-operation with the Council of Europe. Being here, in Israel, in Jerusalem, and more particularly at Yad Vashem, to co-ordinate a forum under the auspices of the Council of Europe's project Teaching Remembrance: Education for the Prevention of Crimes against Humanity is more than symbolic.

The Council of Europe has already organised several seminars about the teaching of the Holocaust in various countries throughout Europe, but we all know that discussing this difficult subject matter here, in Israel, is different. Discussing the Shoah at Yad Vashem, a beacon of Holocaust remembrance, where the names of Holocaust victims are recited on a daily basis, is a very emotional experience.

The educational work done by Yad Vashem is greatly appreciated by the Council of Europe, as we share many common interests and goals. Peaceful co-operation in Europe, and even further, mutual understanding between people of widely varying cultures and languages, as well as the promotion of fundamental values of human rights, tolerance, multicultural understanding and inter-religious dialogue, all these find concrete expression through the Council of Europe's activities.

Yad Vashem is placing primary emphasis on Holocaust studies for educators, students, soldiers and youth in Israel and abroad, in the framework of the International School for Holocaust Studies that was established in 1994. In essence, your school has become the central source for Holocaust remembrance and education in the next century, promoting Holocaust remembrance for future generations.

The International School for Holocaust Studies at Yad Vashem has developed a partnership with the Council of Europe over the past several years, such as co-operating at the seminar on Teaching about the Holocaust in April 2000 in Vilnius, Lithuania. In addition, you actively contributed to the Final Conference of the Project on History in the Twentieth century in Bonn,

at the Haus der Geschichte. Yad Vashem also took part in the international colloquy that was organised at the Council of Europe, on the theme of Artistic Creation and the Teaching of Holocaust, in close co-operation with the Fondation pour la mémoire de l'Holocauste, presided by Simone Veil.

Moreover, Shulamit Imber, your pedagogical director, has been for us an inspirational teacher, showing us new ways of approaching this particularly difficult subject matter. All in all, we are honoured to attend this forum during the time in which you mark your jubilee year.

The history of the Council of Europe, located in Strasbourg, began in response to the devastation of the Second World War. Founded in 1949, the Council sought to heal the divisions of the past and provide an impetus for the building of a united Europe.

One of the main objectives of the Council of Europe is to provide practical advice to educators on how to approach sensitive historical issues in the classroom, rather than avoiding them. Clearly, the Council needs to pay special attention to the way in which history is perceived and taught. After all, lessons can only be learned from history if history is taught, and a vital aspect of building the future is to face and learn from the past.

The Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe now recommends that recent history should be given an important role, with a view to encouraging democratic developments and preparing responsible citizens. History and history education have a crucial role to play in understanding and promoting respect for cultural differences. History teaching cannot be isolationist. Local and regional history is part of national history, which in turn is part of European and world history. In the same vein, the Holocaust, another focus of our work, cannot be approached through a study of national history, but rather as a period that belongs to almost every country in Europe and a large part of the world.

The Council of Europe is very much involved in the duty of teaching remembrance, particularly since the initiative to have, in the schools of the 48 member States Parties to the European Cultural Convention of the Council of Europe, a day of remembrance of the Holocaust and of prevention of crimes against humanity. The ministers of education of these countries, in Strasbourg in October 2002, adopted a resolution recommending that the 48 states concerned legislate Holocaust Remembrance Days in accordance with each country's own history and encourage younger generations to prevent the recurrence of crimes against humanity.

It is essential to prepare future generations to live in a democratic society where the fundamental principles of the Council of Europe – human rights, democracy, tolerance and unity in diversity – will be the rule. The aim of these proceedings is in line with this objective, and therefore I wish this Forum all the success it deserves.

Message from Mr Avner Shalev, Chairman of the Yad Vashem Directorate

In Jewish tradition, remembrance is directly connected to action. The importance to remember in Judaism has been passed down from generation to generation. “And you shall tell your children” (Exodus 13:8) is not only a commandment for parents to tell their children about the slavery of the Jewish people in Egypt, but also a directive to instil values of freedom and hope.

Holocaust (in Hebrew: Shoah) survivors have passed on to us the fundamental imperative that memory must be accompanied by action. At Yad Vashem, in Jerusalem, we have taken a sacred oath to carry the torch of remembrance – to commemorate the Holocaust and to engrave its memory in others through documentation, research and education. Over the past 50 years, we have been devoted to the arduous task of collecting the names of victims, documents, testimonies, artifacts and art, books and articles in every corner of the globe.

Clearly, we have made a conscious choice to remember. It is a choice that is based on a solemn commitment to the continued existence and creativity of the Jewish people, which was viciously targeted for annihilation together with its culture. Ultimately, every human being who chooses to study and remember this watershed event in world history, and to infuse it with meaning, is thereby choosing to struggle for the preservation of the bedrock of moral values that provide the foundation for a democratic society. Overall, this is a commitment to uphold human rights, freedom and the sanctity of life.

However, our greatest challenge must be the education of future generations – teaching about the Holocaust and promoting its lessons throughout the world. We seek to touch the hearts and minds of youngsters, so that they will know as much as they can about the Holocaust. We believe that by grappling with their national past, not only will pupils’ moral values be reinforced, but also a better future will be built.

The legacy of the Shoah – an event still very near to us in time – commands us to assert that the course of Jewish and all human history must hold out the promise of a fundamentally different world. It is our hope that this book, a joint project of Yad Vashem and the Council of Europe, will make a small contribution toward this sacred task.

Chapter 1

Remembrance: international perspectives and challenges

Richelle Budd Caplan

International School for Holocaust Studies, Yad Vashem

Introduction

In April 2002, during one of the sessions that took place during the international proceedings, The Legacy of Holocaust Survivors Conference – The Moral and Ethical Implications for Humanity organised at Yad Vashem, Madame Simone Veil noted that, “Hitler has lost the first battle, but he could still emerge triumphant if history were to betray us. It is not only a question of what we will know and say in ten, twenty or even a hundred years’ time; what matters is what will remain in the history of humanity forever.”¹

Preserving the memory of the Holocaust in the twenty-first century will not be an easy task. Ultimately, this unprecedented tragedy in world history commands us to remember each individual human being – man, woman and child – who became a victim. We need to restore their personal identities by uncovering their names, learning about the communities from where they came and gaining a better understanding about the rich tapestry of their culture. Although many of these details were buried or burned along with the victims themselves, by reading diaries and memoirs, visiting museums and memorial sites and watching documentaries and feature films, teachers and their students in essence become the torches of Holocaust memory for the future.

Historical memory is a product of social, economic, ideological and religious factors that shape the historical narrative of various groups or nations. In an effort to become better acquainted with different historical narratives related to the Holocaust, and to create a foundation for constructive discussions on the manifestations of Holocaust remembrance, participants, representing ten countries, were requested to prepare bullet points, in English, briefly

1. See Irena Steinfeldt and Michael Fisher (editors), *Our Living Legacy* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2003), p. 60.

outlining the rationale to teach about the Holocaust in each of their respective countries. In their summaries, they briefly outlined some of the main religious, political, economic, historical, educational and social issues that have direct bearing on their work as teachers and teacher-trainers. A complete set of their bullet points, focusing on the narrative of Holocaust education and remembrance in Austria, Croatia, Finland, France, Israel, Italy, Luxembourg, Romania, Slovakia and the United Kingdom, have been presented at the end of this chapter.²

Educational observations, implications and applications

During the participants' presentations, it became quite clear that despite the various differences between the ten countries represented, most countries seem to share common issues, such as the need for additional teacher-training programmes to help educators develop strategies on how to approach this complex and difficult subject matter in their classrooms. It should be noted that in 2001, the Austrian Ministry of Education and Culture embarked on a comprehensive teacher-training project on the teaching of National Socialism in their country, providing teachers with seminars in Austria and in Israel, decentralised networks and an Internet site.³

In most of the countries represented, it is compulsory to teach about the Holocaust. For example, in the United Kingdom the Holocaust is a statutory subject as part of the history curriculum in year nine, and similarly in Finland the Holocaust is taught to students usually in the seventh, eighth and ninth grades and in the upper secondary school as part of a compulsory history course. In 1999, in Romania, a governmental directive was issued stating that two hours about the history of the Holocaust would be taught in Romanian high schools.

Although the countries represented have different mandates in teaching about the Holocaust, all of them have legislated Holocaust Remembrance Days. For example, Croatia, Finland, Italy and the United Kingdom observe 27 January, the day marking the liberation of Auschwitz by Soviet forces. Austria, France, Luxembourg, Romania and Slovakia have also legislated Holocaust Remembrance Days relating to each country's own national history vis à vis the Holocaust. Policy makers, Holocaust survivors, representatives from the local Jewish communities and non-governmental organisations

2. For more detailed information about the involvement of each of these nations during the Holocaust, see Israel Gutman (editor), *The Encyclopedia of the Holocaust* (New York: Macmillan, 1990).

3. For more information about this endeavour, see the chapter prepared by Peter Niedermair, one of the project managers, in this volume.

in all of the aforementioned countries have attended official events and ceremonies that have been well covered by the national and international media.⁴

Overall, most participants concurred that even though most high school students have usually heard about the Holocaust, their level of knowledge about what actually happened is rather shallow. For instance, even in Israel, in which 30 hours have been allotted to teach the Holocaust in eleventh grade and remembering the Holocaust is a fixed part of the national calendar, Israeli students' comprehension of historical facts about the Holocaust still needs improvement.

It also became apparent that many of the nations represented have always been multi-ethnic – today more than ever before. In light of this situation, many educators in Europe are teaching about the Holocaust to youngsters who have no familial or national connection to the events that occurred on the soil where they now live. In essence, the question of “How do we make Holocaust education and remembrance relevant to young minds whose families have immigrated from African and Asian countries?” was raised several times.

In all of the countries represented, the Holocaust serves as a historical warning with educational applications. By learning about the Holocaust, students have an opportunity to grapple with their national past, including events that shed light on their country's direct involvement in carrying out the “Final Solution to the Jewish Question”. In addition, teachers often focus on the Holocaust as a case study in crimes against humanity, encouraging their pupils to reflect on the racial ideology that brought about this tragedy as well as ways to prevent the resurgence of xenophobia, racism, anti-Semitism, and other forms of discrimination. Ultimately, teachers not only aim to help their students gain an awareness of how the Holocaust has cast a shadow over European history, but rather how European countries must act to ensure that additional genocides will not take place in the future. All in all, promoting the values of tolerance and democracy has become one of the universal lessons of the Holocaust. As Tvrtko Jakovina from Croatia notes in the bullet points that he prepared for these proceedings, “Teaching history should educate democratic open-minded citizens, and not necessarily only future historians.”

As noted in many of the presentations, teachers throughout Europe seek to make the Holocaust relevant to learners in their present environment, but it is important that they be careful not to overload their students, especially

4. For more information on Holocaust Remembrance Day events throughout Europe, see [http:// www.coe.int](http://www.coe.int)

with graphic images. In addition, educators must recognise that their students can easily become confused between the Holocaust and subsequent atrocities and genocides, and therefore precise definitions and explanations must be prepared for classroom instruction and discussion.

In his bullet points, Peter Niedermair from Austria observes that, “The process of European integration goes hand in hand with remembering the Holocaust, and that a supra-national narrative is evolving.” Approximately three generations have passed since the end of the Holocaust, yet despite the distance of time, interest in Holocaust education and remembrance, not only within Europe but also around the world, appears to be on the rise. Holocaust awareness has significantly developed over the last decade, and it will most probably continue to evolve over the next few years.

However, as more countries legislate Holocaust Remembrance Days and issue curriculum directives on studying the Holocaust in schools, educators – not only those who teach history, citizenship and religion but also those who teach art, literature, drama and other disciplines – will become bridges of memory to the next generations. In light of the state of the field – as distinctly reflected in the following bullet points prepared by the representatives of ten countries – the aim of this volume is to provide teachers with educational guidelines and tools that can be applied in their classrooms.

Teaching the Holocaust in member states

Austria

Why teach the Holocaust?

- Remembering the Holocaust and discussing issues of National Socialist crimes have been and still are major problems in Austrian society
- The Holocaust is a unique tragedy and raises many elementary important questions about humanity
- Remembering the Holocaust is a very complex and challenging issue, from defining and explaining the Holocaust to comparing it to other genocides
- From the why concludes the how: a human rights oriented education is a distinct goal

Political aspects

- There are two main parallel narratives, one of which is the myth that Austria was the first Nazi victim (Anschluss/Annex), the second is represented in "The Other Austria"
- Consciousness of Austria's involvement in National Socialist crimes is still partly suppressed
- As a society, we are shifting from individual to collective memory
- Create awareness about how the Austrian society has developed since 1945
- The process of European integration goes hand in hand with remembering the Holocaust: A supra-national narrative is evolving
- Austria, as the whole of Europe, is a multicultural and multi-ethnic society
- The Jews and Jewish culture were crucial in the development of western civilisation

Social aspects

- National Socialism and the Holocaust are still inter-generational conflict issues
- Generate a careful and honest look at our own perspective of history and how this view is connected to the narratives and the discourses
- There are limits to commemoration, hence scientific research and qualified educational means are necessary to promote a better understanding of the effects and consequences of National Socialism and the Holocaust on our political and popular cultures

Educational aspects

- In many cases instruction on National Socialism and the Holocaust does not reach its intended cognitive, ethical, and affective goals
- Gaps in knowledge are evident
- Learners often express feelings of overload
- Defence mechanisms are activated
- Therefore we need to structure and intensify the critical debate within the educational system in Austria and establish a frame for learning about the Holocaust and National Socialism

Pedagogical challenges

- The learning approach is based on the premise that learners, as well as teachers, are active and thinking subjects who independently acquire an understanding of history and thus must be taken seriously
- Make the Holocaust and National Socialism relevant for learners and teachers in their present environment
- Maximise the transference of carefully developed didactic material on the Holocaust and National Socialism and emphasise the importance of this material for the present
- Tell a human story

Croatia

Why teach the Holocaust?

- The uniqueness of the Holocaust in world history
- We should learn from the past and try not to repeat the horrors of the totalitarian regimes
- Teaching of history should educate democratic open-minded citizens, not necessarily only future historians

Political aspects

- Croats had their role in the Holocaust. Large concentration camps were run by members of the Ustasha regime and the so-called Independent State of Croatia was part of the Nazi system. At the same time one of the oldest and strongest partisan movements against Hitler and Mussolini started in Croatia (Sisak – 22 June 1941) and was led by the Croatian anti-Fascists/communists (Tito). The strongest political party of pre-Second World War Croatia (the Croatian Peasant Party) was participating in the Royal Yugoslav Government in London. That is why the Croats, who were rather happy with the formation of an independent state, have “confused memories” and do not know how to deal with their recent past
- The war of independence in 1991 and the whole process of democratisation of Croatian society shed light on certain “historical truths” (because in Tito’s Yugoslavia certain themes were simply not open to public). As a result of the new approach of the Croatian regime in the 1990s, the benevolent approach to the Ustasha past has been re-examined
- Although Croats are ready to admit what happened to the Jews during the Second World War and accept the consequences, they are less ready to come to terms with the fate of many Serbs, Roma and Croats who disappeared in Ustasha concentration camps

Social aspects

- For Croats, history since the 1940s is hardly a history at all. In a certain way, that makes it easier to teach this specific historical period and to refer to it. At the same time, passions are very much present, as well as the claims regarding who “started first”, “whose guilt is bigger” and “who the real victims are”. In this light, the teaching of the Holocaust and the Second World War is extremely important

Educational aspects

- The Holocaust is being taught in the eighth grade to 14-year-old pupils and in the last year of high school to 18-year-old pupils. This

subject is always an important part of the curriculum focusing on the developments and consequences of the Second World War

- The Diary of Anne Frank represents obligatory literature for elementary school pupils

Pedagogical challenges

- The best way to study the Holocaust is the study of “the ordinary man” as well as the framework of the larger political state mechanism
- In this way, two goals can be achieved simultaneously. Students learn about the Holocaust, but at the same time they become more aware about the importance of using their own heads and not to be manipulated
- In this way, history does not represent a story from the past that is being retold, but an active lesson for multi-ethnic societies in which we live today (not forgetting at the same time the uniqueness of the Holocaust in world history)

Finland

Why teach the Holocaust?

- The Holocaust was an unprecedented event in world history
- To shed light on the parallels between the Holocaust and other genocides in contemporary history
- To encourage a "zero tolerance policy" toward crimes against humanity in the present and in the future

Political aspects

- Finland was allied with Nazi Germany during the Second World War, joining forces against the Soviet Union
- In November 1942, Finland turned over a group of eight Jewish refugees to the Nazis (all but one perished in Auschwitz) as well as approximately 2 000 Soviet Prisoners of War of which 70 were most likely Jewish
- Since 2002, 27 January has been officially commemorated as a Holocaust Memorial Day in Finland (in Finnish it is referred to as "Memorial Day to the Victims of the Persecutions")

Social aspects

- Finland is a Lutheran country with a small population considering its large land mass
- Jews in Finland have always been a tiny minority (less than 2 000 Jews lived there in 1939)
- Finns who lived during the war, and especially those during the Holocaust, found it difficult to discuss their experiences

Educational aspects

- Teachers have a great deal of freedom to choose what topics they wish to teach in their classrooms. Overall, they are well-trained educators
- Finnish students usually learn about the Holocaust in seventh, eighth and ninth grades and in the upper secondary school as part of a compulsory history course
- Groups of Finnish students have visited Auschwitz, Dachau and other memorial sites relating to the Holocaust
- The success of the Living History project in Sweden, especially the book *Tell Ye Your Children* has also reached Finland (especially since Swedish is an official language in Finland). The Finnish edition, which includes a chapter about Finland and the Holocaust, was distributed to every school in the country

Pedagogical challenges

- Although the Holocaust is a well-documented and researched event in history, many unopened questions concerning human beings' capacity to commit evil remain
- In general, the Finnish public continues to equate the crimes against human rights in the Soviet Union with those committed by Nazi Germany during the Second World War

France

Why teach the Holocaust?

- To learn about its importance within the context of the Second World War and Nazism as well as its roots in Christian and political anti-Semitism
- This unprecedented event involved the governments of most European countries
- Promote acceptance and tolerance of the other, especially among youth
- Prevent genocide and crimes against humanity in the future

Political aspects

- Although there are now very few myths about the relationship between Vichy France and Nazi Germany, questions still remain about their collaboration during the war
- Trials of war criminals, such as Maurice Papon and Klaus Barbie
- History of French colonialism

Social aspects

- Multi-ethnic country with many immigrants, including a large Moslem minority
- Largest Jewish community in western Europe, including Holocaust survivors
- Rise in anti-Semitism and anti-Jewish violence since the beginning of the twenty-first century

Educational aspects

- Requirement of a minimum of two hours of study on the history of the Second World War has been implemented into the national curriculum, but usually most teachers only have one hour to spend on this subject
- The term "Shoah" (rather than "Holocaust") is often used in France
- Internment camps, such as Drancy and Gurs, have not become authentic memorial sites with education centres like those in Germany and in other countries
- Visits of French pupils to Auschwitz, especially on 27 January

Pedagogical challenges

- Teacher-training seminars are not organised often outside of Paris
- Need for an interdisciplinary approach
- Books and films on the Holocaust are easily obtained, but teachers have didactic questions about how to utilise Holocaust-related documentaries and dramas in the classroom

Israel

Why teach the Holocaust?

- Remember and mourn the collective past
- Teach about an important chapter in Jewish and world history
- Stress importance of the continuity of the Jewish people and establishment of a Jewish national homeland
- Promote democratic values and the value of human life
- Instil hope for a better future

Political aspects

- Continuous reference to the Holocaust (often contradictory) by all sectors in the political arena to justify their “positions”
- Holocaust denial outside of Israel and particularly in the Arab world
- Comparisons of the Holocaust to the Arab-Israeli conflict

Social aspects

- The Holocaust as part of popular culture (literature/film/theatre/television)
- The Holocaust as part of the Israeli National-Jewish identity
- Recognition and empathy toward Holocaust survivors and their legacy over the last two decades unlike during the early years of statehood when the question of whether victims went like sheep to the slaughter was at the forefront
- Personal connection to victims (family trauma)
- Honouring Righteous among the Nations

Educational aspects

- Yom Hashoah (Holocaust Remembrance Day) annual commemoration; therefore Israeli children are exposed to this day from an early age
- Since 1982, a minimum of 30 hours of Holocaust education has been mandated in Israeli high schools and the Holocaust is covered in history matriculation exams. Since 1999, the Holocaust has become a recommended part of the junior high school curriculum
- Approximately 20 000 Israeli high school students annually travel to Poland on study trips

Pedagogical challenges

- Thousands of Israeli teachers attend courses on Holocaust education every year, yet the majority of teachers are not trained on how to teach this subject matter

- Gap between extensive Holocaust awareness and often meagre factual knowledge
- The Holocaust is not mandated to be taught to younger aged students
- The Shoah should not only be taught as a history lesson before Holocaust Remembrance Day
- Challenge of teaching about the Holocaust to Israeli Arab students

Italy

Why teach the Holocaust?

- The Shoah is the most tragic and unreasonable event in the twentieth century. Because of its uniqueness and complexity, it deserves special attention when teaching contemporary culture and history
- Make the younger generations aware of what happened in our country and teach them how to distinguish between various historical periods and recognise individual responsibilities
- Reinforce human values, human rights and democracy, and fight prejudice
- Society at large must not forget the victims of the Shoah. We can honour them through remembrance and witnessing past events
- People must realise the importance of supranational organisations in the international arena

Political aspects

- The process of European integration entails a greater attention to events with a European dimension. The Shoah stands out as a European event shared by individual countries with individual responsibilities. Italy was directly responsible for the crimes of her own regime, for the passing of racial legislation, the so-called “racial laws” in November 1938. There was, however, widespread solidarity with Jews by ordinary people, above all during the phase of physical persecution and deportation that followed Nazi occupation of the Italian territory
- The days of 8 September (day of the Monarchy’s surrender to the Allies) and 16 October (day of the deportation of the Roman Jews) were crucial turning points
- In Italy, too, the danger of “revisionism” and the tendency to forget hard facts needs to be tackled
- The creative role of Jewish culture before the Shoah needs to be stressed as a fundamental contribution to western civilisation

Social aspects

- Italy is becoming a multi-ethnic society and the remembrance of the Shoah is also to be fostered among immigrant communities. The widespread awareness of what happened can be a cohesive element against prejudice and exclusion
- As long as they are alive and available, all Shoah survivors and bystanders should be called to bear witness about their experience

- Historical research about events that have not been explored in depth and still remain somewhat obscure. The role of the Vatican, for example, should be further studied
- The Shoah is commemorated, but there is an urgent need for it to become part of Italian society's awareness and understanding about its own history

Educational aspects

- Over the last few years the teaching of the Shoah at all school levels has increased. The passing of Law 211 on 20 July 2000 that solemnly proclaimed 27 January as the Day of Remembrance has entailed an increase of school participation in national and local events and school competitions on the Shoah. Also the Italian television networks and some non-governmental organisations (NGOs) – for example CDEC and “Angeli” – are contributing to greater awareness. Some Italian and foreign films have been especially popular with young people and have raised awareness also among those sectors of the population that have not benefited so much from formal education, such as *Schindler's List*, *Train de Vie*, *The Pianist*, *La Vita è Bella*, *Concorrenza Sleale*, *La Finestra di Fronte* and the television series *Perlasca*

Pedagogical challenges

- Avoid the danger of excessive rhetorical commemoration. We should foster research carried out by the students themselves. Increased awareness of the Shoah is to be set within a general historical framework
- Networking between classes in different European countries should be co-ordinated in order to explore themes, methods of inquiry and perspectives. European Co-operation Projects could provide examples of such activities
- For a long time the teaching of the Shoah has been only due to the initiative of individual teachers dealing with contemporary history. Although many teachers of history, philosophy, religion and Italian literature have included the topic in their teaching programmes, very few have actually been trained
- New educational strategies need to be developed in order to foster awareness and, at the same time, avoid the danger of overloading and fatigue.

Luxembourg

Why teach the Holocaust?

- Remember a collective past, questioning about how it was possible that people of a bordering country and with a certain common culture would be able to be the perpetrators of such a tragedy
- Teach about an important and in itself unique historical event
- Promote democratic values and the value of human life
- Prevent a repetition of similar “political constructions”

Political aspects

- Continuous reference to the Shoah by all sectors (often contradictory) in the political arena to justify their “position”
- Holocaust denial in certain European extreme groupings (négalionisme)
- Comparisons of the Holocaust to other conflicts on an international scale

Social aspects

- Holocaust as part of an international culture (literature/film/theatre/television)
- Holocaust as part of the Israeli National-Jewish identity
- Recognition and empathy toward Holocaust survivors; personal connection to survivors

Educational aspects

- Holocaust education is part of the official school curriculum
- Holocaust survivors are invited to give testimony in schools
- Awareness of the importance and rarity of direct statements by survivors
- Regular study trips to Auschwitz and other concentration camps, some of them very close to Luxembourg

Pedagogical challenges

- Teachers are not trained on how to teach the Holocaust
- Gap between extensive Holocaust awareness and often meagre factual knowledge
- Importance of promoting the values of human life and tolerance (Luxembourg is a country where more than one-third of the population is foreign)

Romania

Why teach the Holocaust?

- The Holocaust was not only a tragedy for the Jewish people, but also for all of humankind
- The Holocaust is a historical warning about the errors of the past
- It is very important that children learn about what truly happened
- Fight against intolerance, promote peace and foster democratic values
- Instil the value of human life

Political aspects

- Holocaust denial throughout the world
- Problematic nature of declarations made by Romanian politicians
- Romania is looking to join the European Union in due course

Social aspects

- Holocaust survivors (including Jews and Gypsies) are still living in Romania today
- Anti-Semitism and anti-Jewish violent incidents in Romania
- There are 45 provinces in Romania with major socio-economic and geographical differences between them
- During the Second World War, Romania's population was one of the most multi-ethnic in all of east central Europe
- Borders of Romania today are not the same as Romania in the 1940s
- Large Hungarian-speaking minority living in the country

Educational aspects

- On 4 January 1999, the Romanian government issued a national directive that two to four hours per year be allotted to Holocaust education in public high schools
- An historical commission on the Enquiry into the Holocaust in Romania, chaired by Elie Wiesel, was established in autumn 2003
- Annual Day of Holocaust Remembrance on 9 October, commemorating the mass deportations of Jews from Romania

Pedagogical challenges

- Not many good teaching materials are available
- Pre-war Jewish life, daily life of Jews during the Holocaust and the post-war period in Romania need to be stressed
- Teacher-training seminars on the Holocaust are few and far between. For example, there is one intensive, annual course on the Holocaust in Cluj-Napoca
- Historical myths, especially about Marshall Ion Antonescu, remain prevalent

Slovakia

Why teach the Holocaust?

- Encourage respect toward minorities and civil responsibility among students
- Promote civil equality and human rights awareness
- Warn against racism and extremism
- Prevent future genocides

Political aspects

- Contemporary Slovak society continues to grapple with the historical events that took place in the Slovak Republic during the Second World War as well as the former government's active role in carrying out the "Final Solution"
- Surfacing of historical myths after the Velvet Revolution in Slovakia

Social aspects

- Before the Holocaust, Jews and non-Jews lived side by side for many years
- Issues of co-existence, minorities and xenophobia in Slovak society after the war
- Restitution of Jewish assets

Educational aspects

- To combat forms of discrimination, such as racism, xenophobia, anti-Semitism and other forms of intolerance
- In co-operation with the International Task Force for Holocaust Education, Remembrance and Research, a cadre of leaders in Holocaust education across Slovakia has been created and educational materials are now in the process of being produced with an emphasis on how Holocaust victims, despite segregation and isolation, attempted to retain their humanity
- A network of foundations and institutes has been formed, including Comenius University in Bratislava

Pedagogical challenges

- Developing effective educational guidelines and tools for classroom use
- Motivating teachers to initiate local history projects related to the Holocaust

United Kingdom

Why teach the Holocaust?

- Remember and mourn the collective past
- Teach about the threats and dangers that exist to minority groups
- Provide a social history of minority presence and inclusion in European society
- Promote the importance of democratic values and the dangers of a non-democratic society
- Teach people about the dangers of prejudice and bigotry – how racism kills and destroys society
- Commemorate and remember the victims of Nazism, especially Jews and Roma
- Recognise the importance of international structures and conventions today, for example the UN and the UN Convention on Genocide
- Ensure that current generations are aware of the actions of their country in the past

Political aspects

- Reference to the Holocaust by many sectors (usually inappropriately and based on incorrect knowledge) in the political arena to justify their arguments or actions
- Holocaust revisionism (often more insidious than outright denial)
- Comparisons of the Holocaust to other atrocities and state-authorised human rights violations

Social aspects

- The Holocaust as part of world, European and British popular culture
- Recognition of survivors and refugees as part of current day society and the impact they can provide for wider society

Educational aspects

- Statutory subject as part of the history curriculum in schools in England, Wales and Northern Ireland (although also taught in all Scottish schools) when pupils are in year 9 (13-14 year olds).
- Often taught in other subjects such as English (diaries and poetry); religious education (morality, tolerance, history of anti-Semitism, respect for difference and value of all human life); and citizenship curriculum (human rights, democracy, international organisations)
- National Holocaust Memorial Day since 2001, encouraged in schools by free resources from the Department of Education and Skills

- Several NGOs providing educational support including school exhibitions, survivor visits to schools, education packs and visits to museums and places of remembrance
- Some teacher-training sessions dedicated to teaching the Holocaust

Pedagogical challenges

- Teachers are not (necessarily) trained on how to teach the Holocaust
- Breadth of the Holocaust is often not known
- Addressing the universal messages and lessons, while not losing the particularity of the event
- Immediate relevancy not always recognised
- Confusion between the Holocaust and subsequent atrocities and genocides

Chapter 2

How do we approach teaching about the Shoah?

Shulamit Imber

International School for Holocaust Studies, Yad Vashem

The human being as the centre

Our educational rationale places the human being, the individual, at the centre of our understanding of history. Facing the Holocaust means probing not only such phenomena as mass murder, Nazi policy, the statistics of death and the chain of historical, political and military events. It involves an attempt to understand human beings and the manner in which they contended with extreme situations and with profound ethical dilemmas. The story of the Holocaust is first and foremost a human story. Any discussion of its victims, its perpetrators or those who stood by and watched, must attempt to understand the human being involved. The encounter between students and the “simple” people who were present in the events of the Holocaust – their daily lives and reality – must serve as the foundation for meaningful educational work.

Attention must focus not only on the heroes of uprisings and resistance on the one hand, or on high-ranking murderers on the other. It is imperative that we remember and attempt to understand the difficulties and dilemmas confronting those whose names were all but lost, often along with their lives. Only in such a manner will it be possible to create a real and intimate connection between the learners and the subject matter, and to begin to discern the commonalities and the differences between our own period and that of the Holocaust.

Examination of the various crossroads at which Jews, Germans and others stood, and the dilemmas and challenges that they faced, will allow the educational process to progress from the particular historical situation to a sounding of the universal human voice. Providing the history with a human face, an examination of the human complexities involved, helps to prevent the dangers of banalisation, of a one-dimensional picture or of an abstract, alienated view.

Inter-cultural dialogue

Historians today point to the narrative nature of historiography, of a past that is open to a range of interpretations and understandings, dependent in part upon the point of view and perspective of the narrator. An understanding of other points of view enriches one's own insights and provides an opportunity to examine one's own identity, past and memory. Sensitivity to other points of view and to other groups is among the central values that our educational work seeks to inculcate. We seek to implement this value in the educational materials that we develop and in the seminars and courses we conduct.

The survivors' heritage

Holocaust survivors play a central role in the writing of Holocaust history, in the shaping of memory, in commemoration and in educational work. Testimonies and encounters with individual survivors serve as a central axis in passing on the history and the memory of the Holocaust to future generations. The impending disappearance of the survivor generation challenges educators throughout the world to find new ways to relate the history and to perpetuate the memory and heritage of the survivors to a younger generation that will no longer come into direct personal contact with the generation that experienced the Holocaust and its era.

Inculcation of Jewish and universal values

The mass murder of Jews during the Holocaust stemmed from a radical, racial ideology which set itself the goal of demolishing existing humanistic ethics and physically annihilating the nation that it identified as having created the infrastructure of human ethics – the people who bequeathed to the world such ethical foundations as the Ten Commandments and the injunction that “thou shalt not murder”. As one of our central goals, Yad Vashem seeks to instil these Jewish and humanistic ethical values, pointing to the Nazi attempt to undermine them. In addition, we also strive to inculcate universal values of preservation of human rights, and promote individual responsibility in fighting racism and xenophobia.

A multi-level approach

Educators and psychologists tend to agree that the inculcation of ethical values must begin at a very young age. The school consequently develops materials appropriate for all ages, beginning with very young children and continuing through to college level. We believe that people of all ages are able to confront the Holocaust at an appropriate level. A fitting educational process must be constructed for each age group in order to allow each to

confront particular aspects of the human history of the Holocaust. This process will contribute to an internalisation of values and, it is hoped, to the construction of individual moral identity and ultimately to a more ethical society. The student's encounter with the past and with its ethical dilemmas will be internalised over the years and will contribute to the construction of his or her own identity and personal ethics.

An interdisciplinary approach

A study of the Holocaust as a human experience extends beyond the boundaries of the historical discipline. Our presentation of the story as a human one mandates that other fields of knowledge that contribute to our understanding of human beings and the human spirit be incorporated into the learning process. These include art, literature, philosophy and more. Incorporation of these disciplines allows access to parts of the human psyche that the intellectual examination of historical documents alone does not always facilitate.

The Righteous among the Nations

The Holocaust was a historical event in which extremes of the human capacity for evil were brought into sharp relief. At the same time, however, it was also a historical event that brought out extreme cases of uncommon human courage and compassion. Our encounter with these two opposite ends of the human spirit call upon us to constantly examine our own personal ethics and conduct. Awareness of the importance of the actions of rescuers – the Righteous among the Nations – was expressed in the Israeli law that serves as the basis for the establishment of Yad Vashem nearly 50 years ago. Since its founding, Yad Vashem has occupied itself with locating, identifying and paying homage to these rescuers. More than 20 000 men and women who risked their lives to save Jews have been recognised to date as Righteous among the Nations. Unquestionably, the Righteous among the Nations serves as a powerful educational tool, and this effort is unique in the world in terms of its nature and its extent.

Conclusion

In sum, every teacher who wishes to teach this chapter in human history first needs to be a student and build a concrete base of knowledge. After they have acquired the information and feel emotionally equipped to deal with the subject, then it is our job to present them with various interdisciplinary approaches on how to teach the Holocaust in the classroom. Pedagogical methods and educational materials will hopefully provide teachers with

invaluable skills that will better prepare them to teach the Holocaust to young minds in the twenty-first century.

Below you will find a sample classroom activity taken from the curriculum, "How Was It Humanly Possible?", developed by the International School for Holocaust Studies at Yad Vashem. This educational unit focuses on pedagogical issues pertaining to perpetrators and bystanders. Based on case studies, this interdisciplinary unit includes a wide selection of historical documents, excerpts from scholars, works of literature and art. This lesson does not focus on high-ranking Nazis, but rather on "ordinary" individuals, attempting to examine how so many people were harnessed to the Nazi murder machine.

Transport

"Over 100 people were packed into our cattle car... It is impossible to describe the tragic situation in our airless, closed car. Everyone tried to push his way to a small air opening. I found a crack in one of the floorboards into which I pushed my nose to get a little air. The stench in the cattle car was unbearable... After some time, the train suddenly stopped. A guard entered the car. He had come to rob us. He took everything that had not been well hidden: money, watches, valuables...water! We pleaded with the railroad workers. We would pay them well. I paid 500 Zlotys and received a cup of water. As I began to drink, a woman, whose child had fainted, attacked me. She was determined to make me leave her a little water. I did leave a bit of water at the bottom of the cup, and watched the child drink. The situation in the cattle car was deteriorating. The car was sweltering in the sun. The men lay half-naked. Some of the women lay in their undergarments. People struggled to get some air, and some no longer moved.... The train reached the camp. Many lay inert on the cattle car floor. Some were no longer alive."

From the testimony of Avraham Kaszepicki, deported from the Warsaw Ghetto to Treblinka in Summer 1942.

The railroad played a crucial role in the implementation of the "Final Solution to the Jewish Question". The organisation and co-ordination of transports was a complicated matter, especially in a wartime setting. With the growing shortage of supplies and the priority given to military transports, the allocation of trains for the deportation of Jews was not always easily achieved. It took the close co-operation of all agencies – the SS, the civilian officials of the German Railway, the Ministry of Transportation and, in some cases, the Foreign Office – to overcome the difficulties and allow the transports to run so efficiently that hundreds of thousands of Jews could be deported to their death.

The Nazis had a master plan for applying their racial theory to a demographic reorganisation of Europe. Germans and Poles were to be resettled. Jews were to be concentrated in the east and later, after the decision to murder them was made, they were to be deported to killing centres.

In January 1942, representatives from all the German ministries and agencies were called to a meeting in a villa at Wannsee near Berlin. Here they coordinated the enormous operation of the murder of Europe's Jews. Reinhard Heydrich, the chief of the Reich Security Main Office, said that Europe "was to be combed through from west to east in the course of the practical implementation of the Final Solution". The officials at the meeting then proceeded to discuss the practical details.

In the spring and summer of 1942, the extermination facilities were completed and the deportations to the extermination camps commenced. Nazi Germany employed modern technology and its transportation capabilities to deport millions of Jews from all over Europe to the east. Jews from Paris and Amsterdam, from Salonika and Warsaw were rounded up, crowded into boxcars and shipped hundreds of miles across Europe, only for the large majority of them to be killed upon arrival at their destination.

The dehumanisation, degradation and suffering inflicted upon the victims was tremendous. The Jews were shipped like cattle in sealed boxcars. They were freezing cold in winter and unbearably hot in summer. The wagons were packed tight, their occupants closed inside with no hygienic facilities, no fresh air, no water and only the food they had brought with them. Once they were put in the train, any freedom of choice and control over their lives was taken from them. They were not told where they were going, how long the journey would last, or what would happen at their destination. Often the trains were sidetracked to allow other trains to pass. This meant that the deportees spent many days locked in the trains. On arrival, there were many dead in the cars.

The following section will look at different people who were involved at various levels and degrees in the organisation and implementation of the transports that carried Jews to the extermination sites in the east. These people included the railroad staff – the professional train operators without whom no transport could move, the policemen who accompanied and guarded the transports and the SS officers who planned and co-ordinated the deportations. Another large group must be mentioned. Although not actively involved in the deportations, the many people who saw the trains pass, the bystanders, became witnesses to the plight of the Jews.

*The transport of Jews from Düsseldorf to Riga,
11-17 December 1941*

All transports were accompanied by a detail of guards who were usually recruited from the police. In the deportations from Germany the guard detail routinely included one officer and 15 men. Their task began with the boarding of the train and ended when they handed the transport over to the person in charge at the destination. Salitter was one of these officers. He was in charge of escorting a transport of 1 007 Jews that left Düsseldorf for Riga on 11 December 1941. The Jews were assembled at the slaughterhouse yard in Düsseldorf. From here they were taken to the railway station where they boarded the train that took them to Riga. Salitter produced a detailed report of the entire trip with recommendations for his superiors. Aside from this document, we have no other information about him. This report is juxtaposed with the testimony of Hilde Sherman, a young Jewish woman who was deported with her husband and his family in the same transport.

Salitter's report	Hilde Sherman's testimony
I. Preparing the transport	
<p>The Jew transport planned for 11 December 1941 included 1 007 Jews ... The transport was compiled of Jews of both sexes, of various ages – from babies to 65-year-olds...</p> <p>On the way from the slaughterhouse yard [the designated assembly point] to the platform, a male Jew attempted to commit suicide by throwing himself in front of the streetcar. But he was caught by the streetcar's bumper and only slightly injured. He recovered during the trip, and realised that he could not avoid sharing the fate of the evacuees. An elderly Jewish woman walked away from the platform without anyone noticing – it was raining and it was very dark – entered a neighbouring house, took off her clothes and sat on a toilet. However, a cleaning woman noticed her and she too was led back to the transport.</p>	<p>...According to the Gestapo's orders, we could take up to 50 Kg of luggage and a bedroll 70 cm long and 30 cm wide with blankets etc. Of course, everyone tried to squeeze his best belongings into the suitcase, as no one knew how long they would have to last during this so-called 'resettlement'. ...And so we boarded the train on the 10th [of December 1941]. I said goodbye to my parents....</p> <p>My husband's name was Kurt Winter. I was deported with his family. We arrived at Düsseldorf at dawn. We had to disembark and walk to the slaughterhouse yard, where we were gathered together. I remember that even at that point the older people were unable to carry their baggage and simply threw it on the street. I saw how the people [of the town] were watching. They did not go out on the street, they were watching from behind the windows. I saw how the curtains were moving. No one can claim that they did not see. Of course they saw us. We were over one thousand people.</p> <p>We then arrived at the slaughterhouse yard [the assembly point] and stood there the entire night. Everything was deep in water. It was a terrible night. That was the beginning. It was the first time I was beaten. It was a high-ranking SS officer who stood at the entrance. There were steep stairs leading down into the yard and the people were not moving fast enough. So he pushed me and screamed: What are you waiting for, the streetcar? There will never again be a streetcar for you.... Shortly afterwards, we had to undress completely and our things were taken away....</p>
<p>Salitter makes no mention of the beating which Hilde Sherman mentions. As she reports it, she was beaten by "a high-ranking SS officer". It might even have been Salitter himself (although we have no way of knowing this, of course). What reasons might explain the fact that this did not make its way into Salitter's report?</p>	

II. Boarding the train

Departure of the transport was planned for 9.30 a.m. The Jews were therefore brought to the loading ramp ready to board at 4 a.m. However, the Reichsbahn [The German Railway] could not have the train ready so early, allegedly due to lack of personnel. Subsequently the loading of the Jews did not begin until 9 a.m. The loading of the Jews into cars was carried out in great haste, as the Reichsbahn insisted that the train must depart on time. It is therefore no surprise that some cars were overloaded (60-65 persons) while others had only 35-40 passengers. This caused problems throughout the entire trip to Riga, since individual Jews repeatedly attempted to get into the less crowded cars. As much as time permitted, I allowed them, in some cases, to make changes, as there were also mothers who had been separated from their children.

...The loading of the train ended at 10.15 and...the train left the Düsseldorf-Derendorf station at about 10.30....

The next morning at dawn we were forced to the ramp. The train had not arrived. It was bitterly cold. We stood there and stood there from 4 a.m. until 9 a.m. We were then called and the trip began on 11 December 1941.... Everything had been taken from us. One of the people asked one of the guards, an SS man, when the train was coming. They took out a club and beat him for so long that he remained there on the ground. He didn't get on the transport. That was our first dead. That was the beginning...

III. The train moves

I realised that the car reserved for the guards had not been put in the middle, but was at the end of the train, i.e. it was car no. 21... Due to a faulty heating system, the steam pressure did not reach the last cars of the train. Because of the cold, the guard squad's clothing did not dry. (It rained during the entire transport). Thus, I had to deal with guards who could not stand duty because of illness....

The commander of the transport could not see the whole train from his position. Whenever the train stopped, the Jews tried to contact the people at the railway stations, to have their letters mailed or to ask for water. As a result I had to put two guards in one of the cars at the front...

We were in a passenger car. This was before they started using cattle cars. We were so crowded that it was unbearably hot. In addition there was heating, which was unnecessary. In the other car, where the children were, there was no heating at all. They almost froze...

IV. The journey

At 11.10 [on 12 December] Konitz was reached. [Salitter wanted to rearrange the train so that the guards' car would be in the centre of the train]. This was agreed upon at first, but then the station master declared that... it would not be possible...he told me that the train would have to leave right away. A rearrangement of the train would be impossible...The conduct of the station-master seemed strange to me, and I informed him that I would take the matter up with his superiors. He responded that I would be unable to reach his superior. He had his orders. The train would have to leave, as there were two other trains en route.

He suggested that I remove the Jews from the center car and put them in the guards' second-class car. Then I could move my guards to the empty car. I think someone from the upper echelons should see to it that this railway man is informed that members of the German police are to be treated differently than the Jews. I have the impression that this is a man who still speaks of 'those poor Jews' and for whom the term 'Jew' is totally unknown....

...At Tilsit: There...the car of the guards was put in the front of the train and they finally got some heating. The guards appreciated the warmth very much ...as their uniforms were soaked and they could finally dry them....Normally, the train ride from this point to Riga would take 14 hours, but since there was only one track and our train had only a secondary priority, the trip was often delayed for long periods of time....

I remember we were suffering from terrible thirst. We had taken bread with us, but the thirst was terrible. Everyone in the car was running a fever because of the terrible heat. We arrived at Insterburg, right at the border, in what had been Poland. There the train stopped. The doors were opened and we were allowed to get off and gather the snow for drinking. We could drink it when it melted....

I had not taken off my boots because I knew that I would not be able to get them back on my swollen feet. I was the only one who was not running a fever and could get off the train. So I put as much snow as possible into dishes and even handed it to the adjacent cars through the windows. At the end of the ramp I saw a mailbox. I prepared a postcard for my parents and wrote that once their time comes, they should take only warm clothes. The postcard actually reached them, as an acquaintance later told me.

We were travelling for three days and four nights through Lithuania. I was deeply impressed by the houses of the peasants with their straw roofs. It was something we had not seen in Germany. They used wells. In Germany we had running water. The people were at the wells with felt boots and sheepskins. They looked so miserable. I thought: my God, these Lithuanians are all good Catholics, if this is what their life is like under German occupation, what will our fate as Jews, as deportees be...

In his report on the argument he had with the station-master, Salitter complains that the latter clearly does not know the meaning of the term "Jew" and its implications. What does this seem to indicate about Salitter's attitude toward the task he is fulfilling (as opposed to the majority of the report which is largely a dry, factual account)?

V. Journey's end

...We arrived in Riga at 21.50. The train was kept at the station for one-and-a-half hours.... The train stood there without heat. The temperature outside was minus 12 centigrade.... At 1.45 a.m., we relinquished responsibility for the train over and six Latvian guards were charged with watching it. Because it was past midnight, dark and the platform was covered with a thick layer of ice, it was decided to transfer the Jews to the Sarnel ghetto only on Sunday morning....

...Riga has a population of about 360 000. Among them were approximately 35 000 Jews. As in other places, the Jews were very prominent in business. After the entry of the German army, their shops were closed and confiscated. The Jews were closed in a ghetto surrounded by barbed wire. At this time, there are only 2 500 male Jews who are being used for labour. The remaining Jews were used elsewhere or shot by the Latvians....The Latvians, as far as I can tell, are friendly to Germany and many of them speak German....Their hatred is directed mainly towards the Jews. Therefore, from the moment of their liberation, they have played an important part in the elimination of these parasites. However they seem to find it strange, as I have heard from the railway workers, that Germany brings the Jews to Latvia, instead of eliminating them in their own country.

At night, the train suddenly stopped. We had no idea where we were. At dawn we could see a sign saying Shirotawa. Where is Shirotawa? What is Shirotawa? It was terribly cold. Around 10 a.m. we heard dogs barking. SS troops arrived and circled the train. The doors were opened and the screaming began: Out, out, fast, fast. We had to get out, and the last people had to clean the cars with their hands. There were no tools. We had to stand in line on the ramp. A car arrived with two high-ranking SS officers. They got out of the car, and I remember that one of them started screaming: Line up in fives and off with you to the ghetto. A man called Meyer, he was from Gort, a small village near Düsseldorf, had two children on his arm, two small boys, and asked: Sir, is it very far to the ghetto? Instead of an answer, the officer took out a stick...and hit him in the face. He released a German shepherd, who attacked the man. The man fell to the ground, and the two children too. When he got up, his mouth was all bloody and his teeth broken. This was our first impression of Latvia, of Riga, of Shirotawa.... There was ice everywhere.... The ghetto was about 20-25 km from Shirotawa. People threw away their bags. The Latvians were not only watching, they were looting. As soon as the train left, they stole everything that was on the ground. Then we went through a suburb and up a little hill. Then there was an iron gate. It opened and we were in the ghetto.

Source: Yad Vashem Archive 0.3/7337

In describing the relations with the Latvians, Salitter refers to their attitude to the Germans and their attitude to the Jews. What does this tell us about his own motivations in performing his "duties"?

What are Salitter's motivations in deciding to leave the Jews in the train after their arrival in Riga? What are the external factors which contribute to this decision? What were the implications of this decision for the Jews?

Conclusions

- a) The provisions [for the guards] were good and sufficient.
- b) The pistols and ammunition provided were sufficient...
- c) The two search lights served their purpose well...
- d) The assistance of the [German] Red Cross [to the German guards] is commendable...
- e) In order to supply the Jews with water, it is essential that the Gestapo get in touch with the Reichsbahn and co-ordinate one hour stops every day at a railway station in the Reich. Because of the timetable, the Reichsbahn was reluctant to comply with the transport commander's wishes. The Jews are usually on the road for 14 hours or more before the transport leaves and have used up all the drinks they had taken with them. When they are not provided with water during the trip, they try, in spite of the prohibition, to leave the train at every possible spot or ask others to get them water.
- f) It is also essential that the Reichsbahn prepare the trains at least three to four hours ahead of departure, so that the loading of the Jews and their belongings can be conducted in an orderly fashion.
- g) The Gestapo has to make sure that the Reichsbahn place the car for the guard detachment at the centre of the train.... This is essential for the supervision of the transport....
- h) The men in the guard squad gave me no reason to complain. With the exception of the fact that I had to prompt some of them to act more energetically against Jews who wanted to disobey my orders, they all behaved well and fulfilled their duty well. There were no incidents of disease or any other troubles.

Signed: Salitter, Hauptmann of the Schupo

Source: *Yad Vashem Archive 0.2/1145*

What appear to be Salitter's reasons for recommending that the Jews be provided with water?

Some of the guards, Salitter reports, had to be prompted to act "more energetically". None disobeyed, however. What is hinted at regarding the range of responses among the guards?

Salitter reports that there were "no incidents of disease or any other troubles". What does no trouble seem to mean to him (when placed in juxtaposition with Hilde Sherman's account?)

The Fate of the Jews in Riga

The German army entered Riga on 1 July 1941 and was welcomed by many segments of the Latvian population for having liberated them from Soviet rule. Mass executions of Riga Jews started immediately after this. Towards the end of October 1941, a ghetto, surrounded by fences, was established, and around 30 000 Latvian Jews were crowded into its small area. On 30 November 1941 the first transport of Jews from Germany arrived in Riga, to be followed in the coming months by another 24 transports with a total of over 25 000 Jews, one of which was guarded by Salitter and carried Hilde Sherman. Thousands of these Jews were murdered on arrival, others were put in concentration camps in the area. Around 15 000 were brought into a separate ghetto that was set up next to the ghetto for the Latvian Jews. The Germans conducted periodic mass executions of Jews from both ghettos by shootings in the nearby Rumbuli forests until their final liquidation in December 1943. Among the Jews who perished in Riga was Hilde Sherman's husband and many other members of her family. She registered 26 names at Yad Vashem's Hall of Names where the names of the Jews who perished in the Holocaust are gathered.

For reflection:

- *There are clearly differences between the two accounts:*
 - What elements are common to both accounts?
 - What are the differences?
 - What is included and what is excluded in each?
 - What are the central concerns in each?
 - For what purpose was each of the accounts written? How does the style of each of them reflect this difference?
- *What indications are there in Salitter's text which point to his motivations:*
 - As a police officer doing his job?
 - As an ideologically motivated perpetrator influenced by anti-Jewish feelings? (note his references to the Jews, the dispute he has with the station master in Konitz and his last remark).
 - Some of the guards, Salitter reports, had to be prompted to act "more energetically". None disobeyed, however. What is hinted at regarding the range of responses among the guards?
 - Salitter's report is a dry factual account. At what points does he digress from this dry, official form?

The names of the Jews who perished during the Holocaust are being collected at the Hall of Names at Yad Vashem, Jerusalem. Hilde Sherman filled out 24 pages of testimony for members of her and her husband's family that were killed. Among them are her parents, her brother and sister and a page for her husband, Kurt Winter, who died at the camp of Salaspils in Latvia in 1942.

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A Page of Testimony



ROB.84
Jerusalem, Israel

<p>חוק זכרון וידידות (הגנת) — ת"ד ר"צ ח' תשי"ג (1953) תק"מ סעיף 20 ג</p> <p>המטרה של חוק זה היא לאסוף את החומרים והמידע אשר נמצאו במסגרת חוק זה, וכן לשמורם למנוחה ולתועלת הדור הבא. החוק יחולק לתקופות של שנתיים ולתקופות של חצי שנה (סעיף 20א).</p>		<p>THE MARTYRS' AND HEROES' REMEMBRANCE LAW, 5713 1953 enactments in Article No. 2 (d)</p> <p>The task of YAD VASHEM is to gather into the homeland material regarding all those members of the Jewish people who laid down their lives, who fought and rebelled against the Nazi enemy and his collaborators, and to perpetuate their memory and that of the communities, organizations, and institutions which were destroyed because they were Jewish.</p>	
<p>1. שם המשפחה <i>Winter</i></p>		<p>2. שם פרטי <i>Kurt</i></p>	
<p>3. שם האב <i>Julius</i> <i>אופף</i></p>		<p>4. שם האם <i>Henriette</i> <i>בנדר</i></p>	
<p>5. תאריך הולדת <i>11/10 1912</i></p>		<p>6. מקום וארץ הולדת <i>Düsseldorf, Germany</i></p>	
<p>מקומות המגורים לפני המלחמה <i>Düsseldorf 1912-1937</i></p>		<p>מקומות המגורים במלחמה <i>Ghetto Riga 1941-1942</i></p>	
<p>מקום המות <i>Salaspils 27/4 1942</i></p>		<p>נסיבות המות</p>	
<p>שם משפחת האישה <i>Hilde</i></p>		<p>שם משפחת האישה <i>Zander</i></p>	
<p>שם בעל <i>Hilde Sherman</i></p>		<p>שם הולדת <i>Boyota, Columbia</i></p>	
<p>שמות הילדים עד גיל 18 שנפטרו</p>		<p>אני החתום הולדת ב (מחנה בלוח) קרובת/ה פטירה של</p>	
<p>I, the undersigned <i>Hilde Sherman</i> residing at <i>Boyota, Columbia</i> relationship to deceased</p> <p>hereby declare that this testimony is correct to the best of my knowledge. מצהיר/ה בזה כי נודת זו נכונה לפי מיטב ידיעותי.</p>			
<p>חתימה מקום והתאריך <i>Boyota 10/1 1970</i></p>		<p>חתימת הסוכר <i>1607/1</i></p>	

Chapter 3

Remembering and teaching about Auschwitz

Naama Shik

International School for Holocaust Studies, Yad Vashem

Introduction

In recent years, policy makers in more than 20 European nations have legislated Holocaust Remembrance Days. For example, countries which mark 27 January, the anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz-Birkenau, as their national Holocaust Remembrance Day include Croatia, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Italy, Liechtenstein, Norway, Sweden and the United Kingdom.

As educators, we need to ask ourselves a number of questions before we begin contemplating how to commemorate and teach about the Holocaust. For instance, how did Jews live before they became the targeted victims of the Nazis? What truly took place in this Nazi concentration camp and extermination centre? How should we commemorate the Holocaust? What does Auschwitz mean to us and to our students?

The aim of this chapter is to provide educators with an interdisciplinary context, including testimonies, discussion questions and visual resources, on how to teach about the significance of Auschwitz within European history and culture. Although we realise that it is almost impossible for both teachers and students to fully grasp what truly happened in Auschwitz, we hope that by concentrating on a few aspects, such as selecting new arrivals to the camp, prisoners' daily life and liberation, we will provide a small window of insight on how to approach teaching about this complex and difficult subject matter.

The Jewish minority within the European tapestry

In the years prior to the Holocaust, Jews were an active part of the cultural, social and political life of the countries in which they lived, to the extent where some achieved recognition in the areas of science, art and other fields. A very partial list of names attests to this fact: Walter Benjamin, Janusz

Korczak [Henrik Goldschmidt], Franz Kafka, Marc Chagall, Sigmund Freud, Leon Blum, Walter Rathenau, and Boris Pasternak.

The eighteenth and nineteenth centuries produced changes in the civic status and personal identity of European Jews. These changes exposed Jewish people to European culture and society and constituted a significant challenge to the Jewish community. Jews chose various channels for moulding their personal, religious and national identity, creating a rich Jewish culture within European society.



The Moabit Synagogue, Berlin, 1912. Courtesy, Film and Photo Archive, Yad Vashem.



Boating in Obeliai, Lithuania, October 1936. Courtesy, Film and Photo Archive, Yad Vashem.



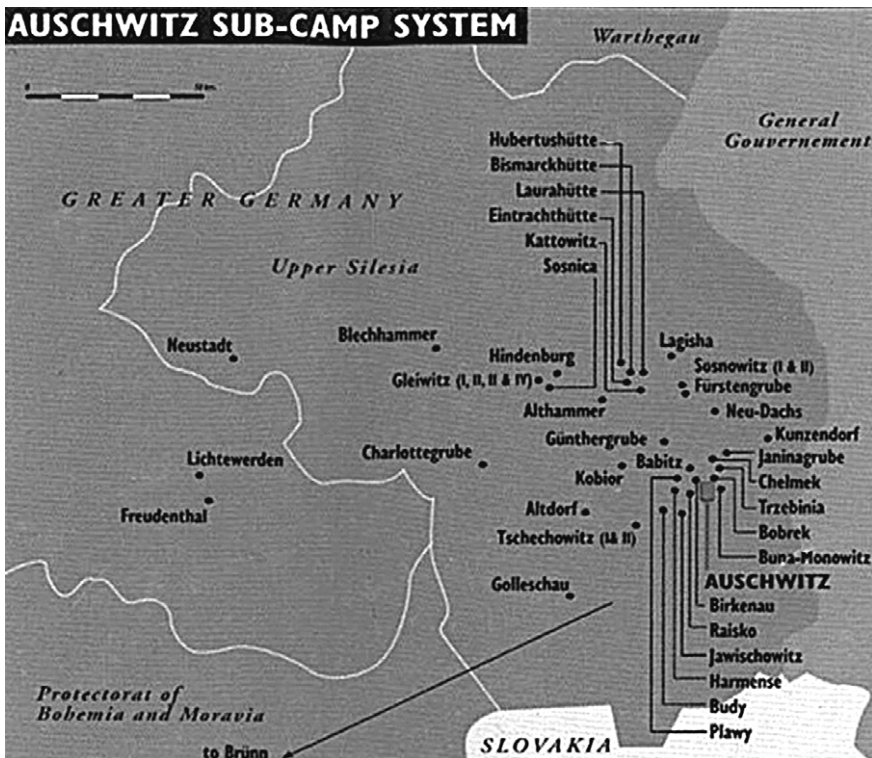
Members of a tennis team, Kaba, Hungary, 1927. Courtesy, Film and Photo Archive, Yad Vashem.

Auschwitz as a symbol

Auschwitz, located in Oswiecim, 60 kilometres outside of Krakow, Poland, has become a symbol of the Holocaust. One of the main reasons that the Nazis established the camp there was because it was a central intersection of roads and railways. Before the Second World War, Jews living in Oswiecim, who were often artisans or merchants, constituted approximately half of this small town's population. After the Holocaust, it may be argued that Oswiecim will forever be overshadowed by Auschwitz-Birkenau, the largest of the Nazi concentration camps and extermination centres.

Not only has Auschwitz become a symbol of the Holocaust due to its geographical size, but also because Jews were sent there from all over Europe to undergo selection and to be systematically murdered in gas chambers. In addition, we have many detailed testimonies of Holocaust survivors who survived the camp.

Between 1.3 and 1.5 million people were murdered in the gas chambers of Auschwitz – more than 90% of them were Jews. The other 10% were Poles, Soviet prisoners of war, Sinti Roma, Jehovah Witnesses, homosexuals and



Courtesy, Yad Vashem. All rights reserved.

others. The vast majority of the victims – who came from both western and eastern Europe including Belgium, France, Greece, Hungary, Italy, the Netherlands, and other countries – were unaware of their destination and of their fate. They were transported like animals in railway cars and arrived in a state of total collapse to the camp. Most of the people actually never really entered the camp, but just crossed it on the way to the gas chambers.

There are no graves or memorial sites for the more than one million people who were murdered in Auschwitz. Unfortunately, the Nazis succeeded to deprive their victims of any identity – even in death. Our aim is to restore the names and faces of the human beings, thereby thwarting the Nazi plan to erase them and their memory.

What was Auschwitz?

We say and write “Auschwitz”, but we actually mean a torture centre, a terror that we cannot possibly conceive, the essence of evil and horror. Yet, Auschwitz was not another planet, but a huge complex built by human beings to murder other human beings in the cruellest industrialised manner.

Auschwitz was surrounded by high electric barbed wire fences, which were guarded by SS soldiers armed with machine guns and rifles. Some Holocaust survivors have said that not only did the barbed wire surrounding Auschwitz tremble and howl, but rather the tortured earth itself moaned with the voices of the victims.

In March 1942 trains carrying Jews began arriving daily. Sometimes several trains would arrive on the same day, each carrying one thousand or more human beings coming from the ghettos of eastern Europe, as well as from western and southern European countries.

Entire families often arrived in Auschwitz, but soon after their arrival, they were brutally broken apart. In Auschwitz-Birkenau, Jews were thrown out of the cattle cars without their belongings and forced to make two separate lines, men and women/children. SS medical personnel, including the infamous Dr Josef Mengele, conducted selections among these lines, sending most victims to the gas chambers where they were usually killed and burned on the same day. Mengele and his colleagues also conducted so-called “medical experiments” on human beings in the camp.

The dehumanised minority often became registered prisoners with shaved heads in striped uniforms. Jews chosen for slave labour were stripped of everything, including outward differentiation between male and female. Prisoners' personal identities were taken mainly by the act of tattooing their arms with numbers – replacing their personal names.

How did prisoners endure such insurmountable conditions on a daily basis? For example, Jack Oran, a Holocaust survivor, relates, “everyone worked so

hard, got beaten up...and came back to the camp – the exhaustion alone pushed him to the bunk to lie down and sleep throughout the night and get enough strength so that s/he might be able to do that again tomorrow. ...In the morning, sixty percent of the six people [in the bunk] did not wake up. The other forty percent went over the pockets of the dead people to find a piece of bread...The hygienic condition was very, very poor in that period. I remember that I searched a dead body in the bunk and I found a piece of bread. That piece of bread was crawling with lice and you shook them off the bread and put it in your mouth and ate it. We all were crawling with lice. Taking a shower was not an option. To get out in the morning, to walk toward the barrack where there is water, running water – you didn't want to walk through mud. If you walked through the mud you probably lost a shoe and then you had to go barefoot. So it would be damned if I do and damned if I don't. Those were the conditions."¹



Jews arriving at Auschwitz before undergoing the selection process. In the background it is possible to see Crematorium II, to which many of the Jews in this photograph were sent after selection to be murdered. In her post-war testimony, Olga Albogen, a Holocaust survivor, relates to her family's arrival in Auschwitz in the following way, "We didn't even say goodbye to Mother and the little ones. We just had some food from home and I gave it to my mother and said, 'We'll see you tonight.' And that was it and I never saw them again. It was such a commotion there in Auschwitz... So many people...And when they emptied the wagons, thousands and thousands and trains kept on coming from all over Europe, not just Hungary. It was just unbelievable." (Yad Vashem Archives O.3-10335). Courtesy, Film and Photo Archive, Yad Vashem.

1. Yad Vashem Archives O.3-8181.



Jews undergoing the selection process on the Birkenau arrival platform known as the "ramp".
Courtesy, Film and Photo Archive, Yad Vashem.

Although the Nazis terrorised and dehumanised prisoners in Auschwitz, as well as in other concentration and death camps under their control, many Jews attempted to retain their dignity and humanity. Despite such conditions, people sought support, co-operation and friendship. For instance, Ovadiah Baruch, a young Jewish prisoner who was deported to Auschwitz from Greece, notes that the support of his friends helped him survive. He states, "During the death marches [from Auschwitz] we were three friends, Yom Tov Eli, Michael and I. We were connected heart and soul. Throughout the whole time we were prisoners in Auschwitz we stayed in close contact.... During the death marches, Michael developed dysentery. He was so weak that he could barely continue to walk, and he begged us to go on without him. Yom Tov Eli and I insisted that we would carry him and support him as best as we could."²

Discussion question

1. Some Holocaust survivors have said that people who were immediately sent to the gas chambers were the "lucky ones". After reading Jack Oran's testimony, why do you think that some Holocaust survivors believe that

2. See Yigal Shachar, *Oh Madre* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2002), pp. 86-87 [Hebrew].

those who were condemned to death upon arrival in Auschwitz were “lucky”?

2. After reading the testimonies of Jack Oran and Ovadiah Baruch, what do we learn about how prisoners in Auschwitz tried to cope on a daily basis?

Liberation of Auschwitz

By January 1945, almost five years after the camp had been in operation, Soviet troops were advancing towards Auschwitz. The Nazis, desperate to withdraw, sent most of the remaining prisoners on death marches westward in the height of the Polish winter. Many prisoners were killed en route to the



Zinovii Tolkathev (1903-77). Waiting, 1945. Pencil on Paper. Gift of Anel Tolkatcheva and Ilya Tolkathev, Kiev. Collection of the Yad Vashem Art Collection.

Reich. Soviet soldiers liberated Auschwitz on 27 January, finding approximately 7 650 barely living prisoners throughout the entire camp complex.

Private Zinovii Tolkatchev (1903-77) was an official artist of the Red Army and joined up with Soviet forces that liberated Auschwitz in early 1945. Tolkatchev was seized by the urge to depict what he saw. In the absence of drawing paper he entered the camp's former headquarters and took stationery with bold black letters: Kommandantur Konzentrationslager Auschwitz; I.G. Farbenindustrie Aktiengesellschaft; Der Oberpräsident der Provinz Oberschlesien and began to draw. Ironically, on these very same pieces of paper just a few days prior were written orders of extermination. Abutting the sketches, Tolkatchev added densely written lines with the testimony of the few survivors able to utter words. He also jotted repeatedly "to remember, not to forget."

Bela Braver, a Holocaust survivor from Poland who was deported to Auschwitz, was liberated in 1945 in Czechoslovakia by the Soviet Red Army. She notes, "The camp guard who came to open the gate said, 'You are free and you can leave.' All the guards with the dogs that used to stand in every corner had disappeared. It was all gone, as though it had never been. It was one of the miracles! The Russians entered, and we were in such a condition that no one moved, no one went out. We did not laugh, we were not happy, we were apathetic – and the Russians came. A general came in, he was Jewish. He told us that he was delighted, as this was the first camp in which he found people still alive. He started to cry; but we didn't. He wept and we didn't."³

Eva Braun, a Holocaust survivor from Slovakia who was deported to Auschwitz, was liberated in 1945 at Salzwedel by the US Army. She recalls, "While I was elated by the freedom, there was tremendous fear. Who would I find? We had survived this but we now have to go back to civilisation. How

3. See Yehudit Kleiman and Nina Springer-Aharoni (editors), *The Anguish of Liberation, Testimonies from 1954* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1995), p. 19. For more sources related to the liberation of Auschwitz, we also suggest that you read the works of Primo Levi (1919-87), an Italian-Jewish Holocaust survivor and author. Born in Turin, Levi was awarded a doctorate in chemistry in September 1943. In February 1944, Levi was deported to Auschwitz where he was imprisoned for ten months. As one of the few Italian Jews to survive Auschwitz, his experiences during the Shoah strongly weighed upon him after liberation. Levi recalls 27 January in Auschwitz in the following way: "So for us even the hour of liberty rang out grave and muffled, and filled our souls with joy and yet with a painful sense of pudency, so that we should have liked to wash our consciences and our memories clean from the foulness that lay upon them; and also with anguish, because we felt that this should never happen, that now nothing could ever happen good and pure enough to rub out our past, and that the scars of the outrage would remain within us forever, and in the memories of those who saw it, and in the places where it occurred, and in the stories that we should tell of it." See his book, *The Reawakening: A Liberated Prisoner's Long March Home through East Europe* (Boston: Little Brown, 1965), pp. 12-13.

4. See Kleiman and Springer-Aharoni, *The Anguish of Liberation*, p. 45.

would we react in a normal world again? We were two young girls without anything. Who will take care of us? What will we do? It was euphoria, but it was a very ambivalent feeling. We were frightened."⁴

Discussion questions

1. Look at the drawing of Private Tolkatchev. How did this artist document the liberation of Auschwitz?
2. Compare and contrast the excerpts of Eva Braun and Bela Braver. After liberation by the Allies, how did these former prisoners react?
3. Upon liberation, Bela Braver was told that she "can leave". Although Bela had been liberated, was she indeed free? Why or why not?

Conclusion

Overall, many moral, theological and educational issues arise when we discuss Auschwitz, but usually we are left with more open-ended questions than clear-cut answers.

However, we should keep in mind that during the Weimar Republic (1919-33), the Nazis began to wage their war of indoctrination as well as to assault their victims with words. Following their rise to power in 1933, verbal attacks were gradually followed by economic discrimination, imprisonment and later by physical destruction. It is imperative to remember that man's inhumanity to man during the Holocaust did not originate in Auschwitz, but rather it began with racism, terror, anti-democratic legislation and propaganda.

4. See Kleiman and Springer-Aharoni, *The Anguish of Liberation*, p. 45.

Chapter 4

Holocaust Remembrance Days: What are our pedagogical aims?

Paula Kitching

Department of Education and Skills, United Kingdom

Holocaust Memorial Days have become national days to remember the crimes of the Nazi period and commemorate its victims. Educators, in the United Kingdom and across Europe, have been encouraged to explore and learn about the events in an effort to understand how such crimes could have taken place and how they could be prevented in, or learnt from for, the future.

Introduction

The sheer magnitude of the Holocaust in terms of scale (both in the number of victims and the geographical spread involving the whole of the European continent and the numerous nations involved), the extreme Nazi racial policies, and the methodology of the crimes (from propaganda and legal isolation, through to the extermination camps of Auschwitz-Birkenau, and all the others), provide everyone with a range of issues to comprehend.

It is not surprising, therefore, that the Holocaust had a profound effect on post-war structures and a universal understanding of morality. The very word 'genocide' was developed in 1943 by the scholar Raphael Lemkin to try and provide a language to describe the incomprehensible crimes of killing large numbers of civilians based purely on race and/or ethnicity and/or religion.

However, widespread acknowledgment of the extent and nature of the crimes of the Nazis took decades to happen. In the initial post-war period the Holocaust and its victims were pushed aside as new political concerns and battles in the guise of the cold war came to the front of political and public consciousness. Only after persistent attempts by survivors, academics and some policy makers did the facts and details slowly begin to emerge. The drive to get the racial crimes of the Nazis and their collaborators known succeeded, but even now there are plenty of misconceptions and confusion about the Holocaust, genocide and crimes against humanity.

The terms “Holocaust” and “genocide” have become frequently used by people to describe a whole range of horrible or barbaric crimes. Unfortunately, because of their now common usage, these terms have sometimes become trivialised, or even corrupted. In many cases the Nazi crimes and their victims are sidelined partly because of the limitations of language as well as because of a lack of understanding and clear information. This raises concerns for any who wish to communicate an accurate picture of what really happened in Europe under the Nazis and to be able to provide a clear interpretation of the nature of the specific crimes that took place both then and subsequently.

As the truth and extent of the Nazi crimes came to be well known the term “Never Again” emerged in defiance, but to society’s cost this has not been the case. Racism and prejudice continue in some form in all modern societies. For many of those who survived the Holocaust this has been a further crime. Lessons have not been learnt. The lessons that the Holocaust can provide society and the responsibility for understanding what happened has taken people in many directions, and this has led to some confusing and unsatisfying outcomes: Has the focus been too heavily placed on the Nazi extermination machine rather than on the preservation of the memory of the victims?; Do we know more about how the victims were murdered than about the lives they lived and the societies they lived in?; Do we know more about some of the individuals who carried out the murders than we do about the conditions that allowed it to happen; and have we asked the countries that ignored the fate of six million Jews what they have done to prevent similar crimes?

In the classroom and the distinction of Holocaust Memorial Day

Discussion over how educators should approach the Holocaust is a process that is continuously developing. The importance of ensuring that all education about the Holocaust includes core factual information is in no doubt. Unfortunately, however, the amount of this core information (partly due to the complexity and enormity of the Holocaust) has sometimes resulted in the human side of the story, the lessons that can be learnt and the relevance to today, either taking second place or not receiving the in-depth detail that is desired.

Holocaust Memorial Day is an opportunity to go beyond the confines of the school curriculum and engage with the human experience as well as discuss the lessons that can be learnt. It provides an opportunity to look at how the Holocaust has left its mark on how subsequent horrors are understood. After

all, can connections be made which will help world nations respond to current events? Does the Holocaust assist us today in understanding other events and empathising with victims of genocide? These are important educational issues to explore, as it is desirable for young people to see the connections in society especially those of the past to the events of the present. However, comparisons cannot be made, because there can be no comparison of suffering. Nevertheless, things can be learnt from examining the stages of genocide and the responses of world nations to it.

Overall, the Holocaust provides us with a precedent of behaviour from the lowest level of depravity to the highest value of morality.

The importance of Holocaust Memorial Day and the following points is to remind us that events such as the Holocaust make an indelible mark on society from which we can begin to understand some of the events in today's world. It also allows us to remember all those innocent people who suffer due to ideologies and structures around them.

As well as providing a national mark of respect for the victims of Nazi persecution and those who still suffer its consequences, Holocaust Memorial Day aims to raise awareness and understanding of how the events of the Holocaust are a continuing issue of fundamental importance.

In particular Holocaust Memorial Day offers an opportunity for students, especially in Europe, to reflect upon, consider and discuss how those events still have relevance for all members of today's society. Ultimately remembrance days aim to restate the continuing need for vigilance and to motivate people, individually and collectively, to ensure that the horrendous crimes, intolerance and victimisation committed during the Holocaust are neither forgotten nor repeated, whether in Europe or elsewhere in the world. In light of the recent re-emergence of forms of anti-Semitism, and other racist discourses, the need to combat Jew-hatred as an integral and intrinsic component of the fight against racism, has become even more apparent.

Clearly, Holocaust Memorial Day is not a substitute for formal education about the Holocaust. Holocaust Memorial Day often focuses on a particular theme, highlighting specific topics or concepts. Although people may choose to mark Holocaust Memorial Day in different ways, a central theme can often provide a focus through which students can examine the continuing relevance of the Holocaust and lead to activities that young people might undertake against the background of the theme, in order to engage meaningfully with the issues.

Educational objectives of Holocaust Remembrance Days

Overall, the creation of a National Holocaust Memorial Day aims to:

- recognise that the Holocaust was a tragically defining episode of the twentieth century, a crisis for European civilisation and a universal catastrophe for humanity;
- provide a national mark of respect for all victims of Nazi persecution and demonstrate understanding with all those who still suffer its consequences;
- raise awareness and understanding of the events of the Holocaust as a continuing issue of fundamental importance for all humanity;
- ensure that the horrendous crimes, racism and victimisation committed during the Holocaust are neither forgotten nor repeated, whether in Europe or elsewhere in the world;
- restate the continuing need for vigilance in light of the troubling repetition of human tragedies in the world today;
- reflect on recent atrocities that raise similar issues;
- provide a national focus for educating subsequent generations about the Holocaust and the continued relevance of the lessons that are learnt from it;
- provide an opportunity to examine our nation's past and learn for the future;
- promote a democratic and tolerant society, free of the evils of prejudice, racism and other forms of bigotry;
- emphasise that all citizens – without distinction – should participate freely and fully in the economic, social and public life of the nation;
- highlight the values of a tolerant and diverse society based upon the notions of universal dignity and equal rights and responsibilities for all its citizens;
- assert a continuing commitment to oppose racism, anti-Semitism, victimisation and genocide;
- support our shared aspirations with both our European partners and the wider international community centred on the ideals of peace, justice and community for all.

Since various countries throughout Europe have chosen different dates to commemorate the Holocaust, it is important to note that educational goals pertaining to Remembrance Day may vary on the local, regional, national and international level.

Sample classroom activities for Holocaust Remembrance Day

As noted above, ceremonies commemorating the Holocaust should not come in place of formal education about what happened during the

Holocaust. It is recommended that educators introduce their students to this difficult and complex subject matter prior to Holocaust Remembrance Day, preparing lessons that will allow their students to better grasp the meaning of the Memorial Day as well as the significance of ceremonies or events that they may attend. In an effort to aid teachers to plan lessons that will enable their pupils to be prepared before Holocaust Remembrance Day, a few sample suggested classroom activities have been provided below.



This is a photograph taken in Germany in 1934, one year after the Nazi party came to power. A woman is sitting on a park bench marked in German "Only for Jews." Other benches were marked "Only for Aryans." Courtesy, Yad Vashem Film and Photo Archive.

Historical context A

After coming to power in 1933, the Nazis sought to set up a totalitarian society. They sought to control the life of every individual in Germany using terror and propaganda. They banned all political parties except the Nazi Party and arrested their opponents, putting many into concentration camps.

The Nazis were racist. They believed in the existence of an "Aryan race" which was superior and that it had to protect itself from other so-called "inferior" groups such as Jews, Sinti-Roma, Slavs and Blacks. The Nazis passed many laws that persecuted such minority groups in society. Jews were particularly attacked. Adolf Hitler repeatedly called them "a germ, infecting

society". He talked of them as a powerful unified group, the enemy of Germany. He blamed Germany's military and economic problems on the Jews. In fact, Jews living in Germany, formed less than 1% of the country's population. Many German Jews had fought for Germany in the First World War.

Key words

Racial state, Pre-war Nazi legislation, discrimination, segregation.

Discussion and research questions

1. Look at the above photograph. Why do you think it was taken?
2. What do you think the Nazis hoped to achieve by making Jews and "Aryans" sit on separate benches?
3. Can you find other periods in history when similar methods of segregation were used?



A Jewish woman selling armbands in the Warsaw Ghetto, 19 September 1941. Courtesy, Film and Photo Archive, Yad Vashem.

4. Germany in the 1930s was ruled as a dictatorship. How does a democratic system seek to protect minority groups in society?
5. Find examples of the laws that were passed by the Nazis about the following: Jews, Roma and Sinti (Gypsies), non-German citizens.
6. Find out how the following groups were treated in Germany in the 1930s: Disabled people, Jehovah's Witnesses and Communists.

Historical context B

After their invasion of Poland in September 1939, Nazi Germany had approximately 2.5 million Jews under their control. The Nazis began to persecute them almost immediately and began to deport Jews for forced labour. In Spring 1940, they began to establish ghettos in the large towns and cities of occupied Poland in which Jews were starved and restricted because most ghettos were surrounded by fences and barbed wire, or by walls. The city of Warsaw had the largest ghetto, which contained 450 000 Jews in an area of only 1.3 square miles. Thousands of Jews died of disease and malnutrition and, as of 1942, they were regularly transported to be systematically murdered in death camps. Despite the insurmountable conditions, covert social and cultural organisations were established, including schools and religious study groups, as an attempt to keep up morale. This is an example of spiritual resistance.

In April 1943, Jews in the Warsaw Ghetto who had not been deported rose up in armed resistance against the Nazi troops who were attempting to liquidate the ghetto. With only a few weapons, the majority of which were home made, Jewish fighting organisations held off the well-equipped Nazi military machine for six weeks. Although finally defeated, the act of rebellion was an important beacon of defiance that inspired further resistance.

Key words

Armband, segregation, ghettoisation, resistance, starvation, Poland

Discussion and research questions

1. Look at the above photograph taken in September 1941 in the Warsaw Ghetto. This photograph was taken by a German soldier. Should we still use photographs or images taken by Nazi photographers? Why or why not?
2. Since everyone living in the Warsaw Ghetto was Jewish, find out why the Nazis required Jews to purchase armbands and wear them.
3. Why do you think the Nazis wanted Jews to be crammed into one place behind walls?



A Holocaust survivor sitting alone in Bergen Belsen after liberation, April 1945. Courtesy, Film and Photo Archive, Yad Vashem.

4. Many Jewish children were forced to live in ghettos; find out what life was like for them.

Historical context C

In the closing months of the Second World War in Europe, Allied armies advancing into Nazi-occupied lands reached the extermination and concentration camps. In January 1945, the Soviets reached Auschwitz, and in Spring 1945 the British liberated Bergen Belsen and American troops entered Dachau, Buchenwald and Nordhausen.

However, this emphasis on liberation is misleading. Suffering did not end when the Allied soldiers walked into the concentration camps; many thousands of people continued to die of hunger and disease, despite the efforts of medical teams to keep them alive. For the overwhelming number of Jews in Europe, liberation came far too late.

The Allies discovered more than 7 million prisoners and forced labourers in Germany, including 100 000 surviving Jews of all nationalities. By the end of 1945, most of these survivors – political prisoners, homosexuals, members of resistance movements, prisoners of war, Jehovah Witnesses and others – had

returned to their homes. But this was not the end of their suffering. They could not simply put the past behind them, but had to live with the burden of their memories for the rest of their lives.

Many Jewish survivors had nowhere to go after the war: nothing of their previous lives had remained. The Jewish communities of eastern Europe had been destroyed; homes and businesses had been taken over by non-Jewish neighbours; friends and families were dead. Some Jewish survivors returned to their hometowns only to be attacked by local anti-Semites. Tens of thousands of people remained for months or even years in Displaced Persons' Camps administered by the United Nations, unwilling to return to their former homes for fear of persecution and unable to find refuge in other countries.

Key words

Liberation, Allies, Holocaust survivors, Displaced Persons' Camps

Discussion and research questions

1. What does the word liberation mean?
2. What dilemmas did Jewish survivors grapple with after the Holocaust?
3. Find the recollections of some people who liberated the camps or visited them soon after they were discovered. Are there any similarities between the different memories?
4. Find out how many Nazi death camps, concentration camps and labour camps (approximates for the last two categories of camps) there were across Europe.

Chapter 5

National Socialism and the Holocaust: memory and present

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Austria

Project description

The project National Socialism and the Holocaust: Memory and Present is a teacher-training project, focusing on the transmission of historical knowledge about the Holocaust as well as the methodological-didactical approaches, with an emphasis on their contemporary importance. The two-fold objective is to instil knowledge and ethical issues among learners. The structure of the project corresponds to the three levels on which National Socialism and the Holocaust are discussed today: Decentralised networks operate on the local/regional level; the central seminars on the national level; and discourse during the seminars at Yad Vashem on the international level. The project, sponsored by the Austrian Federal Ministry for Education, Science and Culture, was launched in September 2000.

Basic assumptions

National Socialism and the Holocaust: Memory and Present assumes that:

- in many cases instruction on National Socialism and the Holocaust does not reach its intended cognitive, ethical and affective goals;
- gaps in knowledge are evident;
- learners often express feelings of overload;
- defence mechanisms are activated.

Audience

Teachers and learners in the Austrian educational system form the target groups of this project, aiming to professionally discuss the Holocaust and National Socialism. Participants are drawn upon a wide range of disciplines and various types of schools, including adult education.

Goals and teaching approach

One important dimension of this project is to provide a structure within the Austrian educational system to promote critical debate on responsibility as a product of Austrian history. Learners should develop an understanding of how the past, present and future are interconnected. Within this context, instruction cannot be separated from reflection on the concomitant value system. An additional objective is to construct a framework for making the Holocaust and National Socialism relevant for learners in their present environment without the topic being made pedagogically pleasing or left to individual interests.

Our approach is based on the premise that learners, including teachers as learners, are active and thinking subjects who independently acquire an understanding of history and as such should be taken seriously. It is only through this approach that teachers and learners can be expected to evaluate their own value system. To achieve this goal, evaluation of project activities and discussion of project results with the group is particularly important.

Sponsors

This project is supported by the Departments for Political Education and the Department for Bilateral Activities – Abteilung für politische Bildung, Mag. Manfred Wirtitsch (Department Head), and Abteilung für bilaterale Angelegenheiten, Mag. Martina Maschke, Federal Ministry for Education, Science and Culture, Minoritenplatz 5, A-1014 Vienna, Austria. For more information, see <http://www.bmbwk.gv.at>

Advisory board

The tasks of the advisory board are to:

- assure the quality and continuity of the project;
- critically evaluate project goals and activities;
- publicise project discourse on the international level;
- publicly represent project interests;
- support the acquisition of material and non-material resources;
- support the initiation of co-operative ventures;
- represent, as trustees, the interests of the sponsors.

The board consists of representatives of the Ministry of Education, Science and Culture as well as the following experts:

- Dr Eva Grabherr (Jewish Studies, Vienna-Dornbirn)
- Professor Ernst Hanisch (University of Salzburg, Austria)
- Dr Reinhard Krammer (University of Salzburg, Austria)

- Dr Bertrand Perz (University of Vienna, Austria)
- Dr Falk Pingel (Georg Eckert Institute for International Textbook Research, Braunschweig, Germany)
- Dr Heidemarie Uhl (Austrian Academy of Sciences, Vienna)

Project modules

Various modules of the project have been established; however, working in conjunction with existing initiatives, projects and institutions in order to utilise synergy and foster exchange is an important dimension.

The Central Seminar

The Central Seminar is an annual conference spanning several days in which representatives of relevant academic disciplines (historical research, literary studies, sociology etc.) meet with teaching professionals and textbook authors to discuss an appropriate approach to “National Socialism and the Holocaust” in the Austrian educational system. During the yearly proceedings, the relevance of this topic for the present is highlighted along with possibilities to develop new methods to teach this subject matter within the educational system.

Seminar in Yad Vashem, Jerusalem

Since autumn 2000, the Department of Bilateral Affairs of the Austrian Federal Ministry for Education, Science and Culture has been sending two groups of teachers every year to a 13-day continuing education seminar at the International School for Holocaust Studies at Yad Vashem in Jerusalem. Preparatory and follow-up activities for this conference are conducted in Austria in order to assure continuity. In addition, a network has been established to further the exchange of ideas and professional development of seminar participants. A support structure for participants who decide to become multipliers has also been created in the framework of the project.

Decentralised networks

In each of the nine federal provinces decentralised networks have been established, interlinking committed and interested institutions and persons. These decentralised networks develop the necessary approaches and initiatives, co-ordinating continuing education seminars for teachers. These networks play an important role in forming working groups that examine and generate teaching materials as well as ideas for new pedagogical approaches. The networks are operated by co-ordinators in each of the provinces, and their task is to link the administrative school institutions, the

topic relevant institutions such as museums and research projects, memorial sites and interested teachers in the province. These regional competence centres provide a number of services for teachers by acting as a network hub, establishing a pool of materials as well as best-practice models, and organising a speakers' bureau. Teaching units that are relevant for the whole of Austria will be supplemented with material that reflects the regional, cultural or political environments of the schools. One of the aims is to encourage learners and teachers to delve into regional history and thereby grapple with National Socialism and the Holocaust in the history of their respective regions and towns.

Internet site

A central means of communication has been established through an Internet site, including aspects of the continuing education programme at Yad Vashem. For more information, see <http://www.erinnern.at>

Project management

For more information about this project, please contact:

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Both project managers are members of international working groups related to Holocaust education. Dr Werner Dreier contributes to the Education Working Group of the International Task Force for Co-operation on Holocaust in Education, Remembrance and Research. Mag. Peter Niedermair is a member of the Council of Europe Working Group, "Teaching Remembrance – Education for the Prevention of Crimes Against Humanity".

Chapter 6

Memory for Peace: a project to promote tolerance and understanding

Emile Shoufani
Saint Joseph's College, Nazareth, Israel

Introduction

Father Emile Shoufani, locally called "Abuna" (Arabic for "our father") is the principal of Saint Joseph's College, a Christian-Muslim school, in Nazareth since 1976. In addition to his duties as an educator, he has devoted his efforts to pursuing reconciliation between Arabs and Jews, believing that cultural and religious diversity should not be an obstacle, but rather a path to peace. Together with his associate Ruth Bar-Shalev, he launched the Memory for Peace project that involved a joint Arab-Jewish pilgrimage to



Father Shoufani and his colleagues visiting Yad Vashem in February 2003. Courtesy of Yad Vashem

the Auschwitz-Birkenau death camp, 26-29 May 2003. Prior to the trip, in which approximately 130 Arabs (mostly Moslems) and 140 Jews (both religious and secular) from Israel participated, preparatory seminars were organised in conjunction with the International School for Holocaust Studies, including a visit to Yad Vashem. In addition, nearly 200 participants from France and Belgium also joined the group, including well-known figures from the French Arab and Jewish communities. In Poland, they toured Auschwitz-Birkenau and the former Jewish quarter of Krakow, learning about the Holocaust and contemplating its lessons as well as contemporary connections.

As a result of the journey, a number of Jewish participants became cognisant of the way in which their collective experience has contributed to high levels of fear and separatism which are deeply embedded. The Arab participants expressed their commitment to a common future for all citizens within the state of Israel, taking upon themselves to develop new ideas to live together, based on their new understanding of Jewish difficulties and pain. For more detailed information about this project, see <http://212.199.140.70/mem2peace/index.htm>

During the International Forum at Yad Vashem in September 2003, organised in conjunction with the Council of Europe, Father Emile Shoufani, together with Ruth Bar Shalev, outlined the rationale behind the "Memory for Peace" project to the participants. Excerpts of their remarks may be found below.



Father Shoufani addressing the participants of the international forum, September 2003. Courtesy of Yad Vashem.

Project rationale

"Out of the depths of pain, both on the individual and collective levels – we initiated the journey 'Memory for Peace' of several hundred men and women who define themselves to be Jewish, Christian, Muslim, Israeli, Palestinian – or simply as human beings – to the infamous Nazi extermination centre, Auschwitz-Birkenau in Poland. The journey was organised in an effort to engrave the pain of the Jewish people in our hearts. In our interest to heal our own wounds, we sought to become better acquainted with the painful scar of another nation.

Clearly, our two peoples cannot put aside the bloody past until we sit down and

internalise the pain and fear that is carried by each and every one of us. We chose to delve into Jewish history, with a specific emphasis on the pogroms, expulsions and the Holocaust. Our unwillingness to tolerate any form of racism and discrimination, as part of our heritage and culture, combined with our responsibility as citizens of the state, motivated us to identify with the Jewish people. In solidarity, we stand with them in the midst of the pain and suffering that remains in their hearts and souls until today.

We decided to learn about the suffering of our Jewish brethren through their eyes, and to better understand how they have been affected by this colossal tragedy. The Holocaust has deeply influenced the Jewish people and their fear of neighbours, particularly from Arabs and Muslims in recent years. We sought to dispel myths and to undertake a project that many people claimed would be impossible to organise. We believed, and continue to believe, that through faith, we would overcome fear, anger and pain. United to bring about a positive change in the relations between our two peoples, we stood together to promote our common goals for a better future.

Human beings have incredible abilities. They are capable of deep introspection and instilling hope in the most difficult circumstances. The human spirit may be found in each and every one of us. If we allow ourselves to express this spirit, its power breaks the barriers of fear. Unfortunately, most of us do not utilise our inner power on a day-to-day basis. Hatred, power struggles, competition, xenophobia and fear surround us. In light of this reality, that we human beings created, we have very few opportunities to truly express our natural human spirit. Therefore, one of the underlying goals of our project, Memory of Peace, was to provide a space and place where we could get in touch with our innermost emotions without preconditions.

A new reality was created not only on the basis of Arab participation in this journey, but also due to their recognition of their Jewish counterparts as human beings, despite the deep mistrust that has been sown. Identifying with the pain of the other, connecting with his fate and empathising with his wounded heart have been some of the main objectives of this spiritual and emotional voyage – for both sides. Our experience, as individuals and as a collective entity, freed us from the confines of suspicion and distrust, enabling us to break away from the web of the past and the vicious circle of separation.

Our journey is not over, and in essence it has only just begun. We continuously search for meaning in being human and channelling our spirit like a ray of sunshine on our fellow man. We call upon Jews and Arabs, both those who live in Israel and abroad, to join our mission. Our project is based on the premise of mutual empathy and love. It is not a delusion or an impossible

dream. On the contrary, our goal to create a solid foundation of peace is within reach, and our work, no matter how arduous, shall move forward.

The second stage of this journey focuses on Arab culture, with its beauty, its pain and its might, in order to encounter what we did not understand, as Jews in the State of Israel, in relation to Arabism and Islam through the eyes, heart and soul of the Arab participants.

Our aim is to acknowledge the great value that lies in Arabism and in Islam, for us as human beings, for the state and for humanity, and to bring this value into expression within Israeli society as well as abroad."

Additional resources

Yad Vashem:

<http://www.yadvashem.org>

Shoah Resource Center:

<http://www.yadvashem.org/Odot/prog/>

Online Exhibitions:

http://www.yadvashem.org/exhibitions/index_exhibitions.html

About the Holocaust:

http://www.yadvashem.org/about_holocaust/index_about_holocaust.html

The International School for Holocaust Studies:

<http://www.yadvashem.org/education/>

The Righteous among the Nations:

http://www.yadvashem.org/righteous/index_righteous.html

Remembrance:

http://www.yadvashem.org/remembrance/index_remembrance.html

Amcha-Israeli Centers for Holocaust Survivors and Second Generation:

<http://www.amcha.org>

Beit Hatefuzoth-The Israel Diaspora Museum:

<http://www.bh.org.il>

The Ghetto Fighters House-Beit Lohamei Hagetaot:

<http://gfh.org.il>

The Simon Wiesenthal Center:

<http://www.wiesenthal.com>

The Vidal Sassoon International Center for the Study of Antisemitism:

<http://sicsa.huji.ac.il>

United States Holocaust Memorial Museum:

<http://www.ushmm.org>

The Imperial War Museum:

<http://www.iwn.org.org.uk/lambeth/holoc-ex1.htm>

Survivors of the Holocaust Visual History Foundation:

<http://www.vhf.org>

International Task Force for Holocaust Education, Remembrance and Research:

<http://taskforce.ushmm.org>

Memorial Museums in Germany for the Victims of National Socialism:

<http://www.topographie.de>

The Council of Holocaust Educators:

<http://www.che.nj.org>

Anti-Defamation League:

<http://www.adl.org>

Fortunoff Video Archive for Holocaust Testimonies:

<http://www.library.yale.edu/testimonies>

Mechelen Museum of Deportation and the Resistance:

<http://www.cicb.be>

Living History Forum:

<http://www.levandehistoria.org>

Centre de Documentation Juive Contemporaine:

<http://www.cdjc.org>

Fondazione Centro di Documentazione Ebraica Contemporanea:

<http://www.cdec.it>

Memorial and Museum Auschwitz-Birkenau:

<http://www.auschwitz.org.pl>

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