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Permanent Delegation
of Hungary to UNESCO

THE IMPACT OF HOLOCAUST EDUCATION: HOW TO ASSESS POLICIES AND PRACTICES?

International Seminar
27 January 2014
UNESCO, Paris

REPORT

INTERNATIONAL DAY OF COMMEMORATION IN
MEMORY OF THE VICTIMS OF THE HOLOCAUST

The Holocaust confronts teachers with one of education's greatest challenges; the history of the Shoah tests the limits of human understanding in its inhumanity, its complexity and its emotional power. As we summon educators to this most important and most difficult of tasks, a consensus has taken hold that the Holocaust must be understood not only in the places where it occurred, not only in the societies most directly affected by its crimes, but throughout the world.

UNESCO, which is charged with "promoting awareness of Holocaust remembrance through education" by resolution 34 C/61 of its General Conference, marked the International Day of Commemoration in Memory of Victims of the Holocaust on 27 January 2014 by convening an international seminar for members of the global community who are involved with and committed to this mandate. The event, titled "The Impact of Holocaust Education: How to Assess Policies and Practices", aimed at highlighting current practices and debates in the field of research in Holocaust education. It was organized in partnership between UNESCO, including

its International Bureau of Education, and the Georg Eckert Institute for International Textbook Studies with the support of the Delegation of Hungary to UNESCO.

The International Day of Commemoration at UNESCO also marked the release of the UNESCO publication *Holocaust Education in a Global Context*,¹ which explores the global spread of teaching and learning about the Holocaust. The conference took another step in expanding the dialogue amongst stakeholders in the field of Holocaust education.

From Aspiration to Achievement in Holocaust Education: Using Research to Advance Policy and Practice



Prof. Steven Katz, Boston University, adviser of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance, gave the key-note speech

Experts about the Holocaust and advocates for its inclusion in curricula around the world have developed a powerful case for the universal relevance and significance of the Holocaust. This broad sense of purpose is embedded in the United Nations General Assembly resolution on Holocaust remembrance (60/7), which established 27 January as the International Day of Commemoration in Memory of Victims of the Holocaust, and encouraged "Member States to develop educational programmes that will inculcate future generations with the lessons of the Holocaust in order to help prevent future acts of genocide". This elevated sense of purpose lays out clearly a set of ideals. It encompasses many specific goals and ideals, which range from an end to genocides to a broader public awareness and understanding of the Holocaust, and from reduced anti-Semitism and racism to greater support for human rights.

¹ The book is available from booksellers and also free, as a PDF file, here: <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0022/002259/225973e.pdf>

In order to advance these specific goals and ideals for Holocaust education, a range of policies and practices have been adopted and implemented, from global institutions to classroom instruction. Yet it is difficult to design effective policies and to implement successful practices without clear knowledge of what is actually occurring in classrooms and other educational sites. To obtain this knowledge, we need high quality research about Holocaust education.

Research can provide us with insight into how Holocaust education unfolds in classrooms, memorial sites and museums around the world. Any Holocaust education experience involves at least three crucial elements: materials; instructional interactions; and students. Research sheds light on each of these elements. Textbook and curriculum research, for example, helps us evaluate the quality of materials at our disposal: are textbooks accurate and complete? Is the curriculum adequate and age appropriate?

Dialogue between Research and Practice in Holocaust Education

Dialogue between advocates and researchers represents a dialogue between values and facts; it is a dialogue between how we wish things to be, and how they really are. When research provides a clear picture of what is happening, educators and policy makers are in a much stronger position to pursue their goals and fulfil their purposes. Research and evaluation help us to understand both what is happening

Are documentaries fair and neutral? Are teachers prepared effectively to handle the challenges they encounter?

Research methods like observations in classrooms and other educational sites enlighten us about the instructional interactions taking place. Are teachers using appropriate methods for transmitting knowledge, developing skills, and fostering positive attitudes? Are inappropriate or problematic behaviours engaged, redirected or transformed? Finally, we must understand the perspectives of the students we try to reach. What prior knowledge, skills and dispositions do students bring to the classroom? Are they open or potentially resistant to the content? How do they relate to what they encounter: do they find it distant and irrelevant, or does the history resonate with challenges in their own communities? These questions, and many more, shape our understanding of the field and what it can contribute.

now, and how effectively various policies and practices are meeting their intended aims, goals and purposes. For this reason, dialogues between researchers and advocates, practitioners and policy makers are crucial to enable us map the most effective pathways from where we are to where we want to be and to choose which policies and practices best fit our goals.

Participating Experts and Programme of the Seminar

SPEECHES BY:

- Qian Tang, Assistant Director-General for Education, UNESCO
- Soo Hyang Choi, Director of the Division of Education for Peace and Sustainable Development, UNESCO
- Eckhardt Fuchs, Deputy Director of the Georg Eckert Institute for International Textbook Research (Germany)
- H. E. Ms Katalin Bogayay, Ambassador, Permanent Delegate of Hungary to UNESCO

KEY-NOTE SPEECH:

- Steven Katz, Director of the Elie Wiesel Center for Judaic Studies, Boston University (USA), Adviser of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA)

Session I: From Advocacy to Policy: The Holocaust in Textbooks and Curricula

- Clementina Acedo, Director of the International Bureau of Education (IBE), UNESCO
- Doyle Stevick, Associate Professor at the University of South Carolina (USA), University of Tartu (Estonia): "Creating Effective Education about the Holocaust: Bringing Research and Advocacy into Dialogue"
- Peter Carrier, Researcher at the Georg Eckert Institute for International Textbook Research (Germany): "The International Status of Holocaust Education: Mapping Curricula and Assessing Textbooks: Initial Results of the Georg Eckert Institute for International Textbook Research/UNESCO Study"
- Pablo Luzuriaga, Historian, 'Education and Memory' Programme at the Ministry of Education (Argentina): "Introducing the Holocaust in the Argentinean Curriculum: Assessing the first Years"
- Claude Singer, Director of Education, at the Shoah Memorial (France): "Overview of the French situation"
- Andrea Szőnyi, Director of the Zachor Foundation for Social Remembrance, Consultant, University of Southern California Shoah Foundation (United States, Hungary): "The Holocaust in Hungarian Textbooks and Curricula: Recent Evolutions and Discussions"

Session II: From Policy to Practice: Classroom Instruction and Professional Development

- Eyal Kaminka, Director of the International School for Holocaust Studies, Yad Vashem (Israel)
- Stuart Foster, Executive Director of the National Centre for Holocaust Education, University of London (United Kingdom): "From Pedagogical Research to Classroom Practice, the Experience of England"
- Magdalena Gross, PhD Candidate, Stanford University (USA, Poland): "Understanding Polish Teachers' Motivations to Engage with the History of the Holocaust"
- Jack Jedwab, Executive Director of the Association for Canadian Studies (Canada): "Measuring Holocaust Knowledge and its Impact"
- Tracey Petersen, Director of Education, Cape Town Holocaust Centre (South Africa): "South African Learners engaging with the Holocaust"

From Noble Purpose to Concrete Goals for Holocaust Education

The sense of purpose animating Holocaust education, including the summons that there never again be another Auschwitz, must be translated into concrete practices in specific contexts, into curricula, textbooks, and teaching methods in diverse classrooms around the world. The call of the United Nations to teach the lessons of the Holocaust in order to help prevent genocides does not specify what those lessons are, but rather leaves them to be formulated anew at the national level. If students in turn successfully learn these lessons, as we hope, future genocides might be averted.

Translating this crucial goal of preventing genocides into practice requires a great number of intermediary steps and objectives. How are children in today's classrooms to become the citizens, activists and leaders who prevent genocide? What must they learn and know in order to become the next generation of helpers rather than perpetrators, the Righteous instead of bystanders? What skills must they develop? What attitudes and dispositions are necessary? What resulting behaviours will demonstrate to us that they

have learned what is necessary to keep the world from mass exterminations in the future? If we follow this challenge to its logical conclusion, we must have a model not only of Holocaust education but also one of genocide prevention, one in which education about the Holocaust itself plays a critical role in cultivating the knowledge, skills, and dispositions necessary to change both individuals' behaviour and societies' conduct as well. Given how few hours are provided to Holocaust education in most countries, we could not rely exclusively on Holocaust education to achieve these ends, but must rather see it is a crucial piece in a broader education that supports this aim.

To honour and to fulfil this highest purpose of preventing genocides, we must ask what Holocaust education is accomplishing, and even what it can accomplish, in order to understand what contribution it can make to the broader goal of humanity to avoid future genocides. To research whether Holocaust education itself can and does prevent genocides is nearly impossible. To research intermediary

goals, however, is both critical and urgent. Advocates, policy makers, and curriculum designers wrestle with the key value questions of what should be: what are our ideal outcomes, methods, and so forth? Researchers can help us to ascertain the extent to which we are fulfilling the goals we set for ourselves. And the goals we establish for Holocaust education may span the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and conduct of students today and in the future.

In this regard, the seminar provided an overview of the following main areas:

- **The State of Holocaust Education Research**
- **The Possible Research Agendas for Holocaust Education**
- **The Promise and Potential of Holocaust Education Research**
- **Some Current Issues in Holocaust Education**
- **Current Trends in Holocaust Education**

➤ The State of Holocaust Education Research

The ongoing professionalization and institutionalization of teaching and learning about the Holocaust has been followed by increasing attention to Holocaust education research. Two general statements may be made about this important and expanding field. First, we do not yet have a comprehensive picture of what is happening in the field of Holocaust education around the world, including some of the societies most directly affected by the Holocaust. Second, it is clear that though many dynamic programmes are familiar

to us, their impacts have not been investigated systematically. These circumstances have two important implications. First, we can identify and pursue a comprehensive research agenda for Holocaust education, which must also be longitudinal in order to document changes over time. Second there is great potential for discovery in the field, by documenting the most exemplary programmes, policies and practices and by sharing them throughout the field.

➤ Towards a Comprehensive Research Agenda for Holocaust Education

While international organizations and many countries have embraced a wide range of goals and purposes for Holocaust education, we lack a clear and comprehensive picture of what is happening in Holocaust education around the world. The field of research into Holocaust education is still emerging. It offers us an enticing picture of what can happen under the best of circumstances, but also warns of problems and challenges that occur too frequently.

We can, however, articulate a basic starting point. To understand what is occurring in a particular context, we would like to explore at a minimum the following domains: students, teachers, educational curricula and materials (such as textbooks, documentaries, and the like), educational methods in classrooms, and the policies that frame Holocaust education. We would seek answers to some of the following questions:

- What do students know, feel, think and understand about the Holocaust?

- What knowledge, attitudes, skills and behaviour result from their learning?
- Are curricula and textbooks accurate and sufficient to capture the complexity of the history of the Holocaust?
- How well are teachers prepared to foster a meaningful engagement with Holocaust history?

“ *As Holocaust education is developing across the world, it is of importance to make sure that it is effectively taught and that best practices be better attuned to the variety of contexts in which this education is provided.* ”

Qian Tang, Assistant Director-General for Education, UNESCO

Qualitative research methods can reveal the micro-level interactions and classroom dynamics whose prevalence can be investigated through quantitative methods like survey research. Statistical baselines of knowledge and attitudes can be kept and tracked, both comparatively across countries and longitudinally, through time.

It is clear that research is conducted inconsistently across countries. In some societies, which have been more resistant to Holocaust education, little research is available, either in official national languages or international scholarship in

English, German, French, or other languages that are used extensively across countries.

Further, only a few universities have programmes or research centres dedicated directly to Holocaust education. As a result, it is relatively uncommon as a research specialization. This also limits the visibility of the field. International organizations and governments can help to address these challenges by dedicating research funding for high quality work in the field, and by funding evaluation work for Holocaust education projects.

➤ The Promise and Potential of Holocaust Education Research

Participants in the field of Holocaust education are all aware of the profound educational experiences many students undergo. These experiences are difficult to generalize because they often involve exceptional instructors, personal encounters with Holocaust survivors, or informal educational visits to museums or memorial sites that are not provided systematically to everyone. Because of the diversity of these experiences, it is not a simple matter to quantify the impact of Holocaust education.

Still, as Steven Katz framed the key issues for the conference, we are reminded of common threads and core commitments. Teaching the Holocaust reflects a general commitment to truth and recognition of its historical impact. Students who are duly attentive, as Prof. Katz notes, should emerge, “more critically alert, more questioning of their own and other environments, and more sensitive to the variety of human and cultural differences.” These commonalities are manifested in diverse local forms, but remain as critical outcomes nonetheless. At stake is reasoned discussion and open inquiry, put at risk by dogma and orthodoxy and prior commitments. As Katz emphasizes, this is not merely a “Jewish” question, but one that defines what kinds of countries and cultures we wish to have—will they be “based on perversions of the truth, on discrimination and dehumanization of the ‘other,’ on the “demonizing” of those one disagrees with, and, therefore, a corrupt and unjust society?” Education is the only answer, and students can be inspired to answer history’s darkest chapters by becoming “more caring, morally self-conscious, and certainly better citizens.” Holocaust education intrinsically invites to move beyond instrumental learning, acquiring knowledge simply to apply it somewhere else, and compels us to consider the moral dimensions of learning and the formation of character in individuals and society.

For these reasons, despite the difficulty in providing simple quantitative measures of complex outcomes, Holocaust education can be of high interest to educators and researchers in complementary or related fields who can examine Holocaust education as a case study, both providing new knowledge about it and deriving lessons for other fields. This means that there is great potential for supporting researchers in relevant fields to conduct examinations of Holocaust education. In addition, many organizations do remarkable work but do not systematically disseminate their findings. Governments and organizations supporting Holocaust education could support high quality evaluations of such projects, in order to measure the



Stuart Foster, Executive Director of the National Centre for Holocaust Education, University of London

extent to which they are accomplishing their stated goals, on the condition that the results will be made available to the public. If the evaluations match the outcomes and expectations we often perceive, then the proven results may lend support to making time available in packed curricula for Holocaust education. Evaluations which fail to meet expectations will be critical for forcing a re-evaluation of methods and approaches, which should also improve performance.

Although the picture of Holocaust education available in the research is not complete, it nevertheless has a great deal to offer. If specific studies are lacking in particular contexts, there

are often studies from neighbouring countries or those with similar characteristics that may be relevant or transferable to that context. Investigations about teachers in Belgium may be needed, but research done with teachers in France, Holland and Denmark may alert us to important trends that apply in that country. Textbook studies in Slovakia, Romania and Hungary may not tell us what we will find in the Czech Republic, but they may sensitize us to key issues and trends. In other words, existing research is better able to instruct us about the most significant questions, issues, dynamics and trends across regions than to the specific truths for any given context. This constitutes an important, if incomplete, contribution.

► Current Issues in Holocaust Education

Quantitative research in particular is underrepresented in the field of Holocaust education, and so the appearance of high quality quantitative work is particularly noteworthy. Quantitative research conducted with large numbers of participants can provide broad generalization about averages in entire countries. Research that takes place at a national level can shed light on the performance of policy, and the need for policy action or reform. National surveys can further provide baseline data that can be monitored across time to evaluate policy efforts and adjust future efforts accordingly.

Professor Stuart Foster, who directs the Centre for Holocaust Education (CHE) for the Institute of Education, at the University of London, demonstrated what is possible when an excellent research organization receives strong financial support from governments and foundations. By conducting original research, CHE is able to act directly on the findings in its research-informed professional development for teachers while sharing their findings nationally and internationally. Their findings are thus some of the most comprehensive available for any national context. Their 2009 study of teachers, for example, reached more than 2000 teachers and documented both deep commitment and the remarkable fact that 83% were self-taught, and while the subject averaged just six hours per year, the actual amount of time varied greatly from school to school. With clear data about teachers' needs, CHE was able to address common problems in Holocaust education instruction, particularly the Auschwitz-centric perspective and frequent use of perpetrator-oriented narratives. Through these efforts, they have reached even more teachers, more than 3000, than they had originally researched.

Currently, CHE has undertaken the largest survey of Holocaust education in the world, reaching more than 10,000 students between 2013-2015. Using mixed-methods and a 91-item questionnaire, CHE will examine not only what students know, but where their knowledge comes from, how they understand it, and how they feel about it. In doing so, they produce results and insights that will be of high-relevance in many contexts. Not least, they are pioneering new survey items and research methods that may be adopted or adapted to new contexts.

If quantitative research on a large scale is rare, so too is research that examines broad national trends comparatively. Jack Jedwab has done both. His research in Canada examined the relationship between genocide awareness, knowledge about the Holocaust, and attitudes towards diversity. 65% of Canadians feel they have a good level of knowledge about the Holocaust, and roughly three in ten do not. Helpfully, Jedwab notes that these figures are consistent in both Francophone and Anglophone Canada. Notably, 39% learned about the Holocaust through a course, including 60% of 18-24 year-olds, while one in eight in that age range profess to never having heard of the Holocaust, double the rate for the country as a whole.

Jedwab's data on sources of knowledge about the Holocaust will provide valuable comparative context for the CHE's forthcoming work on this question. Half of Canadians have spoken to family or friends about it, and half have read newspaper articles. Remarkably, 39% say they have read a book about the Holocaust. 56% have seen a film about it, and 13% have visited a museum exhibit on the subject. Those with strong knowledge levels are in fact more in support of intervening militarily where genocide occurs. However,

attitudes about diversity are not so simple to predict. It is a common belief, and hope, that knowledge of the Holocaust will lead to more tolerant attitudes about cultural differences, including attitudes towards, for example, immigrants. But this belief about what would likely be the case, about what should happen, is in fact an empirical question. And the data available cannot support the belief.

In his study on Holocaust knowledge and its relationship to attitudes towards diversity in Spain, Canada, Germany and the United States, soon to be published by the International Bureau of Education of UNESCO, Jedwab found that strong knowledge of the Holocaust did not lead to stronger support for immigrants to retain their cultures of origin. The extent to which Holocaust education aligns in practice with the goals of multicultural education is unclear, and such insights summon us to conduct further research about the extent to which historical presentations of the Holocaust address the dynamic Jewish cultures across Europe before the war, or whether they reinforce a singular Jewish identity that was mutually exclusive from the dominant national identities in the countries in which they lived. Would today's students see Anne Frank's father the way he apparently saw himself, as a proud German officer of the first World War who was secular and of Jewish heritage, or would they see him through the singular identity that the perpetrators sought to impose on him, simply as a Jew? These insights raise important questions for the content and practice of Holocaust education, and demonstrate the importance of checking our values and beliefs against the empirical realities of the data.

While CHE's quantitative work is exceptional and Jedwab brings an important comparative perspective, the work carried out by the Georg Eckert Institute (GEI) for International Textbook Research and UNESCO, titled "International Status of Holocaust Education" provides one of the broadest international examinations of curriculum and textbooks yet conducted. Earlier work on textbooks by Patricia Bromley and Susan Garnett, published by the International Bureau of Education of UNESCO, documented the global spread of reference to the Holocaust in education around the world. Peter Carrier presented the initial results

of the GEI/UNESCO study that is mapping curricula and assessing textbooks in the field of Holocaust education around the world.

The GEI/UNESCO study uses textbooks in 25 countries on all continents as a representative sample to examine how the Holocaust is understood and presented, and a review of approximately 135 national curricula that are currently in force. The very concept of the Holocaust varies around the world and across languages, where it is used in different ways, and with different associations. Documenting these various conceptions of the Holocaust in different parts of the world provides a baseline for understandings and interpretations and how they evolve over time. Curricula vary in how they prescribe treatments of the Holocaust: some countries make direct reference to it, and some not at all, while several curricula make indirect reference to the Holocaust, employing alternative terminologies different than "Holocaust" or "Shoah" or referring implicitly to the event. Likewise, the fact that the Holocaust is not a compulsory subject in the curriculum does not imply that it is not taught, and conversely.

Dealing systematically with the presentation of the Holocaust requires the consideration of many aspects. The GEI/UNESCO project focuses upon the historical and geographical range included, the people involved, the broader framework within which it is considered (often historical, but sometimes conceptual), the point of view represented, the narrative structures and local variations. Applying these criteria to the narratives presented revealed some trends in Holocaust treatments around the world. It also shows that although the Holocaust is subject to shared patterns of representation, at the same time, it is conceptualized in new idiosyncratic and local ways.

It also highlighted a series of challenges. For instance, there can be a pattern of problematic simplification through superficial comparisons. Complex and detailed comparisons can shed light on both events if done with care, but textbook representations of Hitler and Darwin side by side, or juxtapositions of various episodes of mass violence with Nazi

“ There is no part of our ever-shrinking globe that is free of ethnic friction, racial prejudice, group stereotyping, and forms of political discrimination. Therefore, there is no culture where Holocaust education would not have a significant and beneficial impact within a larger educational programme on values. ”

Steven Katz, Director of the Elie Wiesel Institute of Judaic Studies, Boston University



persecutions may do a disservice to the understanding of both elements.

Other problematic patterns reflect broad trends in social studies debates over the years. Historical narratives that reduce historical explanation to the actions of top leaders—the “Great Man” theory of history—appears as personalization in some textbook treatments of the Holocaust. In his presentation, Carrier noted some cases, in which the broad complicity in the Holocaust was elided by focusing upon Hitler, the idea of anti-Semitism, and his “determination to remove Jews from Germany.” The latter formulation, of course, may reinforce the common but mistaken impression that most Jewish victims of the Holocaust lived in Germany, rather than in Poland and other Central and Eastern European countries.

In some cases, we find appropriation: the Holocaust is not treated on its own but as a reference point through local lenses and for local purposes. The Holocaust functions as a measuring rod in discussions relating to the genocide of the Tutsi in Rwanda or the massacre in Nanjing in 1937. Political motivations appear in the use of the Holocaust in India regarding issues of decolonization. The selectivity can come in the form of emphasizing heroic actions to the exclusion of local complicity, whether by celebrating resistance in French or Francophone materials, blaming Germans and Romanians in Moldova, or praising Albanian rescuers in Albania.

While a great deal has been written about the relationship between Holocaust education and human rights education, the GEI/UNESCO study does not provide evidence to support this in actual practice. While the Finnish curriculum does address human rights violations “such as the Holocaust”, scholars have noted that the Holocaust was not simply a violation of human rights, it was a policy of systematic murder on an unprecedented scale. As Carrier notes, these many renderings of the Holocaust use local and national perspectives and issues to frame the Holocaust, often in

ways which are not intrinsic to the event, and in this manner de-contextualize and re-contextualize the Holocaust through appropriation and domestication.

This global research project provides also a number of critical recommendations for the continued expansion of Holocaust treatment in education systems around the world. These begin at a most fundamental level, with the historical integrity of the materials in question. The relevant period and places must be included, and contextualized within broader historical trends. The actors involved must be identified, by name and in the scale of their involvement, with an understanding of their motivations and experiences. The passive voice, which disguises responsibility, must be avoided, and emotive language as well. False simplicity and singular causality must be prevented; treatments of the multiple causes of the Holocaust are necessary. Carrier concluded with recommendations that mirror the purposes of the conference itself: the idea is not to identify the good models, and transfer those to the others, but rather to recognize the complementarity of different understandings and treatments of the Holocaust that enrich the dialogue between contexts and the inevitable localization that occurs with examination of the Holocaust and its relevance to particular contexts. He noted in particular the excellent treatment of racism historically in South African textbooks, from which European textbooks could surely benefit.

The relevance of the Holocaust in post-apartheid South Africa was on display in the presentation of Tracey Petersen. Post-apartheid South Africa bares the scars of state terror and institutionalised racial discrimination. This context is very important in understanding why Holocaust history has been included in the national curriculum. Holocaust education serves as a case study, and it provides the student with an understanding of how racial states, like the apartheid state, are developed. Holocaust education also deepens the student’s understanding ultimately of the development of the South African Constitution, which drew on the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Peterson examined the meaning and relevance of the Holocaust to South African high school students. Holocaust education has been compulsory since 2007 for all ninth form students. As Director of Education at the Cape Town Holocaust Centre, Petersen has evaluation and project data from thousands of students to inform the Centre’s work. To see what was retained after the short term impact of the prescribed six weeks of instruction has passed, Petersen’s team sampled 344 students from 14 schools with a mixed 27-item survey. It was the first study of its kind in the country.

The findings revealed that students remembered the atrocities of the history; and remembered the suffering of

the victims. When asked what the most significant aspect was that they had learned from the history of the Holocaust, many learners framed their responses in terms of a call to action: the Holocaust was seen as a reminder to them to fight racism. Students were particularly moved by the names and faces of the victims, which aligns with the research-based guidance to “personalise the history” as a methodological approach. Students came down on both sides of the question of whether apartheid related to Nazi persecutions. Studying them in succession enriched understanding of bystanders and persecutors for some. When asked whether studying the Holocaust helped them understand apartheid, others saw no connection. But it seems clear that many students felt a better comprehension of the processes that created and sustained apartheid, and felt it was important to recognize that the apartheid system was not the only racially-driven regime that terrorized its own population.

Argentina’s relationship to the Holocaust involves a different set of historical traumas. Argentina, which has struggled to deal with its difficult history, adopted a set of education and memory policies in 2006. Pablo Luzuriaga, representing the Ministry of Education in Argentina, explained that these education and memory policies address the Holocaust as one of three subjects: the period of state terrorism in Argentina, from 1976-1983; the Malvinas (or Falklands War) of 1982; and the Shoah. To address the Holocaust, the Ministry has worked to insert it into the curriculum and to develop educational materials for different educational levels, and teacher training. The materials are diverse, examining the treatment of the Holocaust in film, teaching methodology and content, history and teacher aids. Particularly noteworthy are the conferences and trainings, which have prepared 7000 teachers during 2013. An additional 1200 participated in online courses. Argentina in particular has noted four specific challenges in dealing with difficult histories, and has used the model of the Holocaust to address these issues. They are: the problem of generational proximity; the challenge of how to represent horror; the local dimension of memory; and contemporary issues of human rights.

Andrea Szónyi of the USC Shoah Foundation, Hungary and the Zachor Foundation for Social Remembrance discussed the current politics surrounding education reform, and with it, curriculum treatment of the Holocaust in contemporary Hungary. Noting that, in the midst of conflict, it is easy to assume that such matters are better elsewhere, she found it valuable and enlightening to hear about the achievements and challenges in the field in contexts all around the world. As Hungary enters the year of the 70th anniversary of the destruction of the Hungarian Jewish community, it faces several challenges in educating about the Holocaust. The revisions to the Hungarian curriculum include a shift away



Qian Tang, UNESCO Assistant Director-General for Education

from competencies and towards more content, including more specifically Jewish topics. The new, data-packed curriculum, however, constrains teachers and reduces their freedom as well.

The lack of freedom is compounded by the limited number of textbook options, which must be reviewed and approved by the government and reduces their choices. The critical review of the curriculum by Jewish NGOs and educational experts, including critics from within the government, has resulted in set of 58 amendments. These challenges, together with the need to integrate teacher training programmes successfully, leaves three major challenges for Hungary: to teach the Holocaust on a professional level, in accordance with international norms in a way that may result in attitudinal change, and in understanding responsibility in forming social norms of the next generation. A yet open question is what exactly the new textbooks that public schools will have to select from will include.

Like Hungary, the other countries of Central and Eastern Europe are only two decades removed from Soviet hegemony and its painful legacy, which compounds and complicates an open reckoning with the history of the Holocaust. No country lost more of its Jewish citizens than Poland, whose developments in Holocaust education Magdalena Gross follows closely. Dr. Gross’s research draws upon interview, surveys and observations of 60 Polish teachers and 200 high school students. Gross explores the local and contextual dimensions of implementing reconciliation curriculum. So much killing was done in Poland that Holocaust curriculum must deal not only with distant death in gas chambers, but with the legacy of atrocities

committed right before the eyes of local populations. In such a context, teaching about human rights, two steps removed from the Jewish particulars of Holocaust history, may lose the purpose of teaching about the Holocaust altogether.

Dr. Gross's research is a result of a three-year study of teacher interviews, student responses to photographs, and student-generated narratives about World War II. Specifically, she focused on the Jewish experience within the frame of the Second World War in Poland. Dr. Gross's ethnographic research on Polish teachers' motivations to teach the difficult past revealed that they are not motivated primarily by a desire to spread ideas about human rights or tolerance. Rather, what drives them is a desire to understand themselves and their students, and to fill a gap in their personal history.

Gross also examined the relationship between young people's understanding of a troubled history and national presentations of the past. Her analysis of nearly 190 Polish public school student surveys and narratives illuminated shared cultural narratives about war. Most students seek to domesticate this past, seemingly impervious to the influence of media and international attention to Polish-Jewish relations and the Holocaust. At the same time, analysis of student data revealed a small but important subset of students who recognized the Holocaust and the Jewish-Polish experience. They formed a budding "counter-narrative," an interpretation that goes against what is commonly believed in Polish society.

Claude Singer of Mémorial de la Shoah in Paris, France, helped to document how historic trends shaped how France dealt with the history of the Holocaust in education. Before 1980, the Holocaust received mention in discussions of World War II, but it was not a focus or area of concentration. The growth of awareness of the Holocaust in France occurs not simply in its improved educational treatment, but throughout society, with documentaries, conferences, novels: a broad literary, film, and academic engagement with the subject. Its

increased presence even prompts concerns about saturation: does the Holocaust risk becoming so pervasive or ubiquitous that it becomes counterproductive, provokes resistance, or loses its special status and power? So far, this seems to be a theoretical concern rather than an empirical reality. France maintains its approach to the Holocaust through history and an analytical frame; the emphasis on moral lessons or considerations arising from studying the Holocaust is not much present in practice.

Doyle Stevick's presentation called attention to the important role of research for future work in the field of Holocaust education. He noted that there is a clear ethical and moral case for adopting Holocaust education, as well as a clear case based on its historical significance. The evidence-based case for Holocaust education, he felt, exists in practice but has not yet been sufficiently documented by researchers. When it is, it can further strengthen the field by identifying challenges and obstacles, best practices, conducive policies, and promising innovations. Much of this work is based on strong local linkages to history, and therefore is not easy to generalize into universal practices, but rather, on principles of effective, responsible, and accurate localization.

Stevick noted that the further development of Holocaust education in diverse contexts around the world requires precisely the kinds of opportunity for dialogue presented by this conference. For teachers to facilitate the engagement of students with the history of the Holocaust, they need the support of both education experts and Holocaust scholars. These pedagogical interactions take place in a broader curricular and policy context. Policy makers, teacher trainers and curriculum experts need researchers in order to understand the particular challenges of the classroom, so that they can make adequate provision of curricular time and professional development. These dialogues, which are focused within national contexts, are only enriched by sharing policies, practices and materials across national boundaries, which allows the transfer of new ideas.

► Current Trends in Holocaust Education

The formal presentations were enhanced by broad interactions among the conference participants, both presenters and audience members. Participants roundly celebrated the diverse perspectives and broad global participation in the conference. All found great value not just in exemplary cases of societies that strongly emphasize Holocaust education, but in all of the ways in which different societies relate to the history of the Holocaust.

The need for ongoing research was clear, not only as Holocaust education spread into new contexts, but also as generations change, politics evolve, and the generation of survivors leaves us. We need large scale quantitative surveys to understand the extent of crucial issues in and between countries, and local qualitative research to appreciate the specific challenges and struggles in classrooms.

These studies revealed how many contexts struggle to reach the most basic and fundamental goals concerning the Holocaust: basic historical accuracy. Together with superficial understanding and knowledge comes the risk of misleading and problematic comparisons or linkages. These challenges all fall into the realm of de-contextualization and re-contextualization. At the same time, students and educators naturally see parallels, make comparisons, and build links to the material. How they make meaning of the event will continue to be a crucial topic for researchers. In addition, it will be critical to provide sufficient support for such educators to engage the subject with sufficient depth that the counterproductive outcomes of superficial treatment are overcome.

We also need to track the impact of new efforts in the field. A strong move towards commemoration has developed, particularly in Europe. How has this effort related to educational efforts? And how does the content of Holocaust education itself relate to the content taught in the other parts

of education systems? Is it complementary, contradictory, or can an in-depth study of the Holocaust function as a capstone that builds on the growing understanding and sophistication of students in later grades?

In sum, it remains a challenge, yet a critical one, to implement adequate Holocaust education in diverse contexts around the world. These challenges are broadly shared, and international exchanges are a crucial medium for sharing experiences, practices, and results. Research has a particularly rich field still to investigate and to document. The power, creativity and innovation in Holocaust education have promise not just for others in the field, but for educators of all kinds around the world. This interface with complementary subjects and instruction can only strengthen the outcomes of Holocaust education, even as its expansion requires us to monitor its adoption from the most basic considerations of factual accuracy to its use and misuse in relation to other global histories.

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Mass grave in Borove, Lvov region, Ukraine, May 2005. © Guillaume Ribot
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