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HOLOCAUST. INTERCULTURAL PREMISES AND CONSEQUENCES

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Abstract

The Holocaust signifies an immense human failure. Historians are now very open to the way other disciplines can illuminate areas of the past and of past behavior. The difference between historical and intercultural approaches is less problematic than it once was, due to recent research regarding national cultures and cultural dimensions.

We consider that intercultural analysis has a great deal to offer to Holocaust studies. Indeed, the intercultural issues have received relatively little attention in relation to the study of the Holocaust. A classical taxonomy—perpetrator, victim, bystander—has long dominated studies of the Holocaust, genocide, and other mass atrocities. We specifically chose to study these aspects, from the point of view of the interculturalist, and show that a person is not by nature—born or preordained—to be one or the other. A person becomes a perpetrator, a victim, or a bystander.

Our paper reveals that individuals behavior depends on cultural values (especially uncertainty avoidance and collectivism) and cultural practices (languages, felt and attributed identities, interpretations of history), which affect the ideology of the majority.

This article investigates the connection between cultural dimensions and human behavior using intercultural analysis. Thus, an intercultural perspective suggests that cultural dimensions influence behavior.

Keywords: Culture, Intercultural, Hofstede's dimensions, Antisemitic, Genocide, Holocaust

Introduction

Culture has not always popular as a source of explanations for behavior. Goebbels once (in)famously said: "As soon as I hear the word culture, I reach for my gun". Of course, culture cannot be used as an explanation for everything that happens in society. Life is far too complex to pretend that one-dimensional explanations can adequately map the human condition. And human behavior is not always predictable (Wursten, n.d.a). Global or universal values are in the first place the values of Individualist cultures. The rights and obligations of individuals and minority groups are integrated in the rule of law in these cultures. The rules are applied irrespective of gender, colour, ethnic origin, religion or sexual preference (Wursten, n.d.b).

With regard to social obligation specifically, those higher in collectivism do seem more responsive to others' needs across a diverse array of contextual cues (Oyserman et al., 2002). Hofstede's national culture dimensions have not become irrelevant simply because they were developed 45 years ago. Instead, there is a need for a better understanding and increased awareness of when and for what countries the field can still rely on Hofstede's framework and when to be more careful in sampling a set of countries (Beugelsdijk et al., n.d.).

Cultural traits have often been attributed to heredity, because philosophers and other scholars in the past did not know how to otherwise explain the remarkable stability of differences in culture patterns among human groups. The role of heredity is exaggerated in pseudo theories of race, which have been responsible, among other things, for the holocaust

organized by the Nazis during World War II. Ethnic strife is often justified by unfounded arguments of cultural superiority and inferiority (Hofstede et al., 2010). Cultural genocide was referenced as the destruction of the specific characteristics of a group— language, religion, traditions, and so on (Waller, 2016).

In terms of values, nations have a gravitational effect not only on the populations of their regions, but also on the nominally different religious groups inside a nation. The gravitational effect has two aspects:

1. Homogenizing: the values of nominally different religious groups that live within a single nation tend to be similar, resulting in relatively short distances between such groups as well as homogeneous national clusters.

2. Discriminant: the nominally different religious groups that live within a single nation tend to be distinguishable from the religious groups of other nations (Minkov & Hofstede, 2014).

Recent psychological research found "mirror neurons" in our brains, resonating if something is happening to others. Scientists have shown that the same brain regions light up when you watch such things happening to someone else as when you experience them or imagine them happening to you. Why is it then that, sometimes, terrible things are done to others? The obvious examples are the Holocaust and, more recently, the beheadings carried out by the Islamic State. The sad thing is that recent research has shown that our empathy is dampened or constrained when it comes to people of different races, nationalities or creeds (Wursten, n.d.b).

What does it mean to be sensitive to the pain of others? How do we learn to respect the traumatic memories of loss that other people carry when they seem to threaten our own? Different countries have to learn to face their difficult histories in their own way (Seidler, 2014). Traditionally, ethical behavior has been understood and addressed as an individual phenomenon, yet the Holocaust and other cases of genocide represent collective forms of violence and victimization, raising complex questions about the links between individual responsibility and collective behaviour. The political and ethical implications of the role of "bystanders" remain as complex as they were in the immediate wake of the Holocaust (Barnett, 2017).

Holocaust signifies an immense human failure. It did enormous harm to ethics by showing how ethical teachings could be overridden or even subverted to serve the interests of genocide (Geddes et al., 2009). Sociology has a great deal to offer Holocaust studies. A concern for both theory and methodology as well as with social problems, social control, social psychology, and deviance make sociology a natural for Holocaust studies (Porter, 1996). In fact, though, ideas for social structures are seldom new: most of them are to be found in the works of Plato (400 BC), or other c1assical writers, or in the Bible. The social designer's problem is to put the right ideas into practice at the right moment (Boersma & Hofstede, 1979).

The processes of interpersonal communication and the articulation of socially inherited memories for young people born since the events are also gendered in complicated ways in different national and cultural environments (Reading, 2002). The processual movement between individual trauma and collective trauma appears to evolve more easily into ethical practices of remembrance when institutional and social settings bring together the aesthetics of empiricism (history), the aesthetics of entertainment (media), and the aesthetics of testimony (trauma). Indeed, these aesthetic registers are at play in many realms of Holocaust culture, including in the series of high-profile institutions founded during the era of the witness and designed to codify Holocaust and genocide memory for future generations (Fogu et al., 2016).

According to the relativist's outlook, discrimination can and does take place but it hinges much more on matters of taste, culture, historical context, privilege, or power than on objectivity, rationality, and truth (Roth, 2005). The sociocultural motivation theory focuses on a multiplicity of interacting influences, with intense group violence as their outcome. These include cultural dispositions, life conditions, and group conflict (Newman & Erber, 2002).

Race has sometimes been used more-or-less benignly as a synonym for species (as in "the human race") or as a word that refers neutrally or in some historical sense to physical, cultural, or ethnic differences among people (as in "the black race"). Overwhelmingly, however, the term race has done much more harm than good. Embedded in the "logic" of racism, the reasons are not difficult to find (Roth, 2015). In the Third Reich's Final Solution to the Jewish Question in 1942, the Disappearances in Argentina's Dirty War from 1976 to 1983, the Rwandan Genocide in 1994, and many other places and times, aggressors have harmed and killed victims designated as outside their scope of justice. Moral exclusion can normalize violence and injustice through exclusionary laws, rules, processes, and outcomes that can then be accepted as the way things are or ought to be (Opotow, 2011).

Not only sociologists of Jewry but sociologists in general avoided the topic of Holocaust for several decades after World War II. However, a sociology of the Holocaust (Shoah) is now being formed after many years of neglect. There were many reasons for the neglect: a return to "normalcy" after the War, a reluctance of sociology to deal with unique events, a lack of role models, stimulation, intellectual criticism, recognition and inspiration for those studying the Holocaust (Porter, 1996).

Public knowledge about the Holocaust is not determined statically by individuals' social structural characteristics. Rather, public knowledge is flexible and could be enhanced by Holocaust education that emphasizes identification (Bischoping, 1996). Other than a few brave souls such as Irving Louis Horowitz, Helen Fein. Theodore Abel, and Vahakn Dadrian, sociology has abandoned the Holocaust to others; yet it does not mean that these "others" have abandoned their "sociology."(Porter & Bayme, 1993).

Holocaust: the Destruction of European Jewry

The Holocaust is unique. What the statement of uniqueness does mean is that the Holocaust is sufficiently different from all preceding events- in terms of ideological purpose, technological manipulation, calculated administration, the character of the criminals, the dehumanization of the victims, and so on- to identify the time thereafter as a new stage in history (Morgan, 1984).

For media scholars, as well as historians, the Nazi Holocaust is a crucial starting-point for discussions of memory and the social inheritance of the past because it was a central point of European history and the 'war on memory' was at its centre. The memory of the events, how and in what ways people remember them, and how within different nations and cultures the memory of the Holocaust is handed down have also been the subject of much academic debate (Reading, 2002). Antisemitism in an extreme racist form and as state sanctioned policy in Nazi Germany "triggered" the persecution and provided the "indispensable ideological basis of its implementation." Not everyone involved to a greater or lesser degree in the persecution, however, shared the extreme Nazi variant of this hatred, and for some, antisemitism was not a motivation at all (USHMM, n.d.).

For example, with the Holocaust, the attack was made on a group that had been loyal, patriotic, and productive members of German society and was intended to eliminate this group not only from Germany, but from the world (Dutton et al., 2005). The postmodern moment allowed those who studied the Holocaust to realize the complicated discussions that arose from this atrocity (Martin, 2004).

For instance, in contemporary Germany, the term Führer ("leader") is used to describe one certain politician in German history closely associated with the Holocaust (i.e., Adolf Hitler), and thus Führer is generally perceived negatively. Rather, business leaders in Germany are generally called Führungskraft, Führungsperson, or Manager. Interestingly, in contemporary Austria, the German word Führer seemed not to have the same association with the Holocaust (Hanges & Dickson, n.d.). The development of Social Identity Theory resulted from the desire to understand why individuals rationalize seemingly irrational behaviours. For instance, during WWII, Nazis rationalized extinguishing entire populations of individuals who were associated with a Jewish social identity, despite the fact that individuals belonging to the two social groups had previously been friends, colleagues, and neighbours. These cognitive processes can explain how people condone unreasonable actions, such as the Holocaust, however, they fail to explain the ways in which social identities are influenced by culture, in particularly individualistic and collectivistic cultures (Powers, n.d.).

For instance, some scholars like Daniel Goldhagen relied on unverifiable assertions about the specifically anti-Semitic nature of German society and culture, and reduced the act of perpetration to a simple and invariable motivation (Overy, 2014). The emphasis in some early works was on understanding the conditions under which ordinary people " followed orders", the underlying assumption being that bystanders were people who were otherwise on the sidelines and not directly involved in the creation or implementation of Nazi ideology and policy. Their fundamental role in history was a passive one (Barnett, 2017).

The Nazi ethic was one of self-denial and responsibility for the 'purity' of the German Volk. Individuals had to learn to sacrifice their selfish interests and desires for something higher – which was the Nazi vision of the moral law (Seidler, 2014).

In most cases the power of ordinary people to confront or withdraw from the imperatives to comply, whether these are intellectual, institutional, social, or psychological, is evidently much more limited than the black/white division between perpetration and dissent would suggest (Overy, 2014). Generally, the course of the war proved critical in shaping the choices of individuals at all levels of German and European societies: whether people thought Germany would win—and dominate Europe for the indefinite future—or lose—a possibility that grew after the defeat of German forces at Stalingrad in February 1943 (USHMM, n.d.)..

The Holocaust, if not the nadir of professional ethics, was surely one of its darkest days. No profession escaped guilt from its practices during that period. In medicine, German physicians clearly had complicity or direct involvement with sterilization of those whom the state deemed unacceptable or those determined by the state to have a hereditary illness (McCall, 2011). These psycho-social problems can be divided into four categories: (1) affectivity, (2) self-identity problems, (3) cognitive problems and (4) interpersonal functioning (Krysińska & Lester, 2006).

Among European Union members, Austria and other central European countries in the IBM studies and their replications scored relatively high on uncertainty avoidance. In this part of Europe, ethnic prejudice, including anti-Semitism, has been rampant for centuries (Hofstede et al., 2010). Antisemitic attitudes were usually secondary, however, to other considerations. In German-occupied countries, the need to prove loyalty to new German masters, provided many individuals with powerful motivation to collaborate. Some leaders, allies of Germany with greater autonomy, from more antisemitic Romania to less antisemitic Italy, chose not to collaborate in all measures, notably turning over Jews for deportation "to the East," in part to protect their countries' sovereignty (USHMM, n.d.).

Before and during World War II many German and Austrian scientists of Jewish descent or who were otherwise anti-Nazi fled their countries, mostly to Britain and the United States. They brought synergy between the Middle European taste for theory (rooted in strong uncertainty avoidance) and the Anglo-American sense of empiricism fostered by weak

uncertainty avoidance. Some of the refugees experienced scientific culture shock (Hofstede et al., 2010).

When one remembers that the persons responsible for the Holocaust were a cross-section from virtually every profession, skill, and social class, the persistence with which the "Final Solution" went forward without effective moral dissent is the more striking (Geddes et al., 2009). During World War II, looking remotely as if one might be Jewish and not possessing a non-Jew declaration while being in a European country was tantamount to a condemnation (Hofstede et al., 2010).

Historians are now very open to the way other disciplines can illuminate areas of the past and of past behaviour that are evidently less amenable to conventional historical methodology. The wide difference between historical and social psychological approaches is less problematic than it once was, not least because a few social psychologists have begun to engage seriously with the history in order to make sense of the psychology (Overy, 2014).

Consequently, National Socialism in Germany is an example that needs to be examined and analysed in this context and light, for how it saw other ethnic groups, cultural entities, races, and especially the Jews at that time, as others to be eradicated (Geddes et al., 2009). Closely related to ethics is social and political philosophy. The Holocaust was systematic, state-sponsored murder. It depended on politics and government, and Nazi Germany put art in the service of genocide even as that regime destroyed works of art that Nazi ideology defined as degenerate (Roth, 2005).

One can, of course, continue to obey a patently illegitimate authority figure by using a variety of justification techniques. In certain ambiguous contexts, a solitary subordinate without access to needed social discussion or comparison information may "over-presume" legitimacy (Miller, 2014). The threat posed by "the Jew" was the most serious to Hitler. Jews, he perceived, were powerful, numerous, widely distributed throughout the world and highly organized, seductive, and the physical incarnation of pure evil. To Hitler, Jews were at the heart of the socio-political forms that he passionately opposed. Jews, he believed, were the originators of Marxist communism, capitalism, and parliamentary democracy (Newman & Erber, 2002).

In fact, a three-term taxonomy—perpetrator, victim, bystander—has long dominated studies of the Holocaust, genocide, and other mass atrocities. In such contexts, those terms are not separable, static, or purely descriptive. The intentions and actions of perpetrators entail victims, and victims do not exist without perpetrators. Importantly, a person is not by nature—born or preordained—to be one or the other. A person becomes a perpetrator, a victim, or a bystander. Both social circumstances and individual decisions are parts of that process (Roth, 2015).

Also, the political corollary of the rise of nationalism in Europe was the emergence of a new normative form of political organization— the "nation- state"— replacing empires, dynastic kingdoms, tribal confederacies, and city- states. A "nation" refers to a sociocultural identity, a union of people who share a sense of national identity, usually built on similar cultural, linguistic, historical, and religious characteristics (Waller, 2016).

Outside Nazi Germany, the form and depth of antisemitic attitudes varied greatly from areas where the Jewish population was larger and less integrated, such as many areas of Poland and Romania, compared to many countries in Western Europe, such as the Netherlands and France, with smaller, more assimilated Jewish populations and traditions of democratic pluralism (USHMM, n.d.).

In the literature different survivor syndrome risk factors are described, and they can be divided into three main categories: an individual's experiences and life circumstances before the Holocaust (e.g., age, social class, and family environment), during the war (social support and available help, the sense of meaning of life and the desire to survive) and after

1945 (the social and political climate, threat of further persecutions, and the family situation) (Krysińska & Lester, 2006). Against the backdrop of an expected decline in Holocaust knowledge, for practical purposes it is important to seek out compensatory approaches to Holocaust education. Beneath three of the social structural or demographic factors examined here, generation, gender, and ethnicity, lie social psychological issues of identity that influence Holocaust knowledge (Bischoping, 1996).

For historians the Holocaust is among the most complex historical situations in which to try to explain perpetrator behavior. This is partly because the Holocaust differs from other forms of mass killing because of its long-term, systematic, and controlled nature, and partly because the number of men (no women were actually involved in carrying out the face-to-face killing) who played a direct part in the genocide was very great, suggesting that any analysis of why they behaved the way they did must rely on a variety of explanations rather than a generic core (Overy, 2014). There are some social-psychological explanations for people's behavior during the Holocaust: (1) Fear. "Fear" is a popular explanation for people's behavior during the Holocaust; (2) Gain. Gain came in many forms and dimensions. For example, for ordinary individuals, "gain" included the acquisition of material possessions either bought at a large discount at auctions or looted after the owners "disappeared"; (3) Deference to Authority. For instance, members of police, paramilitary, or military unit are trained to follow established chains of command; (4) Pressures to conform and to rationalize one's choices (USHMM, n.d.).

Thus, regardless of an individual's personal feelings toward Jews, obedience was a sanctioned rule in Nazi Germany and certainly not relegated solely to low-level subordinates (Miller, 2014).

In the same vein, weakened by emigration and increasing political repression, German psychology gave way to studies congenial to Nazi goals: research on race, eugenics, and character to support Nazi population policies and their ideologies of worthiness and worthlessness (Opotow, 2011).

Protestant, rural, and northern regions generally Nazified earlier than Catholic, urban, and traditionally more liberal western parts of the country. When Hitler took power in Germany, only a small minority of ordinary people shared Nazi antisemitism. Nazi propaganda and changing norms and laws did erode older, pre-Nazi ties, especially in the absence of the public expression of opposing views under the Nazi dictatorship. Still, those who espoused extreme antisemitic views remained a minority (USHMM, n.d.).

For scientists from various fields, the Nazi Holocaust is a crucial starting-point for discussions of memory and the socio-economic inheritance of the past, because it was a central point of European history. The memory of these terrible events, how and in what ways different nations and cultures remember them, and the socio-economic issues of the Holocaust for long-term economic development have also been the subject of much academic debate (Warter & Warter , 2017). In light of those presented above, deniers are chiefly important for what they intend in the present rather than for what they imply about the past and denial is inseparable from contemporary fascist and antisemitic political projects: the Holocaust, after all, still constitutes the major obstacle to the rehabilitation of Nazism (Finney, 1998).

Cultural Dimensions

The six dimensions of national culture identified by Hofstede are: (1) Power Distance (PDI), the way people deal with hierarchy; (2) Individualism/Collectivism (IDV), the way people deal with the relationship between the individual and the group; (3) Masculinity/Femininity (MAS), the way people deal with motivation. A preference for competition or a preference for consensus; (4) Uncertainty Avoidance (UAI), the way people

deal with unfamiliar risks; (5) Long Term Orientation (LTO), short term versus long term orientation; (6) Indulgence versus Restraint (IVR), the way people deal with basic and natural desires. Having collected the data, Hofstede was able to rank the preferences of the majority in any one culture. The ranking is done on a continuum from low (0) to high (100). It is important to understand that this is about the majority preferences of the group and not about individuals. Individuals from a certain culture can clearly have other preferences than the majority of the culture they come from. However, the majority culture decides about the criteria for proper behaviour in that culture and defines what is and what is not acceptable. Being different is seen by the majority as "deviant" and is neglected or even punished (Wursten, n.d.c).

Hofstede originally identified four dimensions of national culture: Power Distance, Uncertainty Avoidance, Individualism (or Individualism/Collectivism), and Masculinity/Femininity. The fifth and sixth dimensions, Long-Term Orientation and Indulgence versus Restraint, have been added later. Only the original four dimensions are based on the surveys conducted at IBM, while scores for the latter two dimensions are based on items and data from the World Values Survey (WVS) (Beugelsdijk et al., n.d.). The Hofstede findings are defined by comparing the values of nation-states. For some "globalists" this is an old-fashioned idea and even unacceptable. Even stronger, some of them are saying that referring to culture is tantamount to apartheid on a global scale. And apartheid is racism and fascism in one encompassing word (Wursten, n.d.b).

Overall, the findings imply that, in spite of cultural change, the continued validity of the Hofstede dimension scores and the cultural distance measures derived from them is not in question. Relative cultural differences measured more than 45 years ago serve as a good proxy for cultural differences today. If there is an issue with the validity of these measures, it is not due to the assumption of temporal stability (Beugelsdijk et al., n.d.).

The national influence is much stronger than the influence of global religions. This results in nationally homogeneous and statistically distinguishable clusters of nominally different in-country religious groups. With respect to values, a shared national history is a potent cultural factor, whereas a globally shared religion is not (Minkov & Hofstede, 2014). Besides, collectivism can be defined as a cluster of attitudes, beliefs, and behaviours toward a wide variety of people. These can all be summarized by the word "concern," which refers to bonds and links with others. The more concern one has toward others, the more bonds with others are felt and acted upon, the more collectivist is the person. Low concern implies weakness or infrequency of perceived and enacted bonds with others, and is typical of an individualist (Hui & Triandis, 1986).

With regard to the question of whether individualism– collectivism (IND-COL) influences well-being, recent research corroborates Hofstede's intuition that IND relates to social structural factors relevant to the workplace. This finding is important, in that it provides an important broadening of Hofstede's initial research, as well as surprising because these findings are based on a correlation between current social-structural factors and societal-IND scores obtained almost 45 years ago. This result suggests more stability in Hofstede's initial IND scores than he himself believed would be the case. Further, a relation between Hofstede's IND score and average country-level life satisfaction ratings suggests that IND may increase well-being (Oyserman et al., 2002). Furthermore, masculinity-femininity is about a stress on ego versus a stress on relationship with others, regardless of group ties. Relationships in collectivist cultures are basically predetermined by group ties: "groupiness" is collectivist, not feminine. The biblical story of the Good Samaritan who helps a Jew in need—someone from another ethnic group—is an illustration of feminine and not of collectivist values (Hofstede et al., 2010).

In another view, mental images are fundamental social structures that we all have in our heads. They transcend all types of activity and delve deeper than differences in an organization culture. The consequence of this is that if two different mental images are operational between two cultures where one communal language is spoken, as is the case in the Netherlands and Flanders, this can lead to major problems. The six mental images are; the pyramid, the Solar system, the well-oiled machine, the contest model, the family and the network (Wursten, n.d.a).

Much of the historiography illustrates the extent to which individual complicity in Nazi crimes was driven by mundane motives like greed, opportunism, and conformity—motives that may influence "bystanders" in other situations (Barnett, 2017). Besides, individuals are inscribed into and through the shared versions of the past that people in different ways inherit; personal articulations of the past, in turn, may then come to be articulated socially through publicly disseminated mediations. Such an historical and intercultural analysis reveals the ways in which the concept and practice of memory in itself is a social construct in which are embedded important technologies of gender and sexuality, especially in socially inherited memories of genocide (Reading, 2002).

Once we come to understand the psychological, social, economic, and cultural motivators that are in place for any given system, we can more easily sift through what these systems deem expedient and inexpedient, and how these systems enforce a desire in their adherents for the expedient (Geddes et al., 2009). An improvement can only be expected if measures are taken, possibly by the government, to remove the necessity of or invitation to socially undesirable behaviour (Boersma & Hofstede, 1979).

If no one denies the reality of suffering, what makes some victims more visible and recognizable than others? By what cultural operations is victimhood transformed from a natural, individual fact into a social object? How and why do some kinds of suffering become grievable, while others do not? These are some questions posed by anthropologists who study the category of "the victim." They are interested not only in the politics of victimhood but also in what kind of politics is entailed by bids for victimhood; they often identify an antipolitics, not unlike recent claims about human rights (Fogu et al., 2016). Theoretical studies take up the problem of evil in general. Empirical studies focus on particular, historical events. This is often a disciplinary divide, with philosophers and theologians debating the problem of evil, while historians, sociologists, and psychologists focus on empirical cases, either institutional or individual (Geddes et al., 2009).

In our pluralistic world, where cultural, religious, and philosophical perspectives vary considerably, a widely held belief is that values are so relative to one's time and place that the "truth" of moral claims is much more a result of subjective preference and political power than a function of objective reality and universal reason. That relativistic outlook meets resistance in the Holocaust, for there is a widely shared conviction that the Holocaust was wrong. An assault not only against Jewish life but also against goodness itself, the Holocaust should not have happened, and nothing akin to it should ever happen again (Roth , 2005).

The ideal of universalization conceives of the individual and the self in terms of a general definition that precludes any historical, cultural, social, political, religious, ethnic, or regional differences among different people and different groups (Geddes et al., 2009). Although philosophy often highlights characteristics shared by all persons, its history contains theories that have negatively emphasized differences—religious, cultural, national, and racial. Such theories have encouraged senses of hierarchy, superiority, and "us versus them" thinking in which genocidal policies may assert themselves, especially in times of economic and political stress (Roth, 2005).

Assuming that all individual members of a certain culture think, believe and behave alike can result in stereotyping and leading to a careless approach (Warter & Warter, 2019a).

Groups that are socioeconomically successful, such as Jews or the wealthy, are attributed traits of competence that explain the group's success, but, if they are considered to be an out-group, such groups are simultaneously viewed as lacking in warmth because they are seen as competitors or exploiters. The former set of traits attribute the ability to influence the economy and society to the targeted group, whereas the latter set of traits suggest that the group may intend to do harm. Thus, groups that are targets of envious prejudice are at particular risk of being viewed as intentionally causing economic and social problems (Newman & Erber, 2002).

Culture, through the influence on behaviour, attitudes, and positions towards action is a major factor of facilitating, blockage, success or failure (Warter & Warter, 2015a). The liberal, egalitarian justification of universal respect for human rights, personhood, and individual autonomy is couched in arguments of moral absolutism, as it is obligatory for all individuals and states—independent of historical, social, or cultural context—to esteem and not to interfere with these foundational norms (Geddes et al., 2009).

There is no society without individual men and women, but as people live together, a social reality that is more than they are, individually or collectively, manifests itself and exerts its influence. Individualistic outlooks tend to lose sight of the fact that living together binds people together by social ties that elude reduction to individual choices and decisions, likings and dislikings. Nevertheless, even individualistic outlooks can recognize the importance of traditions that emphasize how the good of the whole is crucial (Roth, 2005). Cultural diversity in organizations can be both an asset and a liability (Warter & Warter, 2015b).

In some cases, socioeconomically unsuccessful groups may be seen as competitors, rather than as cooperative "helpers," if they are deemed to be a drain on resources (rather than a source of cheap labour) or viewed as threatening the integrity of the dominant group. The Nazis' initial institutionalized murder schemes were directed at the mentally and physically disabled, whom the Nazis viewed as weakening the "Aryan race" (Newman & Erber, 2002).

Life-span variations such as age, health, education, job, and domestic and economic circumstance as well as social, cultural, and political factors—ethnicity, gender, and nationality, for example—affect people's inclinations and abilities to protest and resist crimes against humanity (Roth, 2015). The cultural differences can lead to difficulties of communication and misunderstandings (Warter & Warter, 2019a). Nationalism sees the word as divided into distinctive "peoples," however defined, with a concomitant desire to maintain and protect that distinctiveness. Nationalism is a "psychological bond," not necessarily requiring historical accuracy, joining a people and differentiating it; it is "the essence of a nation." (Waller, 2016)

The French, however, are more culturist than racist in any strict sense. They have accepted black Africans who speak perfect French in their legislature but they do not accept Muslim girls who wear headscarves in their schools (Huntington, 1996).

When discussing the causes and consequences of genocides, attempts should be made to develop multi-layered and complex perceptions of these events, although such a task is difficult, cognitively but mainly emotionally. These realizations are especially difficult when it becomes clear that genocide has long-standing implications, not only on the survivors of the genocide but also on the perpetrators, the bystanders and the rescuers, and on their descendents and their societies, at large (Lazar et al., 2009).

A certain culture will emerge among people who share a particular geographic, and socio-economic habitat and must find particular responses to its specific challenges. National culture operates as a gravitational force that most frequently keeps a nation's territories together in terms of cultural values (Warter & Warter, 2018). However, culture is also a

complicated concept that is difficult to define and therefore easily misconstrued (Warter & Warter, 2019b).

Intercultural Premises and Consequences

The dimension which is very relevant for the discussion on universal values as suggested by globalists is "Collectivism versus Individualism". In Individualistic societies people are supposed to look after themselves and their direct family only, whereas in Collectivist societies people belong to "in-groups" that take care of them in exchange for loyalty. Morality conflicts are mostly about in-group loyalty and behaviour as opposed to out-groups. In collectivist cultures people are supposed to be loyal to, and in harmony with, the thinking and the interest of their own in-group (tribe, ethnic group, region, clan, religious group) and in return the in-group will take care of them. What happens with outsiders is different. In individualistic cultures the position of the individual is the starting point of morality. Equal rights for every human being, regardless of where people are coming from, the colour of their skin, their gender and their sexual orientation or the minority they belong to (Wursten, n.d.c).

Also, which groups are considered minorities in a country is a matter of definition. It depends on hard facts such as the distribution of the population, the economic situation of economic groups, and the intensity of these groups' interrelations. It also depends on cultural values (especially uncertainty avoidance and collectivism) and cultural practices (languages, felt and attributed identities, interpretations of history), which affect the ideology of the majority and sometimes also the minority (Hofstede, 2001).

The priming approach assumes that all people can think about the world in an IND or COL frame but differ in what is likely to come to mind. Because, as shown repeatedly in social cognition research, people base their judgments on what comes to mind at the time a judgment or decision is made, chronic differences in IND versus COL-based behaviour ensue from differences in habitual focus on IND or COL. Thus, a priming perspective suggests that salient cultural perspectives influence behaviour (Oyserman et al., 2002). Feelings toward other nations vary not only with uncertainty avoidance but also with masculinity. Under the conditions prior to the war, ethnocentric, xenophobic, and aggressive tendencies could get the upper hand in these countries more easily than in countries with different culture patterns. Fascism and racism find their most fertile ground in cultures with strong uncertainty avoidance plus pronouncedly masculine values (Hofstede et al., 2010).

A measure that can be applied to the discussion of social cohesion is the degree of social inequality in a country and the degree of acceptance of that inequality. The degree of 'femininity' of a country in a cultural sense relates, among other things, to an unwillingness to think in terms of winners and losers in society. An important characteristic of feminine societies is that there is a great deal of sympathy for and solidarity with the underdog, irrespective of whether they are part of the family or ethnic group (Wursten, n.d.a). Specifically with regard to what we said earlier, if Jews of European origin tend to be better educated, and have higher achievements in education and on IQ tests than other populations, that may have to do with the fact that they did not possess any land; as a result they had to make a living in professions that required mathematical skills: money-lending and trade. This purely secular peculiarity of European Jews may have resulted in a culture that values education more than other cultures do (Minkov & Hofstede, 2014).

Integrating gender into our thinking about the Holocaust is about trying to understand as deeply as possible the meaning of the horrific experiences that people went through, and why and how the genocide against Europe's Jews and other ethnic and social groups happened (Reading, 2002). If national political cultures are considered as dynamic configurations of social identity, social representations of history, and cultural syndromes,

then just as a tradition of valuing high power distance and social hierarchy may predispose a people to adopt violent solutions to a political issue, a calamitous event may be mobilized by political elites to turn a low power distance and egalitarian culture towards violent solutions to political problems in a way that may have long-term consequences for that culture's values (Liu et al., 2012). Further, cultures and whole peoples have been destroyed by an unbalanced desire on the part of others for a monochrome culture that can be controlled (Warter & Warter, 2019b).

The Enlightenment thinkers envisioned a grand scheme for their universal principles and their modes of discourse—one that would be applicable to all human beings regardless of their varied cultural, social, religious, and ethnic differences (Geddes et al., 2009). At the opposite pole, dehumanization is the denial of "humanness" to other people. In general it can take three "faces": (1) animalistic dehumanization: comparing certain human beings to non-human animals. It is used to prevent one from showing compassion towards stigmatized groups; (2) mechanistic dehumanization, in which human attributes are removed, and the person is perceived to be unfeeling, cold, passive, rigid, and lacking individuality; (3) creating "the enemy" a person can be dehumanized is by perceiving the other person as being the enemy. State-organized dehumanization has historically been directed against perceived political, racial, ethnic, national, or religious minority groups (Wursten, n.d.b).

Indeed, historical and socioeconomic explanations seem better at accounting for the conditions initiating genocide or pogrom but once the violence begins, individual actions require individual explanation. It seems that even in toxic situations, where the level of individual atrocity is raised, individual differences continue to exist (Dutton et al., 2005).

For academics, a clear understanding of the word "genocide" is important because it allows us to compare and contrast the complex social phenomenon of similar historical events that fall within the boundaries of that definitional classification (Waller, 2016). Traditionally, three sets of factors are found to create the confluence of forces that erupt into genocide, defined here as the intentional destruction of a national, ethnic, racial, or religious group. These include macrophenomena (wars and economic depressions), structural-political factors (totalitarian regimes, no free press or political opposition) and personal-psychological factors (Monroe, 2008).

However, state- sponsored abuses of human rights can lead to oppositional responses that trigger even greater levels of violent internal conflict. Other sources of violent conflict include political and social inequalities, state crises, fragile political systems transitioning from dictatorships to democracies, territorial disputes, and a history of grievances and provocations between groups (Waller, 2016). For example, racism assumes the innate superiority of one group over another and uses this assumption to justify resorting to violence for maintaining this superiority. Totalitarian ideologies like apartheid imposed definitions of which groups were better and which were inferior—definitions that might be changed from one day to another (Hofstede et al., 2010).

As social identity theory predicts, the escalation of group competition to group hostility, although not inevitable, is possible when in- group members fear, realistically or not, that what makes them distinct and superior is under threat from out- group members (Waller, 2016). One of the main reasons that individuals are attracted by socio-political movements is a strong desire for a new, more acceptable psychosocial identity. Likewise, the SS had a strong appeal for many Germans as they attempted to overcome their existential crisis and disorientation by shedding their unwanted selves and acquiring new and more satisfying psychosocial identities—a means of regaining lost control (Newman & Erber, 2002).

Prior studies have found that onlookers before they made choices that led to complicity and collaboration in the Holocaust, they experienced their Holocaust- related

circumstances and opportunities in various ways, at different times, and in diverse contexts. Those perspectives informed their decisions and actions, which were individual, but also influenced by friends and families, political and religious leaders, and by social factors (e.g. economic prospects, partisan ideologies), the latter steeped in antisemitism and racism (Roth, 2015).

Even where legal liability seemed straightforward, the social and political mechanisms for addressing the ethical and moral aspects were enormously complicated. The Nazi regime had implemented a number of policies that were fully legal under National Socialism, although they were internationally viewed at the time as criminal and declared to be criminal in Germany itself after 1945 (Barnett, 2017).

Seeking explanations for the abominable crimes of the Nazis and beyond, in recent years, neuroscientists have begun to map empathy's pathways in the brain. There is still a need to map a host of other empathy-related tasks — like judging the reasonableness of people's arguments and sympathizing with their mental and emotional states — to specific brain regions (Interlandi, 2015)

In a similar vein, there is some empirical support for the idea of a shared morality. Frans de Waal, a Dutch ethologist, found in his research that morality is not limited to human beings. He showed that morality is found even in the behaviour of primates like Chimpanzees and Bonobo's. This means among other things that morality even predates religion. De Waal found two basic pillars of morality: (1) Empathy: The ability to understand and to share the feelings of others. It is safe to say that, in general, higher primates and humans everywhere share the ability to be empathetic and to understand that you should not do to others, which you wouldn't want to be done to you. (2) Reciprocity: Do unto others, as you would have them do unto you! This is related to a sense of fairness and a sense of justice (Wursten, n.d.c).

Sociodemographic correlates of rescue behaviour now appear to serve more as trigger mechanisms, stimulating what are the critical psychological forces driving rescue behavior. This may explain the variance and disagreement in early studies since one trigger mechanism (e.g., religion or gender) could prompt rescue acts in one person while another trigger (e.g., duty, socialization or education) might activate them for another person, or for the same person at a different point in time (Monroe, 2008). These issues may raise some questions such as: What does it mean to believe that 'in spite of everything people are really good at heart'? Is this a belief that you sustain despite all the horrors you might experience and what does it mean to educate children into this belief? It is not a matter of empirical evidence alone, but somehow can remind us of something different, the need for a formative social theory that engages with its own philosophical assumptions it is often blind to (Seidler, 2014).

In addition, as was true for "bystanders," motivations for individuals who actively helped Jews by sheltering them in hiding could also be more complex than often thought. Not all such helpers were saint-like individuals motivated by altruistic or religious feelings. For some poor people simply getting the money the victims provided for their room and board became a form of survival during hard times and was worth the risk taken. It was not unusual for persons who helped Jews to hold moderate or traditional antisemitic beliefs. Some were able to overlook them to serve their own material interests or as part of anti-Nazi resistance efforts (USHMM, n.d.)

For bystanders, rescuers, and Nazi supporters, self-image required them to act in a certain fashion. For rescuers, self-image created the altruistic personality in which the habits of caring—whether induced through religion, socialization, or innate forces—became part of a spontaneous way of life (Monroe, 2008). The history of denazification illustrates the particular complexities of trying to address the bystander question in the context of a collective crime like genocide, as opposed to the context of individual behaviour in more politically stable circumstances (Barnett, 2017) People must try to prevent major social

conflicts - meaning conflicts not only between classes but also between races or generations. Of particular concern, of course, are those that threaten to lead to violence (Boersma & Hofstede, 1979).

Not only is ethics fragile and easily overridden. Not only is it subject to subversion. It can be an immense force for evil as well as good, and that description fits because the very nature of good and evil are not clear to everyone but profoundly contested. In that sense, the Holocaust shows us that ethics is not simply a solution for social and political ills. It is also a problem and even a contributor to them (Roth, 2005).

Because the Holocaust involved people in different roles and situations living in countries across Europe over a period (1930-1944)-one broad explanation regarding motivation, for example, "antisemitism or "fear," clearly cannot fit all. In addition, usually a combination of motivations and pressures were in play. For the Holocaust as other periods of history, most scholars are wary of monocausal explanations. Interpretations of individuals' motivations fall into two broad categories: first, cultural explanations (including ideology and antisemitism); and second, social-psychological ones (fear, opportunism, pressures to conform and the like). Cultural explanations focus on values, beliefs, and prejudices, particularly antisemitism of various forms, including Nazi anti-Semitism (USHMM, n.d.). Accordingly, psychometric instruments and content analyses were used to examine the Nuremberg defendants. None of the studies as able to pinpoint anything unique in the Nazi's personalities, family histories that would explain their actions in the Holocaust (Dutton et al., 2005).

In brief, the Holocaust was at the center of critical debates in the humanities and social sciences for several decades in the second half of the twentieth century. It deeply marked new theorizations of the forms and limits of representation, the relationship between history and memory, narrative and testimony, and it required the humanities to acknowledge the relevance of concepts previously unheard of in disciplines like history, philosophy, and literary studies (Fogu et al., 2016).

Conclusion

For academics, the Holocaust is among the most complex situations in which to try to explain people behavior. This is to some extent because the Holocaust differs from other forms of mass killing because of its long-term, methodical, and controlled nature, and partly because the number of people who were involved in the genocide was very great, suggesting that any analysis of why they behaved the way they did must rely on a wide variety of explanations: historical, sociological, intercultural, etc. rather than a generic core.

The foundations of Holocaust were laid many years before the creation of "Final Solution to the Jewish question", the Nazi plan for the genocide of Jews during Second World War, by a successful political movement eager to implement its anti-Semitic ideas and by a population that for a number of reasons, listed above, widely accepted and approved of the regime. In this paper, we tried to explain from an intercultural perspective, the basis for the Holocaust, by applying the cultural dimensions, which appears to be suitable for analyzing the motivational structure of the Holocaust related to perpetrators, bystanders, rescuers, and victims. We have argued that such a perspective is the key to better comprehending the complexity of Holocaust.

Because the Holocaust involved people, from different cultures, in different roles and situations living in countries across Europe over a relatively long period of time (1930-1944)-one broad explanation regarding behavior, for example, "antisemitism, obedience, hate or fear," clearly cannot fit all. In addition, usually a combination of motivations and pressures were in play. Especially for the Holocaust most academics are wary of monocausal

explanations. Cultural explanations focus on values, beliefs, ideologies, and prejudices, particularly antisemitism in various patterns.

This paper also indicates that there are a number of issues that warrant more attention in these areas of Holocaust. Our paper has shown the need for diversity in theories and methods to capture different aspects of Holocaust. We believe that it is important to continue to develop new conceptualizations, theoretical frameworks, and methods to advance our knowledge about the Holocaust.

Focusing too much on some social-psychological explanations for people's behavior during the Holocaust: fear, gain, deference to authority, and pressures to conform and to rationalize one's choices, however, obscures and oversimplifies the more complicated dynamic behind the choices ordinary people made with regard to the persecution, then killing of Jews and others such as: Roma, political and religious opponents etc.

We agree with Hofstede's findings that individuals from a certain culture can clearly have other preferences than the majority of the culture they belong. Nevertheless, the majority culture decides about the criteria for appropriate behavior in that culture and defines what is and what is not admissible. Having a different behavior is seen by the majority as "abnormal" and is neglected or even punished in the case of Nazism or other totalitarian regimes.

Our purpose in this article was to highlight central themes that reflect important areas in "human side" Holocaust literature. We believe that these areas can be even better understood with an increased focus on intercultural issues of the Holocaust, resulting in a richer and more nuanced understanding of human dynamics in the global context.

We argued that there is a need for a theoretical approach that shifts the research focus to exploring the richness of the "human side" of Holocaust by emphasizing the Holocaust actors and their sense making, practices, and actions. To address this, we called for an approach that conceptualizes the Holocaust based on cultural values and practices. Future research on Holocaust could focus on the following: (1) external versus internal causes (e.g., economic conditions vs. psychological processes), (2) specificity versus generalizability, (3) the scope of responsibility, and (4) the role of intent or insight.

Yet, comparisons of individuals' behavior across different contexts are still scarce, constituting a special challenge for future research.

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