

Contemporary Anti-Semitic Hate Crimes: A Comparative Study

Hannah Sattler

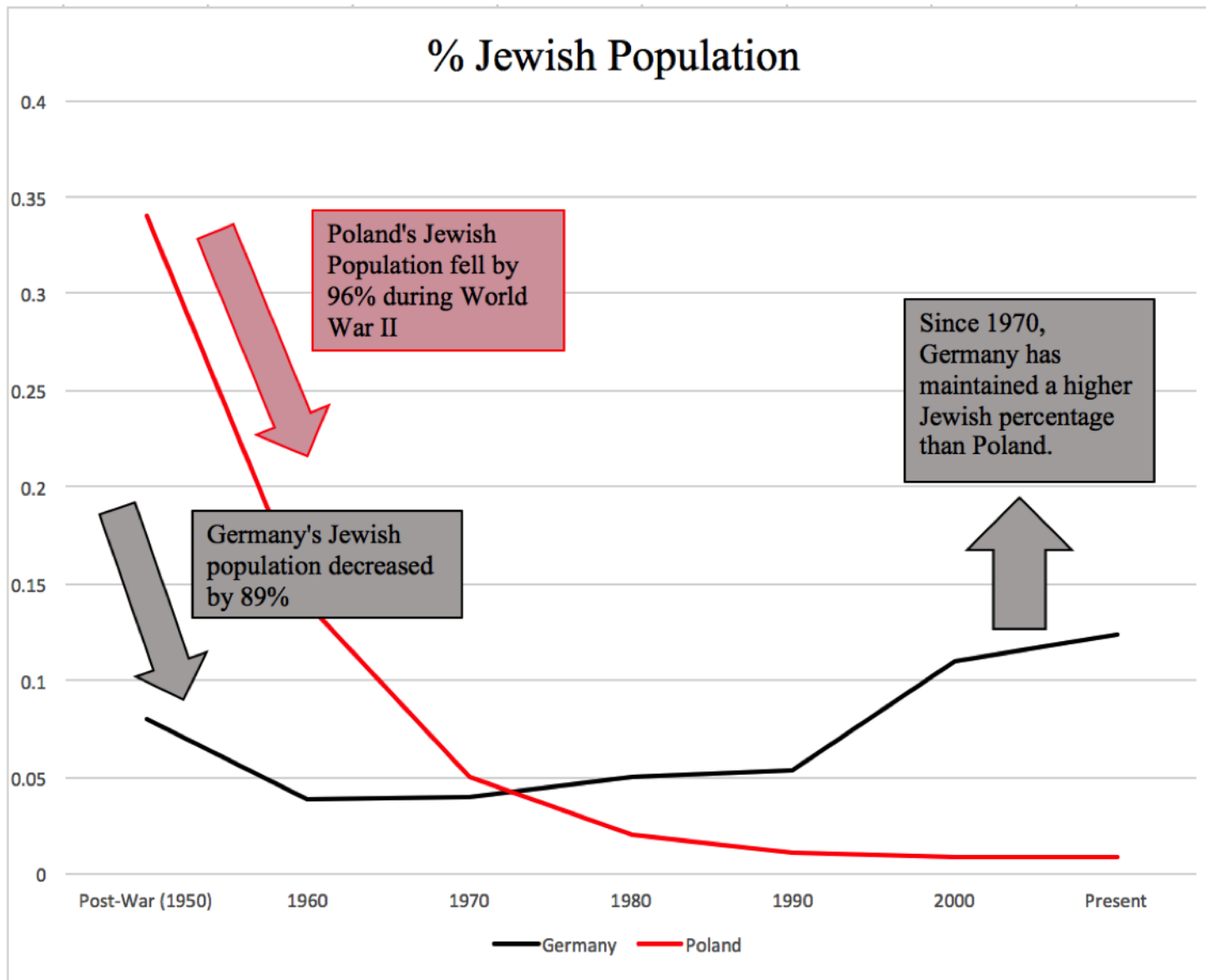
Brudnick Center for Conflict and Violence

Northeastern University, Boston, MA

Wroclaw, 2015



% Jewish Population



Research Questions

1. If the Holocaust is not an accurate indicator of current levels of antisemitism in Poland and Germany, what internal factors, political, economic or social shifts, after WWII affected the differing postwar reconciliations?
2. How did international forces influence the depleting levels of German antisemitism and ignore the creeping anti-Jewish hate in Poland?

Introduction

- Marginalization of Jews for religious, political and economic stereotyping
- Lack of association, based on preliminary data collection, between a country's degree of participation during the Holocaust and current levels of antisemitism
- Acceptance of trauma while enduring postwar political and economic turmoil
- Power of collective memory

Related Studies

- Focusing on roots of antisemitism leading up to the Holocaust
 - William Brustein, *Roots of Hate: Antisemitism in Europe Before the Holocaust*
 - Hannah Arendt, *Origins of Totalitarianism*
- Analyzing current levels of European antisemitism
 - Anti-Defamation League, *ADL Global 100: A Survey of Attitudes Towards Jews in Over 100 Countries Around the World*
 - Ireneusz Krzeminski, *Antisemitism in Poland Today*

Methodology

- Mixed-methods exploratory approach to a comparative case study
- Historical analytical analysis
- Expert interviews in country

Interviews

Germany

Sarah Hiron

Head of Education Outreach, Jewish Museum of Berlin

Magdalena Keil

Expert of East German History

Dr. Sabine Arend

Head of Collections Department, Ravensbrück Memorial

Poland

Blanka Nissan

Librarian, Jewish Historical Institute

Rabbi Yehoshua Ellis

Office of the Chief Rabbi of Poland

Piotr Kowalik

Deputy Head of Education, Museum of the History of the Polish Jews POLIN

Jacek Lechandro

Deputy Head of Research, Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum

Michal Bilewicz

Assistant Professor of Social Psychology, University of Warsaw

Results

Germany

- Western assistance
- Forced shaming and systematic guilt
- Reunification, 1989

Poland

- Diverging narratives
 - Competing victimization
- Search for identity under oppression
- Religious suppression under communist political rule

Narratives of “the other”

Germany

"They prosecuted the Jewish people rather than the Jewish religion." - *Sarah Hiron*

Poland

"The Jewish community in Warsaw is about 2,500 to 3,000 people. The exact number is impossible to know as less and less decide to identify as Jewish." - *Rabbi Ellis*

"Until 1968, communities were very secularized. After 1968, Poland saw a large emigration to Israel and decrease in Jewish communities." – *Michal Bilewicz*

Ideological Influences

Germany

"The Government of the GDR did nothing for Jewish people. Before reunification, only Soviet Victims of World War II were discussed." - *Magdalena Keil, citizen of the former GDR*

Poland

"Communism led to a specific approach to the Holocaust in Poland: Jewish victims were rarely mentioned."
- *Michal Bilewicz*

"Communism suppresses religious observances. It is only now that Jewish life has the opportunity to revive in Poland." - *Piotr Kowalik*

Education

Germany

"Its more difficult for a country to accept its Holocaustic history when the study of the Holocaust isn't a significant part of that education system." - *Sarah Hiron*

"Ravensbrück began as a memorial *only* for Soviet victims. After the Berlin Wall fell, they were allowed to include other prosecuted groups, including religions."
- *Dr. Sabine Arend*

Poland

"I've faced prejudice because of the way I look; not out of hate, but a lack of education about Judaism." - *Rabbi Ellis*

Conclusion

- Continued relevance of the Holocaust
- Narrowed focus of centralized international organizations
- Immediate inclusionary practices in political and social spheres
- Hate crimes stemming from systematic ignorance or refused education

Significance

- The importance of **inclusion** and **education** in the combat of hate
- Impact
 - **Discover** tactics to prevent current and future atrocities
 - **Develop** more comprehensive atrocity reactive policy
 - **Expand** to other countries affected by current or past atrocities



Peace
 Education Equality
Never Again
 Unity Freedom
 Remember

Inclusion

Humanity

Community