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**Article:**

Allwork, L.F. [orcid.org/0000-0003-2301-7668](https://orcid.org/0000-0003-2301-7668) (2017) 'Review: Amos Goldberg and Haim Hazan (eds), *Marking Evil: Holocaust Memory in the Global Age* (New York; Oxford: Berghahn, 2015)'. *Holocaust Studies* , 23 (4). ISSN 1750-4902

<https://doi.org/10.1080/17504902.2017.1289002>

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**Amos Goldberg & Haim Hazan (eds), *Marking Evil: Holocaust Memory in the Global Age*.**

**New York, Oxford: Berghahn Books, 2015. ISBN: 978-1-78238-619-3. £75.00**

*"So, is this global memory really about human rights?"* (p. xii). This is just one of the many provocative questions asked by Amos Goldberg and Haim Hazan in their stimulating edited collection which evolved out of the multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary research endeavours of a group of Israeli scholars at the Van Leer Jerusalem Institute between 2008 and 2009. Through the essays included in this collection, Goldberg and Hazan present one of the most complex and thorough interrogations of the theory and methodology of how the Holocaust is understood as a 'global' memory. They explore the benefits, limitations and provocations of this approach. Their book is split into five sections and is dedicated to Peter Novick, who passed away in 2012. Novick is remembered for critically unravelling the role of the Holocaust in post-1945 American public life. Within the context of this anthology, this dedication to Novick is apt. Not only was Novick a key collaborator of Goldberg and Hazan's at a 2009 conference in Jerusalem, but his mercurial chapter title, 'The Holocaust is Not - and is Not likely to become a Global Holocaust Memory' embodies the spirit of debate and divided opinion which runs throughout Goldberg and Hazan's volume.

The first section introduces the collection and contains essays by Goldberg and Hazan, respectively. Goldberg's contribution provides important intellectual and theoretical contextualisation for all the essays that follow. Goldberg explores a fundamental, sometimes complementary and at other times opposing tension which underlies many contemporary understandings of the Holocaust as a 'global' memory. Goldberg asks, are 'globally' inflected public discourses of the Holocaust primarily about "political ethics" or a "politics of identity" which strongly resonates with the Lacanian 'Imaginary' (p. 8)? Are they concerned with providing a symbolic negative starting point for the reconstruction of the post-1945 Western political order with a view to the ethics of human and minority rights, or are these global manifestations of Holocaust memory primarily about reinforcing and affirming

communal identities? If memories of the Holocaust are capable of promoting so called ‘universal’ values such as human rights, how does this ‘universalism’ square with the ‘exceptional’ status that the history and memory of the Holocaust is often granted in Western public political and intellectual debates? Examples of this ‘exceptional’ status cited by Goldberg include the prohibition of Holocaust denial in twelve countries, despite the European Council’s refusal to criminalise Armenian genocide denial in 2013, as well as the often ‘exceptional’ status accorded to the Holocaust by many postmodernists, whose discourse is often otherwise characterised by a Nietzschean influenced relativism. If Goldberg presents the reader with the aporias that lie at the heart of contemporary ‘global’ Holocaust memory politics, or its spirit of “*anti-fundamental fundamentalism*”, Hazan is far more focused on issues posed by disciplinary lacunae. Hazan’s chapter notes how the subject area of Anthropology has largely avoided the Holocaust. Anthropology has instead tended to focus its interests on other forms of colonial oppression, ethnic cleansing and global genocide. As a result, Hazan claims that Holocaust survivor testimonies have not been critically analysed in terms of the now self-reflexive anthropological discourse of understanding the ‘other’ as ‘savage’, a potentially productive seam of future research and interpretation in Holocaust Studies.

The second section brings together a range of contrasting view-points to analyse the extent to which the Holocaust can be considered a global ‘memory’. It begins boldly with Peter Novick’s critical appraisal of the entire ‘global’ turn in Holocaust memory studies. For Novick, the idea of a global Holocaust memory is far too diffuse because ‘real’ collective memories are created by and make a direct difference to the communities that enact them. Novick conceptualises the international distribution of Holocaust memory as a series of concentric circles. Inner-most is Germany and Israel, which have the most ‘organic’ memories because these are rooted in the experiences of the survivors, the perpetrators and their descendants. Second level in intensity are Holocaust memories produced in European countries occupied by Germany during the Second World War and which

were sites of the perpetration of the Holocaust. The outer ring includes countries beyond Europe, “without any such ‘organic’ connection to the Holocaust” (p. 48), such as the United States, Australia and Canada. Whilst Novick is right to alert scholars to the potential distortions of the discourse of ‘global’ Holocaust memory, his argument seems problematic in terms of thinking about the sheer geographical diversity of Jewish diaspora populations around the world as well as in relation to the work of scholars such as Michael Rothberg and William F.S Miles who have shown that lack of ‘organic’ connection did not impede the influence of Holocaust awareness on discourses of decolonization.

Arguing that the memory of the Holocaust in the global arena provides an international “*symbolic manual*” (p. 62) for mediating local events through global frames of reference, in the next chapter, Alon Confino uses a historical comparison with the memory of the French Revolution to explore, “*two foundational pasts of modern European history.*” (p. 58) Confino points out key differences in the public reception of the French Revolution and the Holocaust. For example, the happenings of the French Revolution were seen immediately by contemporary commentators as historical ruptures whilst the historical events of the Holocaust were only perceived as such after the Second World War. Confino also notes how international discourses surrounding the French Revolution have been appropriated by different political positions; whilst Holocaust symbolism has often been invoked within contexts of morality (good and evil). Evidencing Goldberg and Hazan’s willingness to grapple with thorny issues presented by the Israel/Palestine conflict and ‘global’ Holocaust memory, Confino ends with a critical section on the use of the ‘moral’ frames of Holocaust memory by groups within the Israeli settler community during the 2005 disengagement plan from the Gaza Strip.

Departing from Novick and Confino’s focus on the issues raised by the discourse of ‘global’ Holocaust memory in terms of national and community politics, the final two essays in this section

approach the topic from the perspective of philosophy and phenomenology. Reinterpreting Lyotard, Ronit Peleg claims that the globalisation of Holocaust memory resides in the philosophical demand for an, "*an absolute moral refusal of dialectics.*" (p. 72) Rather than focusing on Lyotard's often cited theorisation of Auschwitz as an 'earthquake', which necessitates new representational forms, Peleg's essay is refreshing in focusing analytical attention on Lyotard's refutation of the Hegelian 'speculative death' or 'beautiful death'. This is philosophically significant globally because it necessitates new relationships of political belonging as well as a post-Auschwitz 'ethics of listening'. By contrast, Nathan Rapport's comparison of the representation of space in Imre Kerstesz's novel, *Fateless* and the author's visit with a group of students to the Montreal Holocaust Museum, proposes a spatial and bodily conception of the Holocaust as a 'global' memory'. This is predicated on a further 'cosmopolitan' tension that can be seen to exist between the 'universal' and the 'particular'. Namely, "*that the individual body in time is a human universal*" (p. 114). Rapport interprets this in the sense that no one else can be fully present to our own imagination and memories. Embracing what is sometimes referred to as the current spatial turn in Holocaust Studies, for Rapport, it is the recognition of this fundamental dissonance of individual consciousnesses which paradoxically unites us in time and space.

The third part of the anthology is dedicated to 'Memory, trauma and testimony' and the fraught relationship of the Holocaust to non-western memories. Drawing on the work of literary critics, Robert Eaglestone and Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, this theme is perhaps most directly addressed in Louise Bethlehem's essay which looks at the potential intersections between Holocaust Studies and Postcolonial Studies in terms of the discursive performance of the voice of the 'other' as historical witness. A key connecting theme running throughout Michal Givoni, Tamar Katriel and Carol A. Kidron's essays is their negotiation of the thesis of global Holocaust memory advanced by Daniel Levy and Natan Sznaider in *The Holocaust and Memory in the Global Age* (2006). For example, Katriel's comparative analysis of the UN's International Holocaust Remembrance Day

(27 January) and the International Day of Non-violence (2 October) seeks to add further examples of what Levy and Sznajder have identified as a global 'cosmopolitan' memory culture. Kidron draws upon Sznajder and Ulrich Beck's later critique of 'cosmopolitan' memory (2010) to question all 'universal' paradigms through her analysis of testimony given by descendants of genocide victims in Israel, Cambodia and members of the Cambodian diaspora living in Canada. Kidron provides hard evidence for the critique of the so called 'universalism' of the PTSD trauma paradigm advanced by critics of this paradigm such as Stef Craps and Irene Visser. By contrast, spotting a lacuna in Levy and Sznajder's argument, Givoni uses his case study of the French section of the multinational humanitarian movement, Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF or 'Doctors Without Borders'), to explore how Holocaust discourse manifests itself in everyday human rights activism. Indeed, given the importance of Levy and Sznajder in this section, it would have been good if these authors could have contributed a new essay to Goldberg and Hazan's anthology, or at least been interviewed on the state of field and asked to respond to criticisms levelled at the Western overtones of 'cosmopolitan' Holocaust memory.

Nonetheless, the anthology does not fall short in terms of offering the views of canonical thinkers. For example, the section on witnessing concludes with an essay by Michael Rothberg which warns against the dangers of the Holocaust becoming a moral symbol at the centre of global memory politics, particularly against the backdrop of the ongoing Israel/Palestine conflict. This essay recaps Rothberg's now hugely influential idea of 'multidirectional memory' but also supplements this with an important new concept of 'implicated witnessing'. Rothberg illustrates this through an analysis of W.G Sebald's novel, *Austerlitz* and the work of contemporary visual artist, Alan Schechner. For Rothberg, the 'implicated witness' is about forms of historical relationship to violent and traumatic events which are more ambiguous than direct perpetration or victimisation, instead making representations of the 'bystander' or the member of the 'postmemory generation' the focus of analysis.

The fourth and fifth parts of Goldberg and Hazan's book explore the representation of the Holocaust in history, literature, theatre and film, as they are encountered in contemporary networks of global media circulation. These sections include Jakob Hessing's analysis of novelist W.G Sebald which takes into account his relationship to the German literary tradition since the mid-1960s. There is also Batya Shimony's essay on Holocaust representation in Mizrahi literature and Shulamith Lev Aladgem's piece on the transgressive theatre of Budapest born Jew and survivor of Nazism, George Tabori. Tabori's work can be seen to be influenced by the 'Theatre of Cruelty' practiced by Antonin Artaud. However, it is two essays on film which are particularly illuminating in presenting original readings of well-known Holocaust representations. Framing her analysis through theories of the sublime and kitsch, Rina Dudai provocatively re-visits *Schindler's List* through a comparison with Omer Fast's *Spielberg's List*, while Sidra DeKoven Ezrahi offers a quite brilliant and iconoclastic re-interpretation of Claude Lanzmann's *Shoah* (1985) and Roberto Benigni's *Life is Beautiful* (1997). For Ezrahi, these films constitute two opposing poles of ethics and representation in relation to the Holocaust – “*the legacy of revenge and the legacy of reconciliation.*” (p. 347) Criticising *Shoah's* focus on the un-ending pain of the past which undercuts constructive intra-community dialogues in the present, Ezrahi instead praises *Life is Beautiful* not for, “*the infidelity of comic representation of the Shoah, but [for] a reinstatement of faith in a post-Shoah universe.*” (p. 349).

Alongside Ezrahi's essay, the final section includes a stimulating essay by anthropologist Emanuel Marx on the significance of the historical event of *Kristallnacht* (1938) as not only a moment of intense violence targeted against the nation's Jews, but also as a set of “*insidious threats*” (p. 319) directed against 'Aryan' Germans. Writing in the shadows of the controversies provoked by members of the 'Hitler Youth' generation during the 'Historikerstreit', but from the very different perspective of a German Jew personally affected by *Kristallnacht*, Marx's essay walks a fine line

between giving important due recognition to German victims of Nazism such as the disabled, the Roma and ‘enemies of the state’ interned in German concentration camps and making more problematic claims in relation to the “*sacrificing*” (p. 335) of German lives on the Eastern Front. Of course every loss of a German soldier during the Second World War was a tragic event for their families. However, Holocaust scholars have long been aware that the agency of Wehrmacht fighters on the Eastern Front could be a far more complex combination of ‘patriot’, ‘soldier’ and ‘perpetrator’, than Marx’s passive discourse of ‘sacrifice’ might suggest.

Although a clearly wide ranging collection that has the capacity to appeal to historians, cultural memory scholars, film and literature professionals, there are nonetheless sections in this anthology on ‘global’ memory that are notable by their omission. It would have been good to have some essays or a round-table discussion with representatives of policy-makers, educationalists or museum curators who are part of the institutional drivers for the construction of the mnemonics of Holocaust memory at the international level. It is also surprising that the collection does not feature any articles dedicated to exploring the impact of the Internet on the representation, communication and transnational exchange of the history and memories of the Holocaust in the contemporary world. Finally, and even more urgently given 2016’s political challenges to the post-1945 Western liberal consensus and the resurgence of the extreme and radical right, it would have been helpful to have had a section dedicated to how the Holocaust is symbolically ignored, used, subverted or negated in the self-representation of international networks of radical right-wingers, far right extremists and Holocaust deniers. That said, Goldberg and Hazan must be congratulated on bringing together an important and exciting collection of essays that in their sheer interdisciplinary range are essential reading for scholars across the Arts and Humanities.

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