

Coffee with the Cantor

2017

Hazzan Rob Menes

Wednesdays, 11:00-12:30

<http://www.hazzanmenes.com>



Perceptions of the Holocaust

The Atlantic

The World Is Full of Holocaust Deniers

Emma Green

A new survey suggests that many Asians, Africans, Middle Easterners, young people, Muslims, and Hindus believe that facts about the genocide have been distorted.

Only 54 percent of the world's population has heard of the Holocaust.

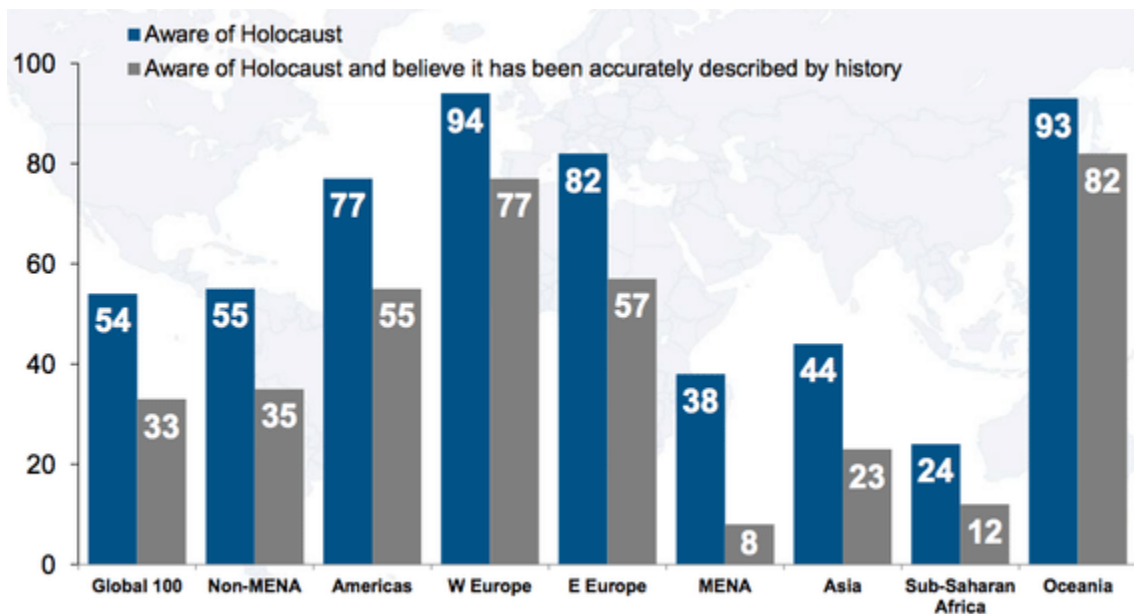
54 percent.

This is the most staggering statistic in a new survey by the Anti-Defamation League (ADL) of more than 53,000 people in over 100 countries, conducted by First International Resources. But that figure speaks to only those who have heard of it: Only a third of the world's population believe the genocide has been accurately described in historical accounts. Some said they thought the number of people who died has been exaggerated; others said they believe it's a myth. Thirty percent of respondents said it's probably true that "Jews still talk too much about what happened to them in the Holocaust."

Seventy years after the liberation of Auschwitz, two-thirds of the world's population don't know the Holocaust happened—or they deny it.

These beliefs follow some unexpected patterns, too. The Middle East and North Africa had the largest percentage of doubters, with only 8 percent of respondents reporting that they had heard of the genocide and believed descriptions of it were

accurate. But only 12 percent of respondents in sub-Saharan Africa said the same, and only 23 percent in Asia. People in these groups were likely to say they believed the number of deaths has been exaggerated—just over half of Middle Easterners and a third of Asians and Africans think the body count has been distorted over time.

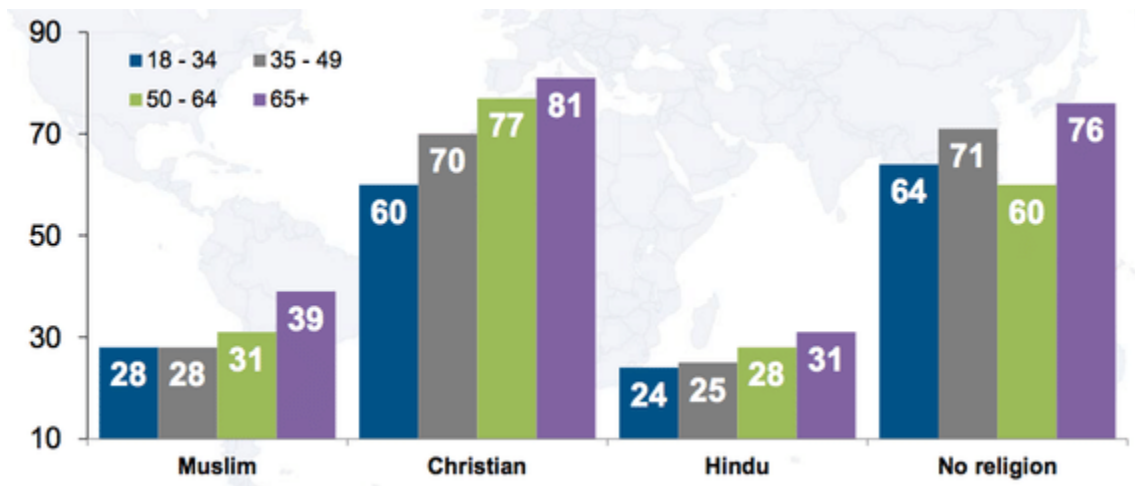


Anti-Defamation League

When the data is sliced by religious groups, the results are even more surprising: Hindus were most likely to believe that the number of Holocaust deaths has been exaggerated. Muslims followed closely, and those two groups were distantly trailed by Christians, Buddhists, and those with no religion. In no coincidence, Hindus and Muslims were also significantly less likely to have heard of the Holocaust.

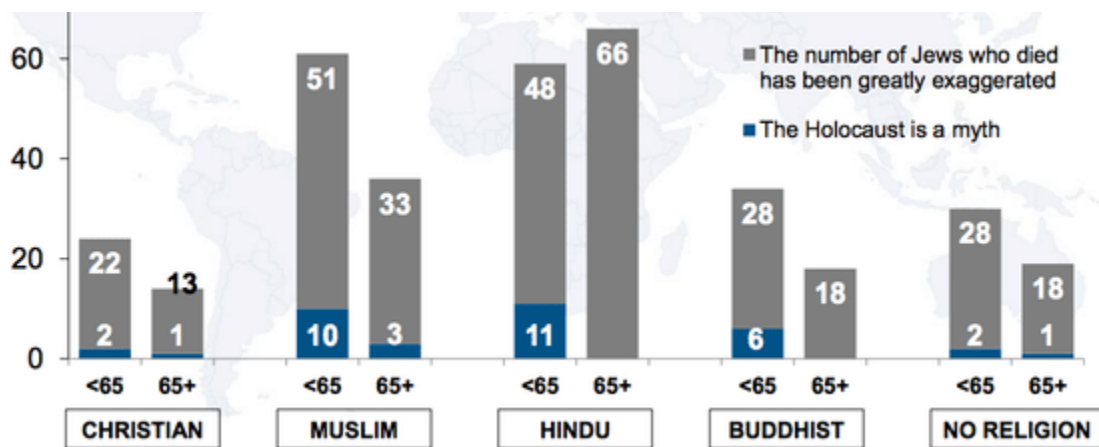
In almost every religious group, people younger than 65 were much more likely to say they believe that facts about the Holocaust have been distorted, and they were less likely to know what the Holocaust is.

Percent Who Have Heard of the Holocaust



Anti-Defamation League

Percent of Who Believe Facts About the Holocaust Have Been Distorted, by Age and Religious Group



Anti-Defamation League

The report by the ADL, a Jewish NGO that campaigns against anti-Semitism and discrimination, also covers the prevalence of other anti-Semitic attitudes, including beliefs about Jews' allegiance to Israel, influence in media and business, and likeability. Although the prevalence of Holocaust ignorance and denial was

just one small aspect of the survey, it illuminates a powerful fact: As the memory of the genocide grows fainter, attitudes toward Jews—and Israel—are changing. The fate of the Jewish people in the twentieth century was largely centered around the Holocaust: the anti-Semitism that facilitated it, the loss it wrought, and the reflection it prompted. As that history becomes more distant, it's unclear what will animate the Jewish community—and attitudes toward it—moving forward.

Depressingly, the study does hint at the way most people get their information about Jews and the Holocaust today:



Comments

Gepap • 4 years ago

For most of Asia and Africa, European history (of which the Holocaust is a part) is not particularly relevant, outside of what effects it may have had with regards to colonialism. Most people in the World likely know nothing of the Great Taiping Rebellion of the 1850's and 60's, one of the bloodiest wars in the history of the world, because knowledge of internal Chinese history is mostly irrelevant.

Honestly, what does the slaughter of Europe's Jewish population by the Nazi German regime and its allies and collaborators mean for your average African, or Indian, or Chinese? The relative ignorance in the Muslim Middle East is clearly political in nature, as those countries have political reasons to either not teach the Holocaust or deny it actively. For most other parts of the world where "awareness" is low, it is merely a function of the Holocaust being a historical event seen as alien and having little relevance to their own history.

Plan 17 Gepap • 4 years ago

Exactly right. Cultural memory plays a big role in our notions about history. People who have neither a cultural memory of the Holocaust nor access to a topically broad education have no reason to know about such things. If I were living in Angola or Kuala Lumpur and I had even been educated about the Holocaust, I would still find it hard to believe. I find it pretty unbelievable, in the colloquial sense, as a well-educated American who fully accepts both that it happened and what it says about humanity. If you tell me that 2/3 of Germany denies the Holocaust then we have a problem. If you tell me that 2/3 of the Congo doubts or is unaware of the Holocaust, I'd say they have one of the bloodiest and longest running wars in history to occupy their minds, of which probably less than 1% of Americans are even aware.

Lee Gepap • 4 years ago

I'm going to bet that if you asked a random sample of Americans to name ONE important historical event that happened in China between 1900 and 1960, more than 50% would come up blank. Not because Americans are such cretins, but because, you're right, people store knowledge that seems relevant to what's going on in their lives at the moment and delete the rest.

Guest Lee • 4 years ago

i would be totally embarrassed if some NGO showed up to ask that question

<https://www.thedailybeast.com/how-the-armenian-genocide-shaped-the-holocaust>

HISTORY LESSON

How the Armenian Genocide Shaped the Holocaust

Nowhere was the debate over what was going on in Turkey to the Armenians more heated than Germany—and the conclusions drawn would change history.

STEFAN IHRIG

01.24.16 12:15 AM ET

One day in the winter of 1941, as he “walked through the streets of the Warsaw Ghetto,” Hermann Wygoda, “Ghetto smuggler,” tried to make sense of what was happening to him and the people around him: “I wondered whether God knew what was going on beneath Him on this troubled earth. The only analogy I could find in history was perhaps the pogrom of the Jews in Alexandria at the time of the Roman governor Flaccus ... or the massacre of the Armenians by the Turks during World War I.”

Wygoda was not the only one seeing this parallel. The German Social Democrats in exile reported continuously on the situation in Germany in their “Germany reports”. In February 1939 they warned, “At this moment in Germany the unstoppable extermination of a minority is taking place by way of the brutal means of murder, of torment to the degree of absurdity, of plunder, of assault, and of starvation. What happened to the Armenians during the [world war] in Turkey is now being committed against the Jews, [but] slower and more systemically.”

We could also mention the famous German-Jewish writer Franz Werfel who in 1932/1933 wrote his most well-known novel about the Armenian Genocide, his *Forty Days of Musa Dagh*, mainly to warn Germany about Hitler. The book was later extremely popular in the Nazi-imposed ghettos of Eastern Europe.

There seems to be something obvious connecting both great genocides of the 20th century. Yet, in its hundredth year, the Armenian Genocide is still a

peripheral object in the violent history of the 20th century. Most of the new grand histories of World War I marginalize the topic, if they mention it at all. It seems as if the topic is an exclusively partisan affair of the Armenian diaspora and a few confused others (like me). But the Armenian Genocide is an integral part of the history of humanity's darkest century. There can be no doubt that it is an important part of the prehistory of the Holocaust, even if history books suggest that the two genocides were separated by a great distance in time and space.

Mainstream history writing has not only been reluctant to discuss the Armenian Genocide at all, but even more so to even think about the possible connections. The alleged and imagined controversy over the factuality of the Armenian Genocide—or more correctly the denialist campaign sponsored by Turkey—have contributed to this impression of a great distance separating this genocide from the Holocaust.

Many problems surround the topic and Turkish denialism is but one of them. Claims to the uniqueness of the Holocaust and a lack of Nazi sources referring directly to the Armenians are others.

In fact the sentence attributed to Hitler, and the most famous Nazi quote on the matter, apparently epitomizes just that: "Who, after all, speaks today of the annihilation of the Armenians?" But this is something of a dead end, if not a distraction from the deeper connections between the two genocides. For one, it is not entirely clear whether he said it or not. Some sources of the meeting have it, others don't (which, however, does not have to signify that he did not say it). Also, it means something different than some understand it. It is more about the fact that nations at war can commit horrible atrocities and get away with it.

The relationship between the Armenian Genocide and the Holocaust is apparent in two periods of history. The first is the debate that raged in Germany regarding the slaughter of Armenians by its ally the Ottoman Empire in the early 1920s. The debate came down in favor of genocide, and by the time the Nazis came to power, violence against the Armenians had been understood and even outright justified, already for decades. The second period is when the Nazis were in power and looked to the post-ethnic cleansing Turkey as a role model.

Strangely enough, not only does Germany connect the two genocides in its own history very closely, it is also Germany that offers some historical clarity on the debate of whether it was a genocide or not.

It has been claimed that interwar Germany did not “come to terms” with the Armenian Genocide and that this somehow made the Holocaust possible. However, the opposite is true: Germany not only came to terms with it, but probably had the greatest genocide debate up to that point in human history. It was rather that the outcome of this genocide debate was particularly problematic: it had ended in justifications of genocide and even with calls for the expulsion of Jews from Germany. And despite a drawn-out debate there had been a marked failure to produce a deeper religious, humanist, or philosophical analysis, appreciation, and condemnation of what genocide meant. While most of the political spectrum had found solace in the fact that this had been an “Asian thing,” only the political extremes on both ends of the spectrum, radical Socialists, and Nazis realized that this was potentially also a “European thing.”

To understand all this one has to take a look at Germany’s very own Armenian history. Germany was not only an ally of the Ottoman Empire during World War I—at the time the genocide was committed—but had been a quasi-ally as early as the 1890s. And already since Bismarck’s times it had often acted as the Ottomans’ European shield when it came to the Armenians. In the 1890s when tens of thousands of Armenians were killed in the Hamidian massacres (1894-1896), this

was also a “problem” for Germany, but also an opportunity to further ingratiate itself with the Ottomans (economic concessions were the immediate results). But it was problematic mainly vis-à-vis its own public at home. Pro-Armenian activists and papers were raising awareness of what had happened in the Ottoman Empire and the pro-Ottoman elites were disquieted; the result was a propaganda war between both sides waged in the German newspapers. The pro-Ottoman (and anti-Armenian) side seemed to be winning, but the massacres simply did not come to an end. During the last massacres (in 1896) a series of essays reporting on the atrocities of the last years was published in Germany and for a moment pro-Armenian sentiment seemed to have carried the day.

But then, merely two years later, the German Emperor Wilhelm II travelled to Istanbul. This obvious show of friendship with the “bloody” sultan necessitated a revisiting of the Armenian massacres in Germany and produced discourses that not only justified the violence against the Armenians but also the German government’s silence and continued support for the Ottomans. The preeminent German liberal thinker, imperialist, and Protestant pastor Friedrich Naumann even went one step further and argued for an ethic-free German foreign policy, devoted solely to national self-interest. This was a dynamic that would play out two more times in German history, during the genocide as well as after World War I in a great German genocide debate (1919-1923).

During World War I Germany, now officially an ally of the Ottomans, again acted as a shield for violent Ottoman policies vis-à-vis the Armenians. However, now this violence reached unprecedented, genocidal heights. While official Germany continued to back their Ottoman ally and even continued to spew violent anti-Armenian propaganda and justifications for whatever was actually happening to the Armenians, behind closed doors Germany started to become anxious. Official Germany now feared that what was happening in Anatolia and Mesopotamia would be used against Germany after the war. And so already in the summer of 1919 the German Foreign Office published a collection of documents from its internal correspondence on the Armenian Genocide. It was meant to show the world that Germany was innocent of the charge of co-conspiracy in the murder of

the Armenians, but it inadvertently kick-started a genocide debate in Germany that would continue for almost four years.

The publication of this documental record of the Armenian Genocide, with all its gory details, provoked an outcry and condemnations in the liberal and left press in Germany, including attacks on Germany's wartime leaders. At this point large sections of the press already acknowledged what we, today, would term "genocide" and what they called "annihilation of a nation" or "murder of the Armenian people." But then followed a long year of backlash in which nationalist and formerly pro-Ottoman papers minimized what had happened, focused on the alleged Armenian wartime stab in the back, and justified what the Young Turk leadership had done as "military necessities."

The debate could have ended here, but then, in March 1921, Talât Pasha, former Ottoman Grand Vizier and Minister of the Interior as well as the widely perceived author of the genocide, was assassinated in a crowded Berlin shopping street. Three months later the assassin stood trial in Berlin and was acquitted by a jury – the trial had been completely turned around and focused rather on the Armenian Genocide and Talât Pasha's role in it than on the actual assassination.

Not only shocked by the outcome of the trial but also by all the evidence and testimony produced in the Berlin court, the German press again focused on the Armenian Genocide in depth. Discussing the trial, the German papers reproduced a horrifying liturgy of genocidal suffering. Now the whole German press landscape, including the formerly denialist papers, came to accept the charge of "genocide" against the Young Turk leadership. Again, the debate did not come to an end here, another backlash followed. Nationalist papers again offered justifications, but now for what even they understood as genocide. And this after the German genocide debate had already gone on since 1919 and after it had included all the ingredients needed for a true genocide debate: detailed elaborations on the scope, intent for, and ramifications of this "murder of a

people.” And it was on this note that the debate simmered for another two years until the Treaty of Lausanne was signed (establishing modern Turkey).

All this would perhaps not be that important, had Germany not been merely ten years before Hitler’s rise to power: A genocide debate had not only taken place, but had ended in justifications for genocide. Even then, the true saliency of the topic lay in the racial and national view of the Armenians held by many of the German commentators: they were seen as the (true) “Jews of the Orient,” either as equivalent to the Jews of Europe or even “worse.” This German anti-Armenianism was as old as Germany’s tradition of excusing violence against the Armenians (especially since the 1890s) and was a carbon copy of modern, racial Anti-Semitism. In this logic, it had been no surprise that in 1922, when another two Young Turks were assassinated in Berlin, the nationalist press connected the Armenian assassins to the German Jewish question. Consciously confusing the two categories, the (hyper-)nationalist press called for an “ethnic surgeon” to cut out what was eating away at Germany’s flesh.

So, who was still talking about the Armenians in the Third Reich? Surprisingly, almost nobody. The Nazis were remarkably silent on the topic, but were very vocal on what had followed the Armenian Genocide. The rise of the New Turkey and all the accomplishments of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk were important ingredients in the Nazi political imagination. In the German interwar and Nazi discourses on the New Turkey, one finds a chilling propagation of what a post-genocidal country, one cleansed of its minorities, could achieve: To the Nazis, the New Turkey was something of a post-genocidal wonderland, something that Germany would have to emulate. The Nazis were discussing the Turkish model already in the early 1920s. A German-Jewish newspaper reader and critic of Anti-Semitism, Siegfried Lichtenstaedter, understood the “Turkish lessons” formulated in Nazi articles (in 1923 and 1924) to mean that the Jews of Germany and Austria should be, and had to be, killed and their property given to “Aryans.” He wrote this in his 1926 book *Anti-Semita*.

In the end it does not matter how important we find the possible influences exerted from the Armenian Genocide on the Nazis—they surely did not need to learn their murderous business from others. What they did learn was that there were many people, even in an open pluralistic society who would ignore, rationalize, or even outright justify genocidal violence. Even the Churches did not significantly intervene for fellow Christians. To paraphrase the impression of a Jewish reader of Werfel's book in the ghettos during World War II: If nobody would save Christians, who would intervene for the Jews? And if German nationalists could find it in themselves to justify the genocide of Christians and were not met with much opposition in the German public, who would speak out for the Jews?

There are no easy and automatic casual connections from one genocide to the next, but the Armenian Genocide and its close proximity to the Holocaust illustrate the importance and the pitfalls of how we come to terms with the past. They also illustrate that we are far from done with struggling to understand the tragic 20th century. This is why the Armenian Genocide finally needs to take its place, and be allowed to take its place, in the bloody history of the 20th century, not only generally in world history, but specifically in European and German history.

Stefan Ihrig is the author of *Justifying Genocide: Germany and the Armenians from Bismarck to Hitler* published by Harvard University Press.

Quora.com

What do Polish people think about Jews?

6 Answers

Aldona Pikul

Aldona Pikul, Polish girl, born and raised

Updated Jan 9, 2017

I was going to pass on answering this question as I find it potentially troubling but as I began writing the explanation for passing, I felt like it would do just as well as an answer, so here it is.

This question is very generic and I feel it's unfair to try and fit all members of a nation into one bucket when discussing people's views and feelings. There are antisemitic people in Poland, sure, you can see them on TV on occasion, I suppose just like everywhere else—but I don't know any. And to be honest, I don't think I had any Jewish acquaintances or friends over the years.

I grew up in Oświęcim. Do you know the place? Even if you don't recognize this name, you probably know the name of the concentration camp that was established by the Nazi right next to it: KL Auschwitz.

I remember having extra classes in school covering the subject of the Holocaust, WWII, or hatred in general. We visited the Auschwitz museum quite often to participate in remembrance days, we had meetings and anti-hatred workshops in the International Youth Meetings Centre and in the newly established Jewish Center. Before the war Oświęcim had a considerable Jewish population and a number of synagogues. When I lived there (I relocated in 2007), I didn't know a single Jewish person, but all this education made me very conscious of the horror their nation had to endure because of what was going on in Europe in the 1930s.

When I moved to Kraków, I figured I would meet people from other cultural groups than what I knew from home. But Poland is not a very diverse place so not much had changed. Living here, you don't really think about it, pretty much everyone is either Catholic or an atheist and you begin to assume that people you meet also fall within those groups, even if they don't tell you their religion. But when I think about it, I don't really know for sure that none of my acquaintances were Jewish.

After I graduated, I got a job as a transcriber for a book about the Jewish heritage of Wieliczka (it's where the salt mine is, if you ever visited the area). The whole project was completed by two Poles who travelled to Israel and to USA to find people who lived in Wieliczka before and during the war and ask them about what they remembered. Listening to their stories, told in Polish (after all those years!) about a town that no longer existed—I was a little heartbroken. I wish all this heritage wasn't destroyed in the war and I feel it's a huge part of my country's history, and we may never fully recover from its loss.

To sum up: I never had a chance to meet Jewish persons and I wish I had, I'd love to learn more about their culture and how they live in Poland today. I feel like their cultural and historical heritage is slipping through our fingers as the time passes. I definitely don't judge people by religion and I know my friends and family don't either.

Tom Andraszek

Tom Andraszek, Still reading Polish news after 12 years abroad...

Answered Jun 14, 2016

Face-to-face questioning of a representative group of 1034 Poles in March 2016 about their attitudes towards other nationalities. Results for Jews:

23% like

31% neutral/indifferent

37% doesn't like

9% undecided

Context: the 'like' result for Jews is in the lower part of the table, but still better than for Vietnamese (21%), Serbs (20%), Russians (20%), Turks (16%), Romanians (15%), Gypsies (11%), an...(more)

Piotr Szafranski

Piotr Szafranski, Polish. So sharing much in common.

Answered May 6, 2016

Again, what does it mean "Polish people"? Including diaspora, there is 60M+ people whose primary identification is "Polish". So take my answer as "one among 60M+ individual and different people", read others as well.

The very question - "... about Jews". What does it really mean? Citizens of the state of Israel? Well, 25% of those are not Jewish in the ethnic sense. Citizens of other countries who happen to have some Jewish ancestors? Many of these had been awoken to the fact by the Nazis, or in similar circumstances. Half of the literary texts being taught in Polish kindergartens or early grades had been written, over centuries, by people who had been "Jewish" if you want to think this way. To me they are as Polish as I consider Polish the scores of people coming from German, Belorussian, Lithuanian, Ukrainian, Russian, Tatar (i.e. Crimean Muslim), French and tons of other extractions.

Poland had been actually a melting pot of immigration through most of it's history. If you looked for a "certified Polish Pole" you would have a hard time. It comes up even in genetic testing - according to Encyclopedia Britannica in 1980ties Poland was the most genetically diverse country in all of Europe. Yes, that did come to me as a surprise, "in my school everyone was Polish", surprise until I started to think about peoples' last names.

Coming back to "What do Polish people think...". About half of them do not think at all, in the sense "What do Polish people think of the left handed people". Non-issue, unless in discussions about the antisemitism and such - of which (discussions) we have a lot.

There seem though to be about half of the population for whom the issue "is someone Jewish" exists at some level. Some will just note. Some will project their fears into. I actually did not witness direct accusations "against them Jews" as the source of people's problems. But some people actually seem to fear people with

some Jewish roots. In pretty much all cases I analysed this was a "competitive anxiety driven" fear. Some people seem to assume they will be always outsmarted by someone Jewish.

One more thing to mention here. Poland in 1944-1956 had a rather horrible experience with Soviet modeled police repression. The political police apparatus had been staffed disproportionately by Jewish Poles (the "why" is a separate story). This is a convenient (true) story for various antisemitisms. Of course many (most?) of lawyers who defended in the courts the victims of the political repressions of the era had been Jewish Poles as well, but this is not remembered as well by the antisemitisms.

Separately, people who (true) had been then interrogated and sentenced (1944-56) in political processes by Polish-Jewish communist functionaries often have (those who survived) a rather strong anti-Jewish sentiment. I would withhold judgement here - I knew some of the stories, they were drastic. Similarly I have to understand Holocaust survivors who had spent years dodging (in Nazi occupied Poland) Polish blackmailers - these survivors were not very fond of things Polish afterwards.

Edward Reid

Edward Reid, works at Actor, Producer, Director & Writer

Answered Apr 1, 2017

I had the opportunity to live abroad in Poland as an English teacher and communicate with many Poles. I think in some regards, Poles are and were treated as a lesser race when considering the war and the holocaust. Millions of Poles died, but for the most part in the west, we only hear about the Jews that perished. A significant part of Poland was demolished and their citizens killed. Poland is not given their historical value among the world for their contribution. Also, many Jews collaborated with the Soviet Union when they invaded Poland and were traitors to Poland sending many to their deaths, torture, and gulags. Even after the war, the leading Communists were made up mainly of Jews, many who tortured Polish allied soldiers. Poles have several valid reasons to hold

grudges against Jews, I've heard from the mouths of survivors who spent time under the guard of Jewish NKVD officers. This is something that is just brushed under the table and I think it would be noble of the Jews to be open and honest about their role in the war and the atrocities committed and not just playing the martyr role. Facts remain facts even though they are hidden. Research will reveal these brutal truths about why some Poles think badly about Jews. The response from Jews, will be about Polish collaboration, but the Soviet invasion began before any of this, so there is no excuse for the collaboration with the red army and betrayal of Poland to the extent of large scale murder.

Mimi Sue

Mimi Sue, Proud to be Jewish

Answered Aug 21, 2016

I am half Polish and half Jewish :D (I'm converting as my father was Jewish and I wasn't raised Jewish). I'm proud to be a Jew of Polish descent especially as there are so few of us and many Poles with Jewish heritage don't really embrace it. Poland is a very Catholic country and many people are very religious in Poland and don't approve of other religions and can be anti-Semitic, but I don't care much for these kinds of people. I don't really mention that I'm Jewish with most Polish people because I worry they might be anti-Semitic. I'm sure many people in Poland have respect for Jews, but I wouldn't tell an extremely religious Catholic Pole that I'm a Jew or someone who is very conservative and narrow minded. I think in London people are more embracing of Jews and I feel comfortable telling people. Poland is more uniform and about conformity whilst London is more multicultural and you get so many people from different countries, races and religions. Even a black people in Poland are rare.

The Poles I have told seem to think that Catholicism and Judaism are similar (they really aren't). My mum who is Catholic has a lot of Jewish friends, but even then they don't really embrace Judaism and some of them brought their children up as Catholic. It just goes to show what the attitude in Poland must be like if people

don't really embrace it. I wouldn't want to live in Poland as I would be an outcast for being a Jew.

Not ALL Polish people are like that. I'm sure many Poles are accepting of Jews and Poles hid Jews in the war as well and even took on some of the children and raised them as Catholics to save their lives. However it is important to remember that Poland isn't as multicultural and diverse as say the UK or America. Catholicism is very important to most Poles and part of their identity. It is for my mother. Even though she isn't that religious, she say Catholicism is part of the Polish peoples' identity and she isn't happy that I'm becoming a Jew.

Having said that I don't think I would marry a Polish man as me not being Catholic (I don't consider myself one even if I had a Catholic upbringing) and being a Jew and wanting to practice Judaism would be an issue for most Polish families like for many Jews a Jew marrying a non-Jew would be a problem. If he was a Polish Jew or at least a non-religious Pole and accepting of my religion that'd be fine. For me Judaism is extremely important and a big part of my identity and I wouldn't want to be with anybody who wouldn't accept it or would ask me to change or convert. I'm done with Catholicism. Some of the Poles are so staunchly Catholic to the extent that they're bigoted and fanatic. The religiosity of the Poles was one of the reasons that I turned away from Catholicism. I don't see myself as having a Catholic identity even if I was raised Catholic. I wish I was raised a Jew (my father was a non-religious Jew and didn't mind us being raised Catholic).

Uwaga Hura

Uwaga Hura, lives in Poland

Answered Dec 3

It depends, unfortunately some people like soccer fans, for example, can be very antisemitic, calling the enemy team 'Jews' and things like that.

Personally I find sad that there is still so much hatred among some.



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We used to live together for hundreds of years together, before the WWII.

There are many famous Polish Jews who contributed to Polish culture like Julian Tuwim, Bruno Schultz etc.