

Foreword

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1985 was a pivotal year for post-war Germany. After struggling towards normalization for forty years, American President Ronald Reagan came to Germany's rescue. Reagan laid a wreath at the Bitburg cemetery, and designated the Waffen-SS, as well as the Wehrmacht soldiers, as "victims of war".¹ Thus, a nation that was faced with the conflict of memorializing its own barbarism was absolved of moral responsibility to the true victims of Nazism.

With this background in mind, it is not surprising that a doctoral dissertation on *Love After Auschwitz: The Second Generation*, which was begun the same year as the Reagan visit, was laden with political backlash. Grünberg's research in Marburg's Philipps University is the basis for this book. The saga of this research project, which spans a generation – twenty years – illuminates not only the intimate lives of the heirs of the victims and perpetrators, but a glimpse into the ultimate question we yet ask: how was it possible for millions of Jews and other minorities to be murdered?

As a graduate student, Kurt Grünberg, a child of Holocaust survivors who grew up in Germany, set out to understand the intimate relations of German Jews and how these Jews compare to a control group of Germans. This group was chosen because it was impossible to find an ideal control group, namely German Jews whose parents did not undergo persecution during the Third Reich. Grünberg's study of love after Auschwitz was further complicated by the lack of trust he encountered when he approached individuals to volunteer to be interviewed about their personal lives. Grünberg encountered tremendous resistance in finding willing interviewees.

1 | Young, J. (1993), *Holocaust Memorials and Meaning*. New Haven: Yale University Press, p. 58

This is not a surprising byproduct of second-generation Jews whose parents survived years of persecution and continued to live next door to their murderers. When Grünberg began seeking out subjects, the common image of a packed suitcase and passport at hand (just in case!) was not a myth. Peter Sichrovsky, in his book *Strangers in their own Land*,² reveals a collective portrait of young Jews who remained “victims of their victimized parents” with “spiritually deeply unfree voice”, inhibitions and angst.

On a personal note, this was the year that I screened my film *Breaking the Silence: The Generation After the Holocaust* at the Berlin Film Festival, February 1985. In discussions that took place after the showing, I learned first-hand about the inner turmoil of non-Jewish Germans who spoke for the first time about the secrecy at home regarding their parents’ Nazi past. These group discussions after the film provided a unique emotional catharsis that helped break the silence and isolation of the second-generation Germans. As young adults, some of these second-generation Germans severed all relations with their parents. While others preferred not to drudge up the family Nazi past. And yet others forgave their parents for doing what they had to do in order to survive a fascist regime.

In August of that same year, an Israeli psychologist from Ben Gurion University, Dan Bar-On, started advertising for children of Nazis to be interviewed through the University of Wuppertal.³ Journalists Gitta Sereny⁴ and Peter Sichrovsky⁵ were also interviewing children of Nazis. Some of these initial interviewees were eager to meet others who were also struggling with feelings of guilt and shame when Bar-On invited them to meet each other at a presentation of his research findings. A group of Dutch children of collaborators that had been meeting since 1981 joined some of these sessions. The next phase in this healing process was for children of Holocaust survivors and children of Nazis to meet each other and discuss the potential for reconciliation.⁶

What emerged from Bar-On’s work about the children of Nazis is that intimate relations are affected by a past punctuated with secrecy. Knowing

2 | Sichrovsky, P. (1985), *Strangers in their Own Land: Young Jews in Germany and Austria Today*. New York: Basic Books, 1986, A blurb on the book jacket of Peter Sichrovsky’s book

3 | Bar-On, D. (1989), *Legacy of Silence: Encounters with the Children of the Third Reich*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press

4 | Sereny, G. (1990), Children of the Reich. In: *Vanity Fair*, July, 76-81, 127-130

5 | Sichrovsky, P. (1987), *Born Guilty: Children of Nazi Families*. New York: Basic Books, 1988

6 | Rosalie Gerut formed One By One

or not knowing about one's parental connection to the mass killings during the Third Reich was not the determining factor in how children of Nazis coped with this family history. Bar-On found that "children of perpetrators have married less and are more often childless than children of survivors in the same age group".⁷ Bar-On explains these differences by stressing that the children of Jewish Holocaust survivors were charged with the "task of biological survival" and the children of the perpetrators were afraid of transmitting a "bad seed".⁸

Intimate relationships in families that have experienced historical catastrophes cannot be understood in isolation. Such interactions need to be contextualized intergenerationally as well as within the social milieu of the time. Kurt Grünberg's eloquent introduction lays out a post-liberation historical timeline unique to Germany which influenced the identity of second generation of victims and perpetrators. For example, the 1980 crisis had consequences on the lives of the Jewish second generation. Journalist Henryk M. Broder wrote: "This and no further. Thank you very much." This member of the second generation of Holocaust survivors announced he was leaving. Lea Rosensweig writes: "This is not my country." Gloria Kraft-Sullivan describes the legendary packed suitcase: "But it stands in reserve in the cellar, in case it should be needed. Sometimes I go downstairs and dust it." Simultaneously, left-wing Frankfurt Jews identified with the plight of the Palestinians in order to feel a sense of belonging.

As for the children of perpetrators, in 1983, the Germans expressed solidarity with the Palestinians in order to annul their own historical guilt. Legitimate German historians, known as the German "Historians' Dispute" (Historikerstreit), proclaimed that Hitler's primary goal was to fight a war against Russia. Therefore, the war against the Jews, the Final Solution, was incidental in the Third Reich.

It took an American Jewish delegation to empower their German counterparts not to be passive bystanders to the re-writing of history. In 1985, it was an American delegation led by Menachem Rosensaft of the International Network of Children of Jewish Holocaust Survivors from the United States (this author among them) that mobilized German Jews to join them at Bergen-Belsen to protest the absurd equation of the victimization of Waffen-SS with Wehrmacht soldiers. Henryk M. Broder continued expressing his outrage at the Germans in 1986 by writing: "The Germans will never forgive us for Auschwitz." The unification of East and West Germany in 1989 widened the net of victims in Germany to those who lived under communism. During the Gulf War, in 1991, Jews sitting in sealed rooms in

7 | Bar-On, 1989, p. 321

8 | Bar-On, 1989, p. 330

Israel and waiting to be gassed by guided missiles from Iraq, which were technologically improved by the Germans, re-kindled the feelings of victimization of Jews. Not a very secure feeling for German Jews!

While many Jewish children of survivors grappled with decisions about their intimate relationships, the tense atmosphere in Germany added to the complexity and exacerbated their struggle with issues of identity, separation from parents, and trust. The interviews and questionnaires conducted by Grünberg (to which readers will be privy to in detail) reveal the barriers that exist in forming committed relationships for this post-Holocaust generation.

As for the non-Jewish Germans, the idea that they are a product of an evil seed and fear of what they may pass on to a third generation has inhibited many of them from marrying and having children. Members of the generation after the Holocaust in Germany, whether descendents of avid Nazis or of passive bystanders, are often plagued with a lack of trust in the parent generation and distorted self-image. Members of this generation therefore face obstacles in forming an intimate relationship.

In contrast, in the United States the evolution of a second-generation identity developed in a different environment. Continuity for Holocaust survivors also meant ensuring biological continuity. Indeed, in the mid- to late 1970s, young adults in America whose parents had survived Nazi persecution, realized a collective identity of their own. Despite their heterogeneity as a sociological group, they shared the bond of a shattered family heritage. Those born after liberation have diverse religious backgrounds, political attitudes, socio-economic and educational levels. Although the circumstances of their parents' survival varied, they all suffered immeasurable loss of community, family, and identity. Whether survivors talked about their dehumanization and grief, or remained silent, their losses were nevertheless reflected in the socialization of their children.

The emergence of a Second Generation consciousness, and the development of an identifiable group, had their origin in the larger "roots" movement in the United States in the mid-1970s, in the increasingly manifest antisemitism in Europe in the early and mid-1980s, and in the restored dignity of Holocaust survivors in Israel.

It was during the social, religious, and political activism of the late 1960s and early 1970s that a number of Jewish graduate students began exploring what it meant to be children of Holocaust survivors. They shared with each other the dynamics of the relationships with their parents, their worldview as children of survivors, and how their perceptions differed from their Jewish American peers. These early discussions appeared in the *Bergen-Belsen Youth Magazine* (1965) and in *Response* (1975), a forum for alternative Jewish views. These discussions inspired psychiatric social worker

Bella Savran and this author to develop awareness groups for children of Holocaust survivors. Independently, W.A.G.R.O. (Warsaw Ghetto Resistance Organization) persuaded their children to meet and form a Second Generation Organization in New York City. Psychoanalysts in New York formed the Group for the Psychoanalytic Study of the Effects of Second Generation, and after much resistance, the American Psychoanalytic Association agreed to have a study group for this population. These heretofore small and invisible group efforts received national visibility in Helen Epstein's watershed *New York Times Magazine* article, *Heirs to the Holocaust* (June 19, 1977). In the spring of 1979, Epstein's *Children of the Holocaust: Conversations with Sons and Daughters of Survivors*⁹ continued to galvanize these young adults to talk to each other. In the late 1970s, with some exceptions, children of survivors in America were not afraid to identify publicly with their parents' persecution as Jews. President's Jimmy Carter's announcement of the Commission on the Holocaust signified a recognition of the need to nationally commemorate the destruction of European Jewry.

Several grassroots efforts facilitated the meetings of children of survivors, which reduced their sense of isolation, and increased their ability to reach political, educational, psychological, commemorative, and creative goals. The inaugural event was the First Conference on Children of Holocaust Survivors under the auspices of Zachor, a unit of the National Jewish Resource Center (later CLAL – the Center for Learning and Leadership). More than 600 children of survivors attended, and the conference resulted in the formation of groups and organizations throughout the United States.

The seeds for the formation of an international second generation movement occurred when more than 1,000 sons and daughters of survivors joined their parents in Jerusalem in 1981 at the World Gathering of Holocaust Survivors. Members of the second generation took a pledge at Jerusalem's Western Wall to commemorate, educate, work towards preventing future genocides, and ensure Jewish continuity. Following the 1981 World Gathering of Holocaust Survivors the children of the survivors established their own umbrella organization, the International Network of Children of Jewish Holocaust Survivors, under the leadership of Menachem Rosensaft, born in the Bergen-Belsen DP camp.

The International Network was involved in confronting the injustice of the Holocaust and the silence or complicity of the peoples of the world. The children of survivors, as a group, became a moral voice in the American Jewish community and in the international political arena. Menachem Rosensaft wanted to ensure that the Second Generation would not be insu-

9 | Epstein, H. (1980), *Children of the Holocaust: Conversations with Sons and Daughters of Survivors*. New York: Penguin

lar, but would also recognize human and social issues affecting the community as a whole. Thus the International Network was the first group to organize a New York City-wide rally in 1982 on behalf of persecuted Ethiopian Jewry. Rosensaft also led the opposition to President Reagan's decision to visit the German military cemetery at Bitburg in 1985. The International Network consistently and vocally opposed the President's laying a wreath at the graves of members of the Waffen-SS in Bitburg. On May 5, 1985 Rosensaft led a demonstration of Second Generation members at Bergen-Belsen against what he called Reagan's "obscene package deal" of Bitburg and the mass-graves of Bergen-Belsen. The International Network was also instrumental in ensuring the deportation of Nazi war criminal Karl Linnas to the Soviet Union in 1987. Rosensaft, along with Elie Wiesel, spearheaded a project to collect and publish the memoirs of Holocaust survivors, originally under the auspices of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, and subsequently Yad Vashem.

Other children of survivors lend their voices on behalf of a range of causes. The social and literary critic Leon Wieseltier of *The New Republic* has spoken on behalf of the memory of the Holocaust dead. When the issue of the cross at the Carmelite convent at Auschwitz was raised in 1988, Wieseltier wrote, in an op-ed article in the *New York Times*: "It appears that Auschwitz has lost none of its power to derange. Nobody dies there anymore; but decency still does."

Social science research, directly or indirectly related to the destruction of European Jewry, reflects the commitment of Second Generation scholars to remember the past and its consequences. To date, close to 150 doctoral dissertations have been written on the psychological results of growing up with Holocaust survivor parents. Others have written about the Holocaust and its aftermath in fiction, plays, screenplays, poetry, and non-fiction.

Kurt Grünberg's doctoral dissertation on love relationships after Auschwitz among the second generation of Holocaust survivors in Germany is an important topic that has not been explored sufficiently. There are a few other doctoral dissertations on this topic of marital relationships of children of Holocaust survivors in America.¹⁰ In Linda Dubrow-Eichel's research, a sample of 46 children of survivors married to spouses who are not children of survivors and 18 children of survivors married to other chil-

10 | Dubrow-Eichel, L. (1992), *Marital relationships of children of Holocaust survivors*. Ann Arbor: UMI; Schecker, S.B. (1996), *Exploring the psychological effects of the Holocaust on the second generation: A phenomenological inquiry with children of Holocaust survivors and children of parents who served the Third Reich*. Ann Arbor: UMI; Schneider, G.K. (1996), *Transgenerational effects of the Holocaust: Levels of object relatedness and intimacy in adult children of survivors*. Ann Arbor: UMI.

dren of survivors showed no significant differences between participants and normative samples of marital adjustment of family relationship characteristics. It was found that children of survivors had lower incomes and higher ratings on a measure of resentment than the other couples. Children of survivors scored higher than their spouses on psychological involvement with the Holocaust, suggesting that the psychological impact of the Holocaust on survivors' children may be discernible and discrete. Males scored higher than females on problematic relations with parents. Females scored higher than males on involvement with the Holocaust and a relative comfort with being emotionally dependent and closer to parents. For women higher education related to higher satisfaction and for males, lower resentment was related to higher satisfaction.

In Germany, Grünberg's study shows that children of survivors have close knit ties to their families of origin. These close relations and loyalty make it difficult to commit to a marital relation to a non-Jewish German. Those children of survivors who get intimately involved with Germans often do not marry or live together nor do they commit to having children. Some wait until after their parents die to commit to a German spouse. Only twenty-five percent of children of survivors are married to others from a similar background. These dyads have more satisfying marital relations than those children of survivors who are married to Germans.

When research is conducted on a unique dynamic such as victim-oppressor, the meta-process of conducting such research often replicates the dynamic. It is almost as if an unconscious re-enactment occurs. When I conducted my social psychological study on why non-Jews risked their lives to save Jews during the Holocaust I needed a rescuer to assist me in getting back some of my data that was taken from me when I collaborated with another researcher.¹¹ In Grünberg's case, "the third-party raters discontinued their work when it became apparent that the second generation Jews were confronted with their parents' experiences during National Socialism in a much clearer and more authentic way than the non-Jewish German comparison group". The German coders accused the principal investigator of unscientific methods to prove that Germans are not capable of good intimate relations. The coders stopped working from one day to the next. They were almost finished with the work, but they did not complete it. Grünberg had to find new coders. They later sued him to get paid for the full amount, even though they did not finish. A compromise was eventually

11 | Fogelman, E. (1987), *The rescuers: A socio-psychological study of altruistic behavior during the Nazi era*. Ann Arbor: UMI; Fogelman, E. (1994), *Conscience and Courage: Rescuers of Jews During the Holocaust*. New York: Anchor Books, Doubleday

reached. Needless to say, this matter held up the research and new coders were needed in order to complete the study. A victim-oppressor dynamic was re-created between principal investigator and his coders.

And if this was not enough, Grünberg also experienced, first-hand, what it was like for Jews during National Socialism and particularly at a university. He audited a course on psychoanalysis and Nazism at his university in Marburg. To his surprise Professor Pohlen explained that the persecuted Jews were “unconscious accomplices”. When Grünberg challenged this assertion the professor declared Grünberg a perpetrator who employs “Nazi methods”, “Gestapo like slander” and “Stürmer style”. The professor said he would take legal action against Grünberg, threatened him with a large fine and with intention of preventing him from completing his doctoral dissertation. What is all too similar to Nazi Germany in the 1930s, not one out of a class of 40 students stood up to the professor. Only one person, a friend, “timidly” asked Professor Pohlen at the end of the seminar whether it was possible that he, Pohlen, might be misguided. The president of the university phoned Grünberg and apologized but never put anything in writing which could be used in a court of law. Grünberg got a taste of what it must have been like for Jews to feel so alone against the hatred and dehumanization against them during the Third Reich. Most people are passive bystanders. It was not from the common, uneducated, workers that the annihilation of the Jews was initiated. Rather, it started at the universities, in the court system, and in the medical profession. It was indeed the most highly educated who jumped on the bandwagon to persecute the Jews. A few months after Hitler got into power, Jews were not rehired to teach in the new semester at universities. Everyone complied. There were no mass demonstrations to question the firing of Jewish professors.

It took courage for Kurt Grünberg to speak up against the idea that the Jews were complicit in their own annihilation during the Third Reich in German occupied countries. Furthermore, it took perseverance to find a new place to complete his dissertation and to empower himself by getting out of the victim-oppressor bind that he relived at the University of Marburg. In the summer of 1990, Grünberg did manage to get some support in a public forum.

Love after Auschwitz is an important document. Previous writings on the post-Holocaust generations in Germany allude to problems in intimate relationships, but Grünberg has more systematic data. It is amazing that with all the historical catastrophes that the world has experienced, the field of family therapy has not studied the impact that genocide and racism have on the love relationships in subsequent generations.

Grünberg’s experiences as a student and researcher also shows the courage that it takes to confront man’s inhumanity to man. There is still a

tendency to “blame the victim”. Three generations after the liberation, the descendents of the victims and perpetrators are still re-enacting their roles. Attitudes towards the victims and their heirs will not change unless costly sanctions are instituted if institutions don’t comply with how to treat another human being just like oneself. The Golden Rule needs to prevail if humanity is to survive another century.

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lyses. They challenged me. And, above all, they encouraged me to persevere in the face of adverse circumstances and many doubts.

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The English version of the project required much stamina and effort. Beyond the original study, it includes an article that was written several years after the initial publication, which deals with the evolution of my study "Love after Auschwitz". I hope the reader will appreciate the interrelatedness of the two pieces of work.

The artist Romain Finke of Ravensburg graciously offered a picture of his "Dachau Zyklus" for use as the cover of the book; I appreciate his generosity. I am particularly thankful to Eva Fogelman for contributing a foreword to my book. She was one of the first experts in the field to consider the effects of the Shoah on the Second Generation an important topic of research.

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1. Introduction

Germany, the “home of the persecutors” is *also* the “home of the victims” – of those few Jews who at least survived the persecution of the National Socialists and who decided to live in this country after the Shoah and in spite of it, and whose children were born here; most of them were German citizens holding a passport of the Federal Republic of Germany, and were invested with all rights and obligations ... Subjective feelings, on the other hand, the personal awareness of one’s own life, need not necessarily correspond with these first external facts. For instance, upon being questioned, a “correction” was certainly frequently made to the effect that one had precisely *not* taken a decision to live in Germany; on the contrary, for years one had kept one’s suitcases packed in readiness to leave, but ultimately one had “hung on”. But even if one had taken such a decision deliberately – even in “one’s own country” one could have a very strong feeling of being a stranger there (cf. Broder and Lang 1979). The use of the juxtaposition “Germans and Jews” already calls attention to a deep-seated conflict: is one to understand that Jews with a German passport, who have grown up in Germany, who have a perfect command of the German language, who are conscientious and punctual persons, who do not attract attention in the street or anywhere else, are *not* Germans? Is it not absolutely right that a President of the Central Council of Jews in Germany should protest against the wishes for peace conveyed to him for *his* country, in view of the fact that the Federal Republic of Germany was not involved in any belligerent dispute with another country?¹ On the other hand, can “Jews *in* Germany” really be con-

1 | The President of the Jewish Community of Frankfurt/M., Ignatz Bubis, had received “good wishes for Easter” from the Chief Mayor of Frankfurt, Petra Roth (Christian Democratic Party) and from the deputy chairman of the city councillors, Hans Busch (Social Democratic Party), who in their letter expressed the hope “that the peace process in *your* country” (quoted from the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* of

sidered as “*German Jews*”? After the massacre of the Jews committed by the Germans, can there still be “*German Jews*” at all? Do they even share a common language? Can there really still be any possibilities of mutual understanding between them in view of the rift formed between them by the graves of six million murdered Jews? In which context one may still remark that in most cases there are no real graves to be found.

The view that there are (at least) two different “normalities”, a Jewish one and one that must be clearly distinguished from it, namely a non-Jewish German “normality” is probably less controversial. It is very likely that a careful look behind the two façades would result in a feeling that one had entered utterly different worlds. An outsider looking at the life of Jewish families in Germany would probably be startled to find how very “fresh” the memories of the period of persecution still are so many years after the Shoah. On the other hand, an outsider looking at the life of non-Jewish German families would probably be startled to find – at least on the surface of things – how “normal” their life seems to have remained in spite of National Socialism. Only a more thorough investigation might reveal how deeply and significantly the German side also is still entangled with the history of National Socialism (cf. e.g. Bar-On 1989, Bohleber 1998, Eckstaedt 1989, Kaminer 1997, Leuzinger-Bohleber 1998, Moser 1993, 1996, Müller-Hohagen 1988, Richter 1986, Rosenthal 1995, Rüsen and Straub 1998, Schneider, Stillke and Leineweber 1996, Sichrovsky 1987, Westernhagen 1987).

It is not only since the “peace” ceremony conducted over the graves of SS men in Bitburg in 1985 that it has been possible to recognize what non-Jewish German “normality” stands for: the Germans are striving to become a “normal” people again; they do not wish to cut a worse figure than that of other nations; further discussion of the topic of the National Socialist extermination of the Jews should come to an end. This is the background against which the unique character of the Shoah was questioned in the course of the “Historian’s Dispute” a few years “after Bitburg” and, following the reunification of Germany a few years later, once again the demand

April 15, 1996; italics by K.G.), which was overshadowed by terrible events, might make progress. Bubis’s reaction was an ironic one. He was not aware, he said, of any tensions between the Federal *Lands* of Hessen and Bavaria (in which case Roth and Busch would undoubtedly have spoken of “our” country) and it was just as unlikely that reference had been made to the non-conclusion of a peace treaty between the Allies of the Second World War and Germany. Moreover, he asked to be informed whether the election for the assembly of town councillors had to be held again, in view of the fact that Micha Brumlik, a member of the Jewish Community, had been elected as a councillor.

to end the debate about the persecution of the Jews which had taken place almost half a century before arose. The end of the division of Germany, frequently regarded as punishment, should at long last entail the end of remembering the criminal acts committed.

However, this attempt to deny what actually happened and to cast a cloak of silence over it is counteracted by a force which one may define as the return of what was repressed. In all the social situations mentioned above, for instance, anti-Semitic clichés about Jews reappear repeatedly, and slips of the tongue frequently occur which impressively demonstrate how very much the Nazi heritage is alive among non-Jewish Germans. Whilst it is “normal” for non-Jewish Germans to deny or play down National Socialism and its persecution of the Jews, it is certainly true that for Jews in Germany it is “normal” to live with the Shoah and its consequences (cf. Funke 1988, Heenen-Wolff 1992, Langer 1991).

The use of concepts to describe the Nazi extermination of the European Jews already raises problems. In this connection, James E. Young comments that in principle “the metaphors and archetypes used to represent the Holocaust ultimately generate knowledge of the events as much as they reflect them, and like every other interpretative element in language they veil as much of the reality as they illuminate” (Young 1988, 140 et seqq.; transl. by H.H.).

Above all, the following aspect seems to be important: if the general preference over here is to use the term “Holocaust” – “which German speakers usually do not pronounce like a word borrowed from the Greek, but in accordance with the rules of English phonemics” (Métraux 1998, 370) – then this is problematic because, in accordance with its literal translation as “burnt offering”, it gives the genocide of the Jews the mystical-religious significance of a sacrifice. Although the Hebrew term “Shoah” has the equal – putative – “advantage” of establishing a distance to a certain extent between the Nazi persecution and the Germans by using a foreign term, its meaning of “great calamity, catastrophe, destruction” would seem to be a more appropriate description of the persecution and murder of the Jews. In Yiddish we find, moreover, the term “churban” or “churbn” (destruction, ruins) with reference to the Biblical destruction of the first and second Temples, which is why one speaks of the “dritn churbn” (third churbn) in connection with National Socialism (ibid.). In his remarks, Métraux refers to James Young, who stresses that the clear religious connotations of churbn were “the reason why this word was not able to find favour with the Labour Zionists writing in Palestine about the situation in Europe”. Accordingly a conscious choice was apparently made in favour of the alternative expression, namely, in favour of using the word Shoah to designate the most recent, unprecedented murder of the Jews (ibid.). At this point, the fact that

the use of the term “Shoah” arose at the same time as the event it describes, would also appear to be significant (ibid.).

The present thesis on the “Jewish children of survivors of Nazi persecution of the Jews in the Federal Republic of Germany and their experience with love relationships”, which was begun in the faculty of Psychology at the Philipps University of Marburg and concluded at the Sigmund-Freud-Institute in Frankfurt/Main is an attempt to find out more about Jewish, but also about non-Jewish “normality” in this country. In this connection the following facts and questions have served as a point of departure for this research project: many investigations of the consequences of Nazi persecution for the Second Generation have been conducted in Canada, the United States and Israel. But which special features characterize the life of the Second Generation precisely in Germany? Many publications are based on research conducted on clinically impaired populations. For this reason, this investigation has been based on a “non-clinical” population. Moreover, most studies are either descriptions of individual cases without any control groups, or – in another case – they were carried out on a purely quantitative basis with standardized methods of investigation. This study is, in contrast to these former investigations, a comparative inquiry with an evaluation that is based both on quantitative and qualitative criteria.

A special bond with their parents has frequently been noted as one central complex of the problems of the Second Generation. Separation from the parents and the individuation process are regarded as having been impaired (e.g. Barocas and Barocas 1979, 1980). This can also be seen in aggression problems (e.g. Nadler, Kav-Venaki and Gleitman 1985, Sigal, Silver, Rakoff and Ellin 1973). The ties with one’s parents play an essential role in connection with the taking up of love relationships (cf. Blanck and Blanck 1968, 5 et seqq., Reich 1987, Winnicott 1965, 88 et seqq.). In addition, as far as potential partners of the Second Generation in Germany are concerned, we are usually dealing not only with non-Jews, but in fact with *Germans*. This means that in these love relationships the critical question of the Nazi past of the partner’s family comes up. This leads to a number of problems which have influenced this investigation decisively.

What part does the Nazi persecution of the Jews play in “German-Jewish” love relationships? What does this imply for the future of such relationships, in particular if one is confronted with the wish to have children or with their education?

Is there a special bond between the Second Generation and their parents? Does this hinder the taking up of love relationships? Do the parents exercise special pressure on the choice of a partner? Does the confrontation between Jewish children of concentration camp survivors in Germany and non-Jewish Germans lead to central conflicts in their relationships?