

# Ripples of Holocaust

Group ethos and values among children of Germans  
and Israeli Jews who lived under the Nazi regime

Eli Somer, Keren Or-Chen, Silke Birgitta-Gahleitner, Petra Falk and Ute Koop

# The Israeli culture in the shadow of the Holocaust

- 274,000 survivors of the Holocaust
- 400,000 second-generation survivors

How has the legacy of the Holocaust impacted the value system of 2<sup>nd</sup> generation survivors?

# German-Israeli 2<sup>nd</sup> generation research project

- Alice Salomon University of Applied Sciences, Berlin
- University of Haifa, Israel

# German-Israeli 2<sup>nd</sup> generation research project

Qualitative inquiry among 2<sup>nd</sup> generation Israelis revealed:

- a conservative, nationalistic stance marked by an existential xenophobic worry and by a sanctimonious victim-aggressor stance driven by the adage: “Never again!”
- a humanistic, compassionate outlook motivated by the resolve to adopt a value system that is as far removed from National Socialist ideology, as possible

# A constant presence of the Holocaust in current Israeli discourse: Conservative conclusions

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## By conjuring the Holocaust, Netanyahu brought Israel closer to war with Iran

Haaretz's editor-in-chief says that the Prime Minister publicly booby-trapped himself to war with Iran by comparing the need to strike its nuclear program with the Jewish request to bomb Auschwitz.

By **Aluf Benn**

Tags: [Benjamin Netanyahu](#) [Barack Obama](#) [Iran nuclear](#) [Iran threat](#) [Iran](#)

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In his speech to the AIPAC conference Monday night Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu moved closer than ever to the point of no return en route to war with Iran.

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## בהשוואת נתאנד לאושוויץ, נתניהו התקרב מאי-פעם למלחמה עם איראן

לדיבורי השואה יש רק משמעות אחת: המתנה ש"העולם" ינטרל את האיום אינה קיימת - אם איראן תגיע לפצצה, נתניהו יזכר כצ'רצ'יל דמיקולו

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# A constant presence of the Holocaust in current Israeli discourse: Conservative conclusions

## Auschwitz borders are here

We know down deep that the loss of a Jewish majority is how the Jewish state ends. And in our heart of hearts, we already know how this plays out.

By Bradley Burston

Auschwitz borders. That ominous phrase, so elegant in its horror. A go-to mantra of the right for more than four decades, it has proven so durable in linking a West Bank withdrawal to the annihilation of the State of Israel that it has outlasted countless anti-peace process ad campaigns (“Yesha zeh kan” the ubiquitous signs once read: Judea, Samaria and Gaza are right here).

Just last week, National Infrastructure Minister Uzi Landau, addressing a settler protest against the government, explicitly summoned up the specter of Auschwitz borders to explain why Israel must never return West Bank and East Jerusalem land. There was some irony in the timing, however: Two days after Landau’s speech, a demographic study showed that at this point, it is the Auschwitz borders that are right here.



National Infrastructure Minister  
Uzi Landau

Photo by: Tess Scheffan



# A constant presence of the Holocaust in current Israeli discourse: Anti (Israel's) government sentiments



# A constant presence of the Holocaust in current Israeli discourse: Anti (Israel's) government sentiments

- 2005 Evacuation of Gaza settlements



# A constant presence of the Holocaust in current Israeli discourse: Humanistic conclusions

“Free all ghettos” (In Hebrew)— graffiti near Warsaw Ghetto  
by former Israeli air force pilot Yonatan Shapira



# German-Israeli 2<sup>nd</sup> generation quantitative pilot study: Exploring values and national ethos

- Socio-Demographic Data
- The McGill Quality of Life Questionnaire (Cohen et al., 1995)
- Sense of Coherence Scale (Antonovsky)
- The Patriotism Scale (Brewer, 2004)
- The Ethnocentrism Scale (Bizumic, 2007)
- The Right-Wing Authoritarianism Scale (Rubinstein, 2006)

The screenshot shows the Globes website interface. At the top left is the 'GLOBES Israel's Business Arena' logo. To the right is an orange banner with the text 'Rent a car in Israel'. Below the banner is a navigation bar with the Hebrew word 'עברית' (Hebrew), the date 'Friday March 9 2012, Israel 11:17', and a search bar with a magnifying glass icon. A sidebar on the left contains a menu with items: 'Front', 'News' (highlighted), 'Views', 'Features', and 'Real estate'. The main content area displays a news article with the title 'Likud stays strong' in bold black text. Below the title is a sub-headline: 'The latest "Globes" Rafi Smith poll sees the Netanyahu's coalition maintaining its comfortable Knesset majority.' At the bottom of the article snippet, it says '1 March 12 19:14, Lilach Weissman'.

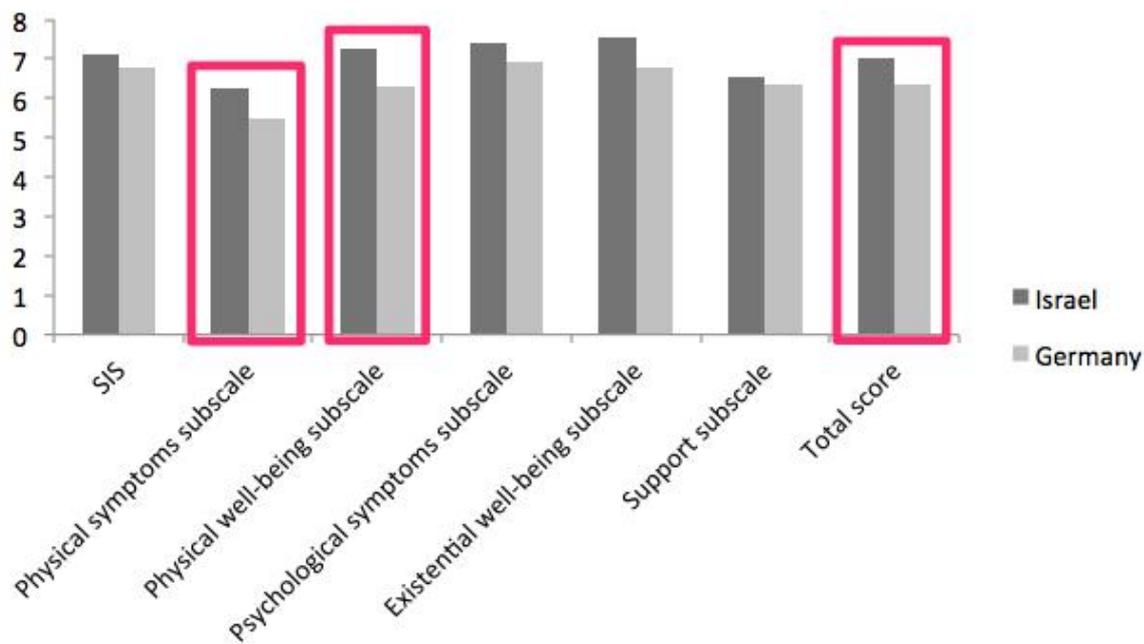
- The rightists coalition is stable and strong
- An atmosphere of nationalism and general mistrust of the Arabs
- What is the Israeli 2<sup>nd</sup> generation stance towards issues of nationalism?
- How similar or different are they from German respondents of a similar age?

# Socio-demographic data

Overview of the socio-demographic data		Ger	Isr
No. of persons participating		31	30
Gender	male	12	20
	female	19	10
Age	mean age	60	56.5
	median age	61	54
	age range	14	26
	minimum age	52	42
	maximum age	66	66
Employment	No. of persons in gainful employment	20	25
	No. of persons out of work	3	4
	No. of persons retired	8	1

# Quality of life

	Mean		Median		SD		Range		T
	Ger	Isr	Ger	Isr	Ger	Isr	Ger	Isr	
<b>SIS</b>	6.77	7.10	7.00	7.15	1.80	2.42	8	6	1.84
Physical symptoms subscale	5.50	6.25	5.00	6	2.64	1.56	9	5	2.85*
Physical well-being subscale	6.30	7.25	7.00	7.80	1.92	2.26	7	7	3.47*
Psychological symptoms subscale	6.91	7.40	7.25	7.00	2.33	2.65	8.75	6	1.95
Existential well-being subscale	6.79	7.54	7.00	7.50	1.82	1.30	8.67	7	1.
Support subscale	6.34	6.54	7.00	6.25	2.12	1.67	7.00	7	
<b>Total score</b>	<b>6.37</b>	<b>7.01</b>	<b>6.65</b>	<b>6.95</b>	<b>2.17</b>	<b>1.98</b>	<b>8.08</b>	<b>6.33</b>	<b>3.01*</b>

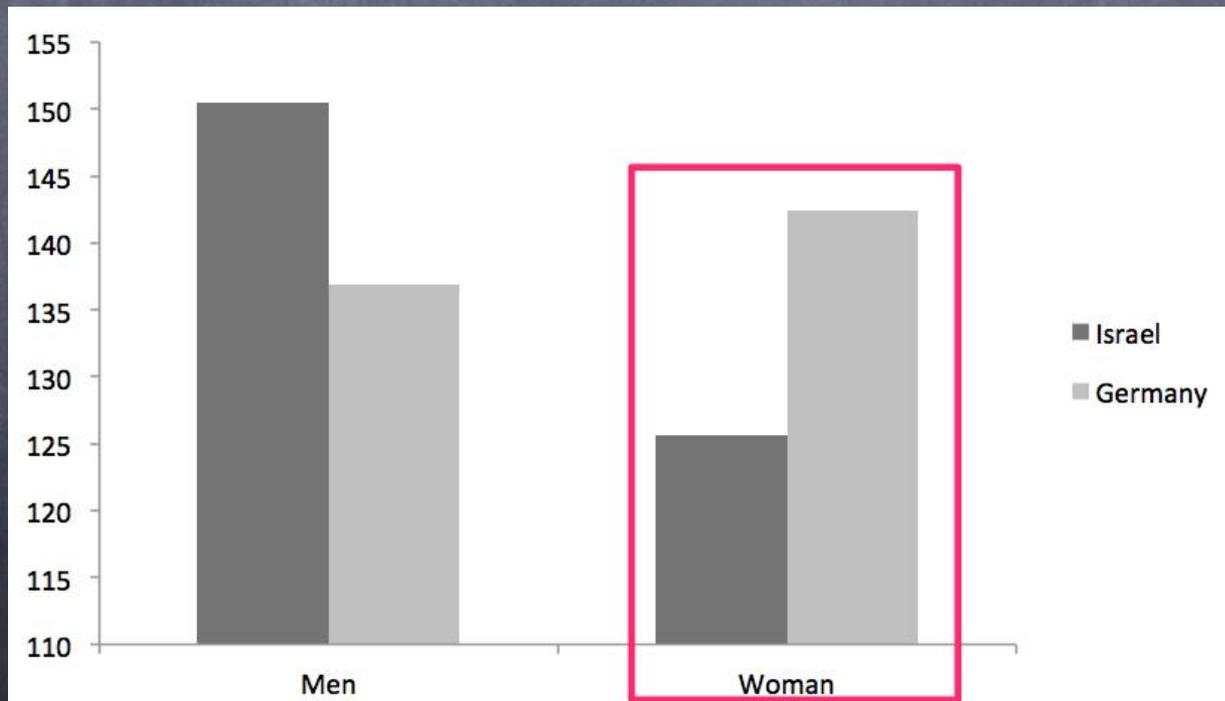


# Antonovsky's Sense of Coherence Scale

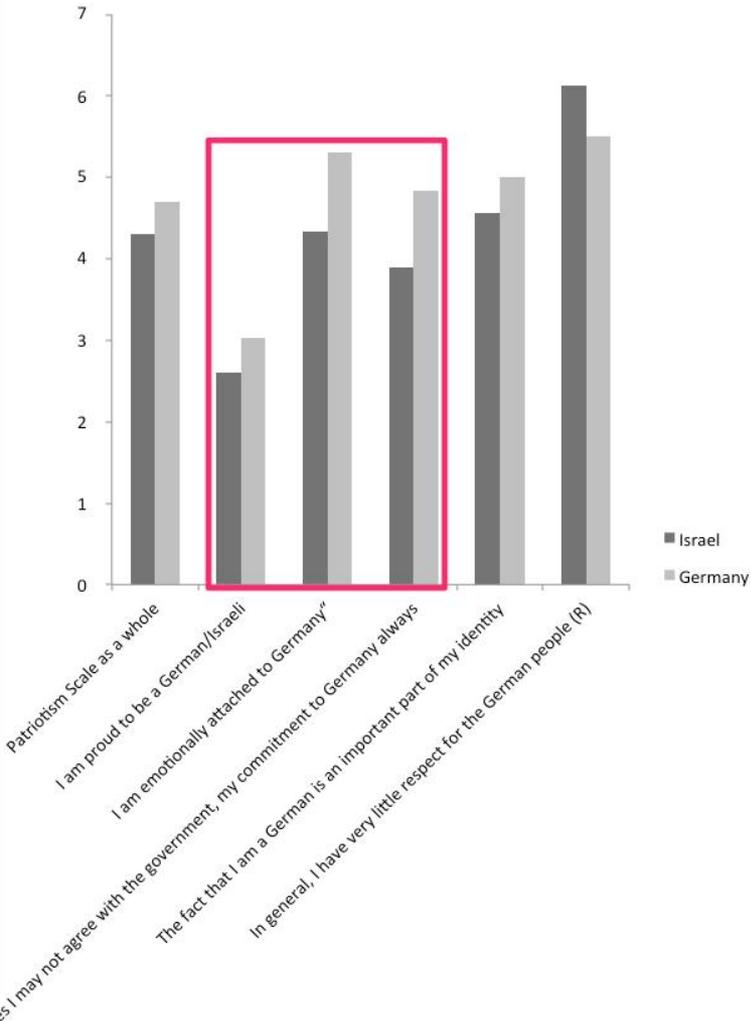
The SOC is defined as: “The extent to which one has a pervasive, enduring though dynamic, feeling of confidence that one’s environment is predictable and that things will work out as well as can reasonably be expected.” In other words, it’s a mixture of optimism and control.

# Sense of Coherence Scale

total SOC		Mean	SD	T
Women	Ger	136.89	25.75	3.25*
	<u>Isr</u>	125.62	21.82	
Men	Ger	142.42	22.00	1.36
	<u>Isr</u>	150.43	25.67	



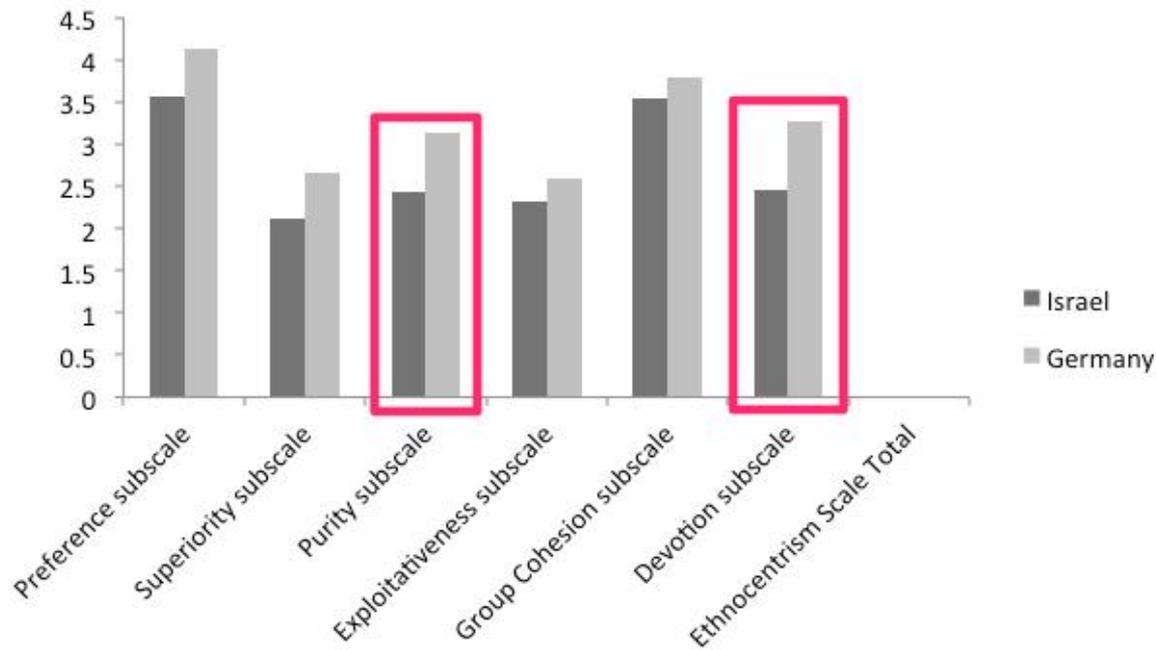
# The Patriotism Scale



	Mean		Median		SD		Range		T
	Ger	Isr	Ger	Isr	Ger	Isr	Ger	Isr	
Patriotism Scale as a whole	4.7	4.31	5.00	3.05	1.30	1.57	5.8	5.6	1.75
I am proud to be a German/Israeli	3.03	2.61	2.5	2.32	1.78	1.23	6	6	2.54*
I am emotionally attached to Germany/Israel	5.30	4.34	6	4.75	1.69	1.45	6	6	3.11*
Although at times I may not agree with the government, my commitment to Germany/Israel always remains strong.	4.83	3.89	5.00	4.5	1.93	1.86	7	6	3.08*
The fact that I am a German/Israeli is an important part of my identity	5.00	4.56	5.50	4.35	1.93	1.89	6	6	1.67
In general, I have very little respect for the German/Israeli people (R)	5.51	6.13	6.00	6.42	1.33	1.43	5	4	1.43

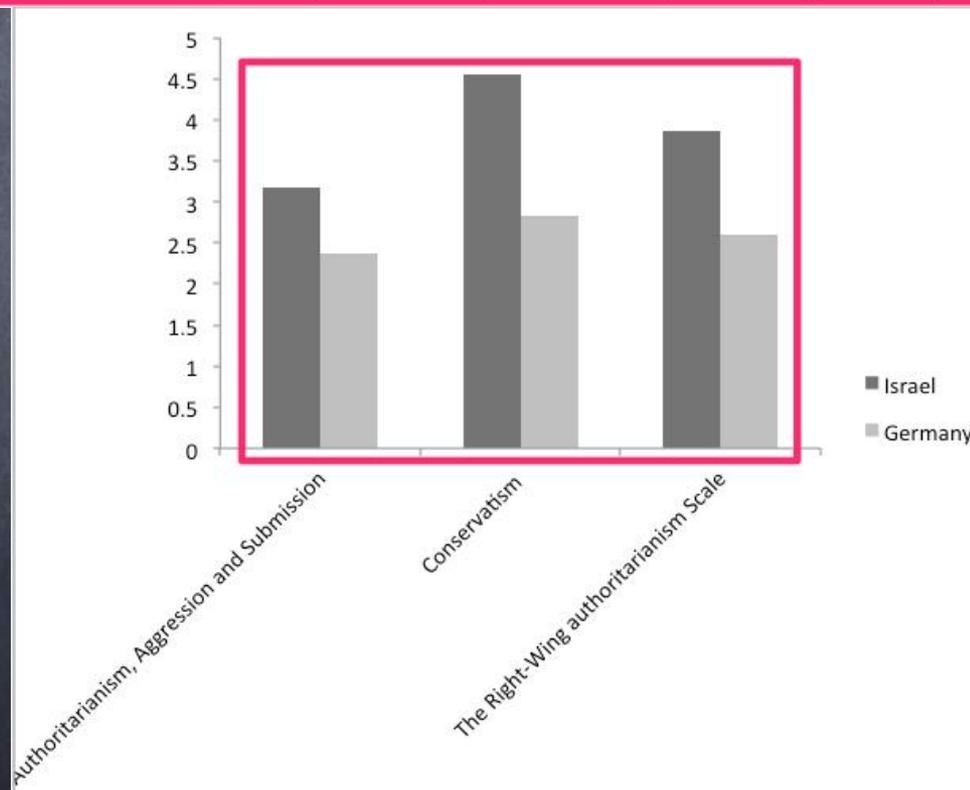
# The Ethnocentrism Scale

	<u>Mean</u>		Median		SD		t
	Ger	Isr	Ger	Isr	Ger	Isr	
Preference subscale	4.13	3.56	4.40	3.25	1.56	1.34	1.76
Superiority subscale	2.66	2.12	2.33	2.22	1.42	1.13	1.01
Purity subscale	3.13	2.43	3.33	2.57	1.04	1.00	2.64*
Exploitativeness subscale	2.60	2.32	2.50	2.15	1.37	1.14	0.98
Group Cohesion subscale	3.78	3.54	3.67	3.25	1.44	1.23	0.86
Devotion subscale	3.26	2.45	3.0	2.84	1.37	1.12	2.76*
<b>Ethnocentrism Scale Total</b>	<b>3.28</b>	<b>2.74</b>	<b>3.19</b>	<b>2.71</b>	<b>0.98</b>	<b>1.16</b>	



# The Right Wing Authoritarianism Scale

	German mean	Israeli mean	German sd	Israeli sd	t
Authoritarianism, Aggression and Submission	2.38	3.15	1.61	2.45	3.97**
Conservatism	2.81	4.56	0.94	2.89	4.78**
The Right-Wing authoritarianism Scale	2.59	3.86	1.12	2.67	3.15**



# Summary

- Israeli 2<sup>nd</sup> generation survivors report better quality of life than their German counterparts
- No difference between the groups in sense of coherence (although German female 2<sup>nd</sup> generation reported a better sense of coherence than Israeli comparisons, and an opposite trend was noted for men).
- Israelis were less proud of their nationality and less attached and committed to their country than Germans.
- Israelis are less ethnocentric than Germans
- At the same time, Israelis were more conservative and right wing than the Germans.

# Conclusion

- Israeli offspring of survivors show a complex pattern of being less patriotic than their German comparison respondents but, perhaps, in reaction to the continued existential threat they face, they are more authoritarian right wingers than their German counterparts. However, this conservative political value system is not based on racism. Israeli 2<sup>nd</sup> generation survivors are significantly less ethnocentric than Germans sons and daughters of the citizens of Nazi Germany.