



## **BREAKING THE SILENCE THROUGH PSYCHODRAMA HEALING THE TRANS-GENERATIONAL TRANSMISSION OF THE HOLOCAUST TRAUMA**

**Author:** Yaacov Naor

### **Abstract**

This article is about my experience leading intermodal psychodrama as a way of healing the emotional wounds of the Holocaust trauma. It includes the use of Psychodrama creating dialogues between enemies, between Jews and Germans.

### **The trauma of the Holocaust-survivors**

Before the Second World War there were over 8 million Jews in Europe. During the war nearly 6 million were killed. The remaining 2 million, the survivors, continue their lives with trauma. For some of them the post war experiences were as damaging as their wartime experiences. They were unable to return to their homes, many became "displaced persons" waiting in refugee camps, sometimes for years, for permission to emigrate from Europe. In many cases they had suffered great losses, including spouses, children or the entire family. Many got married in what is called "marriages of despair". Most of them felt that no one else could understand them.

"Trauma overwhelms our psychological defense mechanisms, takes on a life of its own in our unconscious memory, and, with considerable delay, causes persistent, unexpected, and incomprehensible psychological distress" (Kansteiner, 2004).

After so many years, the Holocaust still dominates the home of survivors and their families. Memory haunts the home, conditioning survivors' thoughts, their behavior, and their responses to their families. But their children and grandchildren continue to live under the Holocaust's emotional legacy. For many Holocaust families the Holocaust has not ended. Kellermann, a well-known Israeli psychologist, describes these long term psychological effects as an atom bomb that disperses its radioactive fallout in distant places, often a long time after the actual explosion.

The Holocaust continues to contaminate everyone who was exposed to it in one way or another. Eli Wiesel, Holocaust survivor and writer said: "Time does not heal all wounds; there are those that remain painfully open" (1978, p.222). Holocaust survivor Jean Amery said: "He who is tortured remains forever tortured; he can never again feel at home in the world. The humiliation of extermination cannot be blotted out. Faith in humanity, rased by the first slap across the face, can never be recovered" (1980).

Over the many years of life-threatening persecution and profound humiliation, Holocaust victims constructed a new, interior world of utter desolation. The traumatic reality destroyed a basic trust in humanity. Just as the survivors suffered from what is known as "survivor syndrome", their children showed symptoms and psychiatric features that bear the striking resemblance to this "survivor syndrome". Emotional survival under such traumatic conditions depends on the victim cutting off his emotions, encapsulating them. The individual more or less numbs himself to escape becoming overwhelmed by horror. This protective mechanism is nearly impossible to remove, and it takes its toll. What remains is an "empty circle" (D. Laub, 1998) that

permanently impairs sensibility and empathy in survivors and in others – including their own children.

### **The Second Generation**

Many of the survivors hoped and dreamed of protecting their children from knowledge about their terrible experiences and they wrapped themselves in a “veil of secrecy,” an individual and collective defence mechanism (J. S. Kestenberg, 1982). Many children, the so-called Second Generation, cannot pinpoint when they first learned about the Holocaust. They feel as if they’ve always known, as if they were born into the Holocaust. Children of survivors consume the unspoken horror experienced by their parents “with their mother’s milk,” and to this day they have difficulties assimilating this bitter knowledge.

For the victim, constant exposure to murder and unimaginably inhumane situations translates into a profound sense of humiliation and embarrassment. The victim’s shame over what was done to him was so unbearable that he kept it from himself and his own children. But children nevertheless felt their parents’ hurt and shame. They did not want to heap additional shame on their parents so instead they fantasized a history for their parents. American psychoanalyst Judith Kestenberg had a word for such futile attempts to assemble the pieces of one’s parents’ lives: She called it “transposition”.

Since the feelings of shame and mourning over so many dead were overwhelming, exceeding the human capacity for emotion, in the end the dead could not be properly mourned. And so, too, did children of the second generation become a replacement for murdered relatives – they were given the special mission of restoring family pride, of undoing the trauma. It was a mission that they unconsciously accepted but could never fulfil. The trauma was handed down, penetrated into the next generation, then into the third and by now into the fourth.

Many members of the second generation compensate for this inherited trauma through high ambition, career success, the search for material security as well as beauty and clothing. To be weak means to be humiliated again; weakness is frightening, for it contains the danger of once again being helpless and powerless. This is why tears were almost forbidden. Israeli psychoanalyst Ilany Kogan (1995) attributed an extraordinary adaptability to the second generation, at the cost of their emotional authenticity and individuation.

"The most important event in my life occurred before I was born", one child of concentration camp survivors has observed. The Holocaust did not end with the liberation of survivors after the collapse of the Third Reich, for the legacy of their suffering extends to a generation that never faced an SS storm troops. Aaron Hass (1991) in his book: "In the shadow of the Holocaust-The second generation" tells about himself: "Events that occurred fifty years ago, before my birth, follow me. Stories of those times, images before my eyes, evoke my most intense feelings of anger, fear, and sadness. My parents, survivors of the Holocaust, raised me and shaped me... Growing up meant being constrained often paralyzed, by hearing: 'How could you do this to me after all I have suffered?' "

Like their parents, children of survivors can have difficulties in modulating their emotions. They may become rageful or they may inhibit their anger. The inability to express hostility toward the parent may result in passivity and internalization of aggression or manifest itself in masochistic and self-destructive behavior. The children are often depressive and anxious, especially around death and separation.

They display apathy, feelings of emptiness and at times lack of emotional involvement.

As a Second generation myself I always felt as if I am a Memorial Candle. On the anniversary of a person's death we light a candle to remember them with. My existence reminded my parents of those who died. This is one of the major reasons why later I chose to become a psychodramatist. Psychodrama allows you to be noticed, to come to the stage and present yourself and say: "Here I am, look at me, I am important, I am me, I am alive". So now I can look back and say that being a psychodrama therapist and trainer is my way of staying alive, my way of not dying in this violent, aggressive, full of wars world.

This is not just my personal story. This is the hidden story of the Second Generation. This is the story which was never told. This is a screaming story, a crying story. We are the memorial candles. We are those who could never speak up, since we were busy trying to protect our parents. We tried to prevent them from further pain beyond their suffering in the past.

In many families of Holocaust survivors, silence took over as a way of dealing with feelings of pain, shame and humiliations. Today the silence is broken. We, the children, do what our parents could not do. All these years we felt that no one is listening or being able to listen to us. We were also educated that expression of emotions is a sign of weakness. The main story, the important one, was the survivor's story. We were only bridges trying to keep our sanity over troubled water. And our stories are full with colorful feelings, pain, rage, anger, frustration and aggression which were inflicted on us without any reason, arbitrarily.

We lost our childhood. We could not experience the joy of playing. We escaped into our imagination. We are trying desperately to make meaning in this destroyed world. We live in a constant inner war; in an inner conflict, whether to reveal the truth or stay with the mask on. We are also survivors. We are also victims of war. We were not there but the Holocaust affected us too. We were flooded with our parent's emotions; with their memories and their experiences. Many of us still dream nightmares and are busy with the question of what our parents could not tell us. Our role, while growing up, was to rescue our families and compensate for our parents' suffering. Many of us were named after relatives who were murdered. This created in many the sensation of being dead while being alive. We all experience difficulty in departing and in termination. Still the experience is an unavoidable meeting with bereavement of the past which stays unprocessed and an emotional unfinished business.

We, the Second Generation, incorporate into our inner world the roles of both the victim and the aggressor. At times we create inner enemies. Like our parents, some of us have difficulty enjoying life. The danger is around the corner. Who knows when a new disaster will fall upon us? Till the present we carry inside uncontrolled anger, guilt and shame. We feel vulnerable and fragile.

We are sensitive people walking at times on a thin line. The world is perceived by many of us as hostile, oppressive and threatening. The wounds are still open. The scars are long term and the pain is being transmitted from generation to generation.

The traces of the past appear in the present; in everyday life; in the inner lives. The Holocaust is not over. It is an ongoing process which affects the third and the fourth generation.

But in spite of everything, we have built new lives. We have continued the "choosing life" project. We rehabilitated ourselves. We have created new families. We won under difficult, at times in impossible conditions. We succeeded to recreate trust in people and in the world. We brought back hope for the next generations. Many of us were able to take off our masks and discover the truth. We have learnt to feel. We already know that if we are able to feel the pain, we can also feel joy.

### **Transgenerational Transmission of Trauma**

Trans-generational trauma is simply the inheritance or passing on of trauma from generation to generation. This topic has been increasingly discussed in the last 20 years. Researchers have increased their focus on the second generation of Holocaust survivors, due to the sufferings and emotional problems which they have. In the first scientific work on the subject there was an astonishingly high agreement concerning the unusual nature and high degree of emotional problems, which were very similar to descriptions from the survivors themselves. Case portrayals and psychotherapy reports on the children and grandchildren of Holocaust survivors or of those suffering from trauma clearly verify that the passing on of trauma from generation to generation is a serious problem. The diagnostic criteria of a Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) resulting from war trauma are frequently fulfilled, although the person has no personal experience of war.

The mechanism of transmission of trauma is a multifaceted process. It occurs both indirectly through the influences of early childhood, internalized modeling, socialization and learning as well as more directly through the communication styles and family interactions. These indirect and unconscious transmission of Holocaust trauma is called "remembering the unknown" (Fresco, 1984) or "the experience of memorial candles" (Wardi, 1992). This usually results in the feeling of the children that they need to live in their parents' Holocaust past (Kogan, 1995).

One of the clearest descriptions of the effects of transgenerational transmission of the trauma from the Holocaust survivors to their children appears in the Barocas' article: "Wounds of the fathers: the next generation of Holocaust victims": "The children of survivors show symptoms which would be expected if they actually lived through the Holocaust. The children present a picture of impaired object relations, low self-esteem, narcissistic vulnerability, negative identity formation, personality constriction and considerable affective impairment. They have to deal with the conflictual issue of intrusive images of their parents' suffering and the association between these images and ideas about their own vulnerability to death.

They seem to share an anguished collective memory of the Holocaust in both their dreams and fantasies reflective of recurrent references to their parents' traumatic experiences. These children wake up at night with terrifying nightmares of the Nazi persecution, with dreams of barbed wire, gas chambers, firing squads, torture, mutilation, escaping from enemy forces and fears of extermination. The children

come to feel that the Holocaust is the single most critical event that has affected their lives although it occurred before they were born" (1979, p.331 ff).

The Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders describes PTSD : "The essential feature of Posttraumatic Stress Disorder is the development of characteristic symptoms following exposure to an extreme traumatic stress or involving direct personal experience of an event that involves actual or threatened death or serious injury, or other threat to one's physical integrity; or witnessing an event that involves death, injury, or a threat to the physical integrity of another person; or learning about unexpected or violent death, serious harm, or threat of death or injury experienced by a family member or another close associate..." (DSM IV, 2000, p.463).

"The symptoms of PTSD may cause disturbances or impairment in social and occupational functioning, as well as other areas of daily living. Such effects, whether diagnosed as full PTSD, or simply problems in mood and adjustment, may have serious impairments not only for the survivors, but also for their children" (Barocas & Barocas, 1979).

"Without the explicit knowledge of why their parents were so overly protective, due to the practice of silence regarding the past, children of Holocaust survivors learned to be anxious leading to difficulties in separation and individuation. A frequent assumption in the clinical literature was that a "secondary posttraumatic stress disorder" was being transmitted, suggesting that since many Holocaust survivors suffer from PTSD, their offspring will also suffer from a syndrome of similar dimensions with diminished proportions)... Posttraumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) provides a common language for diagnoses and assessment of trauma victims, including Holocaust survivors.

Many of these survivors established post-war families and it is here that we began to witness the possibility of trauma transmission.

Parental communication regarding the Holocaust, often characterized by obsessive re-telling or all-consuming silence, and strong family ties are implicated in the theoretical literature on trauma transmission. Terms such as vicarious, empathic, and secondary traumatization have been used to describe intergenerational transmission of trauma.

However, though the stories of the past remained silent, implicit messages were generally still conveyed. The child's lack of understanding of their parent's struggle was not simply forgotten, but instead, replaced by childhood fantasies depicting atrocities that were, in many cases, more severe than the actual past experience. Therefore, although the intent by parental survivors was to protect their children, maintaining silence and secrecy ultimately lead to an intensification of other troubling areas in family life" (Krell et al., 2004).

While many second generation children noted an understanding that their parents loved them, they perceived an overall lack of compassion and affect in displaying that love, and in sympathy toward their various wants and needs. Feelings of helplessness and vulnerability are prominent amongst second generation children.

Children may have felt responsible for their parent's sadness or deficiency of emotional support, and would try to please their parents by excelling in the areas of life in which their parents placed value. However, despite accomplishment in any or all of these areas, children of Holocaust survivors often felt unfulfilled due to lack of emotional praise and contact. Many children were unable to understand the paradox of wanting to please their parents, while resenting their lack of affective attachment. Feelings of guilt and anger were often the result, lasting through adulthood and carrying over into other relationships and connections.

The emotional expression not present in many families of Holocaust survivors may also be tied to the organization and understanding of attachments and relationships. Most Holocaust survivors experienced some form of loss during their struggle; for many that loss came in the form of separation or death of a parent or loved one. Numerous studies have demonstrated a link between the experience of loss by a parent and their attachment relationships with their children. The comprehension of attachment relationships, like those between parent and child, becomes disorganized. The lack of resolution of trauma and loss leads to unresolved mourning by the parent, affecting the bond between parent and child.

It is interesting to note that for children of Holocaust survivors, the trauma of their parents may be perceived both as a curse and as a legacy. Some children grow up with terrible anxiety-provoking Holocaust associations that haunt them day and night. Others experience their heritage as a powerful legacy that gives them a sense of purpose and meaning in life. The contradictory forces of vulnerability and resilience may be assumed to continue to accompany the Second Generation for their entire life span. Tragedy also provided them with adaptive coping ability and with "survival skills". It is important not to view the Second Generation as a homogenous group, which either suffers from specific psychopathology, or which manifests post-traumatic growth, but to see them as simultaneously struggling with both forces throughout life

### **Breaking the Silence through Psychodrama**

My experience was that my parents, like many other Holocaust survivors, were involved in what is called: "Conspiracy of Silence". This term was first coined by Dr. Yael Danieli, clinical psychologist and victimologist. Director of the Group Project for Holocaust Survivors and Their Children in New York and senior representative for the UN International Society for Traumatic Stress Studies. She says: "Survivors' war accounts were too horrifying for most people to hear. Compounding their psychic pain, survivors also encountered the held myth that they had participated in their own destiny by "going like sheep to the slaughter" and the suspicion that they had performed immoral acts in order to survive. The silence imposed by a world that did not want to hear them intensified their sense of isolation, loneliness, and mistrust of society... In bitterness and despair, many decided there was no one they could talk to about their trauma except, perhaps, other survivors or members of their newly formed families. The "conspiracy of silence" was almost an agreement of "you don't listen, I don't tell." Some survivors also chose not to talk about their experiences with their children because they wanted their kids to have a 'normal' life" (1998).

In order to better understand and relate to survivors of war trauma and their families we need to encourage them to stop the silence as a way of survival, we need to encourage them to find safe ways to tell their untold stories. We have to listen to them, despite our fear of the terrible things we might hear. To listen without judgement.

The therapeutic process for the Second Generation include gaining awareness and insight to the roots of their problems, followed by gradual process of working through and re-integration. Psychodrama provides support, sharing of mutual experiences and encouragement to find free expression of feelings, thoughts and associations which were covered up or depressed. This is done since many of them could not find safe and suitable ways of expression to their unwarranted anger, anxiety and depressions. Individual psychotherapy is usually combined with Expressive Arts Therapies and especially Psychodrama.

### **Psychodrama Groups for Descendants of Victims and Perpetrators**

For the last 30 years I am involved in a project called: "Traces of the Holocaust in the Present". I do this together with Hilde Goett who is a psychodrama therapist and trainer coming from the "enemy" side. The participants are offspring of Holocaust survivors and of Nazis. This work is offered especially to second and third generation descendants of victims and perpetrators.

The Second World War and the Holocaust is a story of cruelty and infliction of pain and suffering which left scars on both the victims and the persecutors sides. It is a long lasting process and it has traces in the present. In our work we aim to give the participants a chance to confront the Holocaust without judgement, criticism or blaming.

The purpose of our joint work is to break the silence, gain better understanding and to recognize the moral, social and personal implications that the Holocaust left us with. In these workshops we explore spontaneous, expressive and creative ways of dealing with the relationship of the persecutor-victim roles within each of us and in the society. As a result the participants can learn to face their own history more authentically.

The active work through the body allows an immediate safe opening of the inner emotional world and an encounter with the truth which lies within. The theatrical and psychodramatic stage allows the group members to present and share their real history in a true and genuine manner. They can share their memories, experiences, fantasies and feelings by giving voice to the suffering. And be heard. It gives them an opportunity to win in the struggle against anonymity by telling and acting their stories and by breaking the family and social process of silencing.

The fact that we come from the opposite sides of the Holocaust is unique and special. We bring with us the story and the legacy of our families. Both my parents were Holocaust survivors. Hilde Goett was born in Romania 1953 and is from a family which was a member of the German minority in Romania. She was discriminated against by the Romanians as a "fascist child" since both her

grandparents served in the Nazi army. And as well her grandmother was deported to Siberia by the communist regime.

In the psychodrama groups that we started to lead together, we shared the same goals. We had the same drive to teach people how to respect the other, how to listen to the story, the narrative of the other - the "different" one. Our purpose is not to reach reconciliation but rather teach the Germans and the Jews and others who attended the workshops to be witnesses to the unique personal way the participants express their feelings and share their stories with the group.

One of the things the two conflict groups frequently have in common is the silence, even if the motives for this are different on the respective sides. In the perpetrator families it is mainly the fear of persecution and condemnation which leads to silence about what occurred. In the victim families it is the sadness over murdered family members, the victims' shame of such extreme humiliation and the desire in all family members to protect each other from further pain.

Another thing in common is the terrible effect of family secrets. This is mirrored again in the fantasies of the descendants, which can be expressed in many different forms. In this way descendants of the victims pose questions about the guilt of survival, such as: What did the survivors do in order to survive? Whereas the descendants of the perpetrators ask questions of their own potential guilt, such as: What would I have done in the same situation?

For us the aim is establishing a dialogue through the encounters between both sides. We let the subjective truth of the respective sides be represented on stage with all the sorrow, mourning, shame, despair, horror, rage and feelings of guilt this entails. Thus a bridge is built connecting the fate of the participants with the family histories of the opposing sides.

We use sociodrama as a dialogue for dealing with the burden of trauma stemming from incidents of the previous generations. As a rule, the trauma of the Nazi period has not been personally or directly experienced by participants in our workshops. They are not survivors of the Holocaust and are not Nazi perpetrators, but the children, grandchildren and family members. In short, we deal with Trans-generational trauma.

We start out with the premise that the experience of violence sits tightly in the body where it has found its place and it is physically felt. The body- and the encounter-exercises which we offer help make this possible and also help establish real contact between the participants in the group. The silence in the families weighs so heavily on them that they feel the need to find a new voice. Others want to comprehend the sorrow, despair and mourning of the family which seems to have no apparent end.

Jewish participants take part by mourning over murdered members of their family, enraged about the perpetrators who have burdened them with this sorrow. The participants who come from families of perpetrators have different wishes. They would often like to choke the family history, are fighting the shame and feelings of guilt and often cannot distinguish between the personal and the collective guilt. They would like to have a better understanding of themselves and their families and break

loose from their identification as perpetrator. Some also hope for forgiveness or reconciliation.

The participants who are baptised Christians and have a partly Jewish background, or who come from a family which has experienced persecution for political or religious reasons, or because of their sexual orientation, are also torn with the question of their identity and affiliation. We regard them as coming from "mixed families" because they share the experiences of both sides.

One thing they all have in common is that they are seen as "traitors" to their families. They betray the taboo of silence and confront the family with its troubled past. Generally the individual persons or groups who are made "scapegoats" because they want to talk about what happened and how they feel are regarded as the cause of disaster and accidents. The so-called scapegoats are burdened with the fear, the shame and the guilt and they wear the blame for all the sins of the family, the community and the world. Generally speaking our groups are made up of scapegoats from all sides of the conflict: victims, perpetrators and mixed families.

### **Rituals in Auschwitz**

We also take week-long groups to Auschwitz-Birkenau. While we are in Auschwitz we work psychodramatically but we also include a process of creating individual rituals. These rituals are carried out in Birkenau Death Camp with the help of the group. Some of these rituals take a form of memorial ceremonies and some become theater performances including movement and singing.

We know that words cannot express fully and accurately the story of our reaction to the Holocaust. It is phenomenological experience and expression. Rituals create psychodramatic and sociodramatic forms of sharing the human individual way of interaction. Beyond all it is a therapeutic act which cannot be done by oneself. It needs the community effect of holding and containing.

Some of the rituals became the best and most profound way of confronting the Holocaust. Few Examples: Walking barefoot on the rail trucks leading to the main crematorium, listening to the quite harmonica music inside of one of the barracks, reading Paul Celan poem: Black Milk, sharing dry bread in a circle and eating it very slowly, participating in a dream like ceremony of burial of a young woman and more. The rituals in Birkenau serve the attitude of confronting the Holocaust without judgment or blaming. These sociodramatic rituals have a therapeutic effect, a kind of psycho-social healing.

The rituals allow sharing the personal and the interpersonal at the same time. The rituals are forms of acknowledgement of the suffering of the "other side". It focuses on emotional expression of anger, rage, guilt, fear, anxiety, helplessness, hopelessness and humiliation. The rituals require the use of imagination and creativity. It gives voice, a stage, a form to emotions which do not have clear words. The rituals are integral part of sociodrama events. These are symbolic concretizations in action of memorials. These symbolic acts are based at times on religious ceremonies of burying the dead, reading poetry, singing next to the imaginary grave.

One of the most difficult experiences of Holocaust survivors and their descendant's is not having a real concrete grave to mourn their dead. The rituals create a new

opportunity of re-burying the dead. The rituals offer meaning and a sort of closure to the events of the past. Rituals strengthen the link of the group member, the individual with the group and the social community. These ritual ceremonies have an effect of healing by bringing people together, binding and uniting them. They give them hope, a sense of belonging and a relief from being alone, anonymous and overwhelmed with the enormity of the Holocaust.

These sociodramatic rituals themselves have a therapeutic effect. This is a kind of a psycho-social healing. They can create a perspective, a liminal space that exists simultaneously in the past and in the present. It is a form of "Surplus Reality". It is a bridge between the individual's inner and outer world. It leads to catharsis, change and a sense of integration. The rituals also have a balancing effect between the individual and the group.

### **From Encounter to Dialogue**

Our work is based on Moreno's concept of the encounter which can lead to a dialogue. This structure include group and personal warm up, art making, trust building, empathy education, awareness and acceptance.

This psychodramatic and sociodramatic work and the special ritual performances allow the participants to move from projection, generalizations, prejudices, pre-conceptions and illusions into the process of learning to be in one's center, taking responsibility, look in the eyes of the other face to face with acknowledgement, empathy, respect and acceptance.

As leaders we are aware in our work of the danger of creating false closeness which can lead to premature reconciliation or forgiveness. We do not aim to reach reconciliation, but at times it happens spontaneously and naturally, in a step by step, long and slow process.

The encounter between Holocaust survivors and their perpetrators is most of the times painful or even impossible. The generation after and even the grandchildren are taking the risk to meet and confront one another in a safe way, working deeply on this theme in front of others in the group, especially from the other side.

We are now responsible for ensuring that history does not repeat itself. We accept the group from the opposite side and look for a new way, through encounters and dialogue, where the wounds can be suffered, mourned and then be healed. Seeing this pain as an essential part of a person's life can lead to a clear decision never to cause anybody else such hurt and to realise a different, respectful and meaningful relationship with other people.

We can now look back into our history as psychodrama directors coming from opposite side of the Holocaust that we succeeded to create a safe place of expression, to create trust, a sense of belonging and exchange fear, hatred and prejudice with a real encounter and dialogue. In the many years we have worked together we have developed a system of encounters and dialogue filled with mutual acceptance, respect, recognition and love. We sincerely hope to carry on this work in the future.

### **Future Perspective**

We live in a world of changes, full of conflicts, wars and political and social uprising. Wars and conflict affect us much longer than their actual time. We live with the emotional results. The emotional results of trauma are present in our inner lives and affect our behavior. We live with trauma which goes on from generation to generation. Facing this, many of us are speechless and unwillingly chose the rescue of silence.

Silencing forces want to repress and control the secrets, the untold stories, the difficult memories. But silence is an accumulating process. It creates emotional and bodily blocks. At times this silence comes out of being overwhelmed, out of fear, not knowing, or even as a form of denial.

We live still in the midst of great collective silence. We need to raise our voice, to break the strong tradition of silence. We need to tell the stories which we never told, the stories we were not allowed to tell. We need to free ourselves from slavery, submission and collaboration with the tradition and power of silence.