

Bar Ilan University

**Teaching the Subject of the Holocaust to
Ultra-Orthodox High School Students from the
Mizrahi Jewish Community**

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Abstract

This study deals with teaching the subject of the Holocaust to ultra-Orthodox high school students from the Mizrahi Jewish community. The purpose of the study is to examine in depth how teachers from the Mizrahi Jewish community teach the subject of the Holocaust to ultra-Orthodox high school students from the Mizrahi Jewish community. The study is submitted as part of a comprehensive study by Prof. Zehavit Gross within the framework of the National Academy of Sciences, on the subject of Holocaust education in the various sectors in Israel. The current study examined the question: How are girls from the Mizrahi Jewish community who attend ultra-Orthodox schools taught the subject of the Holocaust?

This study is based on extensive theoretical literature in the field of Holocaust education, such as changes in Holocaust education in Israel, Holocaust education in the education system, the goals of Holocaust education in general and in accordance with the age of the students. In addition, various aspects pertaining to teaching methods in Holocaust education. In addition, a focus was placed on teaching the subject of the Holocaust to students from the Mizrahi Jewish community, through a general examination of the subject and focusing on Holocaust education in the Mizrahi Jewish sector. Aspects arising from the connection between the Mizrahi Jewish community and the Holocaust were also discussed.

The present study is a qualitative study, focusing on an in-depth investigation of the field under study with the aim of getting to know the perceptions and motives of people who experience the subject in a unique and different way as members of the Mizrahi Jewish community. The study is being conducted through semi-structured in-depth interviews with teachers from the Mizrahi Jewish community who teach at ultra-Orthodox high schools for girls from the Mizrahi Jewish community. In the interviews,

the teachers present their perceptions and attitudes towards Holocaust education, examining its limitations and detailing their teaching methods.

The findings of the study raise aspects pertaining to teaching the history of the Holocaust to high school students from the Mizrahi Jewish community. The findings focus on broader aspects of teaching this complex subject, addressing the academic, religious, national, social and emotional realms. The findings of the study show that due to the complexity of the subject, the teachers employ diverse teaching aids in order to give it depth and make it meaningful.

A key conclusion that emerges from the study is that the subject of the Holocaust should be tailored to the specific target population and should address its subjective difficulties in dealing with such a “difficult” subject and with the objective needs of the complexity of the subject matter.

Another key conclusion of the study is that a learning envelope should be created within the teaching process that addresses other multidimensional aspects of Holocaust education such as the religious, social, national and emotional aspects, in order to enable students to contain this complex subject and cultivate meaning and a personal connection with it.