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Framing the Holocaust in popular knowledge: 3 articles about the Holocaust in English, Hebrew and Polish Wikipedia

Introduction

Wikipedia, the online encyclopedia, is one of the most popular websites in the world. With over 20 million articles in 295 different languages ("List of Wikipedias", n.d.), it is a prominent source of information globally.

The key feature of Wikipedia is its collaborative character: the body of knowledge of the encyclopedia is not rigorously written and edited by academics and experts, but open for public participation, where every person can contribute by writing or editing ("Wikipedia: Introduction", n.d.). This leads to a situation in which articles remain under constant change and debate, and some are even considered, in Wikipedia's terminology, as "disputable". Articles in different languages are not identical translations of original articles – they are written separately, and thus differ from version to version (some are not even available in certain languages). Differences prevail, of course, in articles related to historical events, the memories of which are often represented distinctively in different societies: when the collective memories of a certain event differ in given societies, we assume that differences will be reflected in the respective articles on Wikipedia, since the articles are written by members of these societies, and interact with prevailing narratives of the collective memory.

The memory of the Second World War and the Holocaust has been the ground for long-lasting debates (and to a certain extent even tension) between Israel and Poland. As will be explained further in this article, the two societies (Polish and Jewish) have greatly suffered from the atrocities of the German army during the war, and both promote a vision of themselves as the main victims of the war. The way in which various events and phenomena from this period of war are viewed in both countries is often significantly different, and at times even incompatible. The goal of this paper is, therefore, to see whether and how the differences in the collective perceptions of the Holocaust in Poland and Israel are reflected and communicated through the relevant articles on Wikipedia in the respective languages. The hypothesis is that the articles touching historical events related to the Holocaust will show significant discrepancies, both in terms of volume and in terms of content, assuming that the articles will resonate the narratives of the collective memories in both societies.

Methodology

In order to answer the research question, the research will analyze 3 articles on events related to the Holocaust, in three languages: Hebrew, Polish, and English[1]. The analysis will be based on the theory of "Framing", originated by Erving Goffman. According to the theory, when an individual recognizes a particular event, it employs frameworks or schemes of interpretation (Goffman, 1986, p. 21). Every social group has a belief system that operates as a primary framework of understanding, a "framework of frameworks" (Goffman, 1986, p. 21), otherwise defined by Entman (1993, p. 53) as "the level of culture". The theory sees mass media as having a strong impact on constructing social reality by setting the frames through which the audience interprets public events, a role termed by Scheufele (1999, p. 115) as "frame setting". Media framing includes the process of selection of certain aspects of an event and making them more meaningful, noticeable or memorable (Entman, 1993), promoting a certain vision of the event according to four parameters: definition of the problem/phenomenon, causal interpretation (identifying the forces behind the happening), moral evaluation (of the agents and their effects), and treatment recommendation of the event. Frames are manifested in the text by the presence or absence of keywords, phrases, images and sources of information,

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[1] The English version is expected to serve as a reference point of comparison between the two other versions, assuming that it takes a third stand on the topic, distant from particular concerns of the collective memory of the two other given societies.

repetition, and association with culturally familiar symbols (Entman, 1993). Studies focusing on media frames tend to consider these frames as dependent variables, looking at various social factors (political orientation of the medium's owner, socio-economic background of the medium's audience, and others) as influencing the employment of different frames: what factors influence the way in which issues are framed, and what frames are used as a result (Scheufele, 1999). A common method for answering these questions is a comparative research of consistencies and differences in the framing of essentially the same phenomena.

Identification and description of the frames will be done through a process of comparative qualitative content analysis, which enables interpretation of the text through systematic classification, coding and identification of certain patterns of meanings (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005, p. 1277). The analysis units will be the Wikipedia articles in the three languages, and the research shall follow a deductive process (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005, p. 1281), using the four roles of frames identified by Entman as main categories for analysis: fragments in each article will be categorized according to the framing role which they fulfill, and each type of frame will be assigned to the fragment as a sub-category (for example, if a certain fragment in the article describes Germans as perpetrators, it will be categorized as "causal interpretation", and the sub-category will be "Germans as perpetrators").

Two supplementing tools will be used to support and strengthen the qualitative content analysis. First, the research will examine the manifestation of frames in the texts and the presence, absence or repetition of certain information, through "manifest" content analysis (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005, p. 1283) – a comparison of the presence of categories and sub-categories in each text done by word-counting of categories and sub-categories: the total amount of words in each coded fragment will be counted and summed, and then the total amount of words coded under each sub-category and category in each article will be compared, in order to compare the manifestation of each type of sub-category and category in the articles[2]. The other tool is the semiotic analysis. The semiotic analysis, as presented by Roland Barthes in "Mythologies" (2009), complements the understanding of the ideological frames in which the analyzed texts operate. It assists the content analysis by providing it with depth regarding the symbolism, connotation and meaning suggested by the text. The semiotic analysis focuses on the relation between denotation and connotation,

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[2] The goal of the manifest analysis is not to give an exact quantitative and statistical evaluation of the categories, but rather a more general comparison of the presence of each category and sub-category in the text. The exact number of words dedicated to a certain frame in each language is not crucial, but major differences in the volume of the fragments dealing with certain categories will hint at a contrast between the importance given to this particular category.

between what is read in the text and what is understood from it, and on the system of values that is the base for the whole system of significations and connotations in a given text (Barthes, 2009, p. 157). Using Barthes's remarks on the relations between denotation, connotation and myth, this article will strive to understand how the analyzed texts frame events, create certain connotations, and in this way strengthen particular versions of memories.

The analyzed articles

The three articles analyzed in this article are the ones on the following topics: the Auschwitz-Birkenau camp, the pogrom in Jedwabne, and Righteous Among Nations. The rationale behind the choice of these three particular topics was that they represent phenomena that are apt to be treated differently by the collective memories of the different nations: the topic of Righteous Among Nations includes heroic, positive action, which is expected to reflect consensus between the three versions. The article on the pogrom in Jedwabne, on the other hand, describes an event in which Poles are perceived to be the perpetrators of crimes against their Jewish neighbours; it is an event of conflictive and controversial nature, and thus the article is also expected to reflect conflict and controversy between the Polish version (which may try to diminish the role of Poles in the crimes or perhaps even justify the behaviour of the Polish perpetrators) and the Hebrew one; the Auschwitz-Birkenau camps are iconic symbols of the Holocaust – for both nations they represent a painful episode of suffering and victimhood, and it would be interesting to evaluate whether the articles in the different languages will present a consensual version or rather engage in a competition of victimhood. In order to understand more about the concept of the "collective memory", the fundaments of such memory in Israel and in Poland, and how they can be reflected in the articles, a short introduction to the topic shall now be provided.

Collective memory of the Second World War and the Holocaust in Israel and in Poland

To facilitate the analysis of frames in the articles, the paper now continues with a short background overview of the concept of the collective memory, and its appearance in the context of memory of the Holocaust in Israel and in Poland. Why does this article assume that the Wikipedia articles will present different versions of historical events in each country? The answer lies in the way in which we understand memory as a social phenomenon.

At first sight, memory is perceived to be an individual matter. People recall only their own experiences first-hand and treat them as "private property" (Lowenthal, 1985). However, decades of social research and thinking have helped us to understand that every memory, even first-hand, is always constructed in a social context – we need other people's memories to confirm our own, exchange information with others, to revise and validate our own memories and to learn about events from our own lives, which we cannot remember ourselves (Lowenthal, 1985, pp. 196–197). Moreover, large fragments of our memory that constitute the bulk of our identity were not experienced by us first-hand; they may have occurred before we were born and are passed to us by second-hand or even third-hand sources but we still consider them as part of our personal history (Shils, 1981, p. 53). In "The Social Frames of Memory", the French sociologist and philosopher Maurice Halbwachs (1969), makes the point that memory always consists of (and is organized according to) "social frames of representations" – when evoking memories, we end up locating our memories in a vast net of other memories, and begin organizing them thematically; these memories enter in dialogue with the memories (and versions of memories) of other people, which we have learned about through dialogue and exchange. At the end of this process, people end up having very similar versions of particular events, and groups start developing a rather uniform story of particular occurrences (Banasik & Pennebaker, 1997, p. 8). With time, the collective version of memory of particular events in given groups is no longer a matter of direct dialogue, but becomes institutionalized and transmitted through the official institutions of socialization of the group. A whole set of symbols, texts, myths, traditions, rituals and monuments arises, making memory a part of a group's culture (Assman & Czaplicka, 1995, p. 65). At this point, collective memory becomes the historical consciousness of the group, the way in which the group decides what its history consists of and how it is perceived. Individual members of the group begin referring to this past as their own (Elam & Gedi, 1996, p. 47).

The collective memory is a key component of the nation – the sense of a common past lies at the heart of the collective identity that constitutes the nation. Historical events, places and texts become "sites of memory" to which all members of the nation return in order to find their affiliation within their group, and to which the nation as a whole returns to determine its identity (Nora, 1989, pp. 15–16).

Such is the memory of the Second World War in Poland and in Israel. Both states represent nations that suffered the most tragic and destructive outcomes of German aggression and for both, the Second World War and the Holocaust fit into a larger historical context of

persecution and oppression which makes a central part of the national identity. Jews in Israel talk of a "historical cycle" of persecution, in which different oppressors attempted to enslave or eradicate the Jewish nation. The fall of the ancient Jewish kingdoms in the land of Israel marks the end of a sovereign "golden age" and the beginning of two thousand years of exile, characterized by exclusion, persecution, discrimination, and almost dissolution of the nation (Tzukerman, 2007). The events of the Second World War, and in particular the persecution of Jews and the "final solution", are seen in this respect as the culmination of this cycle (Auron, 1993, p. 109), fixing the Jewish self-perception as an eternal victim (Bar-Tal, 2007, p. 113). The Holocaust is seen as a unique historical event that occurred only (and could only occur) to the Jewish people, the ultimate proof that "the whole world is against us" (Bar-Tal, 2007, p. 113) and of the necessity of the State of Israel as a "state for a persecuted nation" (Resnik, 2003). In this sense, the Holocaust is not only the peak and the culmination of the sequence of persecution, but also the beginning of its end. After it, the state of Israel was founded and the Jewish nation became "a lord of its own destiny" (Friesel, 2008, p. 446).

In Poland, too, the War is seen in a larger frame of loss of freedom: the War caught Poland 20 years after regaining its independence, following over a century of occupation and partition. According to Orla-Bukowska (2006, p. 179), the end of the war did not necessarily signify the end of oppression, and the struggle for freedom continued as the country was "sacrificed" to Soviet totalitarianism. Under the communist regime, only an official narrative was allowed in public discourse, and only with the fall of the authoritarian regime and the liberalization of public discourse could the Poles express alternative voices, leading to a radical transformation in the collective memory. According to the new voices sounded in the democratic era, Poles saw themselves as "the Christ of nations", martyrs-saviours who in their suffering remained disobedient to the oppressor and kind towards other victims.

The topic of the Holocaust and the extermination of Polish and European Jewry was little discussed under the communist regime, and it was only with the fall of the regime that Poles began to discuss more openly the topic of extermination of Jews on Polish soil, including attitudes and reactions of Poles during the war (Orla-Bukowska, 2006). Researches and publications, such as Jan Tomasz Gross's "Neighbors" (which revealed that Poles, and not Germans, were the ones to have conducted the pogrom in Jedwabne, in which hundreds of Jews were brutally murdered) stirred public debate, as they questioned the self-portrait of Poles as righteous martyrs, and positioned them in the place of the bystanders, cooperators, or even perpetrators.

As it can be seen in this short introduction, the ways in which Poles and Israelis remember the events of the Holocaust differ, and at times even collide. In this historical and social context, the comparison of the articles on Wikipedia will now take place, with the aim of evaluating whether (and how) these differences are presented.

Findings

All the articles were assessed and saved on December 18, 2014, to assure that no changes were made during the analysis process. The content of each article was coded into the four categories defined by Entman as the roles of frames, and particularly repetitive themes within each category were coded as sub-categories.

Righteous Among Nations

The article under the title "Righteous Among Nations" showed a high level of uniformity among the three versions. The three articles focus mostly on the frame of "definition of the phenomenon", namely legal and descriptive aspects of the award of Righteous Among Nations, making extensive use of the official definition of the term taken from the Israeli "Yad-VaShem" Law (a law from 1953 defining "Yad VaShem" as Israel's main institution commemorating the Holocaust and determining its main roles, among which the awarding of the Righteous Among Nations title also is), describing the legal background for the establishment of the award, the conditions for awarding and the benefits given to the recipients.

Under the category of "causal interpretation", the Polish and English versions interpret the award almost exclusively in the official/legal context. They focus on the award as being an initiative of the Government of Israel, and do not interpret the acts of rescue as the original phenomenon to be discussed. Only the Hebrew version focuses on rescuing activities as a general phenomenon, including reasons for rescuing, types of rescuing activities, and the price that many rescuers had to pay. In this respect a moral evaluation of the Righteous and their deeds can be noticed, by detailing the risks in which they were put for their acts of rescuing and cases in which the Righteous were punished. Although in the Hebrew version the length of the causal interpretation (talking about rescuers) is considerable, in the other two versions this causal interpretation is almost non-existent (chart 1). In the English and Polish versions, very limited non-official language is used that

can be identified as applying some sort of moral evaluation of the deed. None of the versions offer any recommendation regarding the event.

Chart 1 - Manifest Analysis of Categories: Righteous Among Nations
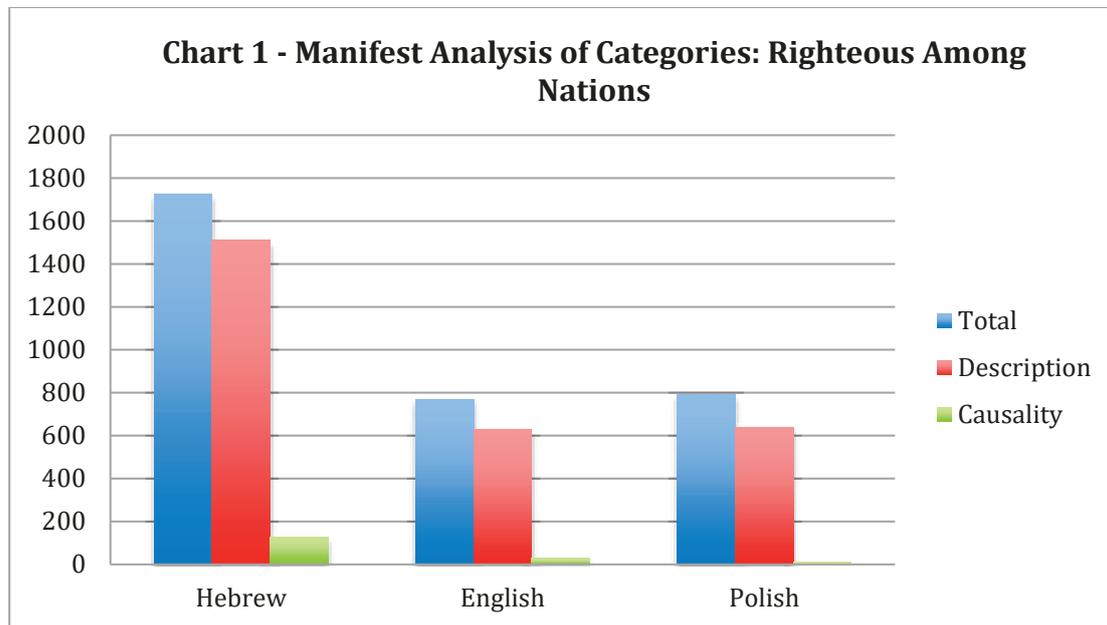
Auschwitz

The articles regarding the Auschwitz camp attempt to depict the features and work of the camp in a factual way, mentioning mostly dry facts, numbers and statistics about the operation of the camp. In this spirit, the category of definition and of causal evaluation are prominent, and relatively little place is given to a moral evaluation of the work being done in the camp or to the fact that behind the figures a mass-murder industry stood that took the lives of millions. The category of definition includes all the explanations about the camp: its structure, the process of building and evacuating, and the working routine. The opening paragraph of the English version, for example, says:

> The first extermination of prisoners took place in September 1941, and Auschwitz II–Birkenau went on to become a major site of the Nazi 'Final Solution to the Jewish question'. From early 1942 until late 1944, transport trains delivered Jews to the camp's gas chambers from all over German-occupied Europe, where they were killed with the pesticide Zyklon B.

In the category of the causal interpretation there is one main perpetrator – Nazi Germans[3]. In the English and Hebrew versions, the framing of Germans as perpetrators is

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[3] Nevertheless, at the level of naming, this one perpetrator obtains many names: in the English version reference is more often made to the operating SS forces, whereas the Polish version emphasizes the use of the word "German". This has to do with the problem of the camps often being referred to as "Polish Camp".

strengthened by a long introduction on the persecution of Jews in Nazi Germany and its occupied territories prior to the camp, whereas the Polish version emphasizes the cooperation of German civilians and businesses with the work of the camp, giving a detailed account of German personnel in the camp and of German businesses that profited from its workforce. This comes as a response to the problem of the camp often being referred to as a "Polish Camp", a problem addressed explicitly in the article:

> A separate issue is the global use of the term 'Polish camps', deriving from the geographic location of these Nazi[4] constructions. Lack of knowledge of history and geography in Western countries often caused the appearance, usually in the daily press, of claims on Polish death or concentration camps, as well as on Polish Nazis. This suggested that Poles, and not German Nazis were the conductors of the Holocaust. […] According to a proposal suggested by Poland and Israel, since June 27, 2007, the official name of the place is 'Auschwitz-Birkenau German Nazi Concentration and Extermination Camp'.

In the Polish version a short continuation also appears, in which one can see that not only Germans were perpetrators in the camp, but that the camp was later also shortly used by the Soviets and the communist authorities in Poland. This strengthens the Polish narrative of being released from one occupation only to come under another. The Hebrew and English versions discuss a third perpetrator – cooperators with the Nazis from other nationalities (such as the Kapo), and this sub-category is non-existent in the Polish version.

The causal interpretation includes also the identification of the victim. In this context, one identifies a series of victims mentioned under the category of the causal interpretation: Jews, Soviet POWs, Poles, Political Prisoners, and Gypsies. Jews are acknowledged as the main victims of the camp – this acknowledgment is done quantitatively, by over-mentioning the sub-category of victimhood of Jews (chart 3) and also qualitatively, through the choice of content, as in this example from the Polish version: "The definite majority – up to 80% of those who arrived to Auschwitz-Birkenau […] were Jews, transported by the Nazis from ghettos and camps from all around occupied Europe." In the Hebrew version, one may be surprised to see that more fragments were coded under "Polish victimhood", but behind the numbers a more complex explanation stands: even if not many fragments deal directly with Jewish victimhood and can be coded under the causal

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[4] The Polish language version uses two variants of the word "Nazi" – "nazistowski" and "hitlerowski", literally meaning "Hitlerian", a term not otherwise translatable to English. In this case, the term used was "hitlerowski".

interpretation of Jews as victims, the victims are often naturally referred to as "Jews". The words "Jews" and "victims" or "prisoners" are often interchangeable in the article, even within one paragraph[5]. This interchangeability leaves the impression of assuming that the victims were always Jewish[6].

Nevertheless, other victimhood categories, which were previously mentioned (Roma, POWs, homosexuals, and others) are not forgotten, and are mentioned in the articles, to different extents. In this context it is important to mention that Poles are framed as victims of the camp not only by being imprisoned and murdered in the camp, but also in the more general context by having Polish lands occupied and confiscated for the purpose of building the camp, and for having local Poles working forcibly towards the construction of the camp. The Hebrew article, for example, explains the background to the building of the camp, after the occupation of Poland by Germany:

> In the Western part, where later was built Auschwitz, Nazis began immediately with steps for 'germanization' of the new territory, according to the ideology of 'living space'. Immediately after the occupation, Germans murdered 15,000 members of Polish intelligentsia, who were executed according to a ready list. Additionally, two million Christian Poles were expelled from their houses, which were then confiscated by the Germans…The goal was to settle ethnic Germans instead of the transferred Poles.

The third sub-category that appeared in the causal interpretation is the one of heroism – the description of attempts to escape, uprisings, and attempts to pass information from the camp to external forces. This sub-category is not very developed, and the results follow a pattern that was expected in the research hypothesis, with every version focusing mostly on the heroism of its own nation: in the Polish version it revolves mostly around stories of Polish heroes (such as Witold Pilecki), whereas Jewish acts of heroism, such as the uprising of the sonderkommando, go unnoticed. In the Hebrew version there are mentions of Polish acts of heroism, but they are minor, and emphasis is given on the heroic acts of Jewish prisoners.

As previously mentioned, little place is given to the category of moral evaluation of the camp's activities. Most fragments of the article attempt to depict the activity in a factual way, even when

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[5] For example in this fragment: *"The Jews sent to death did not get a number, and the same happened with prisoners sent from Auschwitz to work in other camps"*, where the words "Jews" and "prisoners" are used interchangeably.

[6] This is in line with the previously presented approach of Bar-Tal, according to which Israeli society performs a "particularization" of the Holocaust, presenting it as an event that happened only to the Jewish people.

talking about the murder of prisoners. In certain places, this tendency is taken even to the edge of positively evaluating the German activities for their efficiency, for example when the English article describes the chief of construction of Auschwitz II-Birkenau as:

> a competent and dynamic bureaucrat who, in spite of the ongoing war, carried out the construction deemed necessary.

Examples of negative moral evaluation are found when negative adjectives were added to particular situations, such as in the quote:

> [P]eople died there a painful and humiliating death, worsened by the view of their dying beloved ones
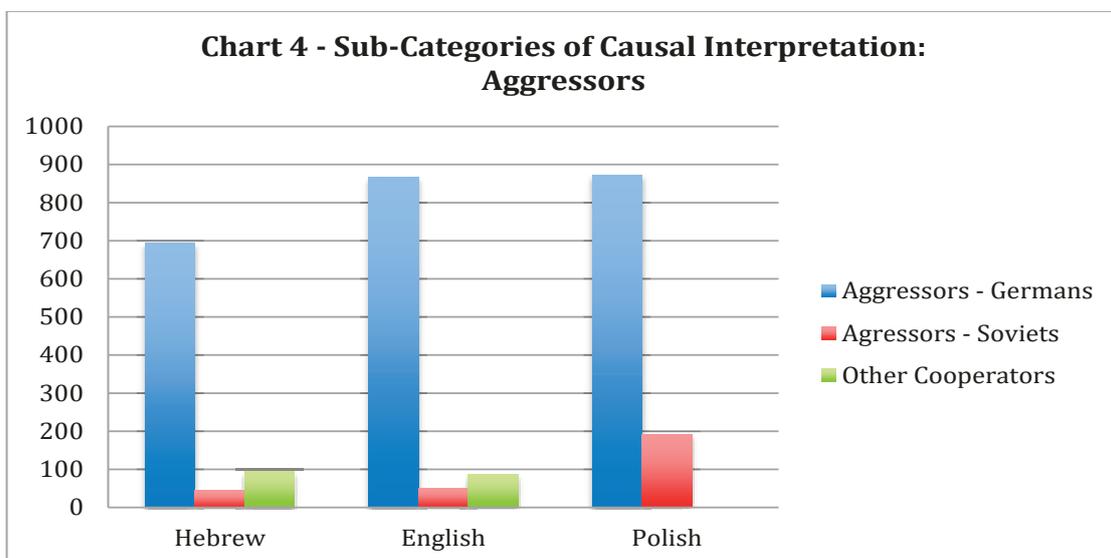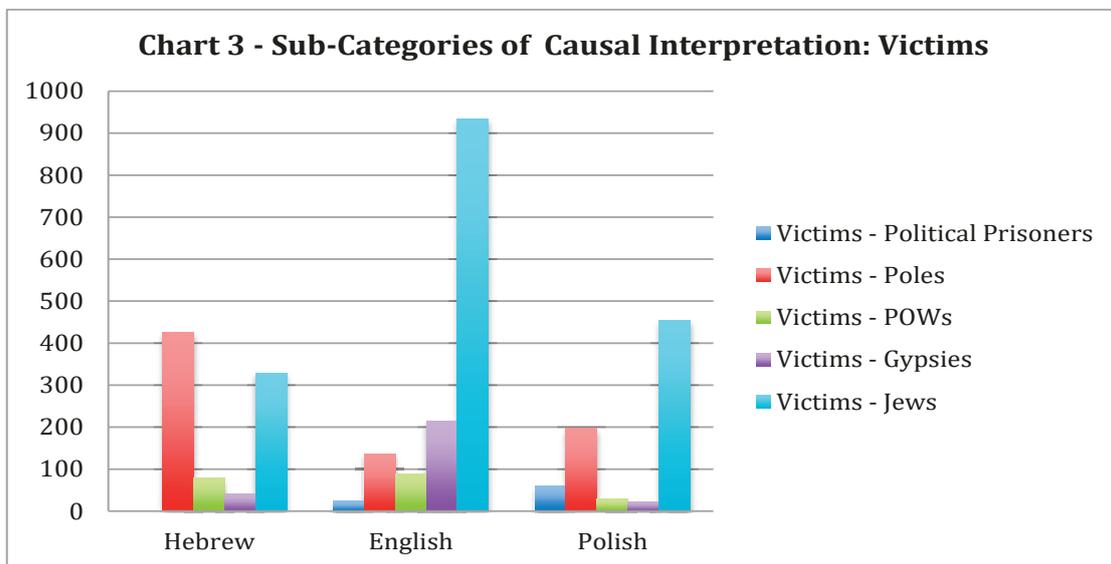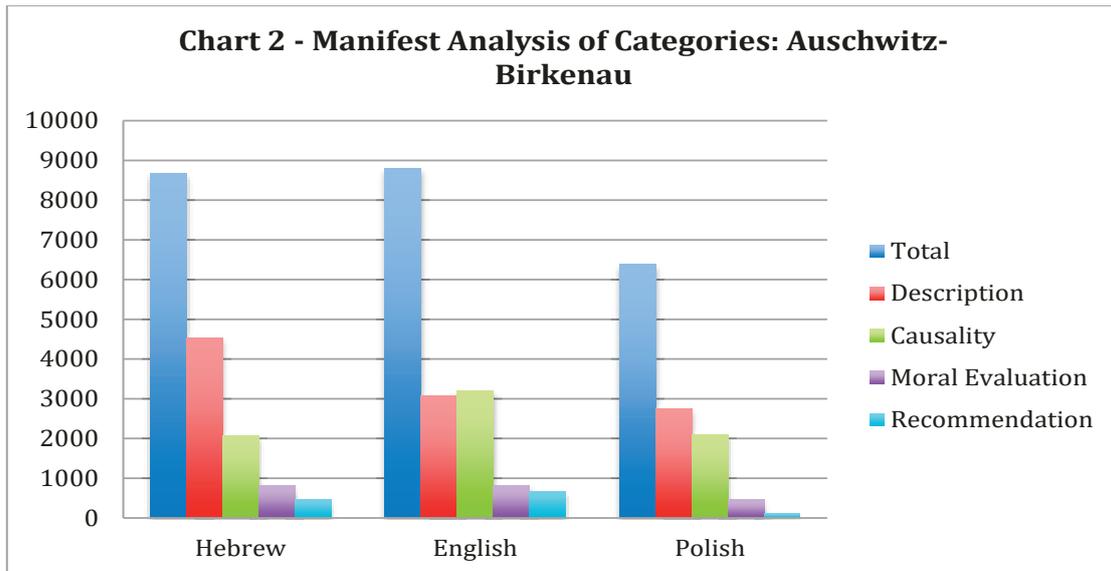
taken from the Polish version. A rare case in which evaluative language is used extensively is found in the Polish version, in a fragment about medical experiments being held on prisoners of the camp. The fragment begins by naming the experiments "pseudo-medical experiments" (the word "pseudo" having a negative, judgmental connotation), and continues in portraying them as "unethical and inhuman".
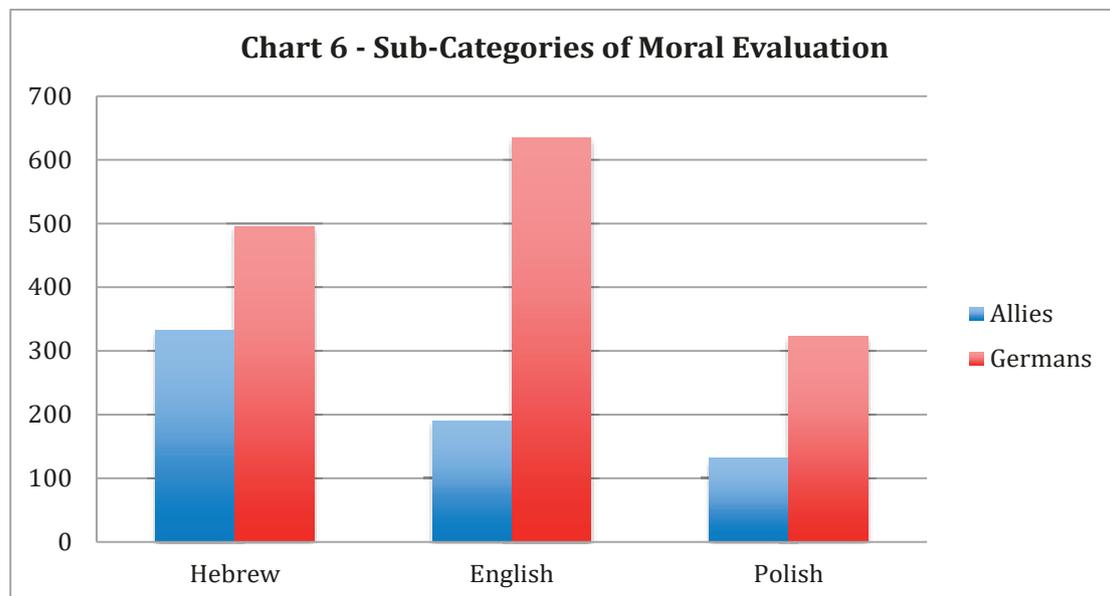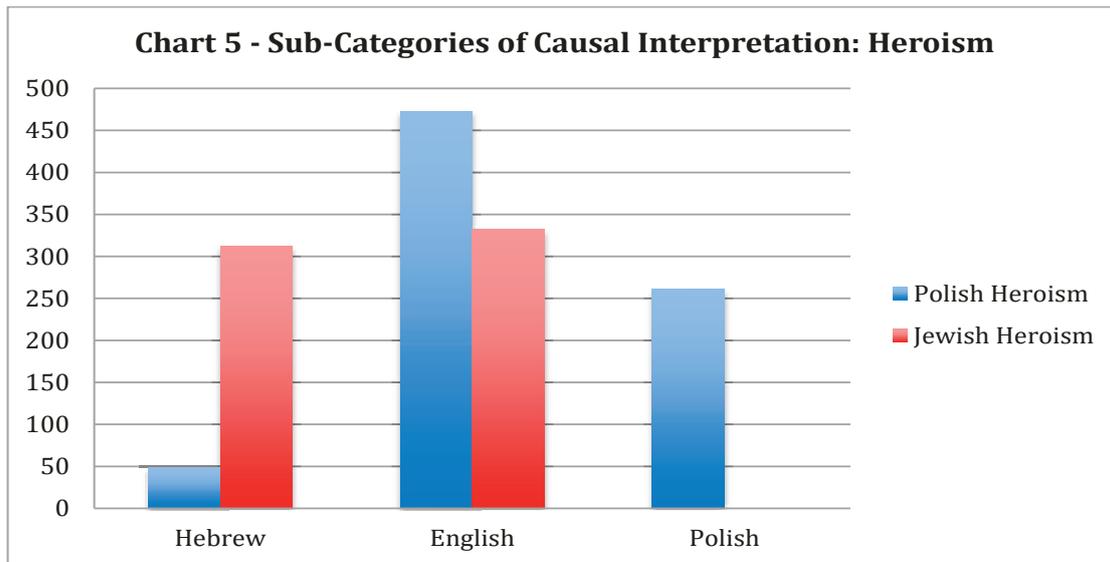
Another sub-category of moral evaluation is given while describing the reaction of the allies, who are

> criticized for not taking other actions, such as bombing the camp (and in particular the gas chambers)…

(in the Polish version). All the articles devote a noticeable portion to depictions of the (lack of) reaction from the allies to the atrocities occurring in the camp (chart 6). This can be understood by the fact that both Polish and Israeli historical narratives of the war criticize the allies for not doing enough to save the lives of Poles and Jews (Poles remember that no allies came to their defense upon the German invasion of Poland in September, 1939), so criticism of the allied forces finds a fertile common ground in the articles in both languages.

The fourth category, which is for the first time present among the articles, is the suggestion of treatment. As such the fragments on memory as a treatment and prevention were coded, in which Auschwitz is mentioned in all the articles as a site of memory of the atrocities that should never be repeated, and acknowledged as a UNESCO world heritage site as an important history lesson. The Polish version also talks about the growing popularity of the Holocaust denial and the need to prevent and counter this trend.

Chart 2 - Manifest Analysis of Categories: Auschwitz-Birkenau

Legend:
- Total
- Description
- Causality
- Moral Evaluation
- Recommendation

Categories: Hebrew, English, Polish

Chart 3 - Sub-Categories of Causal Interpretation: Victims

Legend:
- Victims - Political Prisoners
- Victims - Poles
- Victims - POWs
- Victims - Gypsies
- Victims - Jews

Categories: Hebrew, English, Polish

Chart 4 - Sub-Categories of Causal Interpretation: Aggressors

Legend:
- Aggressors - Germans
- Agressors - Soviets
- Other Cooperators

Categories: Hebrew, English, Polish

Chart 5 - Sub-Categories of Causal Interpretation: Heroism

- ■ Polish Heroism
- ■ Jewish Heroism

(Bar chart: vertical axis from 0 to 500 in increments of 50; horizontal categories Hebrew, English, Polish. Hebrew: Polish Heroism ≈ 50, Jewish Heroism ≈ 310. English: Polish Heroism ≈ 470, Jewish Heroism ≈ 330. Polish: Polish Heroism ≈ 260.)

Chart 6 - Sub-Categories of Moral Evaluation

- ■ Allies
- ■ Germans

(Bar chart: vertical axis from 0 to 700 in increments of 100; horizontal categories Hebrew, English, Polish. Hebrew: Allies ≈ 330, Germans ≈ 495. English: Allies ≈ 190, Germans ≈ 635. Polish: Allies ≈ 130, Germans ≈ 320.)

Pogrom in Jedwabne

The articles on the pogrom in Jedwabne show a much lower level of uniformity and formality than the articles on the Righteous Among Nations and even the articles on Auschwitz--Birkenau. The category of "definition of the event" would refer to description of the timeline of events, but more than debating the events of the pogrom itself, the articles focus on the investigations, controversies and memory debates that occurred (chart 7).

The causal interpretation presents a first controversy. Fragments under this category can be divided into three sub-categories: evidence that Poles were initiators and conductors of the pogrom; evidence that Germans incited it; and evidence of Jewish involvement with

the Soviet occupation as a motivation for the pogrom. The sub-category of framing Jews as cooperators with the Soviet occupation can be read as "softening" the blame on Polish perpetrators, putting Jews in the role of initial perpetrators and framing the pogrom in terms of revenge or in the role of anti-communist outburst, rather than pure anti-Semitism:

> At first, many Polish Jews were relieved to learn that the Soviets, rather than the Nazis, were to occupy their town, and unlike gentile Poles, publicly welcomed the Red Army as their protector. Administrative jobs were offered to Jews who declared Soviet allegiance. Some Jews joined a Soviet militia overseeing deportations organized by the NKVD. At least one witness testimony says that during round-ups, armed Jewish militiamen were seen to be guarding those prepared for deportation to Siberia.

However, as it can be seen in chart 8, this category is less common than the two others.

The case that the Polish population was the one conducting the pogrom is agreed in all the articles: both Hebrew and Polish versions open with the fact that the pogrom was conducted by Poles, whereas the English version presents this statement only later, discussing investigations of the event. The Polish version goes further, saying that

> at the same time, the reluctance of the local Polish population towards Jews, which was in this region already high anyway, grew, among others due to intensive propaganda of the nationalist movement (endecja) from the beginning of the 20th century

– in other words, that Poles were not only responsible for the conduction of the pogrom itself, but that the pogrom found fertile ground in the strong anti-Semitic sentiments of the Polish population. Another difference between the English and Polish versions is the description of events; the English version attempts to provide a more descriptive timeline, by using the passive form:

> The group was taken to a pre-emptied barn, killed and buried.

The Polish version, on the other hand, tells the story of the events depicting Poles as active aggressors by changing the form of the verbs from the passive voice to the active voice:

> Polish residents of the town and of neighboring localities began taking Jews out of their homes and leading them to the town square. There they beat them and exercised other forms of violence… the Polish residents took [the Jews] to a wooden barn behind the town, closed the barn, spilled on it gasoline, and burned it.

The Polish version thus includes the causal interpretation in a more explicit way into the events' description. The same applies to the Hebrew version. The article opens with

a strong fragment of causal interpretation, in which the description of the issue itself is only in the background:
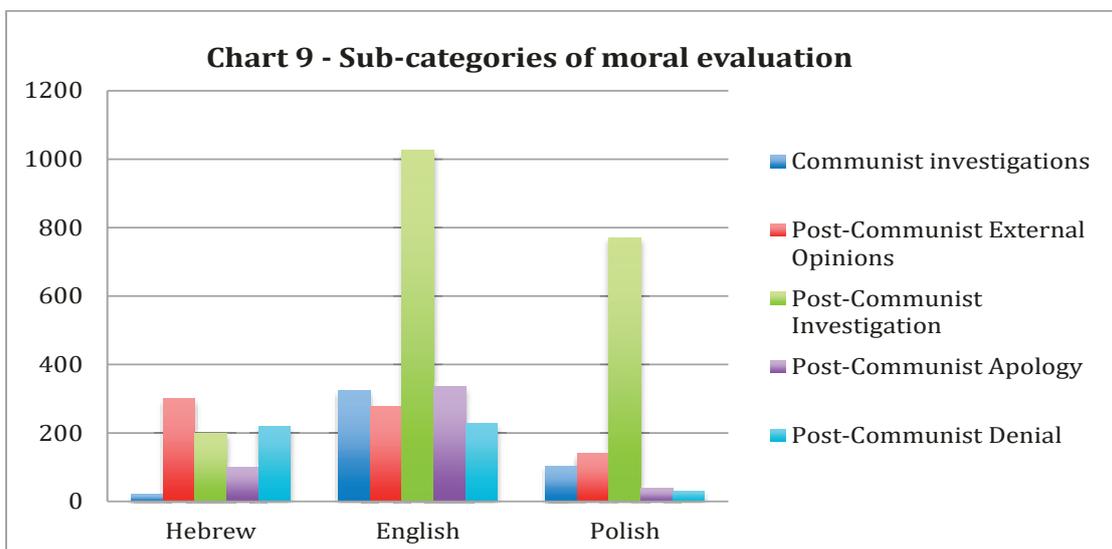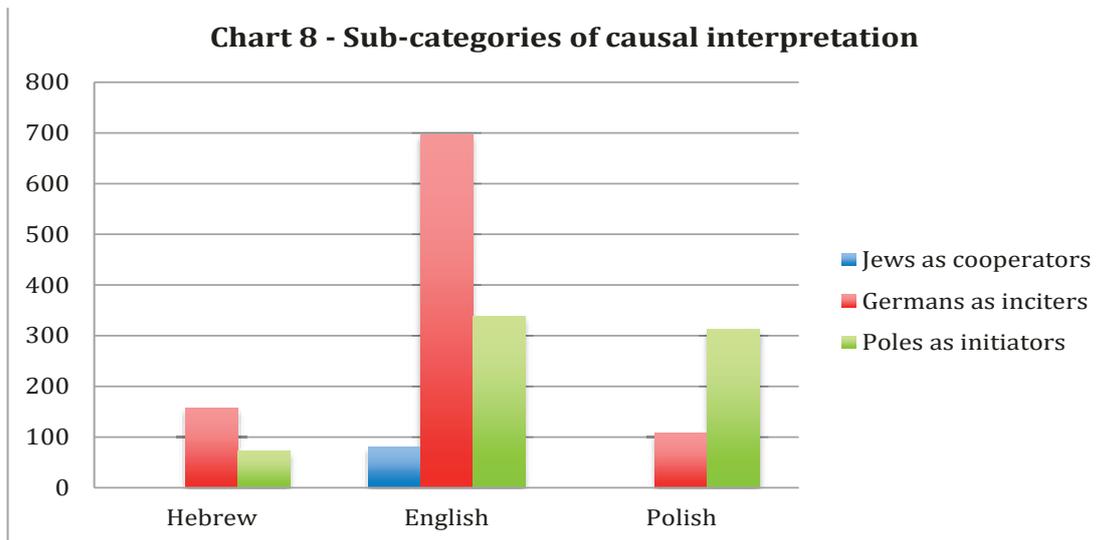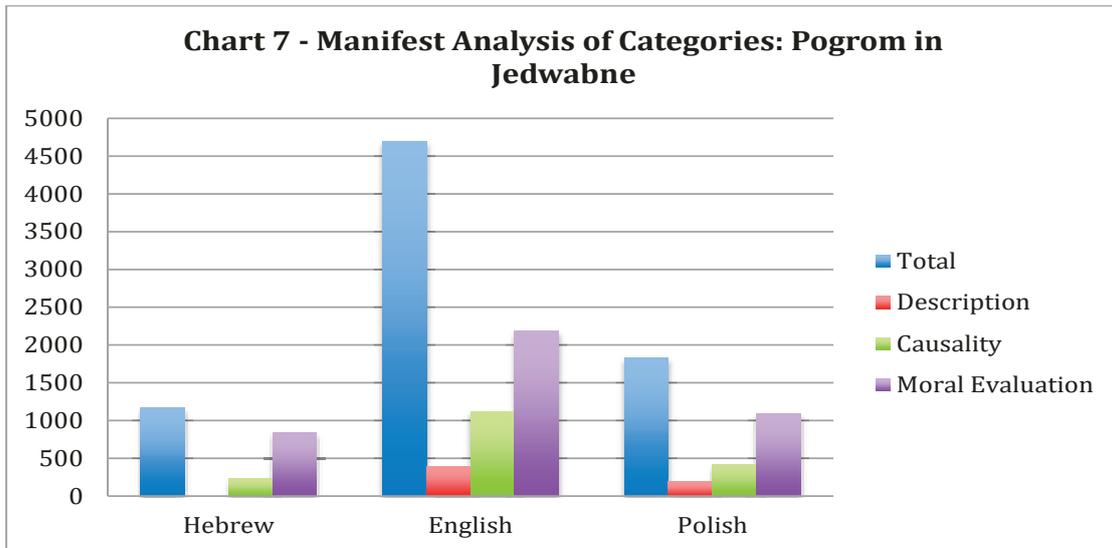
> On July 10 1941 Jews of the town of Jedwabne, near Łomża in the east of Poland, were slaughtered by their Polish neighbors. For years the acts were attributed to the Germans, but in 2001 the historian Jan Tomasz Gross revealed that Poles were the ones conducting the slaughter.

From this opening paragraph, the impression is that the events themselves are less important than the question of who conducted them.

Although all the versions make clear the central role played by the Polish population during the pogrom, a debate continues around the question of the role of Germans in inciting the pogrom. All the articles agree that Germans were supervising and played a certain role in the conduction of the pogrom, but they are divided with regards to the level of the German engagement. The English article is the only one to provide an account of direct participation of German individuals.

Under the category of moral evaluation, it is interesting to notice that direct moral evaluation of the events was barely present. For this reason, fragments coded under this category represent, in fact, accounts of different reactions to the pogrom. In all the versions, the description of reactions begins with the trials of 1949–1950 in communist Poland. The review of these trials is shorter than the description of post-communist debates (chart 9), the trials are not treated as serious attempts to achieve truth and justice, and are framed rather as political trials, typical of communist regimes. The post-1989 debate is presented more thoroughly. In this debate, the articles present the opinion of "the rest of the world", depicting Poles as responsible for the events to a large extent. These opinions are represented mainly through discussions on the book "Neighbors" by Jan Tomasz Gross. Against this claim, one can identify three types of Polish reactions within the articles: investigation, acceptance and apology, or denial and conflict. Investigation is mostly represented through the investigations of the Institute of National Remembrance (IPN) – portrayed as transparent, factual and reliable. Responses of acceptance and apology are presented mostly as the more formal reaction, represented by gestures such as the official apologies of Polish Presidents in 2001 and 2011. Responses of denial and conflict are seen as political and grassroots reactions of anti-Semitic nature[7].

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[7] An incident in which the monument at the site of the murder was defaced with a swastika, or a case in which a Polish Member of Parliament was accused of being anti-Semitic for opposing the apology by the President of the Republic of Poland in 2011, are portrayed in the English version.

Chart 7 - Manifest Analysis of Categories: Pogrom in Jedwabne

Chart 8 - Sub-categories of causal interpretation

Chart 9 - Sub-categories of moral evaluation

Conclusions

Several results were extracted from the analysis carried out: in most articles, the category of definition of the phenomenon is the most prominent. The articles present a definition of event / phenomenon focusing on legal and historical terms, often detailing also the historical and political background, timeline of occurrences, and outcomes. Usually, it is within this definition of the phenomenon that they present the causal interpretation, namely the forces behind the events. Direct and explicit moral evaluations are usually omitted, with the exception of particularly extreme occurrences or actions. Indirectly, moral evaluation is given through descriptions of reactions to the events. The category of treatment suggestion was only detected in the article about Auschwitz-Birkenau.

Findings show that the research hypothesis was not decisively accurate. Explanations and interpretations provided in the different languages were similar, and did not necessarily follow the collective historical narratives of the Holocaust in the given societies, as were presented at the beginning of this article: for example, in the article on the pogrom in Jedwabne, the Polish version appeared as the most critical in depicting the Polish population as perpetrators, while the narrative of the Polish collective memory tends to focus on an image of the Poles as noble victims – two visions that do not really coincide. Furthermore, the English version of the articles, in spite of being expected to perform as a "middle-ground", neutral version, proved during the analysis to have numerous cases of biased structure or judgmental language. In many fragments, it also presented similar arguments and language to either of the two other versions. This can be explained by the use of similar sources in each article, and by the fact that Polish or Israeli editors may have taken part in editing also the English version.

Nevertheless, there are findings that go in line with the research hypothesis: in the article about Auschwitz-Birkenau, for example, the articles in Polish and Hebrew present almost solely cases of heroism performed by members of their own respective nations. The semiotic analysis strengthens the conclusions of the manifest analysis: the appearance of judgmental or evaluative language in the articles is rare, yet occasional choices of vocabulary (such as the interchangeability between the words "Jews" and "victims" in the Hebrew version) reminds us that the articles are written in a certain cultural context.

The conclusion is that the main characteristic of the articles that were discussed in this paper is their attempt to remain academic and scientific. This attempt determines

the language of the articles – they are descriptive, and with very little evaluation or appeal to emotions. This attempt for encyclopedic standardization is also one of the explanations for the relative similarity that was found between the categories and sub-categories in the articles. Differences do exist, especially in the language used in the articles and in the amount of attention devoted to different issues, showing that writers and editors do indeed operate in a certain cultural and social context: the articles were written for (and by) a particular audience, who comes from a certain cultural background and holds particular views about history – views that are often reflected in the articles. Nevertheless, as similarities are more noticeable than differences, it is fair to say that the standardization and the attempt to maintain a distant and descriptive character is stronger than the given cultural context. This, in turn, opens space for an interesting debate over the question as to whether globalized standards of websites such as Wikipedia will manage to overcome national narratives.

The results of this research, taken into consideration together with the dynamic character of Wikipedia as an editable text under constant construction, suggest that an interesting take on the Wikipedia articles may focus not only on the "final result" (meaning, the text of the article presented on the front page), as was performed in this research, but also on the "behind-the-scenes" process of editing the articles. Each Wikipedia article contains also a "discussion page", in which writers and editors debate the information that should be presented in the article. A complementary research may focus on these discussion pages, and extract interesting findings on the historical debates taking place in them; such research would ask what narratives and frames are suggested by different editors, what sources are used, who the editors who take part in the editing process are, how the decision-making process is led, and which narrative prevails in the end – thus shedding light on the final product presented to the audience. All these questions, however, remain beyond the scope of this research.

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Framing the Holocaust in popular knowledge:
3 articles about the Holocaust
in English, Hebrew and Polish Wikipedia

Abstract

The goal of this article is to examine how different events and phenomena related to the Second World War and the Holocaust are framed via Wikipedia articles written in Polish, Hebrew and English. Departing from the pillars of the theory of framing in mass media, the article conducts a content analysis of three articles, in three different languages. The articles under analysis are the following: "Auschwitz-Birkenau Camp", "The Pogrom in Jedwabne", and "Righteous Among the Nations". The analysis will use the four roles of frames as categories, determined by Entman: definition of the problem/phenomenon, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and treatment recommendation. Analyzing how the articles fulfill each of the roles in the different languages, the research hypothesis is that the framing of the phenomena will differ between the versions, and each version will follow pillars of the collective memory of the Holocaust in its respective country. Findings, however, are not in complete compliance with this hypothesis.

Keywords:
Holocaust, collective memory, content analysis, Wikipedia, Poland, Israel

Kształtowanie popularnej wiedzy o Holocauście
na przykładzie trzech artykułów z polskiej,
hebrajskiej i angielskiej Wikipedii

Abstrakt

Celem artykułu jest zbadanie, jak przedstawiane są wybrane wydarzenia i zjawiska, związane z historią II wojny światowej oraz Holokaustem, w internetowej encyklopedii „Wikipedia" w różnych językach. Prezentowana analiza treści opiera się na teorii framingu w mass mediach i obejmuje trzy artykuły: „Auschwitz-Birkenau", „Pogrom w Jedwabnem" oraz „Sprawiedliwy wśród Narodów Świata", opublikowane w językach polskim, angielskim oraz hebrajskim. W analizie wykorzystano cztery role „ram" (frames), sformułowane przez Entmana: definicja problemu/zjawiska, interpretacja przyczyn, ewaluacja moralna oraz propozycja rozwiązań. Autor, badając to, jak poszczególne artykuły wypełniają każdą

z tych ról, stawia hipotezę, zgodnie z którą teksty przedstawiają ten sam temat w różny sposób, w zależności od podstaw pamięci zbiorowej w danym kraju. Wyniki badań jednak nie zawsze są zgodne z tą hipotezą.

Słowa kluczowe:

Holokaust, pamięć zbiorowa, analiza treści, Wikipedia, Polska, Izrael