

# Patterns of genocide:

## can we educate Year 9 in genocide prevention?

Alison Stephen, who has wrestled for many years with the challenges of teaching emotional and controversial history within a multi-ethnic school setting, relished the opportunity to link her school's teaching of the Holocaust with a comparative study of other genocides. As she reports, her aim was not create a hierarchy of suffering or significance but to expand her students' knowledge and understanding and to equip them with a framework within which to analyse patterns of similarity and difference. Her article offers an invaluable guide to the processes of planning, both by alerting readers to the rich and varied resources available on-line, and by illustrating the power of collaboration – within a school setting, between a school and its local community, and across the wider history education community. The account that she presents of a short scheme of work in history and of a Year 9 'Global Awareness Day' reveals how history departments can contribute powerfully to multi-disciplinary initiatives while respecting the distinctive insights offered by a historical perspective.

### Alison Stephen

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### Introduction

Easter 2013. In a North Manchester café, lunch is shared by Naomi and Kaltrina. Apparently worlds apart, one Jew, one Muslim, a large age gap, one an experienced senior educator in Manchester, one a student at Oxford University. What brings them together? Shared experience at Abraham Moss Community School, where both of them told their stories to students, Naomi as the daughter of a Holocaust survivor, Kaltrina as a child refugee from Kosovo. This friendship is one of the positive outcomes of work we began in school this year, as part of the Institute of Education (IOE) Beacon Schools Holocaust Education programme.

I have been fortunate to take part in the Beacon Schools programme over the last academic year. While I have taught about the Holocaust for many years, using many different approaches, the training, particularly on the full week spent at the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum (USHMM) in Washington DC in July 2012, helped me to relate the Holocaust to other genocides in my teaching. This was something I had previously achieved only in a patchy fashion.<sup>1</sup>

### What were our aims?

My overall aim was for students to learn about the Holocaust and other genocides, exploring the relationships and the similarities and differences between them. The intention was not to create a hierarchy of suffering or significance, nor to trivialise the Holocaust, but to give students knowledge and understanding of events, together with a framework within which to analyse patterns of genocide. This would build on their conceptual understanding of change and continuity, of cause and consequence, and of diversity, in turn allowing them to consider whether and how genocide can be prevented.

Mindful of the debate concerning the role of moral and historical objectives in Holocaust education, I wanted to enable students to draw their own lessons, allowing time to discuss and reflect upon critical issues.<sup>2</sup> In addition to introducing a new history scheme of work, we decided to hold a full day of learning about genocides and related issues, for Year 9. This 'Global Awareness Day' would help not only to alleviate the pressure on teaching time but also to encourage students to link past and present and to explore human rights issues, personal choices and their own role as global citizens.

The opportunity for a whole day of learning led us to think carefully about our rationale. Addressing social, moral, spiritual and cultural (SMSC) aspects of education helped me to justify the use of a full day to our Senior Leadership Team and other heads of department, as well as to one particularly able student, who was genuinely worried about missing a maths lesson on that day. I had to point out to her that she might only have one chance in her life to meet a survivor of the Bosnian genocide.

Whereas, in recent years, all departments in the school have been required to plan learning within a cross-curricular themed week, the humanities department was keen this time to use our own disciplinary frameworks, as well as subject knowledge, to promote wider learning. For example, the theme of personal choices is linked with citizenship and PSHE, but we carefully grounded learning in actual historical situations. As Professor David Cesarani has written, 'Eichmann was a thinking person who consistently made choices.'<sup>3</sup> A historical situation where positive choices were made can be found in southern France, where the people of Le Chambon and the

Figure 1: The Abraham Moss scheme of work 'Can genocide be prevented? What can we learn from studying genocides in the past?'

Lesson number	Rationale	Activities
1. How was survival possible?	Start with the personal to ease students into the process of analysis of wider events.	<p>Students generate questions from photographs of people. The photographs were selected carefully to avoid use of images of atrocities, because they might discredit the victims. The horror of events can be related without recourse to graphic imagery by allowing survivors to tell their stories.</p> <p>Students read and analyse an individual story. They identify key points in the story, and in the wider events in that country.</p> <p>They then plot factors leading to survival in a Venn diagram, which is used as a comparative tool when they hear about the other survivors from classmates.</p> <p>They consider emerging patterns.</p>
2. How is it helpful to analyse patterns of genocide?	Introduction to the four-stage model, and to the interventions that might be made to prevent genocides.	<p>Students examine symbols for warning signs, and discuss events for which there are warning signs today. Analogies with a volcano about to erupt and a friend about to lose his temper are used to illustrate the four stages.</p> <p>They then sort cards on one of the genocides under four headings: warning signs, acts of violence, interventions, legacy. Students then plot photos of the survivors, maps and key events in each genocide on a class display on the wall. This highlights the similar patterns.</p> <p>Against the definition of genocide in the Geneva Convention, they decide whether each of the conflicts, including Kosovo, could be classed as a genocide.</p> <p>Review learning against questions posed last lesson.</p>
3. Can genocide be prevented?	Understanding of the role of international organisations and citizens.	<p>Students listen to survivor testimony about the role of the UN and other organisations. They study NATO action in Kosovo, and how this averted deaths on the scale of Bosnia or other conflicts. They look at suggestions from Hillary Clinton about US actions, and alternative suggestions about interventions from James Waller's book <i>Becoming Evil: how ordinary people commit genocide and mass killing</i>.<sup>4</sup></p> <p>In groups, students adopt the role of UN advisers to study a timeline of events in one of the cases of mass violence. They have to decide what kind of intervention would be advisable and at what point.</p> <p>In a conference at the end of the lesson, they have to persuade class members of the action they counsel.</p>
4 and 5: How should we remember genocides?	Time for reflection. Use of creative skills as well as understanding. Linking past & present.	Students match photos of memorials with written descriptions of their purposes. Having discussed the purposes, and possible forms of memorialisation, they design their own memorial to genocide

neighbouring villages sheltered up to 3,500 Jewish people and maybe 1,500 others, during the war. This is an unusual example of rescue as it involved the people of a whole region in southern France. The villagers' replies to the question posed later about why they did it, were summarised, 'How could you call us "good?" We were doing what had to be done. Who else could help them?'<sup>5</sup>

The balance of moral and historical purposes in Holocaust education was debated in the previous issue of *Teaching History* dedicated to this subject.<sup>6</sup> In that issue, Alice Pettigrew reported on teachers' differing views about the relative importance of social and presentist aims compared to purely historical objectives, drawing on evidence from an IOE survey conducted in 2009.<sup>7</sup> While many teachers spoke

Figure 2: Planning for a card sort comparing genocides

	Warning signs	Acts of violence	Responses	Legacy
<b>Holocaust</b> (1940s)	Dictatorship Antisemitism War Ghettos	Murder by gas in death camps – 6 million Jewish people	Little was done. 32 countries met at the Evian Conference 1938, and did little.	Refugee crisis State of Israel created 1948 Destruction of European Jewry Universal Declaration on Human Rights 1948 Genocide Convention 1948
<b>Rwanda</b> (1994)	Ethnic divisions stirred up under Belgian rule Economic problems Anti-Tutsi propaganda RPF formed – killed President Habyarimana	Murder of 800,000 Tutsis and moderate Hutus in 100 days Rape	UN & international community withdrew UN invoked genocide convention 1994	Complicated re-integration in Rwanda Knock-on effects in the Democratic Republic of Congo
<b>Bosnia</b> (1992-95)	Serb nationalism and increasing control under Milosevic. Wars of independence in neighbouring countries.	Policy of 'ethnic cleansing' – massacres of 8,000 Muslim men and boys at Srebrenica	UN failed to protect its 'safe areas', handing over Bosniaks to killers	Refugees Serbs continued aggression in Kosovo
<b>Kosovo</b> (1996-99)	Serb nationalism and increasing control under Milosevic. Wars of independence in neighbouring countries.	Destruction of villages and ethnic cleansing, murder of at least 600 and deportation of 750,000 Albanians	NATO airstrikes began March 1999 – helped end the war	Refugees
<b>Darfur</b> (2003-05)	Conflict between African farmers & nomadic Arab tribes, favoured by government. Rebel groups take up arms against government.	Janjaweed militia destroyed 400 villages. Up to 400,000 deaths. Rape.	Massive humanitarian response, but interrupted by violence. International Criminal Court investigations	2.7 million refugees Problems spilled into Chad

of their hope to facilitate 'understanding diversity', the exact meaning they attributed to diversity was not made clear. Our understanding of diversity at Abraham Moss goes beyond the study of diverse cultures within a 'community cohesion' perspective. Historical diversity is not simply an aspect of the past to find out about, but also a tool with which to analyse the past.<sup>8</sup> I wanted our comparison of genocides to lead to the study of different forms of propaganda as a precursor to genocide, and to the exploration of diverse reactions in a genocidal situation, and of different interventions. This would involve analysis of diverse responses and reactions during any one genocide, as well as analysis of similarities and differences between genocides, with a wider focus on change and continuity. Examples of similar warning signs might be the use of propaganda to label Jewish people or Tutsis. Students could also find similarities and differences between the contexts for genocides: World War Two, for example, provided the context for the Holocaust; the Bosnian genocide took place during the wars in the former Yugoslavia; and the Darfur genocide followed civil war in Sudan. Another similarity to be explored would be failed responses from the international community, such as the withdrawal of UN troops from Rwanda and their failure to protect the 'safe area'

of Srebrenica in Bosnia. In terms of the differences, students might investigate why the UN has only invoked the genocide Convention of 1948 on one occasion, for Rwanda in October 1994. They could be asked, 'Why did Winston Churchill fail to insist upon Allied bombing of Auschwitz to save Jewish lives in 1944, but Tony Blair insist upon NATO air strikes on Kosovo in 1999?' This might involve comparison of military capacity, of the reliability of evidence of genocidal activities available to the governments at the time, of any requests from the victim groups for interventions, and of the motivations of the two prime ministers.<sup>9</sup> Another important difference may have been their knowledge of – and ability to appeal to – the example of previous genocides.

Holocaust education is particularly interesting in our school context. The school has a multi-ethnic population and around 63 different home languages are spoken. Over 85 per cent of the students are Muslim. There are currently no Jewish students and our students rarely have any connections with the Jewish community situated nearby, sometimes perceiving the visible Chassidic population as archetypal of all Jewish people.<sup>10</sup> The diverse composition of our classrooms requires a sensitive approach to teaching the

Figure 3: Students plot refugees' journeys on 3D maps of Sudan (Global Awareness Day)



Holocaust. We believe this to be an extremely important part of the history curriculum, and have also raised the profile of the Holocaust during Holocaust Memorial Week for many years, through assemblies and PSHE lessons. Our approach involves examination of the history of antisemitism and of European Jewish communities before the Holocaust. This may help counter any local prejudices, and also helps explain the sense of persecution and fear which is expressed by some local Jewish people today. We also consider it important to examine the role of different forms of Jewish resistance to the Holocaust, as well as positive interactions with non-Jewish communities. This helps to negate the impression of Jewish people as passive victims. Indeed, our students are often quick to empathise with Jewish victims. They often draw comparisons between antisemitism and any prejudice they might have experienced. While there are some parallels with racism today, I am keen for them to recognise the limitations of such parallels and to appreciate the specific nature of European antisemitism, with its deep-seated historical roots, boosted by socio-economic conditions at the time.

One of the challenges in teaching about the Holocaust at our school is the tendency of students to ask questions about Jewish people today, about the actions of the Israeli state and the US 'war on terror'. While our approach welcomes student-

led questions, there is a danger of being distracted from the focus. As history teachers, we stress that it is critical to refer to evidence, rather than hearsay. Last year we planned a short scheme of work, jointly with the citizenship department, focused on finding evidence to counter Holocaust denial. We wanted to tackle this issue, because students will find all kinds of theories on the internet, and need to refine the skills to assess them for themselves. This year, following the Beacon Schools approach, I felt better equipped to draw all aspects of learning together. Making the link with other genocides allowed us to look at the experience of Muslims in Bosnia and Kosovo, and of Africans in Rwanda and Darfur, with which some students felt more connection. In turn, the acknowledgement of their own concerns might facilitate more openness on the part of our students in exploring the history of the Holocaust.

In order to develop a common rationale and to address any questions from staff, I held a training/discussion session with all the colleagues involved in Global Awareness Day, who are teachers of history, RE, geography, PSHE, citizenship, English and media studies. We discussed responses to possible student questions, as well as language issues. We agreed on formal definitions of the Holocaust and of genocide. Following the practice of our RE department, we agreed,

Figure 4: Success criteria shared with students and used to assess their work

## Success Criteria – levels of understanding

Demonstrate understanding of the events shown and present a thoughtful and sensitive view of shared humanity/global citizenship.

Explain why these events are important and why/how people should remember.

Tell me the importance of what you have learned.

Describe aspects of your learning.

for example, to use the term 'Jewish people' rather than 'the Jews' in our discourse. Although this is a departure from academic practice, we have heard the word 'Jew' used as a term of abuse locally, and wanted to personalise the people in our stories. Furthermore, as Kay Andrews points out, use of the term 'the Jews' appears to imply a homogeneous group.<sup>11</sup> We have explained this reasoning to students in order to help open their minds to the complexities of the topic. We also discussed the balance between democratic dialogue with students, the need to fulfil specific learning objectives and the danger of students expressing offensive or racist views. Students would be welcome to express views, but anything which might offend others would be challenged, and the intentions behind it would be questioned. Some questions would be deferred to later lessons; for example, anything connected with Israel and Palestine was dealt with in a later short sequence of lessons on the Arab-Israeli conflict. In fact, while some of the expected questions did arise, there were no instances of expression of racist or antisemitic views.<sup>12</sup>

### Planning the history scheme of work

Within history itself, I also created a short scheme of work for Year 9 on comparing genocides, which I began planning during my week in Washington, D.C. This followed on from a five-lesson scheme of work on the Holocaust itself, based on the approaches and resources used in the professional

development programme offered by the IOE.<sup>13</sup> The link between our study of the Holocaust and the comparison with other genocides was a lesson on human rights, in which students explored the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the impact of its articles. They then found out about human rights violations across the world. My colleague had originally developed this lesson, but we now adapted it in order to link the declaration more closely with responses to the Holocaust and the evolution of the UN Genocide Convention which was signed later the same year. Here I was able to draw on my own increased knowledge of the issues in order to make learning more meaningful for students.

Planning the scheme of work presented a variety of challenges, not least in selection of content. I was aware of the fine balance and necessary interplay to be achieved between building substantive knowledge and analysing patterns of genocide. Too much information to handle might become confusing, while deficiencies in knowledge might lead to unhistorical approaches, with a tendency to categorise all mass atrocities as genocide. We decided to focus on genocides in Rwanda, Bosnia and Darfur, using Kosovo as a comparison, since arguably genocide was prevented there by NATO intervention. Kosovo would be an interesting case study, given that we have a substantial number of students from Kosovo. I was slightly uncomfortable with teaching about these genocides with no other context about the countries or peoples. However, time constraints would not allow us to take a broader approach this year. This may be something we seek to address in future years.

In developing the resources I had to read widely. Again, the experience of sharing with colleagues in the IOE Beacon Schools programme was invaluable here, both through discussions during the Washington visit, and through an IOE online forum after our return. As the legacies of recent genocides are not yet fully understood, I found it difficult to establish exactly what had happened in each area, and especially what interventions and legal proceedings had taken place. I found it hard to keep up with unfolding events, for example as the International Criminal Court is still pursuing its investigations into events in Sudan, and there have been ongoing legal investigations in the Netherlands into the role of Dutch peacekeeping forces in Bosnia. The most helpful resource was from a guidebook, now available on the web, entitled 'Holocaust and other Genocides', which as IOE Beacon Schools we were invited by the authors to review and comment upon.<sup>14</sup> The USHMM website also hosts a wealth of resources.<sup>15</sup>

My enquiry question was 'Can genocide be prevented: what can we learn from studying genocides in the past?' I chose three characters, Norah Bagarinka from Rwanda, Niemat Ahmadi from Darfur, and Hasan Nuhanovic from Bosnia, whose stories can be found in oral form on the USHMM website. Each one has since taken up positive action against genocide. We also chose the story of Esther Brunstein from the Holocaust Memorial Day Trust website, and that of an ex-student from Kosovo, Qendrim Gjata.<sup>16</sup> We have drawn on Qendrim's story many times in the context of teaching about refugees, since he left the school in 2007. We used an adapted version of Stanton's eight-stage model of genocide, tracing warning signs, acts of violence, interventions and legacy. On a simplistic level,

Figure 5: An example of a student's ideas for his memorial

Name:

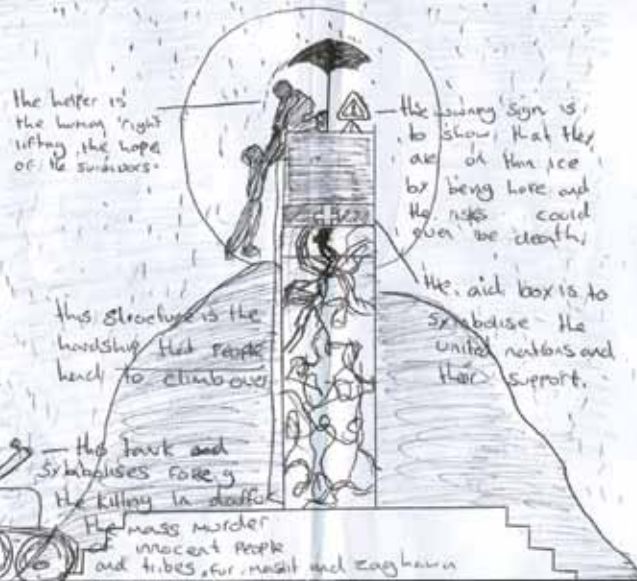
## How should future generations remember genocide?

**Size:** the size of the tank should be 2m and the rest 6m.

**Inscriptions:** description of the (the statue) Such as date and what it symbolises.

**Materials:** it has to be metal, firstly because it's strong and stable and secondly because metal is always attached or attached to a magnet and this statue is attached to genocides all over the globe Past or Present.

**The chosen genocide and people / events to remember:** well there are now genocides but I will be focusing on the one that happened in Darfur, If you are unaware of what horrible actions that were taking place I will tell you the Janjaweed came in on horse-back with weapons slaughtering the innocent from women to children.



**Location:** I would like it to be in the central base of a city for e.g if it was Manchester, I would place it in town, so it can remind more people of what has happened and what is going on.

**The meaning behind the design is** how everyone including children are trying to survive a fight for survival. The gas rising from the surface is a warning sign. The box and the tank, all these are related to show that many people had climbed over an obstacle in their life. It shows that all the people are fighting to survive even though they may know the risk they still try to continue to fight back in any way possible. It could also be the obstacles that is getting in the way for aid and people in need in Darfur 2.7 million people have fled their homes. 7000 African union troops trying to protect them.

we could compare these four stages to examples of everyday conflict in school, and thought that it would be less complex than Stanton's model for students to deal with.<sup>17</sup> My plan for the five lessons can be found in Figure 1.

Our school population includes a large number of students who have English as an additional language and/or special needs. Overall levels of literacy are below average. All classes in Year 9 were mixed ability, typically reflecting a very wide spectrum, ranging from several young people working below National Curriculum level 3 up to those working at level 7. All of my resources were therefore differentiated, with two or three levels of challenge. The card sort referred to in lesson 2 was the most difficult resource to prepare, because of the need to select and present key points from complex stories in a few sentences, and I took advice from my Beacon Schools Associate, Arthur Chapman, about which particular points to select or omit. I decided to include pictures to replace some of the words for one of the sets of cards about the Holocaust, using symbols such as the swastika, with which students might already be familiar. This helped a few students to access the cognitive challenge of sequencing and sorting rather than stumbling with the reading. Figure 2 shows the basis of my planning for the card sort, with the main aspects of each genocide arranged as four stages.

## Global Awareness Day

The day was launched with an assembly about genocide, during which I shared the story of Raphael Lemkin, who coined the term 'genocide' and campaigned tirelessly for its adoption into criminal law, weaving in an overview of genocide through his questions as a young Polish lawyer about the injustice experienced by Armenian survivors, and his personal experience of tragedy with the loss of 49 family members in the Holocaust. This was linked with human rights in other areas. We also used photographs of victims and survivors of different genocides from Armenia to the present day as initial stimulus material. Keen to find positive stories, I did not want to detract from the horrific experiences of victims, nor to present too sanguine a picture of the extent of rescue. I used the USHMM DVD *Voices of Rescue* and also referred to the 'Missing Pages' website which provides a photo documentary about Albanians who helped Jewish people in danger during the Holocaust.<sup>18</sup> They did so because of the Albanian code of 'Besa', which implies a form of honour, involving active caring for others regardless of their background. These were very positive examples to counter negative stereotypes of Muslims presented as enemies of Christians or Jews in the modern world. The danger that students would leave with an unrealistic view of the role of rescuers was countered by study in the history

classroom of perpetrators and bystanders. In the assembly, as in the scheme of work, I used a photograph of a milk churn, from the Oyneg Shabes–Ringelblum Archive, which was clandestinely compiled between 1940 and 1943 to document the story of Polish Jews, and later uncovered from the ruins of the former Warsaw ghetto.<sup>19</sup> I had seen the milk churn at USHMM, and taken the photo from the website; I thought of it as a symbol of Jewish control and action, while most of Poland and Europe took little action to help.

After the assembly, students attended two workshops from a range of ten, which involved making protest banners, debating whether the rest of the world should take up armed intervention in Syria, creating video appeals from NGOs, making 3D maps of Darfur and plotting refugee journeys, investigating why people are migrating in Sudan, analysing stories written by survivors, watching and planning film scripts on this topic, and looking at the legacy of the Holocaust. The workshop on legacy drew on ideas developed by the IOE on the void left by the European Jewish communities, and followed the approach that Kay Andrews had shared with us by presenting photos of the local high street in Cheetham Hill, with shadows where all the Asian shops, mosque and community buildings presently stand.<sup>20</sup> This helped students to visualise events far outside their experience. Figure 3 shows students at work.

Some workshops were led by visitors, Kaltrina Gjata, an ex-pupil, who was a child refugee from Kosovo, and Sanja Bilic from Bosnia. We also invited Arthur Chapman as an expert to help answer students' questions, and Naomi Jahoda, who works in our building as Manchester Local Authority's North Area Partnership Co-ordinator, and is the daughter of a Holocaust survivor. Students related well to these people, their evaluations suggesting that working with them was one of the most positive experiences of the day.

To help students draw links between historical events and the world today, we wanted to involve our Year 10 GCSE citizenship students as peer leaders. Two of these students attended each workshop to support the younger students, and then share the learning in order to design an assembly at the end of the day. This involved sharing photos and videos, reviewing the activities and exploring suggestions about positive actions that might be taken. At the end of the day they also gave out leaflets about ongoing campaigns in which students might like to participate. Their presentation was very well received by Year 9 students, and provided a little light relief through its interactive activities.

## How did we measure progress?

A further challenge was how to evaluate our teaching, and assess students' knowledge and understanding. Within the history department we decided not to assess their achievement using National Curriculum levels. We wanted the learning to be exploratory. Learning outcomes comprised verbal communication and group conclusions about similarities and differences, as well as diagrams, and short pieces of writing on possible interventions and their effects. Too much written work can mean less learning time when under pressure to complete a packed scheme of work. We were therefore keen to use a non-written final learning outcome, and opted for a

memorial design. We adapted a version we had used before to allow a student response to any or all of the genocides they had learned about. This was an opportunity for them to draw together the different aspects of their learning, commenting on the patterns of genocide, and reflecting on warning signs for genocide and whether it can be prevented, with reference back to our original enquiry question. At the start of the lesson, students looked at a range of Holocaust memorials, matching photos with descriptions of their purpose. This year, I added in some extra challenge for the most able students, who were asked to consider the controversy surrounding the stumbling stones memorial in Cologne, and the Harburg memorial against fascism. The Harburg memorial is interactive, offering an invitation to members of the public to write their ideas on it, which has led to some neo-Nazi messages. The research that I had read about the purposes of different memorials, including a study of memorials to genocide in Bosnia Herzegovina, prompted discussion over whether we should study interpretations of history through memorialisation, but we decided that this strayed too far from our original brief.<sup>21</sup> With Darius Jackson from the IOE, I developed success criteria for this piece of work, which are set out in Figure 4. The levels that we identified all required some knowledge and understanding of historical events, with the highest level showing wider awareness of global issues. Figure 5 presents one example of a student's response, which shows a high level of thinking about different aspects of genocide and genocide prevention, with reference to historical events.

## What were the wider benefits of this approach?

First, we now have a local network of history teachers that I established as part of the IOE Beacon Schools programme. I have shared my scheme of work on genocides with them, and they have adapted it in different ways for their own students. We intend to keep the network running as a useful forum within which to share good practice on wider issues in the future. IOE staff came to our school in July to deliver the first of the professional development day courses to members of the network and other local teachers.

Second, my colleague, together with Naomi Jahoda, has established a 'linking communities' project with King David High School, our local Jewish school, whereby a group of students from each school have worked together on a shared understanding of their own cultures and of the Holocaust. We began this to coincide with Holocaust Memorial Day in January 2013. The students have attended workshops together, and are planning to deliver assemblies in both schools, with input from the local Second and Third Generation Group.<sup>22</sup> We raised some eyebrows by our arrival together on one coach at the local commemorative event for Holocaust Memorial Day. Students and staff at King David have expressed an interest in finding out about other genocides, and welcomed offers from two of our students to tell their family stories as refugees from Kosovo. Their next planned venture is a joint visit to a mosque.

## Evaluation

As we worked through the lessons on genocide, I did find, as I had expected, that many students became a little confused

about what had happened where, and did not retain sufficient knowledge to make the analysis for which I had hoped. I therefore took a little longer than planned over the scheme of work, adding in simple tasks for starters and plenaries, including reinforcement of vocabulary through matching exercises, labelling countries on a world map, and connecting particular victim groups with the relevant conflict. Although keen to avoid 'dumbing down' serious issues, I felt that these activities were necessary to consolidate learning.

On the whole students responded well to the challenges, both in the history classroom and in the global awareness workshops. They produced high-quality work in terms of the levels of thinking involved, although I might have liked to have more tangible work to show for it. I would like to allow longer to complete the final piece of work on the memorial design, with closer guidance provided on how this might reflect their understanding of the similarities and differences between genocides. Evidence that students had considered genocide prevention was found in work where students took on the role of history experts tasked with advising the UN about warning signs for genocide, and suggesting interventions. In questionnaires nearly all students said they had gained a better understanding of the world today, could make links between past and present on issues about genocide and related events, and knew how they could take action to contribute to efforts to prevent this. One student described the experience as 'a great day to inform children of the voice and power that they have to change the world for the better'. When students selected their GCSE courses, some time after this scheme of work was completed, the choice of history was higher than usual, with half of all students opting to continue with the subject. In their questionnaires, some said that this scheme of work influenced their choice.

An unintended consequence was that the learning about genocides facilitated understanding about the Arab-Israeli conflict and also the events of 9/11 and its aftermath later in the year. This was possibly because students had a better understanding of the role and limitations of the UN and other organisations, as well as specific knowledge about the Jewish experience of the Holocaust.

It is extremely difficult to assess whether student understanding matches our aims. In their chapter on Holocaust education and citizenship, Short and Reed found gaps in student understanding, which was assessed one year after the initial learning.<sup>23</sup> However, if we were to measure students' knowledge of any subject one year on, without deliberate revision, we might find that their memories of causes and specific facts might have faded. Students are more likely to remember general impressions, and possible moral lessons about genocides, rather than specific details. I remain a little concerned that while most students showed an understanding of the term genocide, they might tend to equate any horrific events, past or present, with this label. Given more time, I would have liked to encourage them to test events against different definitions, and possibly to spend time looking at the Genocide Watch or Aegis websites.<sup>24</sup> A guided web search would have given them more opportunity to explore past and current events for themselves, and to find out what actions are being taken across the world to prevent genocide. I would like to develop further their ability to draw

comparisons between the genocides we learned about, and to study others on their own, with a sharper conceptual focus on similarity and difference. At a higher level, they might be able to look at the limitations of different comparative models. Despite the concerns expressed above, I found this project inspiring and challenging. For myself as an experienced teacher, the learning curve was steep, yet it was a pleasure to see students engage with a topic through which they learned about the past, showing empathy with other individuals and also developing a sense of their own power as global citizens. For once, a positive addition to the curriculum, chosen by the school and not forced upon us by the DfE.

#### REFERENCES

- <sup>1</sup> You will find information and survivor stories on the Peace Pledge Union website, for example, found at [www.ppu.org.uk/genocide/index1a.html](http://www.ppu.org.uk/genocide/index1a.html)
- <sup>2</sup> For an introduction to this debate and an exploration of teachers' objectives see Pettigrew, A. (2010) 'Limited lessons from the Holocaust? Critically considering the "anti-racist" and "citizenship potential" in *Teaching History*, 141, *The Holocaust Edition*, pp. 50-55; and Salmons, P. (2010) 'Universal meaning or historical understanding? The Holocaust in history and history in the curriculum' in *Teaching History*, 141, *The Holocaust Edition*, pp. 57-63.
- <sup>3</sup> Cesarani, D. (2010) 'Adolf Eichmann: The Making of a "genocidaire"' in *Teaching History*, 141, *The Holocaust Edition*, pp. 40-41.
- <sup>4</sup> Ideas were taken from Clinton's Keynote Address at an 'Ending Genocide Symposium' at USHMM on 24 July 2012. A transcript of her address is found at [www.ushmm.org/genocide/endgenocide/transcript/clinton.php](http://www.ushmm.org/genocide/endgenocide/transcript/clinton.php) The book is Waller, J. (2007) *Becoming Evil: how ordinary people commit genocide and mass killing*, Oxford : Oxford University Press.
- <sup>5</sup> Berenbaum, M. (2006) *The World Must Know: the history of the Holocaust as told in the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum*, Washington D.C.: United States Holocaust Memorial Museum.
- <sup>6</sup> *Teaching History*, 141, *The Holocaust Edition* (2010).
- <sup>7</sup> Pettigrew, *op. cit.*
- <sup>8</sup> You will find full exploration of the concept of historical diversity in the CPD unit of the Historical Association website at [www.history.org.uk/resources/secondary\\_resource\\_1326,1328\\_11.html](http://www.history.org.uk/resources/secondary_resource_1326,1328_11.html)
- <sup>9</sup> A summary of the Auschwitz bombing controversy can be found at [www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/judaica/ejud\\_0002\\_0002\\_0\\_01610.html](http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/judaica/ejud_0002_0002_0_01610.html)
- <sup>10</sup> There is a very large Chassidic Jewish community in North Manchester. These orthodox Jews are distinguished by their traditional dress, which is particularly noticeable for men who might wear long black coats and black hats, with sidelocks. Many of their children attend King David High School, which is very close to Abraham Moss.
- <sup>11</sup> Andrews, K. (2010) 'Finding a place for the victim: building a rationale for educational visits to Holocaust-related sites' in *Teaching History*, 141, *The Holocaust Edition*, p. 47.
- <sup>12</sup> For further guidance on teaching sensitive issues, see the Historical Association's TEACH report, found at [www.history.org.uk/resources/resource\\_780.html](http://www.history.org.uk/resources/resource_780.html)
- <sup>13</sup> Details of the IOE's free CPD programme can be found at [www.ioe.ac.uk/holocaust](http://www.ioe.ac.uk/holocaust).
- <sup>14</sup> A digitised version of this book can be found at [www.niod.knaw.nl/en/holocaust-and-other-genocides](http://www.niod.knaw.nl/en/holocaust-and-other-genocides)
- <sup>15</sup> Examples of resources on the USHMM website can be found at [www.ushmm.org/education/foreducators/resource/](http://www.ushmm.org/education/foreducators/resource/)
- <sup>16</sup> [www.hmd.org.uk/resources/stories/esther-brunstein](http://www.hmd.org.uk/resources/stories/esther-brunstein)
- <sup>17</sup> Stanton's model is explained at [www.genocidewatch.org/aboutgenocide/8stagesofgenocide.html](http://www.genocidewatch.org/aboutgenocide/8stagesofgenocide.html)
- <sup>18</sup> *The Voices of Rescue* DVD can be found at [www.ushmm.org/remembrance/dor/years/2012/voicesofrescue/](http://www.ushmm.org/remembrance/dor/years/2012/voicesofrescue/) the photo documentary came from the Missing Pages website: [www.missingpages.co.uk/](http://www.missingpages.co.uk/)
- <sup>19</sup> Information on this archive can be found at [www.ushmm.org/research/center/publications/details.php?content](http://www.ushmm.org/research/center/publications/details.php?content) The photograph of the milk churn is found at [www.ushmm.org/education/foreducators/resource/pdf/artif6photo.pdf](http://www.ushmm.org/education/foreducators/resource/pdf/artif6photo.pdf)
- <sup>20</sup> Andrews, *op. cit.*, p. 48.
- <sup>21</sup> Chapman, A., Perikleous, L., Yakinathou, C. and Celal, R. (2011) *Thinking Historically about Missing Persons: a guide for teachers*, 5. *How Should the Missing Persons of the Cyprus Conflict be Remembered? Lesson plans and rationale*, Nicosia: The Association for Historical Dialogue and Research / UNDP-ACT. Available at: [www.ahdr.info/ckfinder/userfiles/files/MISSING%20PPL\\_55.pdf](http://www.ahdr.info/ckfinder/userfiles/files/MISSING%20PPL_55.pdf)
- <sup>22</sup> This is a local group formed of the children and grandchildren of Holocaust survivors.
- <sup>23</sup> Short, G. and Reed, C. (2004) *Issues in Holocaust Education*, Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing, chapter 6.
- <sup>24</sup> The Genocide Watch website is found at [www.genocidewatch.org/](http://www.genocidewatch.org/) The Aegis website is found at [www.aegistrust.org/](http://www.aegistrust.org/)