MASTER OF ARTS (MA) IN HISTORY
UNIVERSITY OF COPENHAGEN
FACULTY OF HUMANITIES

# SILENCENED SUFFERING?

## DANISH JEWISH REMEMBRANCE OF THE SECOND WORLD WAR 1945-2025

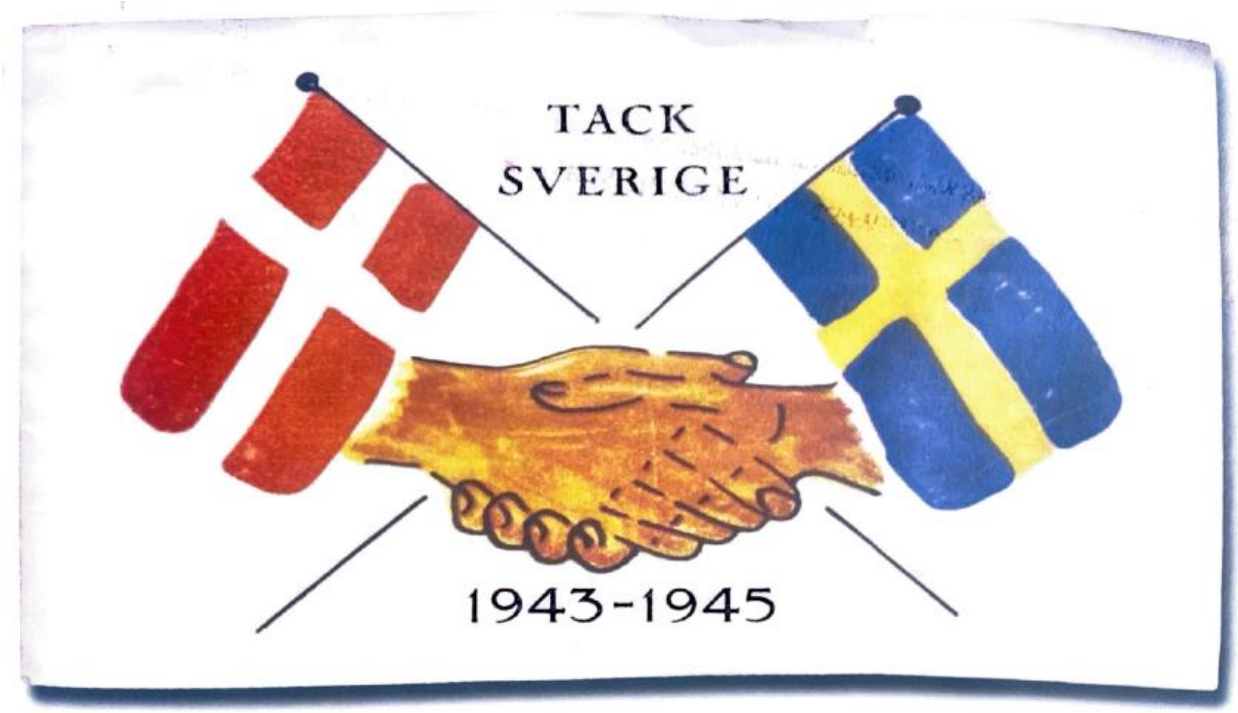


Figure 1: Thank You Card, donated to the Danish Jewish Museum in 2002: Bak, 2010, 209

MASTER'S THESIS

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# Abstract

Danske forskere er uenige om, hvorvidt der sænkede sig en tavshed over de danske jøder efter deres hjemkomst til Danmark i 1945. Denne historiografiske uenighed har fået mig til at udarbejde den følgende problemformulering: Hvilke fortællinger om forfølgelse, eksil og deportation blev artikuleret af danske jøder efter deres hjemkomst til Danmark ved afslutningen af den Anden Verdenskrig, og hvordan ændrede disse fortællinger sig over tid? For at besvare dette spørgsmål har jeg analyseret 60 skriftlige vidnesbyrd fra perioden mellem 1945 og 2025, fordelt ligeligt mellem to grupper af dansk-jødiske overlevende: dem der flygtede til Sverige, og dem der blev deporteret til Theresienstadt. Jeg har undersøgt mit kildemateriale på tværs af tre erindringsbølger: 1945-1960, 1961-1992 og 1993–2025, for på den måde at kunne identificere brud og kontinuitet i fortællingernes struktur og tematiske fokus. Min analyse viser, at tavshed i betydelig grad prægede den dansk-jødiske erindring. Denne form for *stille lidelse* (silenced suffering) materialiserede sig gennem internaliserede følelser af skam og skyldfølelse over at have overlevet, samt blev påvirket af eksterne forhold der begrænsede individuelle personers mulighed for at deltage i den offentlige samtale om besættelsesårene. Men tavsheden udgjorde aldeles ikke hele fortællingen. På tværs af de tre erindringsbølger finder jeg også talrige eksempler på personer, der ønskede at dokumentere deres erfaringer, som forholdt sig til deres fortid ved hjælp af humor, og som indskrev deres krigserfaringer i en bredere fortælling om jødisk udholdenhed, hvor bl.a. oprettelsen af staten Israel fremstod som kulminationen på generationers forfølgelse. Efter at have analyseret disse forskelligartede måder at engagere sig i fortiden på, er jeg derfor fortaler for et opgør med den strenge dikotomi mellem enten at aflægge vidnesbyrd om fortiden eller at forsøge at glemme selvsamme. I stedet argumenterer jeg for, at det er mere frugtbart at se disse to udtryksformer som variabler, der begge indgår i det samspil, som den dansk-jødiske erindring blev formet igennem.

# 1.0. INTRODUCTION

> *After the war, I rarely spoke about what I had witnessed and experienced, but it was always present. As an adult, I have undergone several operations. And after each one, I have had to relive my arrest in the great Jewish roundup in October 1943 [as] the anaesthesia stripped away my psychological defences. Like a gift from heaven, after my last operation in 1989, I suddenly found it possible to draw pictures of the situations that had always been a painful part of my life. And then I understood that I was now required to talk about what had happened* […][1]

In the synopsis of Jytte Bornstein's graphic novel, *My Journey Back,* an autobiographical book about her experience of persecution, the above extract can be found.[2] I have chosen to introduce my master's thesis with this quote, as it illustrates some of the aspects that I want to explore in my study of Danish Jewish remembrance of the Second World War. Firstly, it brings to the forefront how silence played an important role in relation to the creation of a meaningful narrative about the Danish Jewish experiences of war, as some eyewitnesses found it difficult to talk about their past. And secondly, it highlights how the passing of time changed how eyewitnesses engaged with their memories from the Second World War, thus illustrating how narratives about the past are not stable entities, but instead narratives that are re-negotiated.

Jytte Bornstein was one of the 472 people who were captured in the Nazi raid against the Danish Jewry in October 1943, and was subsequently deported to Theresienstadt, a ghetto situated north of Prague.[3] However, the vast majority of her Jewish neighbours had a different experience of war. More specifically, 7742 people managed to escape across the Øresund Strait to Sweden, thus avoiding captivity by going into exile.[4] In total, 95 per cent of the Danish Jewry avoided deportation, and since the vast majority of the Danish Jewish community from Theresienstadt were liberated in April 1945, almost all of the Danish Jewry survived the German occupation of Denmark. This story of survival is found in no other place in Europe, and as such has received much attention by scholars both at home and abroad.[5] However, the unique survival of the Danish Jewry is not the topic of interest in this thesis. Instead, I want to investigate the Jewish remembrance of war, when I ask the following research question: *Which narratives of persecution,*

[1] T-53. In this thesis, my primary sources will be cited as T (for testimony) followed by a number. I have ordered my sourced by date of publication, from T-1 (earliest source) to T-60 (most recent source). See the full list of sourced in Appendix 1. All Danish quotes have been translated into English by the author.
[2] Original title: *Min rejse tilbage*. All titles named in this thesis have been translated by the author.
[3] Tarabini, 2023, 481.
[4] Bak, 2010, 137.
[5] The first discussion of the topic can be found in: Yahil, 1967.

*exile and deportation were articulated by the Danish Jewry after their return to Denmark by the end of the Second World War, and how did these narratives change over time?* When asking this question, I wish to examine how the members of the Danish Jewish community understood their own persecution and how they made sense of the past in a post-war setting. Furthermore, as the quote written by Bornstein illustrates, an analysis of the Danish Jewish remembrance of the Second World War would not be complete if I do not address the issue of silence. As such, I want to pay special attention to the topics that the Jewish survivors described in detail in their testimonies, but I also want to investigate how certain topics were avoided, and how silenced individuals decided to come forth as time passed. Jay Winter has described the construction of a collective remembrance as similar to that of the ocean. More specifically, he says that '[m]emory is framed by forgetting in the same way as the contours of the shoreline are framed by the sea' and that we should understand the creation of a narrative about the past as a three-dimensional dynamic.[6] A dynamic in which our understanding of the past is forever changing as new waves of remembrance emerge, but also in which deposits of silence may be hidden below the surface, only to appear with environmental changes (as was the case with Bornstein's narrative half a decade after her arrest). Not much has been written about the Danish Jewish remembrance of the Second World War, and even less so about how these narratives changed over time.[7] That is this gap that I seek to address with my master's thesis.

Before turning to my historiographical introduction, I would like to make one clarification regarding how I intend to name the authors of my primary sources. In multiple publications from the early 21st century, Danish scholars anonymised the names of Danish Jewish victims.[8] For example, in her publication from 2010, Sofie Lene Bak said that she cannot publish a list of the deceased members of the Danish Jewish community as her information comes from confidential sources.[9] Thus, she can only detail the names when relatives have given their consent or when the identities of the victims from October 1943 can be verified through public sources. However, the practice of hiding the names of eyewitnesses did not only apply to people who had never spoken about their experiences, or who had passed away. For instance, a member of the Danish Jewish

[6] Winter, 2010, 3.
[7] I will discuss this in further detail in my historiographical introduction.
[8] Kirchhoff, 2005; Rünitz, 2005; Banke, 2005; Kirchhoff & Rünitz 2007; Bak, 2010.
[9] Note 92, 252. In 2010, Bak worked for the Danish Jewish Museum (henceforward DJM) and she thus followed their policy.

community told the story of how she survived the Second World War as a hidden child in a national Danish newspaper in 2009.[10] Yet, in Bak's publication, the eyewitness still went under the partially anonymised name *Tove*, even though her identity was known to the wider public.[11] This has since made Silvia Goldbaum Tarabini critiqued Bak for her interpretation of the Danish Archival Act.[12] More specifically, Taribini finds the above-practice problematic for two reasons. Firstly, it is difficult for historians to critically evaluate the research of others if their arguments cannot be traced back to specific sources, thus prohibiting future researchers from engaging with the material. Secondly, Tarabini states that it is ethically questionable to deprive Jewish survivors of their identities, as this was precisely what happened during the Second World War when they were given prisoner numbers by the Nazi regime. Interestingly, Jytte Bornstein signed almost all of her illustrations in her graphic novel with her initials JB and her transportation number XXV/3-129.[13] As such, I would not want to hide Jytte Bornstein behind an alias or partially concealed name, as she wanted her work to be recognised as her interpretation of the past. Furthermore, only three of my primary sources (5 per cent of my source selection) are not publicly available but instead sourced though museum archives.[14] As such, the vast majority of my sources can be found and read by any member of the wider public, making the practice of anonymisation redundant. Based on the above critique, I will use Tarabini's approach, as I intend to be open about the identities of the authors of my primary sources. For many eyewitnesses it was a heavy burden to share their stories about the past, and to respect the challenges that came with their public acts of memory work, while also keeping in mind how productive historiographical discussions are produced, I do not want to continue the practice of anonymising my primary sources.

[10] Later, this will be discussed in more detail.
[11] Original italics: Bak, 2010, 44. For an introduction to Tove Udsholt's story, see Nilsson, 2012, 135-146.
[12] Tarabini, 2023, 18.
[13] Ibid, 461.
[14] T-29; T-30; T-41.

## 2.0. Historiographical overview

In the following, I will introduce the most relevant scholarly work related to my research question. I will present the field of Memory Studies and key terms used within this practice as a way to define and limit my area of interest. I will then discuss the most up to date research on Danish Jewish remembrance regarding the Second World War which will constitute the foundation of my analysis. Finally, I will introduce the dynamic of silence, as I want to use this concept to nuance my discussion of how the Jewish community made sense of their experiences of persecution.

### 2.1. Remembrance of the past: shared or individual?

'The concept of "culture" has become for historians a compass of sorts that governs questions of interpretation, explanation, and method. And the notion of "memory" has taken its place now as a leading term, recently perhaps the leading term, in cultural history'.[15] Alan Confine wrote this description in 1997, and it would be fair to say that Memory Studies has only grown in the subsequent decades. However, the 'memory boom' within academia has also brought with it its challenges, one of them being that the 'proliferation of memory discourses' has resulted in a multitude of terms and concepts, whose 'commonalities and differences are by no means clear'.[16] In the following, I will therefore detail what is meant by terms such as collective memory, communicative memory, and remembrance, in addition to explaining why memory is not always individual in character.

The field of Memory Studies dates back to the 1920s when the scholars Maurice Halbwachs and Aby Warburg started a discussion of the constructed and collective nature of memory, which, according to them, was influenced by language systems, signs, symbols and the wider social contexts in which individuals operate.[17] However, their theories of collective and social memory were not widely discussed until the 1980s, when the social sciences and humanities reconsidered these concepts, in what Astrid Erll has called the 'new cultural memory studies'.[18] One of the main scholars who drove this research forward was Pierre Nora in his multi-volume *Les Lieux de*

[15] Original quotation marks: Confino, 1997, 1386.
[16] Winter, 2007, 363; Erll, 2011, 6.
[17] Halbwachs, 1994; Gombrich 1986; Ginzburg, 1989.
[18] 2011, 13.

*Mémoire.*[19] Nora was interested in what he identified as the 'acceleration of history', or the idea that culture and customs seemed further away as the pace of modern societies sped up, thus making people feel increasingly disconnected from one another.[20] In the eyes of Nora, pre-modern society was characterised by spontaneous acts of memory, as people were bound by a knowledge of a shared past, while modern society lacked this rootedness. Consequently, since people cannot live in this state of anxiety, Nora argued that the state had become a key memory driving agent, as no place, not even our 'hopelessly forgetful modern societies' can live without the knowledge of where we come from.[21] Collective memory, or our shared understanding of the past, did therefore not disappear, but was instead artificially preserved in sites of memory (*lieux de mémoire*). Many of Nora's arguments have since then been critiqued by other academics, especially its nation-centredness as well as its 'ideologically charged' binary divisions, but Nora still remains one of the most influential scholars within Memory Studies as he 'dared historians to broaden their vision and to widen their repertoire of evidence'.[22] In order to acknowledge the importance of Nora's study, while also being mindful of its shortcomings, I will draw inspiration from researchers who have studied different *lieux de mémoire* from a bottom-up perspective, looking at remembrance from the perspective of minority groups.[23]

Another approach was proposed by Aleida and Jan Assmann. The two scholars advanced Maurice Halbwachs' theory of collective memory when they argued that there is a 'qualitative difference' between a collective memory that is based on everyday interactions, and a remembrance that is institutionalised and rests on rituals and memory rehearsal.[24] Thus, the two scholars divided the idea of collective memory into the two concepts: *communicative* and *cultural memory*.[25] They agreed with Halbwachs that an individual memory cannot be embodied by another person, but it can be shared once verbalised in a narrative (or represented in a visual form), thereby becoming part of an 'intersubjective symbolic system'.[26] The Assmanns further developed Halbwachs' theory by saying that, on the one hand, *communicative memory* is characterised by its proximity

[19] 1984-1992.
[20] Søberg Grib, 2025, 4.
[21] Nora, 1989, 12.
[22] Erll, 2011, 27; Winter, 1997, 2.
[23] François & Schulze, 2001; Vesterbæk, 2009.
[24] Erll, 2011, 28.
[25] J. Assmann, 1995.
[26] A. Assmann, 2008a, 50.

to the everyday, and thus has a temporal horizon of three to four interacting generations.[27] *Cultural memory*, on the other hand, is characterised by its distance to the everyday, and is instead maintained in ceremonies and monuments, making it stable enough to survive for centuries.[28] Since my thesis analyses Danish Jewish remembrance between 1945 and 2025, it would be natural to assume that I will be focusing on communicative memory. However, the best way to distinguish between cultural and communicative modes of remembering is not the measurable time (i.e. the time that has passed since an event took place) but rather the mode of remembering chosen by a given remembrance community, i.e. the function that a specific act of remembrance takes. In other words, episodes from the past can simultaneously be an object of analysis within the frameworks of cultural *and* communicative memory, since they can speak to close and everyday encounters of eyewitnesses while also playing an important role vis-à-vis the distanced and fixed horizon (this was the case with the French Revolution in the year 1800 and the Great War in the 1920s).[29] Thus, I will pay special attention to whether the descriptions of persecution, exile and deportation, found within my primary sources, connect to a mythical and ancient past through which the eyewitnesses made sense of their experiences in the present.

Lastly, I want to describe the difference between *collective memory* and *collective remembrance*, and what this shift in terminology signifies. Earlier, I alluded to the fact that memories may be linked to personal experiences, but that they are simultaneously understood through the language and customs that individuals have acquired from their surrounding society. However, the jump from individual to collective remembrance does not 'afford an easy analogy' and thus calls for further clarification.[30] Social groups do not have memory in the same way that humans do. Communities do not *have* a memory, they *make* memory narratives using symbols, texts and rituals. Within Memory Studies, it is thus widely accepted that the study of the 'ways in which people construct a sense of the past' is made up of three aspects: cultural traditions, memory makers, and memory consumers.[31] As such, there is a strong focus on memory driving agents, the individuals who are doing the acts of recollection, not to mention the individuals who are receiving a narrative about the past. When it comes to the difference between *memory* and *remembrance*,

[27] However, this timeline has been questioned in Stone et al., 2014; Cordonnier et al., 2021.
[28] Søberg Grib, 2025, 5; J. Assmann, 2008, 17.
[29] Erll, 2011, 31.
[30] A. Assmann, 2008a, 55.
[31] Confino, 1997, 1386; Kansteiner, 2002, 179.

Emmanuel Sivan and Jay Winter moved away from the former, as they wanted to bring the acting party back into the analysis of the past; by using the word *remember*, rather than *memory* they argued that the discussion of collective remembrance moved away from talking about memory as an object that could be identified and studied, towards an engagement with the subjects involved in the construction of a narrative.[32] In my analysis of Danish Jewish remembrance, I similarly aim to focus on the individuals who are engaged in memory work, i.e. public rehearsals of memories, when discussing how narratives about the past are constructed by people.

### 2.2. Danish Jewish Remembrance of the Second World War

As Memory Studies became a more popular area of research in the 1980s, so did the field of Holocaust remembrance.[33] The close connection between these two academic fields was also present in a Denmark, as illustrated by the fact that when the Centre for Humanities and Historical Research published a new series of books in 1995, titles included *The Policy of Memory and Oblivion*, *The History of Denmark: a battlefield of remembrance policies*, and *The Time of Occupation as Collective Memory*.[34] The latter is especially important, as this was the only publication that focused solely on one historical event, i.e. the Second World War, thus highlighting the central role of this conflict in shaping the field of Memory Studies in Denmark.[35] *The Time of Occupation as Collective Memory*, written by Anette Warring and Claus Bryld, was, however, not without its flaws. The publication featured a wide range of topics such as the Danish memorialisation of the war and Danish memory culture, in addition to an analysis of the first three generation of World War II scholars and their many disagreements. Furthermore, a chapter regarding the 'apocryphal narratives', i.e. the German and Soviet-friendly counter narratives was included as well.[36] However, I would argue that the exclusion of the Jewish remembrance of the Second World War is a significant shortcoming, since the Danish Jewry had a unique experience of persecution during the occupation of Denmark, and a focus on this minority could have shed new light on the construction of a meaningful narrative about the past. Nonetheless, the publication remains relevant to my discussion, as it is the most comprehensive analysis of the remembrance of the Second World War in Denmark.

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[32] Winter & Sivan, 1999, 9.
[33] Winter, 2007, 363; This article starts with the quote: 'whoever says memory, says the Shoah'.
[34] For original titles, see bibliography: Jensen et al., 1996; Jensen et al., 1997; Bryld & Warring, 1998.
[35] Søberg Grib, 2025, 6.
[36] Bryld & Warring, 1998, 95-137.

The lack of focus on the Jewish minority was addressed three years later by Sofie Lene Bak in her study of the raid against the Danish Jewry in October 1943, and the remembrance thereof. This was a crucial first step towards a better understanding of the unique Jewish experiences of war in Denmark. However, Bak's research followed a top down-approach, and as such, the majority of her focus was on how the events from 1943 were understood by historians and the wider public, and not how the experience of persecution was remembered by the minority itself.[37] The same can be said about Karl Christian Lammers in his article about the Holocaust in collective remembrance, in which he discussed why it had taken so long for the story of Jewish suffering to be integrated into the European remembrance of World War II. He specifically discussed how perpetrators, bystanders and victims had suppressed events of the past (albeit for different reasons), thereby delaying a general understanding of the uniquely Jewish experiences.[38] Then, in 2010, Bak published another book regarding the Danish Jewry. This time her focus was on the Jewish experiences of war, and the long-term consequences of persecution. More specifically, Bak argued that ever since the end of the Second World War, the events during October 1943 had become a central part of the Danish remembrance culture. However, by talking about the *rescue,* and not the *escape* of the Jewish community, the focus had inadvertently been on the Danish population who helped the Jewish minority, and not on the minority itself.[39] After conducting interviews with Jewish survivors, Bak concluded that persecution, exile, and deportation had significant economic, social, and emotional consequences, which led many to refrain from talking about their experiences of persecution after returning to Denmark in 1945.[40] Interestingly, Silvia Goldbaum Tarabini came to the opposite conclusion in her publication from 2023. Tarabini argued that the Danish Jewry, or specifically the 472 people who got deported to Theresienstadt, had an immense desire to share their experiences of the past, and that an unwillingness to listen to these survivors has been misinterpreted as a 'myth of silence' by many academics.[41]

As such, I see a disagreement within the literature regarding the Danish Jewish remembrance of the Second World War.[42] On the one hand, Bak argues that the Danish Jews, upon returning from

[37] 2001, 19.
[38] Lammers, 2002, 6-17.
[39] Bak, 2010, 19.
[40] Ibid., 202.
[41] Tarabini, 2023, 12-13. The term is borrowed from Cesarani & Sundquist, 2012.
[42] Søberg Grib, 2025, 8.

Sweden, wanted to move on with their lives, which meant that silence fell upon the community after 1945. Tarabini, on the other hand, argues that the Danish Jewish survivors wanted to talk about their past traumas, but that they were met by an uninterested audience at home. In relation to this, it is worth noting that Bak's research includes an analysis of multiple wartime experiences, such as the hidden children, Jews that escaped to Sweden, and those were deported. However, her primary focus was on the escapees in Sweden and how their time in exile affected their subsequent lives.[43] In other words, there might be a difference between Bak's and Tarabini's arguments, but there is also, at least partially, a difference between which segments of the Jewish population the two researchers focus on. Tarabini with her focus on Theresienstadt, and Bak with her focus on Sweden. In my opinion, the diverging conclusions that the two scholars came to, as well as their difference in focus, call for further investigation. How did the different experiences of war manifest itself within the Danish Jewish remembrance of persecution, how did silence affect the creation of a meaningful narrative of the past, and how did the Danish Jewish remembrance evolve over time? These questions will form the core of my study of Jewish remembrance in Denmark.

### 2.3. Silence

One of the areas where Bak's and Tarabini's research provides an important foundation, but where there is also a need for supplementary material, is precisely when it comes to my discussion of silence. The two scholars both address the concept in their respective publications, but I would argue that a key point is missing, namely a definition of what silence is and what function it has. In her book, *Nothing to Speak Of* (note the title of the publication), Bak describes how the members of the Danish Jewish community who escaped, as well as those who had been deported, stopped talking about their experiences of war for two reasons; firstly, numerous members of the Danish Jewry felt that their testimonies were not received positively by their surrounding communities, leaving many feeling ignored and misunderstood. Secondly, the Danish Jews could also feel a sense of gratitude (and possibly also shame) for having survived the Nazi persecution, when, as they later found out, millions had suffered a different fate, thereby making their experiences pale in comparison.[44] Tarabani made similar observations in her research: several of her primary sources describe how, upon their return, they were cut off by their neighbours when they attempted

[43] The book was part of a wider project within the DJM, and among staff, the project was simply called 'the Sweden project'.
[44] Bak, 2010, 202.

to talk about their experiences of captivity.[45] However, Tarabini also found that the reception of the Jewish testimonies did not deter the survivors from Theresienstadt from talking about their past; more specifically, she described how more than a third of the 472 people who were captured during October 1943 have given testimony to their experiences of war.[46] Based on the above, it can be deducted that the suppression of remembrance may be related to the interaction between memory makers and memory consumers, as certain victims were excluded from participating in the conversation about the past. Furthermore, it would seem that silence can be the result of an internal process within an eyewitness as their understanding of their past changed over time. However, besides these comments, the topic of silence was not discussed in more detail.

In the international scholarship, silence has received a lot of attention within recent years, and I therefore turn to these publications to establish a theoretical foundation for my analysis. Aleida Assmann writes that when 'thinking about memory, we must start with forgetting […] In order to remember some things, other things must be forgotten'.[47] Silence can both be a consequence of a passive neglect of the past and an active negation of a story as 'painful or incongruent memories are hidden, displaced, overwritten, and possibly effaced'.[48] Much has been said about remembrances of the past, and equally, scholars have started taking an interest in what societies forget.[49] But, as Winter argues, it is problematic to think that 'silence is the space of forgetting and speech the realm of remembrance'.[50] According to him, silence is a tool that people use in various situations, and it can therefore also be related to the desire to remember.[51] More specifically, he argues that silence can be found in three variations.[52] Firstly, silence can be *liturgical* or associated with a religious or spiritual set of beliefs, whereby silence enables individuals to experience their loss and make sense of the past in their own time. Secondly, silence can be *strategical.* This type of silence can be chosen when a community wants to suspend a conflict over the meaning of the past, until the immediacy of the conflict is less pressing, thereby making it less emotional to talk about. Thirdly, silence can be connected to the idea of privilege. Sometimes, societies decide that

[45] Tarabini, 2023, 12.
[46] Ibid. 14.
[47] A. Assmann, 2008b, 87.
[48] Ibid.
[49] Esposito, 2008; Ricæur, 2004; Connerton, 2009.
[50] Winter, 2010, 4.
[51] For an illustrative example see: Ephratt, 2015.
[52] The following will be based on Winter, 2010, 4-6.

not every person has the right to talk about the past, and as such, silence can be connected to an *essentialist* definition of memory makers. In other words, Winter says that silence can come from an inner desire to relate to the past on your own terms, but it can also come from the outside as societies decide when a conversation about the past should take place, as well as who may participate in it, thereby making silence an expression of many different things. However, the cultivation of a culture of silence, or a *conspiracy of silence* as Zerubavel calls it, is always a collective effort.[53] It takes a memory maker to refrain from talking about the past, it takes a memory consumer to refrain from asking about the past, and it takes a 'memory activist' to break a long-held silence, thus highlighting how silence, like remembrance and forgetting, is a social web of memory acts.[54]

Lastly, I find it important to return to the topic of Jewish survivors, and the idea of hierarchical suffering when discussing the issue of silence. Bak writes that the returning Jewry who came back to Denmark after the capitulation of the German armies were subject to the creation of a hierarchical relationship between the different survivor groups.[55] An important point related to this observation is that the Jewish survivors, regardless of their experiences of war, could feel frustration if they did not get an *independent* recognition of their *own* suffering, while at the same time also being acutely aware that others had endured far more severe trauma.[56] In other words, the Danish Jewish victims did not understand their personal trauma within a vacuum, as they compared, and thus relativised, their own and other's experiences of exile and deportation. A similar dynamic can be found in Primo Levi's description of his captivity in Auschwitz, in which he said that survivors like himself never knew the worst; that knowledge was reserved to those who became the living dead within the German extermination camps.[57] Interestingly, scholars have shown that the hierarchical understanding of suffering, and its connections to the idea of deserving victimhood, continued to affect Holocaust survivors long after the end of the war. For instance, Ellis Spicer found that factors such as nationality, experiences of war, age, and gender, all played a role when Jewish victims in British survivor associations interacted with one another, and that

[53] 2010, 36.
[54] Carol Gluck in Winter, 2010, 12.
[55] Bak, 2010, 202.
[56] Many Danish Jews had connections abroad, and reports about the murder of the European Jewry thus quickly came to Denmark. Ibid. See note 283.
[57] 2002, 90.

several survivors felt excluded as their experiences were seen as less severe than others' (e.g., ghettos were seen as holiday homes in comparison to extermination camps).[58] Based on these observations, I find it relevant to examine the effects of silence in my analysis of Danish Jewish remembrance between 1945 and today, when trying to understand whether a hierarchical understanding of suffering affected the Danish Jewish eyewitnesses and their willingness to testify.

[58] 2020, 442-460.

## 3.0. Selection of Primary Sources

Memory Studies have drawn on a wide range of sources to examine how the past is remembered in the present, including the study of written accounts, visual materials, and interviews. Therefore, the first step towards making my research more concrete was to limit my selection of primary sources. The aim of my thesis is to analyse Danish Jewish remembrance of the Second World War between 1945 and 2025, and as such, my research covers a substantial period of time. Therefore, I wanted a consistent foundation of primary sources (that did not change, as new technologies emerged) to more easily draw conclusions about ruptures and continuities. Since I do not want to compare how narratives about the past are affected by the media through which they are presented, I have limited my analysis to *written* sources. Furthermore, I have excluded handwritten letters and questionnaires, as these were predominantly produced in the immediate aftermath of the war, thereby not supporting a longitudinal analysis. As such, the only criteria I had for the selection of my sources were that they had to be written by Jewish individuals who detail their experiences of persecution in Denmark, that the sources were in Danish, and that they were not written by hand.[59] Lastly, it is worth detailing the different genres of testimonies found within my primary source selection. As my research question opens a discussion about Danish Jewish remembrance of the Second World War as a shared narrative, I have prioritised sources that were meant to be read by others, and thus also accessible to the Jewish population. In total, I have examined 21 books and 34 articles, including 21 articles from periodicals and 13 articles from national or regional newspapers, in addition to five testimonies sourced through archives.[60] This approach allowed me to discuss how a Danish Jewish remembrance was produced by Jewish survivors who wanted to participate in a public discussion of the past. A full overview of the genres of my primary sources can be found in Appendix 2.

As described in my historiographical introduction, I have found disagreement among Danish researchers as to whether silence fell over the Danish Jewish community after 1945. And, since silence is one of the primary interests of this thesis, I have let the division between Bak and Tarabini inform my source selection. Consequently, I have collected sources from two groups of

[59] One of my sources was written in Hebrew and later translated into Danish by the author herself: T-27.
[60] Three out of the five testimonies that I sourced through archives were individual narratives, while two were family narratives (and thus meant to be read by a specific, albeit very small, audience).

Danish Jewish survivors, as half of my primary sources were written by individuals who escaped to Sweden, while the other half was written by individuals who got deported to Theresienstadt. Furthermore, I have taken inspiration from recent studies, as I divide my source selection into three waves of remembrance: 1945-1960, 1961-1992, and 1993-2025. In Bak's publication we find a slightly different periodisation.[61] However, since a lot of attention was dedicated to how non-Jewish actors wanted to memorialise the Jewish experiences of war (e.g., the Danish state, as well as foreign state actors), I have instead taken inspiration from Tarabini's periodisation, as her focus was on the Danish Jewry and their testimonies about of the past.[62] As such, I have collected ten sources from each of the above periods, bringing my total number of primary sources to 60 (ten sources from each of the two victim categories, across three waves of remembrance).[63] I gathered my material by looking through relevant literature, while keeping a note of eyewitnesses.[64] Additionally, for the periods where I struggled to find enough testimonies, I started reading some of my sources, while looking for other accounts; a sort of chain referral-method.[65]

One of the limitations arising from this selection strategy is, of course, that my analysis is limited to those individuals who *chose* to write about their experiences of persecution, thereby leaving out those who remained silent. This is true for much of the research which has been conducted within Memory Studies – however, since narratives about the past are often driven by specific *memory makers*, the above strategy should still help us understand how a collective remembrance was created about the Danish Jewish experiences of war.[66] In this context, a clarification is required. Since I wish to analyse Danish Jewish remembrance, I will now define who falls into this category. Ultimately, I have decided that if an individual got deported to Theresienstadt, or if they were forced to flee to Sweden 'due to their religious heritage', their testimonies could be included in my source selection.[67] In other words, I do not employ a religious definition of *Jewishness*, but rather a definition connected to lived experience of persecution.[68] Furthermore, any testimony written by

[61] 2010, 222-232. More specifically, the cutting off point at the end of the second wave of remembrance was 1987 and not 1992.
[62] It is worth noting that Tarabini divided the second wave of remembrance into two, as she found a period of silence between 1961-1964 (this will be discussed in more detail in chapter five). However, since my sources selection also contains testimonies from the survivors from Sweden, I decided to merge these into one: 1961-1992 (as opposed to 1961-1964 & 1965-1992).
[63] The number ten was agreed upon in consultation with my supervisor.
[64] This was primarily the case with the testimonies written by those who were deported.
[65] This was the case with the accounts given by those who escaped to Sweden between 1945-1960.
[66] Kansteiner, 2002, 179.
[67] The phrase 'due to their religious heritage' is taken from the definition of the victims of the occupation, passed by the Danish Parliament, where the Danish politicians wanted to avoid a repetition of a racist Nazi-terminology: Bak, 2012, 105.
[68] Banke et. al., 2018, 13.

a person who was affected by the raid against the Jewish community *in Denmark* is relevant to my analysis, and *Danishness* should thus not be understood as citizenship.[69] A second possible limitation also has to be mentioned when asking whether written sources can be used to analyse the issue of silence. Of course, themes that were fully hidden below the surface cannot be analysed through a discussion of written testimonies. However, as I intend to analyse ruptures and continuities over a period of 80 years, it is my hope that a comparative analysis of Danish Jewish remembrance can shed light on how the (re)negotiation of the meanings of the past was affected by silence. Silence may not be audible, but it leaves a trace, which, when analysed over a long period of time, can be identified if and when silence is broken.

Lastly, I want to stress that I make no claim of discussing all the relevant aspects related to Danish Jewish remembrances of the Second World War. Such a thing would not be possible within the scope of this thesis. Therefore, instead of claiming to conduct a comprehensive study of the creation of a meaningful past, a 'tour d'horizon', I want to present an analysis of certain topics and structural factors, which can illustrate how people understood dimensions of the past in the present, and the language through which they organised their recollections.[70] My analysis will be divided into three chapters, each focusing on a separate wave of remembrance (chapter 4-6). In the first part of each chapter, I will ask why people chose to write their testimony; in the second part, I will conduct a comparative content analysis on a selection of topics; and in the third part, I will discuss the structural factors that influenced the creation of a narrative about the past.

[69] A significant part of the Jewish community were stateless refugees on the eve of the Second World War: Bak, 2012, 14-15.
[70] Winter, 2014, 7-8.

## 4.0. Building a narrative? *Danish Jewish remembrance between 1945 and 1960*

The repatriation of the Danish Jewry was a carefully orchestrated affair. As the liberated Jewry from Theresienstadt had been driven to Malmö, the vast majority of the Danish Jewish refugees were in Sweden at the end of the war, and were thus given the opportunity to return to Denmark during the first few months after the end of the occupation.[71] For some, this meant returning to their familiar surroundings as their old homes and jobs had been taken care of by their neighbours or the Danish authorities, while others had to rebuild their life from scratch after having lost almost everything.[72] Additionally, this was a period where the Danish Jewish identity was called into question as many chose to leave the religious community after returning home in 1945 (either by quitting their membership or by immigrating to Israel).[73] In other words, the immediate aftermath of the Second World War was a period with many challenges - in which the Danish Jewish community simultaneously had to start processing their experiences of persecution. In this chapter, I want to examine the earliest recollections of the Second World War, while keeping in mind what role silence might have played in shaping this initial narrative during a period where Denmark, along with the rest of Europe, was transitioning from wartime to peacetime.

### 4.1. Why testify: *motivation for writing about the past*

There can be many reasons why Jewish survivors decided to share their experiences of persecution. Or equally decided not to do so. Thus, it should come as little surprise that the question of whether (and if so, how) the European Jewry testified to what later became known as the Holocaust is still a contested topic. For example, researchers such as Norman Finkelstein and Peter Novick have argued that there was a noticeable development in the number of eyewitness accounts, moving from a period of silence in the first decades after 1945 to an explosion of testimonies in the last decades of the 20th century.[74] In a Danish context, this argument is similar to that of Bak in her analysis of the Danish Jewish experiences of war between 1943 and 1945.[75] However, other scholars, such as David Cesarani and Eric J. Sundquist (and, in a Danish context, Tarabini), have been critical of this assertion, as they have shown how the European Jewry were eager to provide

[71] Bak, 2010, 160.
[72] Bak, 2012, 180.
[73] Ibid., 213-214.
[74] 2000, 37-87; 1999.
[75] 2010.

evidence of the Nazi crimes committed against themselves immediately after the end of the conflict.[76] In relation to this, I would argue that it is worth moving away from a strict dichotomy between bearing witness and remaining silent, in order to gain a more nuanced understanding of the construction of a collective remembrance of the past. On the one hand, it is worth noting that I have found much evidence of people who wanted to document their experiences of war within the first wave of remembrance. For instance, among those who fled to Sweden, Torben L. Meyer, Henning Metz, and Stephen Hurwitz wrote their memoirs as a type of journalistic reports about their own, as well as others', escapes to Sweden.[77] In these accounts, it is clear that the goal was to address questions such as where, how, and when did people escape, while also detailing their time in Sweden. Among those who got deported, the book by Max Friediger, the Chief Rabbi of Denmark, is an example of an early testimony that sought to document everyday life in captivity.[78] Furthermore, other publications can be found under titles such as *Revisiting Theresienstadt*, *Departure for Theresienstadt*, *A Day in Theresienstadt*, and *What Was It Like in Theresienstadt*.[79] In other words, I have found many examples of eyewitnesses who took it upon themselves to write about the consequences of the raid against the Danish Jewry, in which the goal of documentation seems to have been a central motivation for writing about the past. On the other hand, I must also admit that this observation is based on the individuals who decided to write about the past, and as such, these primary sources can only be used to illuminate certain aspects related to the topic of silence. It is a constant struggle for academics who wish to talk about silence to address this issue directly, rather than falling back on what has been said.[80] In relation to this, I also have to acknowledge that it was significantly harder for me to find testimonies from those who escaped to Sweden during the first wave of remembrance when compared to those who got deported. As such, I must conclude that the existence of primary sources in which we find a clear desire to document the past, does not rule out the possibility that silence also played a role within the Danish Jewish community during the first 15 years after the war.

Another factor that helped persuade members of the Danish Jewish community to talk about their experiences of war was undoubtedly their desire to express gratitude towards those who helped

[76] 2012, 5; 2023.
[77] T-1; T-6; T-3.
[78] T-15.
[79] T-16; T-17; T-12; T-13.
[80] Bak, 2011, 158–167.

them in their hour of need.[81] Based on my primary sources, this motivating factor was widespread among the Danish Jews who were sent to Theresienstadt as well as those who fled to Sweden (albeit with different people in mind). Both Bak and Tarabini have mentioned gratitude in their respective research.[82] However, since this emotion stood out to me when reading my primary sources, I find it relevant to illustrate this topic in further detail. For instance, Max Friediger described the people who sent aid packages to the Danish Jews in Theresienstadt as follows:

> *[W]e sent them our blessings and included them in our daily prayers. They saved our lives! Yes, may all the men and women who made the sending of these parcels possible […] be imbued with the awareness that the deed they performed is not just a good deed. Saving people from starvation is on a higher level [than that]*.[83]

A similar sentiment is found in the testimony of Axel A. Margolinsky, who wrote: 'Countless organisations, people, famous and unknown, have lent us a helping hand. We owe them our heartfelt thanks'.[84] To understand how the Danish Jews who escaped to Sweden could express their gratitude, Pinches Welner's novel serves as a good example. The author described how Jewish refugees sang the Danish and Swedish national anthems when returning home in May 1945, and how, as they were singing *Du Gamla, Du Fria*, their faces expressed 'gratitude and reverence for the country that gave them protection and sheltered them during a stormy time'.[85] Interestingly, many eyewitnesses in the subsequent waves of remembrance returned to this feeling in their later testimonies, and as such, it can be said that the sense of gratitude that many Jewish survivors felt towards their neighbours at home became an integral part of Jewish remembrance of the Second World War (in which fishermen, doctors, nurses, ambulance and taxi drivers, as well as the Red Cross aid workers, were praised for their actions).[86] Unfortunately, my primary sources do not help explain why this particular feeling became such an important part of the Danish Jewish narratives about the past. On the one hand, it may be an expression of a desire to reconnect with the Danish population after having been forced to leave the country during the last part of the occupation. On the other hand, it may also be an expression of what Bak described as the hierarchy of suffering, in which the Danish Jewry felt compelled to describe their awareness of having been luckier than

[81] See, for example, the thank-you card illustrated on the front cover, which was kept by a Danish Jewish family as a cherished memento of the war.
[82] 2010, 209 & 214; 2023, 410.
[83] T-15, 63.
[84] T-19, 5.
[85] T-9, 205.
[86] T-57, 91; T-58, 241; T-25, 74.

other victims.[87] However, I cannot draw such a conclusion about causality based on my source material, and it is therefore up to future researchers to continue the discussion of Danish Jewish remembrance (especially vis-à-vis the context in which it was produced) so that we can get a more complete picture of the role that gratitude played over time.

### 4.2. Ruptures or Continuities*: comparative content analysis*

Remembrance, as discussed in my historiographical overview, does not mean the construction of a narrative in which every detail about the past is included; rather, it is a constant negotiation concerning what is and is not included.[88] As such, it is important to pay attention to the events that are put at the heart of a narrative, as this reveals something about what a particular community wants to remember about themselves. Between 1945 and 1960, both the Jewish majority who escaped to Sweden, as well as those who got deported to Theresienstadt, drew the readers' attention towards King Christian X. They spoke of the King's visit to the synagogue in 1933; how he declared that there was no 'Jewish problem' in Denmark; how he said that he would wear the Star of David if the Danish Jewry was forced to do so; and how he sent a message to those in Theresienstadt, praying for their imminent return.[89] On one occasion, it was even mentioned that the royal family had made an appeal to the Danish population to help the Jewish community escape in October 1943.[90] Lastly, a year after returning to Denmark, the Jewish community held a ceremony commemorating the members who had died in Theresienstadt, at which point it was said: 'The entire Danish people, led by the King, stood united behind Denmark's Jews'.[91] In other words, when reading through the testimonies from the first wave of remembrance it is rare not to encounter the King as a symbolic figure. This was not unique to the Danish Jewish community, as Christian X also became a symbol of resistance in the wider Danish remembrance.[92] However, in the examples cited above, the King does not merely appear as a historical figure who resisted the Germans. Instead, he was given a mythical status, built upon rumours and hearsay.[93] For instance, the rumour about the King saying that he would wear the star of David appeared for the first time in the illegal press in January of 1942, at which point it was said that Christian X was going to

[87] The hierarchy of suffering will be discussed in further detail later.
[88] A. Assmann, 2008b, 87.
[89] [N.A.], 1947, 1; T-15, 9 & 80; T-11, 130.
[90] T-9, 116.
[91] T-7, 5.
[92] However, to a much lesser degree than what I have found in my primary sources: Bryld &Warring, 1998, 324.
[93] For a discussion of the myth of the king wearing the yellow star, see Lund, 1975; Vilhjálmsson, 2021.

abdicate if the Germans introduced the Nuremberg laws in Denmark.[94] Later, while the majority of the Danish Jewry were in exile in Sweden, the Jewish refugees were suddenly able to express a nationalistic feeling that could not have been expressed in Denmark (due to occupation), and as such many people gathered around the royal family as a symbol of home.[95] Based on the above, I come to the following two conclusions. Firstly, parts of the Danish Jewish remembrance of the Second World War were built on narrative that had emerged during the years of occupation, e.g., when it comes to the importance of the royal family. Secondly, I would argue that the King was used as a unifying figure who regarded the Danish Jewish community as no less Danish than the rest of the population. Whether this was grounded in fact, fiction, or propaganda is another question. As such, the earliest examples of Danish Jewish remembrance sought to construct a narrative that confirmed that they should not be seen as outsiders, but rather as an integral part of the Danish nation, even though they had been forced to leave the country in October 1943.

Now to a topic that has received limited attention, but which is nonetheless relevant to my discussion of Danish Jewish remembrance of the Second World War: The State of Israel. As the first wave of remembrance runs from 1945 to 1960, it is important to note that the political status of the territory in the Middle East changed, transitioning from the British Mandate of Palestine to an independent nation-state in 1948.[96] During this time, the Danish Jewry followed the developments closely, both in terms of political debates and the situation on the ground. Evidence of this engagement can be seen in the establishment of a Danish fundraising campaigns to support the creation of a Jewish state between 1946 and 1948.[97] Furthermore, agricultural training was provided for future emigrants to Israel, and some members of the Danish Jewry also decided to participate in the Arab-Israeli War of 1948.[98] It is also worth noting that the Danish Jewish Periodical wrote extensively about the conflict in the Middle East, thereby ensuring a constant flow of information concerning the formation of the State of Israel.[99] As such, it should come as

[94] Bak, 2001, 157; Tarabini, 2023, 32.
[95] Bak, 2010, 169.
[96] Arnheim & Levitan, 2011, 153.
[97] List, 2020, 36.
[98] Bach, 2003, 13; Banke et. al., 2018, 163-164.
[99] List, 2020, 29. The Danish Jewish periodical changed its name multiple times across my three waves of remembrance. From 1946-1964 it was called *Jewish Society.* Between 1964 and 1965 it was called *Jewish Debate,* and then, after 1967, it was known as *Jewish Orientation* (which is still its current name). For consistency's sake and to make my thesis more readable for the audience, I will refer to the magazine published by the religious Jewish community as the 'Danish Jewish Periodical' (with a capitalised P).

little surprise that the topic of Israel may have influenced how members of the Jewish community understood their experiences of persecution. Consider, for instance, the following quote:

> *The Jews have it – a small country, but still our own country, born in a sea of blood and suffering, but not as much blood was shed and not as much suffering inflicted on innocent people as when the other, the big country, fell. The prophecies from the fifth book of Moses came true – both about the downfall of the persecutors and the restoration of 'the land flowing with milk and honey'. One would be a consequence of the other. Without the countless Jewish sufferings, without the millions of victims, without the burning anti-Semitism, and without a crazy man's fanatical stirring up of a people's worst instincts – without all this, Israel would hardly have been restored in our time.*[100]

In the above, the establishment of Israel is described as a direct consequence of the Second World War, while also being the culmination of centuries of Jewish suffering. Other instance where the State of Israel is mentioned can be found in Cilla Cohn's novel and Pinches Welner's collection of short stories, in which the Second World War and the struggle for survival are important themes.[101] When taken together, a common thread emerges from the two publications: the murder of European Jewry and the future safety of the Jewish people are intimately connected to the establishment of a Jewish state. Whether this represents a conscious (re)construction of their personal experiences, intended to make sense the murder of millions of Jews, is difficult for me to say. Both Cohn and Welner were supporters of Zionist ideology, and it is therefore possible that the above examples could reflect a politically motivated framing of the past.[102] However, it is also possible that the two eyewitnesses wanted to situate their experiences within a broader narrative, using the history of Jewish suffering and the founding of Israel to foster a sense of belonging and pride across territorial boundaries.[103] It is difficult for me to determine with any certainty which of the above explanation is the most likely (indeed, it could also be a combination of them both) and thus, I will instead finish this section by saying that eyewitnesses did not always make sense of their experiences of persecution within a framework limited to the events of the Second World War. Sometimes, they placed their experiences within a longer historical narrative to give their personal stories a greater meaning. And, in the eyes of Jan Assmann, this reflects a form of identity formation that relies on a reconstruction of near past within a larger framework of the ancient past

[100] Original quotation marks: [N.A.], 1955, 3.
[101] T-20, 38; T-8, 120-121.
[102] T-22, 102; Cohn grew up with an influential (Zionist) brother, who was like a father to her: Cohn, 1997, segment 18, 17:45. Bak has described how many Zionists engaged in a kind of productive amnesia, as they left the past behind and focused on the creation of the State of Israel post-1945: 2010, 2004. However, I have also found examples within my source selection where Zionists did the opposite and instead engaged in public acts of remembrance.
[103] As argues by List, 2020, 47-64.

(i.e. what he calls *cultural memory*).[104] In this light, the suffering of Jewish victims is understood not only as a tragedy of immense scale, but also as part of a historical continuum that culminated in the creation of the State of Israel. Because of this, the establishment of an independent Jewish homeland came to symbolise both the consequence of the past and the promise of a better future.

In the above, I have shown how some eyewitnesses altered the timeline of their narratives to shift the focus of their remembrance: from wartime persecution to accounts of historical endurance. In this section, I will turn to another narrative approach, one in which humour played a central role, to show how Jewish eyewitnesses did not always document their experiences of persecution in a neutral tone of voice. This may come as a surprise, as humour, death, and persecution are not usually associated with one another. As with the topic of Israel, I will return to the subject of humour across all three waves of remembrance; therefore, in this first encounter with the theme, I will focus on documenting the occurrences of this communicative style. Firstly, it is worth noting that multiple authors described *gallows humour* as part of their experiences of captivity, but, more importantly for my research question, these moments of laughter were preserved in their post-war remembrances. For instance, Max Friediger described how gallows humour was not unheard of in Theresienstadt, a sentiment that was echoed by Ralph Oppenhejm and Wulff Feldman, who characterise the atmosphere of the camp as filled with laughter and jokes.[105] Secondly, I have identified various instances of dry humour as part of the narrative style of my primary sources. Consider, for example, Cilla Cohn's description of her father's escape from Austria: 'They [the Austrians] felt that the time had come to fish in troubled waters and embarked on a brisk little pogrom'.[106] Or Hans Pollnow's description of Theresienstadt:

> *This camp was otherwise reputed to be something of a model community, because it did not use gas chambers or bonfires to exterminate the Jews. It was considered more humane to give them so little food that they would die of starvation*.[107]

The above extracts strike a particular nerve when the experiences of antisemitism and captivity are described in a humoristic tone. Is it inappropriate to laugh? Why do we find instances of humour when the topic of discussion is death and destruction? These questions have started to intrigue

[104] J. Assmann in Erll, 2011, 29.
[105] T-15, 37-38; T-11, 57. T-12, 6.
[106] T-20, 22.
[107] T-14, 7.

international Holocaust scholars, however, not much has been said about the topic in a Danish context.[108] As such, I hope that my thesis will be a first step towards a deeper understanding of this style of communication among the Danish Jewry. Furthermore, it is worth mentioning that some eyewitnesses described an ambivalent feeling towards humour as they remembered their past, thereby reflecting how both memory makers and memory consumers could feel confused about the topic of humour when discussing the topic of the Second World War. For instance, Arthur Friediger wrote that he recalled the funny moments that had taken place in Theresienstadt when reflecting on his time in captivity. However, this (happy?) feeling was quickly replaced by the memory of the thousands who had not survived the ghetto.[109] In other words, humour was replaced by a feeling of grief, and the remembrance of laughter was quickly shut down. Based on the above, I therefore find it important to return to the following questions in chapter five and six as I continue my discussion of humour: why did people use this specific style of communication when recounting their experiences of war, and what functions did humour play within the Danish Jewry? For now, it suffices to say that not all eyewitnesses employed a neutral or documentative tone of voice when sharing their experiences of the past. Some were also witty and played on stereotypes and irony as they retold their stories of persecution.

### 4.3. Structuring Memory: *making sense and giving meaning to the past*

As mentioned earlier, one of the structuring elements that played a role in determining who decided to testify, in addition to influencing what was remembered, was the feeling of shame, or what researchers have termed 'survivor guilt'.[110] Bak has described how all the members of the Danish Jewry could experience this feeling when the full extent of what had happened to the European Jewry became known.[111] The total number of people who fled to Sweden as a consequence of the German raid in October 1943 was 7742 (of which 686 people were non-Jewish, fleeing due to their marriage to a member of the Jewish community).[112] Out of the 472 people who were deported to Theresienstadt, 52 died in captivity.[113] As such, 99 per cent of the Danish Jewish population survived the Second World War, which is a survival rate found in no other European country.[114]

[108] Lipman, 1991; Ostrower, 2015; Patt, 2016; Wisse, 2015; Slucki et al., 2020.
[109] T-18, 8.
[110] Gill, 1994, 54.
[111] 2010, 202.
[112] Ibid., 137.
[113] Tarabini, 2023, 481.
[114] The closest one is Italy, in which 85 per cent of the Jewish community survived: Bak, 1999, 74.

Through this framing, the Danish Jewry and their experiences of persecution appear as the light in the dark in a narrative of death and destruction.[115] According to Bak, the realisation of their unique survival led many Danish Jewish eyewitnesses to externalise their memories by giving testimony, sometimes even from a third-person perspective, or alternatively to remain silent about what had happened to them.[116] However, I have observed a third response in my source material, as some eyewitnesses, more specifically those who escaped to Sweden, described the feeling of shame explicitly in their testimonies. For instance, Pinches Welner said that Eastern European Jews had suffered far worse than the Danish Jewry in Sweden, thereby making it shameful for the Danish refugees to complain about the hardships they faced when returning to Denmark.[117] Torben Meyer also described how he felt ashamed of his escape, as others members of his community had been less fortunate. He asked: 'Why didn't they get our place in the boat? Why didn't we do more for them? Why should they perish, and we be saved?'[118] Lastly, some of the Jewish survivors who escaped to Sweden expressed a particular type of shame: they felt embarrassed to have left Denmark at the time when the Germans tightened their grip on the country, either because they wanted to share the burden of occupation, or because they regretted not having taken part in the resistance.[119] These are some of the most explicit references to survivor guilt within my primary sources. Of course, it is impossible for me to discuss the people who turned their shame inwards and stopped talking about the past. When I make the above observation about the presence of shame among the Jewish survivors who fled to Sweden, it should thus be acknowledged that this may only be part of the truth. However, based on my source selection, it is also clear that members of the Danish Jewish community differed from one another when it came to explicit descriptions of survivor guilt, as those who had survived their time in exile described this feeling explicitly in their testimonies, while those who were deported did not mention this topic in the same way.

When discussing the issue of survivor guilt, I find it useful to turn to the concept of hierarchical suffering when considering whether the Jews who escaped to Sweden viewed themselves as lesser victims. Ellis Spicer's work on hierarchical survivorship likewise examines how institutional

[115] Bak, 2001, 150.
[116] 2010, 202.
[117] T-9, 216-217.
[118] T-1, 197.
[119] T-1, 88; T-3, 4; T-5, 2.

structures can shape a victims' self-perception.[120] This is relevant, as the Danish Parliament did, in fact, offer an official definition of victimhood through the passing of a law regarding economic compensation for the victims of the occupation (in which we find a hierarchical classification based on the financial support provided to victims).[121] Firstly, the Danish Jewry did not receive an honorary reward, which was granted to members of the Danish resistance who were deported, thus creating a division between active and passive victims.[122] Secondly, the law imposed definitions linked to the notion of legitimate victimhood, as people under the age of 18 were excluded from the compensation. Lastly, due to their status as deportees, the victims from Theresienstadt were given compensation for torture and property damage, which the refugees from Sweden were not. Whether these divisions were unfair is not the point. What is relevant is that the Jewish community was divided along the lines of age and experience of the war as a result of the legislative work of the Danish Parliament.[123] Bak's argument, that all members of the Danish Jewish community were at risk of experiencing survivor guilt, may still hold true.[124] However, when I examine my sources, while keeping the above definition of victimhood in mind, I argue that feeling of shame could be displayed in different ways. On the one hand, the Danish Jews that were sent to Theresienstadt saw themselves as victims of Nazi persecution, albeit fortunate ones who had been spared the gas chambers.[125] On the other hand, the Danish Jews who escaped to Sweden questioned their status as victims to a far greater extent. Consider for instance Valdemar Koppel's description:

> *I do not suffer from delusions of grandeur; I do not imagine for a moment that the minor inconvenience I have experienced at the hands of the Germans is anything compared to what millions have had to endure. I am almost ashamed that it is not more than it is.*[126]

The feeling of survivor guilt is evident in the above quote, and I therefore find is plausible that the feeling of shame affected how, and to what extent, the Danish Jews who escaped to Sweden were

[120] 2020, 446.
[121] Bak, 2012, 103-120.
[122] In 1993, the clause was removed, and the survivors from Theresienstadt were thus given the same reward.
[123] Bak said the many Jewish survivors did not to talk about the compensation as it broke with the social expectation of providing for your family; 2012, 182-187. However, it is likely that the above law still had an effect, as 1/5 of the Jewish community applied for the financial help, thereby experiencing the consequences of the law on their own lives: Ibid., 160.
[124] 2010, 202.
[125] For a good example see T-11, 79. Tarabini similarly found that the Danish Jews from Theresienstadt interpreted their experiences as one out of many narratives of a suffering: 2023, 427. Their status as victim was not question.
[126] T-2, 1.

able to participate in public remembrance work that aimed at constructing a meaningful narrative about the past.[127]

Earlier, I stated that it is important to pay attention to the elements placed at the centre stage of a remembrance narrative. However, it is equally important to address what is not being said. It is true that my sources may not be ideally suited to discuss the topics that remained silenced as the Danish Jewish community returned to Denmark in 1945. However, as I have found several references to the topic of silence within my primary sources, these quotes may still help us understand why silence does not equal the 'absence of sound' but rather 'the absence of conventional verbal exchanges'.[128] The first type of silence that is mentioned explicitly within my sources can be illustrated by Max Friediger's description of his liberation from Theresienstadt:

> *But the joy of the kind that we Danish Jews experienced between the 13th and 15th of April can only be felt when you experience it under the circumstances in which we experienced it, and it is impossible to describe it so fully that others can comprehend it.*[129]

In other words, certain events were beyond comprehension for those who had not lived through them. As shown above, these feelings could be associated with the happiest of moments, but I have also found examples in which they were connected to experiences of suffering.[130] Another explicit description of silence can be found in the following:

> *Such eventful times lie immediately behind us that we have repeatedly paused and asked ourselves: Do you remember what happened today a year ago? However, one cannot continue in this manner without damaging one's soul. One cannot constantly immerse oneself in the past, neither in its horror nor in its glory, without neglecting the present and the strict demands it places on us*.[131]

These two quotes describe different forms of silence, and they may thus serve different purposes. In the first quote, the eyewitness suggests that his experiences could never be fully understood by his neighbours at home in Denmark, which led him to avoid describing the joy that he felt as a newly liberated man. Only a particular group, his fellow Jewish prisoners, could understand his emotional state (as well as his recollection thereof). In my view, this type of silence resembles

[127] Maybe this hierarchical definition of survival could also explain why it was more difficult for me to find testimonies written by those who escaped to Sweden. This is, however, speculations.
[128] Winter, 2010, 4.
[129] T-15, 98.
[130] T-13, 3; T-2, 4.
[52] T-5, 2.

what Winter called *strategical silence*, a silence employed to avoid conflict (e.g., between the Danish Jewish community and the wider Danish society) concerning the meaning of the past.[132] In this context, it is worth repeating how various scholars have described how Jewish prisoners felt that their wider communities did not want to listen to their stories of captivity.[133] Furthermore, scholars have shown that Jewish testimonies occupied a marginal position within early European remembrance cultures.[134] As such, I suspect that silence may have served as a reaction for certain Jewish victims in the situations where they felt ignored.[135] A different dynamic is evident in the second quote, in which the author questions what ought to be remembered and when such memory work should take place. The witness warns that too much remembrance can damage the soul, arguing that by remembering the past too intensely, you risk neglecting the present. The purpose of the testimony seems to be to redirect attention towards the immediate challenges facing the Danish Jewish community, as indicated by the following statement: 'Now is the time to be quiet - and work.' [136] This type of silence is not discussed by Winter , which is unsurprising given that his work is one of the first attempts to theorise the meanings of silence caused by wars.[137] Ultimately, the testifier suggests that there is a time and place for memory work to occur. The title of the article, *One Year Has Passed*, implies that anniversaries represent an appropriate occasion for commemoration, while the intervening periods should be dedicated to addressing contemporary issues. This is a rather different function of silence, when compared to Friediger's testimony. One concerns the struggles of remembrance when shared with outsiders (an in group/out group dynamic) while the other addresses the time and space for appropriate memory work. Based on the above, it would seem that silence may be a reaction to other members of society, as well as a self-inflicted response, thereby making silence well suited to demonstrating how remembrance operates as a social construct grounded in communication between people, whether audible or not.

## 4.4. Conclusion

My analysis of the first wave of Danish Jewish remembrance shows signs of a community dealing with a traumatised past while also trying to focus their energy on the challenges lying ahead. Both

[132] 2010, 5.
[133] Bak, 2010, 202.
[134] Ibid., 220. See especially note 311.
[135] However, as my analysis focuses on the production of a remembrance narrative, and less so on the reception of my sources, this interpretation is based on the evidence detailed by the eyewitnesses themselves and thus connected to a degree of uncertainty.
[136] T-5, 2.
[137] Bak, 2011, 158.

the majority of the Danish Jewry who escaped to Sweden and the minority who survived their deportation to Theresienstadt participated in shaping the early remembrance of the war. Yet they did so from markedly different points of departure. Furthermore, it should also be acknowledged that it was considerably more difficult for me to find relevant primary sources written by the eyewitnesses who escaped to Sweden, despite the fact that their numbers were ten times greater than those deported by the Gestapo. This could be a sign of the newly emerged definition of legitimate victimhood, which ultimately seems to have affected the Danish Jewry in different ways. The Danish Jews that escaped to Sweden frequently positioned themselves lower in a perceived hierarchy of suffering, openly expressing shame and questioning their status as victims, while those who were deported tended to frame their accounts more firmly around themes of persecution, captivity, and legitimate victimhood. This is a clear example of how the testifiers from my primary sources differed from one another depending on their experiences of war. The two groups did, however, also share similarities. For instance, many people from both victim groups used the Danish King as a unifying symbol to emphasise their sense of belonging, during and after the war, while also expressing a sense of gratitude towards the many helpers who aided them during their hour of need. These similarities and differences shaped what was spoken about, but also what was left unsaid. Silence thus emerged as a structuring factor within the early Danish Jewish remembrance of the war. It functioned both as a protective boundary, used strategically when experiences were felt to be incomprehensible to the wider Danish society, and as a self-imposed restraint meant to safeguard the surviving Jewish community from focusing too much on the past. Based on my source selection, I therefore want to move past the strict dichotomy between the act of bearing witness and an attempt to forget the past. Instead, I argue that memory makers actively decided what they wanted to share in addition to deciding which forms or shapes their narrative was going to take. In other words, my analysis shows how the early Danish Jewish remembrance was less a coherent story than an ongoing negotiation shaped by emotions such as gratitude, shame, and ambivalence. Some people wanted to document their experiences of the past in a journalistic tone, some framed their testimonies in a broader narrative of suffering, while others decided to use humour when recounting their experiences of the Second World War.

## 5.0. Strengthening a narrative? *Danish Jewish remembrance between 1961 and 1992*

At the beginning of the second wave of remembrance, something important took place abroad; the trial of Adolf Eichmann in Jerusalem, in which Jewish narratives of suffering were broadcast across the globe.[138] In this context, the journalist Hannah Arendt described the trial in her journalistic report from the proceedings, thus paving the way for a broader understanding of the Jewish experiences of the Second World War.[139] By this point, a new culture of remembrance had emerged in America and Israel, as the Holocaust was commemorated more widely.[140] 15 years had passed since the end of the Second World War, and much had similarly changed regarding the context in which the Danish Jewish minority found themselves. Like my discussion in chapter four, this chapter will be dedicated to a three-fold analysis in which I aim to discuss how the remembrance of the Second World War was presented in testimonies written by Jewish eyewitnesses. I will ask why people chose to bear witness, I will analyse key points from my primary sources to understand what the Jewish community wanted to remember, and finally, I will consider how my sources left a trace of silence in their narratives of persecution. Additionally, I will examine whether any ruptures or continuities can be found within the Danish Jewish recollection of the past after 1961, when compared to the first wave of remembrance.

## 5.1. Why testify: *motivation for writing about the past*

In this section, I want to focus on a somewhat hidden motivational factor, which may nonetheless have moved several eyewitnesses towards sharing their experiences of the past: being directly asked by others. This was not a dynamic that was spoken much of within my sources. However, some evidence did nonetheless appear. For instance, in Maria Marcus' memoir, the author described how her father encouraged her to write about her impressions of exile as a document of 'historical interest'.[141] Later, her lover further encouraged her to write about Sweden. As such, we see how two different people, Marcus' father and her love interest, played important roles in the creation of her memoir. In another source, the doctor Herman Krasnik decided to retire from his job, on which occasion the Danish Jewish Periodical asked him a few questions. At this instance, the interviewer led the discussion towards the topic of the Second World War, commenting: 'You

[138] Bryld & Warring, 1998, 30.
[139] 1965.
[140] Bak, 2001, 16. Later, this also happened in Denmark during the 1980s and 1990s: Juul, 2005, 56.
[141] T-28, 129.

yourself have had a dark period in your life. You were in Theresienstadt, like hundreds of other Jews from Denmark' after which Krasnik described his time in captivity.[142] In other words, the conversation may not have touched upon the experience of persecution, had the interviewer not raised the question. These are two examples in which we see a clear request being directed at an eyewitness to share their experiences of the Second World War.[143] However, I suspect that the dynamic might have influenced others as well. For instance, I suspect not every witness would include a section in their memoir describing how they were asked by a friend of a family member (let alone a stranger) to testify, even if such a request was made. Therefore, it is possible that this motivational factor might have played a greater role than initially thought. For instance, in Mélanie Oppenhejm's memoir it is suggested that it was the journalist Thyra Christensen who persuaded the author to talk about her experiences of captivity.[144] However, the fact was not discussed in much detail, and as such the reader is left without a clear understanding of how the testimony came about. Would Oppenhejm have given testimony without the influence of Christensen? That is hard to say. However, the discussion of memory work and the overlap between individual and collective efforts towards coping with the past remains relevant. In the words of Winter and Sivan: 'memory does not exist outside of individuals, but it is never individual in character'.[145] I see this clearly mirrored in the above examples, as memory consumers led the discussion towards the Second World War. All in all, I argue that the continual conversation about the past, and the public interest in the years of occupation should not be forgotten when thinking about why an eyewitness decided to give testimony.

Another motivation for writing about the past can be understood by considering *when* a testimony was published. As mentioned earlier, one eyewitness argued that memory work should be contained to specific remembrance days, in order to deal with the past in appropriate ways.[146] Furthermore, some of the articles discussed in chapter four were published by the Danish Jewish Periodical in 1955, celebrating the ten-years anniversary of the end of the war.[147] According to Tarabini, most Jewish testimonies from the first wave of remembrance were published between

[142] T-39, 7.
[143] In the third wave of remembrance, Simon Kurland similarly described how his son asked him to share his story: T-47, 7.
[144] Oppenhejm first shared her experiences on the radio 1980, after which her memoir was published the following year: T-33, 5.
[145] 1999, 24.
[146] T-5, 2.
[147] T-18; T-19.

1945 and 1948, however, as shown above, some eyewitnesses also decided to publish their accounts on significant anniversaries.[148] In relation to this, Warring and Bryld have shown that the commemorations of the Second World War continued to grow in Denmark as the temporal distance from the events increased.[149] More specifically, they argued that the Danish State became a primus motor in the 'theatre of anniversaries', fostering a heightened awareness of the war as the decades passed.[150] In this light, it is unsurprising that I continued to find articles published on anniversaries as the end of the Second World War moved further away. See for instance Hanne Kaufmann's articles from September and October 1968, where she detailed her escape to Sweden, or the October volume in the Danish Jewish Periodical from 1983, in which several eyewitnesses described their experiences of persecution.[151] I interpret this as a clear indication of an *implicit* relationship between anniversaries and the act of bearing witness. Furthermore, I found several examples of authors who linked their testimonies *explicitly* to anniversaries. For instance, Alex Eisenberg wrote that the '2nd of October 1943 – 40 years ago – is a day that is not that long ago'.[152] Similarly, Emilie Roi wanted to publish a book about her escape to Sweden during the official celebrations that took place in Israel in 1983.[153] Based on the above, I interpret the act of giving testimony on an anniversary as a quintessential public form of memory construction. These anniversaries, or *ceremonies*, function as important public recognitions of the past while also being a ritual of bereavement for the people directly affected the Nazi persecutions.[154] In this light, I do not interpret anniversaries as dead memories, as argued by Nora.[155] Instead, I see them as instances when eyewitnesses chose to share their experiences of the past with a wider audience.

Lastly, the creation of a remembrance community can be illustrated further by thinking about *where* a testimony was published. As mentioned earlier, I make no claim of presenting a 'tour d'horizon' of the effects of the Second World War on the Danish Jewry but instead aim to take the reader on a journey through various points of enquiry.[156] A similar approach was adopted by Jesper Vesterbæk in his analysis of the Danish periodicals that targeted former concentration camp

[148] 2023, 483.
[149] 1998, 138-179.
[150] Ibid, 140; For good examples see: T-37; T-35.
[151] T-34; T35; T-23; T-24; T-25.
[152] T-36, 8.
[153] She was, however, delayed a year. T-27, 5.
[154] Winter & Sivan, 1999, 97.
[155] Nora in Erll, 2011, 23.
[156] Winter, 2014, 7.

prisoners as sites of memories. More specifically, Vesterbæk describes how the ex-prisoners shared a collective reference point based on their experiences of captivity, and by reading (and for some, writing) these periodicals, they took part in an imagined community – thereby making them a place that gave meaning to their pasts.[157] Vesterbæk analysed two periodicals: *Pigtraad* [Barbed Wire] and *Gestapofangen* [The Gestapo Prisoner]. However, as his focus was on prisoners who were sent to the German camp system, e.g. Danish resistance fighters, the author did not discuss Danish Jewish memory work (since Theresienstadt was classified as a ghetto). Nonetheless, during the selection of my primary sources, it became clear to me that members of the Danish Jewry also participated in the memory work that took place within these publications.[158] To illustrate this, I turn to an article written by Paul Brandt, in which the author described a family holiday in a vacation home provided by the charity that funded the above periodicals. Interestingly, the author did not spend much time describing his holiday. Instead, Brandt detailed how he was captured by the Germans.[159] The vast majority of the account described how his father had tried to save them, and how they subsequently formed a strong bond in Theresienstadt. Later, the author brought the reader back to the present by saying that his children wanted to go to the beach. This focus on a traumatic past, followed by a (happy) ending in a holiday home, may seem odd, but if we interpret these periodicals as a place where the remembrance of captivity was *rehearsed* and *ritualised*, the focus on the past makes more sense.[160] Furthermore, Brandt said in an earlier article that he saw it as his 'duty […] to commemorate the fallen' members of the Jewish community, which could explain why he prioritised writing about the past as opposed to the present.[161] When reading my sources, this is one of the clearest examples of how a member of the Jewish community participated in a memory rehearsal that ritualised the remembrance of the past within a specific *lieu de mémoire*. In conclusion, I find it important to note that the act of testifying had many functions; it could be an act of commemoration when an eyewitness decided to write about their past on an anniversary, but it could also be an act of rehearsal that reaffirmed one's identity when done within the pages of a specific periodical.[162]

[157] 2009, 256.
[158] T-34; T-35; T-38; T-52.
[159] T-32, 29.
[160] Winter & Sivan, 1999, 16-17.
[161] T-31, 37.
[162] Winter & Sivan, 1999, 15.

## 5.2. Ruptures or Continuities*: comparative content analysis*

As mentioned in chapter four, the State of Israel was a topic of much discussion during the first wave of remembrance.[163] As I will show below, the influence of the state, or the discussion thereof, continued into the second wave of remembrance. Firstly, I can partly attribute the focus on Israel to the fact that several of the testimonies within my source selection were written by Jewish individuals who supported the Zionist ideology. Some immigrated to Israel, while others remained in Denmark where they supported the country from abroad.[164] As such, I cannot rule out that there might have been a less prominent focus on Israel among other Danish Jews (e.g., among the orthodox Jews who tended to be critical of the establishment of the State of Israel in 1948), thereby making my source selection skewed due to the political opinions of certain eyewitnesses.[165] However, as my discussion of Jewish remembrance is based on written source material, I do not want to downplay the fact that the topic of Israel was mentioned in multiple primary sources published after 1961. Among these Zionist authors, many decided to end their narratives, not with the end of the Second World War or their return to Denmark in 1945, but instead with the establishment of the State of Israel.[166] Through this framing, the genocide of the European Jewry appeared as inextricably linked to the establishment of a Jewish state, as was also the case with several eyewitnesses during the first wave of remembrance.

The role of Israel also influenced Jewish remembrance in other ways. For instance, Tarabini found that the years 1961-1964 were striking for the Danish Jews who were deported to Theresienstadt, as she was unable to locate a single testimony from this period.[167] This is surprising, as scholars have shown how the trial of Eichmann generated a surge of testimonies elsewhere.[168] Furthermore, Tarabini argues that the trial marked a turning point vis-à-vis Danish Jewish remembrance. According to her, Jewish survivors from Denmark began to frame their experiences differently: no longer as part of a narrative of suffering, but instead as an exceptional survival story.[169] However, Tarabini's example regarding this shift is a testimony from the Eichmann trial given by Werner

[163] List, 2020, 66.
[164] E.g., Emilie Roi lived in Israel where she wrote a book about her escape in Hebrew (1980), which was later translated into Danish (1984) by the author herself. Marcus Melchior and Pinches Welner remained in Denmark and provided their support through *Awodah* and the *Women's International Zionist Organisation* (WIZO): Bach, 2003, 25-26.
[165] The orthodox Jews wanted the establishment of a Jewish homeland to be instigated by God and not people: T-42, 29.
[166] T-40; T-27.
[167] 2023, 486.
[168] Wieviorka, 2007, 81; Rousso, 2011.
[169] 2023, 486.

Melchior, who escaped to Sweden, thus raising the question of whether Tarabini is pointing to a broader narrative shift among the Danish Jewish community, or simply to the fact that testimonies from those who escaped to Sweden received more attention.[170] As it is beyond the scope of this thesis to analyse the reception of my primary sources, I cannot determine whether the testimonies from Sweden became more influential over the course of the second wave of remembrance.[171] What I can say, however, is that many eyewitnesses continued to express gratitude towards the many helpers who supported them in their hour of need, while also referring to Denmark as an exceptional place to be as a Jewish individual.[172] These observations could therefore be used to support Tarabini's arguments about Denmark as the light in the dark in the post-1964 context.[173] However, since most of these testimonies were given by individuals who fled to Sweden, these examples could also be interpreted as a continuation of the hierarchical understanding of victimhood as discussed in chapter four - in which those who crossed the strait to Sweden stressed how fortunate they were, while the survivors from Theresienstadt were more likely to see their experience as part of a broader narrative of persecution. This latter interpretation can be illustrated by Ben-Zion Epelmann's testimony from 1965, in which the eyewitness used the term *Final Solution* to describe his experience of captivity as he connected his suffering in Theresienstadt to the persecution of the European Jewry.[174] In other words, some eyewitnesses still understood their experiences of deportation within a wider narrative of suffering after the trial of Eichmann. However, to reject Tarabini's claim, I would need significantly more evidence, and I will therefore conclude this section by saying that, however tentatively, I have not been able to observe the above shift within my primary source selection.

And now, I want to return to another important topic: humour and Jewish remembrance of the Second World War. As with my analysis of the first wave of remembrance, I stumbled upon a surprising number of jokes in the source material published after 1961. For an illustrative example, see Cilla Cohn's description of her liberation from Theresienstadt: 'If the Messiah had come riding

[170] See Tarabini's reference no. 23 in appendix 3.
[171] Similarly, I cannot say whether the above change was caused by the fact that the accounts given by the escapees started to outnumber the testimonies given by the survivors from Theresienstadt, as I do not have a complete overview of the production of testimonies.
[172] T-40, 93; T-42, 72; T-28, 141 & 203.
[173] For a longer discussion of Denmark as the *light in the dark*, see Bak, 2001.
[174] T-40, 58.

on his white donkey at the head of the convoy, everyone would have accepted him.'[175] Instead, it was the Gestapo that guided the Red Cross buses and so, Cohn commented 'if not the Messiah, at least the donkey was represented'.[176] Why do we see this reoccurrence of humour? What function did it have? If humour appeared in several primary sources between 1945-1960, and then continued into the second wave of remembrance, it must have had some significance. To answer the above questions, I want to highlight two testimonies. Firstly, Mélanie Oppenhejm described her time in Theresienstadt as follows: 'People are completely unpredictable, and many can adapt to the most extraordinary situations. In the midst of all the macabre and bleakness, people could laugh'.[177] Secondly, Hanne Kaufmann described her escape to Sweden as follows:

> *At the table, I talked through our distress so that it would not become a burden on this kind family. I laughed loudly at old jokes because I wanted to laugh the dark ghost of anxiety out of the living room with its overwhelming floral wallpaper.*[178]

Earlier, Kaufmann had also described how she used humour to avoid sinking into self-pity.[179] All three examples suggest that members of the Danish Jewish community used humour as a means of distraction, or as a way of holding anxiety at a distance to endure the challenges they faced. The question now, is how these comments relate to Danish Jewish remembrance of the Second World War in the post-war setting. Here, I would suggest that we turn our attention to the recurring appearance of humour within my primary sources. It is likely that some of the eyewitnesses wanted to document their lived experiences, thereby shining light on the psychological function of laughter as a weapon against an oppressor during the Second World War.[180] However, I ask myself whether the comparison between the Gestapo and Jesus' donkey, from an article published in 1985, performed the same role? Did the eyewitness truly make such comment in the moment, or was the humour added retrospectively? For obvious reasons, it will be impossible to for me to answer this question with any certainty. However, I would argue that the inclusion of the comment in itself is significant. When humour was used (or described) so widely within my primary sources, I interpret that as evidence of the continual role of this communicative style in the post-war context, helping the Danish Jewry cope with their memories of a troubled past. I find it plausible that the act of

[175] T-37, 6.
[176] Ibid.
[177] T-33, 41.
[178] T-23, 32.
[179] Ibid.
[180] This is discussed in further detail in: Lipman, 1991, 10.

recounting their stories led survivors to return to laughter as a defence mechanism when revisiting their traumatic experiences, thereby serving as an outlet regarding their post-war struggles.[181] In other words, humour can be understood as much more than a narrative style. It can also be seen as an indication of the psychological pressure that continued to affect members of the Danish Jewry several decades after the end of the war.[182]

## 5.3. Structuring Memory: *making sense and giving meaning to the past*

At this point, I would like to return to the issue of silence. When the second wave of remembrance started, fifteen years had passed since the end of the war, which makes me wonder whether the passing of time meant that silence played a different role in the construction of a narrative about the war. Firstly, it is worth noting that it was significantly easier for me to find testimonies written by those who escaped to Sweden, and as such, I observe a development in relation to the period between 1945-1960. In other words, it would seem that fewer members of the Danish Jewish community who avoided deportation refrained from talking about the past. Secondly, I have found a description in which some people seem to have dealt with their traumatised past by talking to others. More specifically, Herman Krasnik describes in his interview with the Danish Jewish Periodical that the best cure is a conversation between a doctor and a patient. Many Jewish survivors had experiences that left 'a mark for many years, perhaps even forever', but, as Krasnik notes, 'a pleasant conversation may help a little'.[183] That is not to say that the dynamics of silence disappeared completely. For instance, Emilie Roi described how her grandmother never told the rest of their family about her experiences from Theresienstadt.[184] In a similar manner, Mélanie Oppenhejm described how silence kept her from talking about her past for 35 years:

> *Many people could not comprehend much of what we told them. We had returned home, so it could not have been that bad after all. And in any case, we were home now. Some said: But God, what do you look like – you look like corpses. How can it be that you look so terrible? What should we answer? Where should we begin and where should we end? We knew that no one, even in their wildest imagination, could imagine what had happened to us.*[185]

[181] Patt came to a similar conclusion vis-à-vis Jewish humour in DP-camps: 2016.
[182] Slucki et al., 2020, 1.
[183] T-39, 7.
[184] T-27, 42.
[185] T-33, 81.

The above extract echoes my discussion from the first wave of remembrance, in which people also remained silent for strategic reasons – to avoid conflicts between groups due to their different experiences of war.[186] As such, it is important to remember that although the dynamic of silence may have changed in certain aspects, e.g., as more eyewitnesses who escaped to Sweden came forward, it nonetheless remained a relevant factor when thinking about the construction of a Danish Jewish remembrance between 1961 and 1992.

In closing this chapter, I want to take a step back and examine how narratives about the past were constructed. The relevance of this topic came to my attention as I observed how some of the authors of my primary sources continued to look for information about their personal stories after their return to Denmark, and how this search subsequently reshaped their understanding of the past. For instance, Hanne Kaufmann wrote:

> *If we had said yes, we would have been on a boat heading for rescue that night, but the very boat we could have said yes to never reached its destination. We only found out about this much later, but the fact put our experience in a completely different light.*[187]

According to the eyewitness, Kaufmann would never have made it to Sweden if she had found a rescue boat the day before her actual escape, and a simple decision to wait thus proved crucial. In other words, the inclusion of this quote illustrates the growing awareness of danger that some members from the Danish Jewry later associated with their experiences of October 1943 as new information emerged during the second wave of remembrance. In a similar case, Birgit Fishermann described how they were forced onboard the ship *Waterland*, which departed from Copenhagen on the 2nd of October 1943.[188] In relation to this, it was important for the author to note that the ship was a *warship*, something she only 'came to realise later'.[189] The reader is not told why this nuance was important, but the comment is nonetheless relevant as it illustrates how the processing of the past took place long after the end of the Second World War. As such, I argue that Danish Jewish remembrance should be understood as a narrative that was (re)constructed by eyewitnesses as time passed and new information was gathered. This interpretation is further illustrated by Arne Nathansohn's testimony. Nathansohn's memoir was not written for the wider public, but was

[186] Winter, 2010, 5.
[187] T-24, 72-73.
[188] Details of the deportation of the Danish Jews can be found in Tarabini, 2023, 446-473.
[189] T-34, 110.

instead part of a family narrative written in collaboration with his brother, which may explain why the final document shows sign of visible editing (e.g., hand drawn arrows indicating a revised order of the testimony).[190] Besides the inclusion of arrows, most sections of Nathansohn's testimony were written on a Danish typewriter, although a handful of sections were also written on a Swedish typewriter. Interestingly, the Swedish sections were placed at the end of the document, suggesting that these parts may have been added in a different location and thus also a different point in time. Arne Nathansohn had relocated to Linköping in Sweden after the war, whereas his brother stayed in Denmark, and thus, his four-page testimony could have been written over a period of time in which the eyewitness resided in both countries.[191] In any case, clear signs of revision can be found within the primary source, as details that had initially been forgotten or deemed unimportant, were added (and then integrated into the narrative through the use of hand-drawn arrows). When the above is taken together, it would seem that most eyewitnesses wanted to share their experiences of the past in a meaningful way. Often, this meant constructing a chronological narrative, even if memories did not unfold in such a linear fashion.[192] The vast majority of my primary sources do not include signs of editing; however, the testimonies of Kaufmann, Fishermann, and Nathansohn demonstrate that memories did not always operate according to a chronological timeline. Instead, it moved back and forth, incorporating events that were forgotten, or adding nuances when new details were discovered, as memory was produced, expressed and consumed in a public setting.[193]

## 5.4. Conclusion

My analysis of the second wave of remembrance sheds light on a memory culture that was transformed by new historical circumstances and while also being rooted in patterns established in the immediate aftermath of the war. When examining why eyewitnesses chose to testify, it became clear that motivation often arose from interactions with surrounding communities rather than in isolation, as family members, journalists, and commemorative occasions all acted as catalysts vis-à-vis the publication of testimonies. This observation illustrates Winter and Sivan's insight that memory is never purely individual. For instance, anniversaries and commemorative dates became

[190] T-30; T-41.
[191] Josef Nathansohn wrote the other half of the family testimony in February 1993, and it is thus plausible that the two brothers communicated about the production of their shared memoir when Arne wrote his section in December 1992: T-41.
[192] See Tarabini's note on child-survivors and their tendency to seek chronology: 2023, 493. I will discuss child-survivors in more detail in chapter six.
[193] Winter & Sivan, 1999, 1.

ritual occasions where the past was rehearsed and shared by the public. Contrary to Pierre Nora's notion of memory being hollowed out by the institutionalisation of remembrance, my primary sources indicate that anniversary practices were spaces where individual memories were revived rather than shut down. In addition to this, it is worth stressing that some of the differences vis-à-vis the Danish Jewish remembrance of the war continued into the second wave of remembrance. Firstly, many of the primary sources written by those who escaped to Sweden described the events of October 1943 as a dangerous (although very short) episode from their lives, accompanied by a section detailing their heartfelt gratitude towards the people who helped them in their hour of need. Secondly, eyewitnesses from Theresienstadt continued to frame their narratives as a story that went beyond the Danish context, thus connecting their experiences of persecution with the destruction of the European Jewry. These two observations echo my discussion of a hierarchical understanding of victimhood in chapter four, thus showcasing a degree of continuity across the two waves of remembrance. However, I also observed some change. For instance, far more testimonies were written by those who escaped to Sweden, thus showing how the silences that dominated the period between 1945 and 1960 was beginning to change (at least for this group of survivors). For those who were deported to Theresienstadt, many still spoke of silence, as exemplified by Mélanie Oppenhejm, who said that various obstacles prevented the liberated Jewry from sharing their memories of the past. My analysis of the period between 1961-1992 thus shows how the Danish Jewish remembrance of the Second Word War was not merely a preservation of lived experiences, but also an active reconstruction of the past influenced by evolving mnemonic environments.

## 6.0. Rewriting a narrative? *Danish Jewish Remembrance between 1993 and today*

Anette Warring and Claus Bryld have argued that a new remembrance culture had emerged in Denmark around the time of the 50th anniversary of the raid against the Danish Jewry.[194] More specifically, they said that the passing of time, as well as the changing geopolitical scene at the end of the century meant that a new type of remembrance culture, with its focus on the principles of universal human rights, became more prominent. Additionally, they found that, for the first time the experiences of the Danish Jewish community were integrated into the official commemorations of the Second World War, as illustrated by the following quote:

> *October 1943 was Danish, but the hope and conviction behind it belong to all of humanity. When we consider the persecution of peoples that, despite all progress, is still part of Europe today, October 1943 is not just history. The rescue operation for the Danish Jews also has powerful lessons for the present day*.[195]

However, the above quote also makes me wonder whether we see a similar focus on universal human rights among the Danish Jewry? And if not, were there any elements from the first and the second wave of remembrance that continued to play a role after 1993? The latter question is especially important, as Winter and Sivan have stressed that 'forgetting and fade-out are usually the rule', thus calling for further explanation when the opposite is observed.[196]

## 6.1. Why testify: *motivation for writing about the past*

A significant factor influencing the third wave of remembrance was the temporal distance from the events of the Second World War. By this point, many eyewitnesses had passed away, and the remaining survivors were often at an advanced age. Thus, it should come as little surprise that I have found many references to an awareness of ageing, with survivors frequently citing this as one of the primary motivations for bearing witness. For instance, at the age of 85, Robert Fishermann said that: '[t]houghts from that time come flooding back, along with a desire to share, and the understanding of how important it is to bear witness for future generations becomes clearer'.[197] Similar concerns appear in Elias Levin's memoir. At 92, he wrote that he wanted his testimony to be published so that his 'impressions of the past […] would not be forgotten'.[198] Yet, Levin also

[194] 1998, 173.
[195] Ibid., 174, as expressed by Poul Nyrup Rasmussen, the then Danish prime minister.
[196] 1999, 31.
[197] T-57, 4-5.
[198] T-55, 4.

noted that he began writing his memoir when he came across old paper scraps from Theresienstadt, thus suggesting both an age-related motive, as well as a practical motive behind the publication of his book (as he organised his belongings).[199] According to Bak, many witnesses had by 1993 reached a stage in life where they could discern patterns regarding their experiences of war, which made them feel compelled to pass on their interpretations of the past.[200] This is exemplified by the testimonies of Fishermann and Levin. However, it is also worth acknowledging that for some of the authors of my primary sources, retirement offered a natural occasion for a broader reflection on life, which helps explain why certain memoirs addressed themes that went beyond wartime experiences, including topics such as politics, adulthood and family life.[201] As such, age was an important motivating factor for many of the authors of my primary sources within the third wave of remembrance, albeit for different reasons. Some wanted to share their experiences of persecution before passing away, while others wanted to share their stories of a long-lived life.

Several eyewitnesses were also motivated to talk about their experiences of persecution, as they felt that they had a unique opportunity, but also a duty, to bear witness to the war. However, this sense of obligation was not equally evident in all my sources. In fact, those who were deported to Theresienstadt, to a far greater extent than those who escaped to Sweden, emphasised this sense of obligation. To illustrate this, I want to highlight two memoirs; in her graphic novel, Jytte Bornstein explained that she did not talk about her captivity after returning to Denmark.[202] However, after a psychological change in late adulthood, she suddenly felt 'required to talk about what had happened […] as my contribution to ensuring that no one can claim that concentration camps never existed'.[203] A similar sentiment was detailed by Robert Fishermann:

> *All too often, I see examples in Europe, the very scene of the Holocaust, of antisemitism rearing its ugly face again. This must be counteracted while I and the last survivors are still here as witnesses from that time, when the world stood by and did nothing.*[204]

In the above, we see the responsibility to testify described explicitly by survivors, thus making it clear that the topic was important to the eyewitnesses. They took it upon themselves to share their

[199] Ibid.
[200] 2010, 208.
[201] T-42; T-46. This will be discussed in more detail later in this chapter.
[202] T-53, the synopsis.
[203] Ibid.
[204] T-57, 9.

stories, even though the act of testifying was a heavy burden that did not always lead to healing.[205] This sense of duty operated on two levels. Some witnesses believed they had to preserve the historical record of their persecutions (looking to the past), while others wanted their testimonies to constitute a 'vaccine' against modern antisemitism (looking to the present/future).[206] Especially the latter is interesting, since it speaks to what Jan Assmann has called *cultural memory*, as the remembrance of World War II turned into a defining event of the 20th century, with its many lessons regarding universal principles and human rights.[207] And, as shown above, several eyewitnesses wanted to participate in this debate, teaching the younger generations about the horrors of the past, as well as their responsibility to prevent them from happening again.[208] When reading my primary sources, I found that the survivors from Theresienstadt often underscored the link between past and present antisemitism, framing their testimonies as carrying a preventative and documentary function. By contrast, those who escaped to Sweden did not highlight this connection as explicitly.[209] This is not to suggest that such a link did not exist. After all, the decision to write a memoir about the Second World War speaks to its enduring significance. However, the link between past and present antisemitism, and the importance of memory work in relation to this issue, was described more explicitly by the survivors from Theresienstadt, thus illustrating another difference between the two victim groups.

Finally, it is worth stressing that not all eyewitnesses included a section in their testimonies detailing why they chose to share their experiences of war. This absence is evident in Bent Melchior, Herbert Pundik, and Georg Kustosz's autobiographies.[210] Yet, as noted above, the lack of an explicit statement does not mean that a personal motivation did not exist. What it does mean, however, is that these eyewitnesses did not find it necessary to articulate a personal justification in relation to the publication of their memoirs. Furthermore, I would argue that their choice of genre, the autobiography, can give us a hint as to how the above survivors understood their experiences of persecution. Here, it is worth stressing that both Melchior, Pundik and Kustosz placed their experience of exile within a longer narrative as the events after 1945 received far more

[205] Winter & Sivan, 1999, 32; Fishermann and Katznelson describe it as an all-encompassing burden: T-57, 137-139; T-58, 261.
[206] T-60, 6.
[207] J. Assmann, 1995, 131.
[208] Levy & Sznaider, 2002, 88.
[209] For instance, Bent Melchior finished his autobiography by saying that the battle against Nazism and antisemitism remained relevant, but not within the pages of his memoir: T-42, 213-214.
[210] T-42; T-46; T-45.

attention than the years of occupation. By contrast, other memoirs from the third wave of remembrance, such as those written by Fishermann, Levin, and Katznelson, focused heavily on their deportation, showing the centrality of Theresienstadt in shaping their identities.[211] Melchior, Pundik, and Kustosz, instead combined accounts of persecution with narratives of education, careers, and family life. In their works, the experience of persecution was undoubtedly important, but ultimately more attention was devoted to their post-war lives. Why this division between the survivors from Sweden and Theresienstadt emerged, is difficult for me to determine. Perhaps the survivors from Sweden were less marked by the war than those from Theresienstadt. Perhaps those who escaped remained influenced by the hierarchy of suffering, thereby seeing themselves as the fortunate ones who 'escaped the Holocaust'.[212] These are of course speculations. What is important, however, is that it is significant in itself that some survivors wrote memoirs devoted solely to their wartime experiences, while others framed the Second World War within a larger narrative. This is important to bear in mind when trying to understand the similarities and differences between the Jewish experiences of war and how these affected the Danish Jewish remembrance of the past.

## 6.2. Ruptures or Continuities*: comparative content analysis*

By now, it is clear that the experiences of persecution within the Danish Jewry were not exclusively understood against the backdrop of the Second World. For some, these episodes were given meaning in the context of a long-lived life, while others connected them to the newly independent State of Israel, as discussed in chapters four and five. Interestingly, I have observed a continuation of the discussion concerning the role of Israel after 1993. Firstly, it is worth noting that my source selection includes two testimonies written by members of the Danish Jewry who participated in the Arab-Israeli War of 1948, in which we find descriptions of their motivation behind participating in this conflict.[213] Secondly, I found several discussions regarding Israel's role in the world and its connection to the Jewish diaspora in other testimonies.[214] I can therefore conclude that Israel played a role, not only for those who fought for the establishment of the nation-state, but also for those who merely had an abstract relationship with the country through religious and

[211] T-55; T-57; T-58; T-59; T-60.
[212] Bak, 2010, 202-204.
[213] T-42; T-46.
[214] T-48; T-45; T-47.

cultural ties. An example of the connection between Israel and the remembrance of the Second World War, is seen in the following:

> *My "conversion" to Zionism was influenced by my experiences fleeing to Sweden, and me realising the extent of the Jewish catastrophe. How should I, as a Jew, deal with the future? Anti-Semitism did not disappear with Hitler*.[215]

In this quote, we see how Herbert Pundik attributed his political beliefs to his experience of being on the run from Nazism, which, according to the author, made him join the conflict in the British Mandate of Palestine. However, in relation to my argument, it is even more important that the eyewitness ascribed meaning to his political affiliation based on his understanding of the 'Jewish catastrophe'. In another example, Bent Melchior described it as a type of justice that he and other Jewish soldiers were using Nazi-weapons in the conflict against the Arab nations.[216] It was detailed how the Jewish underground had stolen German firearms from Czechoslovakia, and that these were being used in the fight for an independent Jewish state. Lastly, Pundik described how many German soldiers joined the Iraqi army, which, according to the eyewitness, made the war in the British Mandate of Palestine a literal extension of the Second World War.[217] When taken together, these extracts illustrate how, for some, the Arab-Israeli War, could not be understood without connecting it to the (remembrance of the) Second World War. This is a clear example of memory work in which eyewitnesses did not just ascribe meaning to their experiences of persecution, but also felt a political purpose in the present, due to their understanding of the past.

Following the above discussion, it is worth clarifying that not all members of the Danish Jewry conceptualised their experiences of persecution as a justification for participating in the struggle for an independent Jewish state. However, many of the eyewitnesses in my source selection still wanted to discuss the existence of the State of Israel. Some were positive towards the country and saw it as an important place that could help the Jewish community survive, while others were more critical. For instance, Georg Kustosz noted that most European countries did not open their doors to the Jewish refugees living in Displaced Persons Camps after 1945, which thus made 'the biblical land of the Jews' the only solution.[218] Kustosz did not want to emigrate himself, as he had built a

[215] Original quotation marks: T-46, 101.
[216] T-42, 49.
[217] T-46, 12.
[218] T-45, 57.

strong connection to Denmark during his time as a *hechalutz student*, but he understood why others had little choice.[219] Simon Kurland echoed this sentiment, saying that he did not want to leave Denmark, but that if 'a situation like the one in the 1940s were to arise', he would consider immigration.[220] In other words, Israel was seen as an alternative place to live, if Denmark was unable to prevent the growth of antisemitism. After the creation of the State of Israel, Kurland felt that he had two countries to which he belonged, a mother country and a father country, which ultimately gave him a sense of security.[221] To others, Israel was a source of conflict. For instance, Herbert Pundik acknowledged that the dream of an independent Jewish state meant that 'truth, human rights, and equality before the law' was disregarded when it came to their treatment of the Palestinian people.[222] This sentiment was taken one step further by Maria Marcus, who wrote that she did not wish to be associated with Israel, as she 'loathes' its treatment of the Palestinians.[223] Additionally, she said that she was afraid of expressing these feelings publicly, as she expected to be accused of being an 'anti-Semite' and a 'Jew-hater'.[224] In summary, I have not found a homogeneous interpretation of Israel among the Danish Jewry during the third wave of remembrance: some were positive, some were negative, and some were ambivalent towards the State. This leads me to conclude that remembrance of the Second World War, and the construction of a meaningful narrative about the past, remained contested half a century after the end of the conflict, particularly in relation to discussions of Israel.

Lastly, I want to finish this part of my analysis by returning to the topic of humour, and more specifically the concept of 'Jewish' humour.[225] As shown in my discussion of the first and second wave of remembrance, humour was a narrative style that several eyewitnesses used when detailing their remembrance of the past. But does that mean that there is such a thing as a *Jewish humour*, and if so, what makes it distinctively Jewish? From an academic perspective, it seems that many international researchers agree that the concept of *Jewish humour* describes a genuine phenomenon.[226] However, within a Danish context, I have struggled to find any relevant

[219] *Hechalutz student*: a person who wanted to immigrate to the British Mandate of Palestine, and who, in order to do so, was taught agricultural skills to prepare them for life the Middle East. See: Hæstrup, 1982.
[220] T-47, 164.
[221] Similar description in T-42, 22.
[222] T-46, 172.
[223] T-48, 6.
[224] Ibid.
[225] Slucki et al., 2020, 1-3.
[226] Ibid; Patt, 2016; Ostrower, 2015. Lipman, 1991; Wisse, 2015.

references. Silvia Goldbaum Tarabini describes Ralph Oppenhejm's narrative style as funny, while Therkel Stræde describes Ib Katznelson's humour as 'Jewish?'.[227] But besides these somewhat hesitant descriptions, I have not been able to locate anything noteworthy. Therefore, I instead turn to members of the Jewish community, as they have mentioned the concept of *Jewish humour* on various occasions. See for instance the following extract, written by Herbert Pundik:

> *Jews found comfort in their faith […] in each other, and in humour. It was a shield that protected them from the discrimination and antisemitism of the non-Jewish world around them. Jewish humour is largely a product of the contrast with their surroundings. A defence mechanism.*[228]

The above quote is illustrative, as it conveys how a member of the Danish Jewish community understood the origins of this communication style while also outlining its purpose. Later, Pundik said that Jewish humour was a consequence of the pogroms that took place in Eastern Europe, thereby seeing it as a direct result of violent episodes of antisemitism in a specific geographical location.[229] Another member of the Jewish community echoed this by saying that the Jewish community had a remarkably fertile soil for the development of a sense of humour. More specifically, Marcus Melchior said that 'difficult circumstances usually lead to a bright mind', and that the Jewish community would not have been able to 'withstand the pressure' from the outside world without their sense of humour.[230] International scholars have argued something similar, namely that Jewish humour was an 'outgrowth of the distinctly Jewish humour of pre-war Eastern Europe, especially found in popular Yiddish literature of the late nineteenth century'.[231] From this perspective, it could thus be hypothesised that the use of humour found within Danish Jewish remembrance is an echo, or an outgrowth, of the humour found within Eastern European communities – and it might therefore be connected to the waves of Jewish immigrants who came to Denmark before the outbreak of the Second World War. However, more research will have to be conducted before such a connection can be made.[232] For now, what I can say is that Jewish

[227] 2023, 14; T-58, 22.
[228] T-46, 20.
[229] Ibid.
[230] 1967, 133-134.
[231] Patt, 2016, 114.
[232] I discussed *Jewish humour* with Sara Stadager, Museum Curator at the DJM, including examples of humour from before the wave of Eastern European Jewish immigration. Stadager was thus very critical of the above hypothesis, noting that humour was used widely within the Danish Jewish community before the 20th century as well.

humour was not a foreign concept to members of the Danish Jewry, and as such, I see it as a useful term that can help us understand the construction of a meaningful narrative about the past.[233]

When we accept that the concept of Jewish humour is a useful term, we subsequently have to question what purpose this communicative style might have had. Above, Pundik described how Jewish humour was a defence mechanism, but what else can be said about the functions of this narrative style? The study of Jewish humour before, during, and after the Second World War is an expanding field of research, and as such, there is a growing understanding of the different types of humour and their various functions.[234] I have already mentioned one type, *gallows humour,* which is a form of self-protection or emotional escape from the past.[235] However, other types of humour were also used. See for instance Alex Eisenberg's remembrance of life in captivity: once the fleas 'have satisfied their worst hunger, it is as if they are dancing the Horah, a singing Jewish circle dance' all over the prisoner's legs, after having bitten them for hours.[236] Later, Eisenberg said that 'the question of whether my stomach would be the safest place is purely theoretical. When it comes to a piece of bread, my stomach is in fact safer than any vault'.[237] This type of humour is less directly about persecution, and more about the living conditions that many Jewish survivors had experienced during World War II. Some testimonies included jokes about food, some about sex, and sometimes people even joked about their excrement. According to Avinoam Patt, jokes about harsh living conditions were meant to help Jewish individuals bear the unbearable.[238] And, when included in a testimony about the war, they should be understood as an 'affirmation' of the fact that 'they were indeed still alive', thus constituting an inversion of hierarchies as the powerless became the powerful.[239] Patt also adds that Jewish humour helped 'forge a collective identity for the survivors' which may explain why certain scholars have argued that humour became a cornerstone of the 'Holocaust memorial landscape' in the post-war context.[240] Unfortunately, I would not be able to make such a conclusion based on my sources selection, as more research

[233] This is an approach within Memory Studies (with its focus on meaningful language and gestures) that overlaps with the theory of social constructivism, in which *reality* may be construction, but the language used to describe it is nonetheless important: Winter & Sivan, 1999, 10; Berger & Luckmann, 2003, 39.
[234] For key works, see: Lipman, 1991; Wisse, 2015.
[235] Ostrower, 2015, 191. For examples of this see: T-58, 96-97 & 145; T-45, 11.
[236] T-54, 8.
[237] Ibid., 14.
[238] Patt, 2016, 115.
[239] Ibid.
[240] Ibid, 116; Slucki et al., 2020, 3.

would have to be conducted on how memory consumers and the memory traditions were affected by humour as well.[241] However, it is still worth stressing that I have found evidence of humour and sarcasm within Danish Jewish testimonies across all three waves of remembrance. Thus, I find it likely that humour did, at least to some degree, help foster a meaningful narrative about their experiences of persecution for members of the Jewish community. This is an important finding, as Danish researchers have not previously examined humour and its role in the creation of a Danish Jewish remembrance of the Second World War.

## 6.3. Structuring Memory: *making sense and giving meaning to the past*

One observation, which may guide us into the discussion of the underlying structures that affected Jewish remembrance after 1993 is the fact that the majority of my primary sources were written by child-survivors.[242] According to Tarabini, the emergence of child-survivors, or the appearance of testimonies given by people who had been children during the Second World War, started in the 60s and 70s, and then became the dominant category of testimonies by the 1990s.[243] This development naturally raises the question of whether changes in the Danish Jewish remembrance can be observed as new eyewitnesses came forward. In relation to this question, I would like to highlight two testimonies given by Danish Jewish child-survivors, Robert Fishermann and Ib Katznelson, as they exemplify a new type of memory work that emerged by the end of the 20th century. More specifically, I argue that these testimonies illustrate the introduction of a new genre: the historical memoir. By historical memoir, I am referring to a narrative, in which an eyewitness combined, not just their own memories with accounts borrowed from other eyewitnesses, but also academic sources and scholarly books. This genre is interesting as it highlights the ongoing negotiations regarding Jewish remembrance of the past, as certain survivors began to draw on other sources (a kind of memory patchwork) in an attempt to fill gaps in their knowledge. For Robert Fishermann, the use of secondary sources is most evident in his description of his liberation from Theresienstadt.[244] In this chapter, the author began to cite academic sources when describing Folke Bernadotte, a central figure from the Red Cross rescue mission and the liberation of the Danish

[241] It is worth noting that several eyewitnesses, who did not use humour themselves, described how it was used by others, suggesting that many examples of this communicative style may have been lost due to the lack of surviving source material; T-48, 6; T-57, 53. I therefore suggest that future discussion of Jewish humour, complement their analysis by turning to oral history as a supplementary source of evidence. See the discussion of the benefits related to oral history and Memory Studies in Denmark in Bak, 2023.
[242] There is a discussion in the literature about what 'child' means. For a good introduction, see: Suleiman, 2002.
[243] 2023, 486.
[244] Chapter ten in T-57, 79-84.

Jews. According to Fishermann, it was important to be critical of the academic discussion concerning the Swedish diplomat, as it presented a 'misleading' picture.[245] Thus, it became meaningful for the eyewitness to discuss events that he had not experienced himself (e.g., the diplomatic negotiations that led to the release of the Danish Jews) as his understanding of the rescue mission was markedly different than that of certain scholars.[246] In a similar way, Ib Katznelson also relied on other sources to fill the gaps in his narrative, though for a very different reason. Katznelson, who was deported at the age of two, had no recollection of his captivity. His autobiography is therefore a mix of his own memories from after the war, his family's testimonies, and academic sources.[247] Furthermore, Katznelson's memory work continued over a long period of time, as he discussed his personal story within the Danish media whenever he uncovered new information about himself.[248] No doubt, this type of memory work, the patchworking and the weighing up of credibility, also took place among other child survivors who might not have understood everything that took place around them, or who may simply have forgotten certain episodes.[249] In this light, the testimonies from Fishermann and Katznelson are useful, as they help us understand how the passing of time, and the increased dominance of child-survivors had an impact on the Danish Jewish remembrance at the end of the 20th century.

When discussing child-survivors and the testimonies that were published after 1993, my analysis would not be complete without touching upon the emergence of a new survivor category: *hidden children,* i.e. children who had survived the war by hiding in basements, shelters, and sometimes even in plain sight. Interestingly, the transition to the third wave of remembrance coincided with the introduction of this new category of victims. In 1994, André Stein, himself a hidden child, wrote a book about his own experiences and those of others, in which he said:

> *It took us almost fifty years to leave shame more or less behind us. It took us all that time to accept that even though we are different, and our parents are different, we don't have to be ashamed of showing our scars. It took as all that time to prove to ourselves and to others that we are not freaks, that we are not alone and that it is no longer possible to hide.*[250]

[245] Ibid., 79.
[246] Fishermann gave less credit to Sweden and Bernadotte, as he believed that Denmark, and especially Danish volunteers, were the primus motor in the rescue mission.
[247] T-58., 74.
[248] T-59; T-60.
[249] Suleiman, 2002, 277.
[250] 1994, 273.

In the above, we see a clear example of what Sudan Rubin Suleiman has described as a 'delayed generational consciousness', as many child-survivors did not consider their traumas as relevant or important, thereby affected their willingness to talk about their experiences of persecution (in this case, it took half a century before the silence was broken).[251] However, everything changed in the early 1990s, as 1600 hidden children came together in New York to bear witness to their experiences of war – thus letting the wider public know about their unique survival stories.[252] Interestingly, something similar happened in a Danish context by the end of the 2000s. In 2009 Tove Udsholt stepped forward and testified to her experience of being left behind in Denmark, as her mother escaped to Sweden following the raid against the Danish Jewry in October 1943.[253] Furthermore, in the spring of 2009, the DJM also held a talk about the hidden children in Denmark, after which there was a veritable explosion of testimonies. Within a few days, the museum had collected the names of 60 such survivors, and after three months they had collected 133 names. [254] Today, we know of 160 named Jewish children that were left behind by their parents.[255] This backdrop is important to my research, as it highlights two things. Firstly, the emergence of a new victim category illustrates how a significant rewriting of the narrative about the Second World War took place during the third wave of remembrance. Some people believe that children and survivors who escaped captivity do not qualify as real survivors.[256] As such, the emergence of testimonies given by hidden children constituted a hegemonic battle regarding the definition of Jewish survival half a century after the end of the war. Secondly, the debate encapsulates how shame can prevent people from talking about their experiences of the past, thereby putting to the forefront how the reception of one's testimony is a crucial factor in relation to construction of a collective remembrance.[257] Once again, it is worth remembering that a 'conspiracy of silence' is constructed by more than one person. [258] As discussed in chapter five, some eyewitnesses may only come forward when asked to share their stories of the past by memory consumers, and if this does not happen, then silence can fall upon a community until a 'memory activist' decides to talk.[259] Unfortunately, my primary sources do not shed light on the many nuances affecting the

[251] 2002, 286.
[252] Bak, 2010, 61.
[253] Nilsson, 2009.
[254] Bak, 2010, 43.
[255] Bak, 2022, 30:15.
[256] This opinion was expressed by several Holocaust survivors in: Spicer, 2020, 447.
[257] As children compared their experiences of hiding, with that of their parents' exile and captivity, and maybe also death.
[258] Zerubavel, 2010, 36.
[259] Carol Gluck in Winter, 2010, 12.

relationship between memory producers and memory consumers vis-à-vis the production of a narrative about the past, and further research is therefore needed before we are able to fully understand this dynamic.

## 6.4. Conclusion

During the third wave of Danish Jewish remembrance, the temporal distance from the Second World War reshaped why and how survivors testified. As old age made the urgency to bear witness more acute, the act of testifying was seen as a moral responsibility by several eyewitnesses, who emphasised their duty to document their experiences of persecution to warn against contemporary antisemitism. This dynamic was especially present among the eyewitnesses who were liberated from Theresienstadt. Their testimonies show how the Second World War became an event that carried with it lasting meaning and thus became a lesson about human rights and the dangers of repeating the past. By contrast, several survivors who escaped to Sweden instead placed the war within their broader life stories, showing how temporal distance could also widen the spectrum of how the past was integrated into post-war identities. Another place where I have observed conflicting interpretations of the past is on the topic of Israel. For some, their experiences between 1943-1945 helped justify participation in, or emotional attachment to Israel; others expressed ambivalence or critique. However, despite these differences, Israel consistently appeared as another symbolic site where the meaning of persecution, security, and Jewish belonging was negotiated. In a similar way, humour also remained a recurring feature across all three waves of remembrance. Whether in the form of gallows humour or playful descriptions of camp life, it operated as a defence mechanism, a strategy of survival, and as an inversion of power. Although echoes of Eastern European Jewish humour may be observed within my primary source selections, more research is needed before any firm conclusions can be drawn about the transmission of this type of humour in Denmark. Still, the presence of irony and jokes across all waves of remembrance indicates that humour played a significant function in making traumatic memories bearable. Additionally, I have argued that the temporal distance to World War II meant that a new genre of memory work emerged, the historical memoir, in which survivors wove together personal recollection with other testimonies and scholarly research. This memory patchworking reflects the rise of child-survivors, who often filled in the gaps of their memories by looking to other accounts or descriptions of the past. Lastly, the late emergence of hidden children further underscores how

remembrance narratives evolved as new witnesses were recognised and new voices become audible.

# 7.0. CONCLUSION

When answering my research question, my analysis of Danish Jewish remembrance between 1945 and 2025 followed two strands. Firstly, my research addressed the disagreement within the literature regarding the issue of silence. Sofie Lene Bak argued that silence fell upon the Danish Jewry upon their return to Denmark, whereas Silvia Goldbaum Tarabini described how many eyewitnesses wanted to testify to what they experienced while in captivity. On the one hand, it was significantly more difficult for me to find relevant primary sources from the first wave of remembrance written by those who escaped to Sweden despite their numbers being ten times larger than the population that was deported to Theresienstadt. As such, silence did, at least partially, affect some members of the Danish Jewry. On the other hand, some people also decided to step forward and talk about the past. See for instance the testimonies given by Meyer, Metz, and Hurwitz who wrote their memoirs about their own, as well as others', escapes to Sweden.[260] Not to mention the many members of the Danish Jewry returning from Theresienstadt, who described their deportation, captivity and liberation. Instead of supporting Bak's thesis of silence, or Tarabini's critique of the myth of silence, I thus want to suggest an alternative approach. Based on my primary sources, I have observed signs of silence as well as active acts of remembrance in the form of texts, and I therefore argue that we should depart from the mutually exclusive line of argumentation (either/or) and instead apply the positive affirmation with additional conditions (yes, and) approach. Silence did affect members of the Danish Jewry, across all three waves of remembrance, but many also chose to share their experiences of the past as they felt a duty, a desire, or a demand to do so. However, since my analysis was limited to the production of remembrance narratives, and therefore does not address the reception of my primary sources or the broader remembrance culture surrounding the Danish Jewish survivors, more research is needed before the dynamic of silence, its many functions, as well as it varying effects on the Jewish community can be fully understood.[261]

Secondly, my analysis focused on change over time, as I selected primary sources from three waves of remembrance spanning the years 1945-2025. The reason I decided to conduct a

[260] T-1; T-6; T-3.
[261] The two other key aspects of Memory studies: Confino, 1997, 1386; Kansteiner, 2002, 179.

longitudinal analysis can be understood by returning to Winter's example of the sea. Collective remembrance is not just affected by the waves that change the shorelines, constantly altering the contours of the past as understood in the present, but also the deposits of silence below the surface of the water - only to emerge with environmental changes.[262] By looking at Danish Jewish remembrance across 80 years, I was able to address silenced individuals as they became visible due to the passing of time. For instance, I found that more child-survivors came forward by the second and third wave of remembrance, which in turn meant that a new type of memory work was introduced - the historical memoir, characterised by its memory patchworking and the reliance on the testimonies of other in addition to scholarly work and academic sources. Collective remembrance does not exist outside of individuals, but it is also never fully individual in character, and thus, by looking at memory gaps I have shown how eyewitnesses increasingly relied on other testimonies to fill in the holes of their narratives. Additionally, I have discussed how the introduction of a new category of survivors, the hidden children, emerged in Denmark by the end of the 2000s, thus leading to a reinterpretation of what Jewish survival could look like. In other words, a significant reconfiguration of the Danish Jewish remembrance took place during the early years of the 21st century.

To make my research more concrete, I decided to select written primary sources across all three waves of remembrance. My aim was not to make a representative analysis, and I therefore focused on specific points of enquiry as I asked why the authors of my primary sources had decided to testify, what they talk about (and what they excluded), in addition to detailing which structures affected their narratives. However, my strategy for collecting source material also meant that certain aspects had to be left out. For instance, in my analysis of Jewish humour in chapter six, I discussed a specific eyewitness who described the living conditions and the hunger that he experiences while in captivity in a humoristic tone.[263] However, it has later come to my attention that the same author published a novel forty years earlier, in which his narrative tone was a lot darker.[264] As such, I have subsequently asked myself the following questions: did the passing of time affect the degree to which the individual eyewitness used humour in his descriptions of the

[262] Winter, 2010, 3.
[263] T-54, 8.
[264] Eisenberg, 1955.

past? Did the genre of his testimony play a role in relation to which narrative style was used?[265] I was unable to ask these questions in my analysis, as the eyewitness' first publication from 1955 was not part of my source selection. Consequently, it is worth stressing that my arguments are based on a selection of sources, which ultimately did not allow me to cover all the nuances related to the production of a Danish Jewish remembrance of the Second World War. Furthermore, I have wondered whether the use of humour in Danish Jewish testimonies is any different from non-Jewish survivors who experienced persecution during the years of occupation.[266] Similarly, I have not been able to ask this question, as I was beyond the scope of my thesis to compare Jewish testimonies with other persecuted groups (e.g., the Danish communists or the Danish police). In other words, I hope that my analysis of Danish Jewish remembrance will start a deeper discussion of the meaning of the past among Holocaust survivors, as much still remains unclear. More specifically, I hope that my research can inspire others to participate in the discussion of collective remembrances when it comes to humour, irony and satire vis-à-vis the construction of a meaningful narrative about the past among survivors of persecution and genocide.

[265] In Vesterbæk, 2009 the change of genre and the passing of time are discussed briefly.
[266] An analysis of this question could be based on Hong's discussion of humour in Denmark during the war: 2010, and Üngör & Verkerke's comparative study of humour after genocides: 2015.

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# 9.0. Appendix

## Appendix 1. List of Primary Sources

When referring to a primary source within this thesis, I have abbreviated the name to "T" (for testimony) followed by the number of the testimony, e.g., T-1, T-2, T-3, etc.

Below, you find the abbreviated name of all primary sources, the name of the eyewitness, the full reference to the source, their fate (i.e. did they escape to Sweden or were they deported to Theresienstadt) as well as a supporting document verifying their status as an eyewitness (wherever possible). In most cases this will be a link to safe-haven.dk, a database created by the DJM and the Danish Institute for International Studies regarding those who escaped to Sweden, or the deportation number for those who were sent to Theresienstadt.[267] The testimonies will be organised based on their time of publication, and divided into my three waves of remembrance

### First wave of remembrance: 1945-1960

| *Abbreviated name of source* | *Name of the eyewitness* | *Full reference to the primary source* | *What happened to the eyewitness* | *Supporting documentation* |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| T-1 | Torben L. Meyer | Torben Meyer, *Flugten over Øresund* (København: Jespersen og Pios Forlag, 1945) | Escaped to Sweden | Safe-Haven document |
| T-2 | Valdemar Koppel | Valdemar Koppel, 'Flugten til Sverige', *Special publication of Politikens Magasin,* 1945. | Escaped to Sweden | Safe-Haven document |
| T-3 | Stephan Hurwitz | Stephan Hurwitz, 'De Danske Flygtninge i Sverige', *Special publication of Politikens Magasin*, 23rd of May 1945. | Escaped to Sweden | Safe-Haven Document |
| T-4 | Marcus L. Melchior | Peter Petersen, 'De danske jøder var blevet advaret', *B.T.,* 2nd of October 1945. | Escaped to Sweden | Safe-Haven Document |
| T-5 | M[arcus] M[elchior] | Marcus Melchior, 'Et Aar er Gået', *Jødisk Samfund,* 5(1946). | Escaped to Sweden | See reference T-4 |
| T-6 | Henning B. Metz | Henning Metz, 'Ankomsten til Malmø', *Jødisk Samfund,* 5(1946). | Escaped to Sweden | Safe-Haven Document |
| T-7 | Karl Lachmann | [N.A.], 'Theresienstadt-Monument', *Jødisk Samfund,* 11(1946), pp.1-2 & 5. | Escaped to Sweden | Safe-Haven document |
| T-8 | Pinches Welner | Pinches Welner, *I Hine Dage* (København: Thaning & Appel, 1949) | Escaped to Sweden | Safe-Haven Document |

[267] See list of people who were deported to Theresienstadt in Tarabini, 'Liv og død', pp. 447-473.

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| T-9 | Pinches Welner | Pinches Welner, *Ved Øresunds Bredder* (København: Thaning & Appel, 1953) | Escaped to Sweden | See reference T-8 |
| T-10 | Verner A. Henriques | Verner A. Henriques, 'Vor Flugt I Oktober 1943', *Københavns Stadsarkiv,* Archive no. 11262, 1956. | Escaped to Sweden | Safe-Haven document |
| T-11 | Ralph Oppenhejm | Ralph Oppenhejm, *Det Skulle Så Være: Marianne Petits Dagbog fra Theresienstadt* (København: H. Hirschprungs Forlag, 1945) | Got deported | XXV/3-122 |
| T-12 | Wulff Feldman | Wulff Feldman, 'En Dag I Theresienstadt', *Social-Demokraten,* 8th of June 1945, pp. 6-9. | Got deported | XXV/3-174 |
| T-13 | Johan Grün | Johan Grün, 'Hvordan var der I Theresienstadt', *Horsens Folkeblad,* 28th of July 1945, pp. 3-4. | Got deported | XXV/2-79 |
| T-14 | Hans Pollnow | Hans Pollnow, 'Tyskernes Kæmpebluff i Theresienstadt', *Vejle Amts Folkeblad,* 10th of November 1945, p. 7. | Got deported | XXV/3-121 |
| T-15 | Max Friediger | Max Friediger, *Theresienstadt* (København: J. Fr. Clausens Forlag, 1946) | Got deported | XXV/2-65 |
| T-16 | Lilly Bornstein | Lilly Bornstein, 'Gensyn med Theresienstadt', *Jødisk Samfund,* 4(1948), p. 4. | Got deported | XXV/3-91 |
| T-17 | Benzion Epelman | Benzion Epelman, 'Afgang til Theresienstadt', *Jødisk Samfund,* 9(1953), pp. 4-5. | Got deported | XXV/3-28 |
| T-18 | Arthur Friediger | Arthur Friediger, 'Transporterne glemmer jeg aldrig', *Jødisk Samfund,* 3(1955), p. 8. | Got deported | XXV/2-64 |
| T-19 | Axel A. Margolinsky | Axel A. Margolinsky, 'Fra Trældom til befrielse', *Jødisk Samfund*, 3(1955), pp. 5-6. | Got deported | XXV/2-130 |
| T-20 | Cilla Cohn | Cilla Cohn, *En jødisk families sage* (København: Nyt Nordisk Forlag, 1960) | Got deported | XXV3/-138 |
| **Second wave of remembrance: 1961-1992** | | | | |
| *Abbreviated name of source* | *Name of the eyewitness* | *Full reference to the primary source* | *What happened to the eyewitness* | *Supporting documentation* |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| T-21 | Marcus Melchior | Marcus Melchior, *Levet og Oplevet* (København: H. Hirschsprung, 1965) | Escaped to Sweden | See reference T-4 |
| T-22 | Pinches Welner | Pinches Welner, *Fra Polsk Jøde til Dansk* (København: Steen Hosselbachs Forlag, 1965) | Escaped to Sweden | See reference T-8 |
| T-23 | Hanne Kaufmann | Hanne Kaufmann, 'Vi er forfulgte – vi er dødsens', *Hjemmet,* 39(1968), pp. 31-35. | Escaped to Sweden | Safe-Haven document |
| T-24 | Hanne Kaufmann | Hanne Kaufmann, 'Vi havde sagt farvel til hverdagen – men ikke håbet,' *Hjemmet,* 40(1968), pp. 72-75. | Escaped to Sweden | See reference T-23 |
| T-25 | Hanne Kaufmann | Hanne Kaufmann, 'Jeg følte trang til at græde eller kaste mig I vandet,' *Hjemmet,* 41(1968), pp. 72-75. | Escaped to Sweden | See reference T-23 |
| T-26 | Ina Rohde | Ina Rohde, *Da jeg blev jøde I Danmark* (København: C. A. Reitzels Boghandler, 1982) | Escaped to Sweden | See a review of her memoir in: Hans Kirchhoff, 'Ina Rohde: Da jeg blev jøde i Danmark. Nogle erindringsblade fra besættelsen. Udgivet af Selskabet for dansk jødisk historie. København, C. A. Reitzels Boghandel, 1982', *Hisorisk Tidsskrift,* 13(1983), p. 346. |
| T-27 | Emilie Roi | Emilie Roi, *En Anderledes Historie* (Århus: Meet the People, 1984) | Escaped to Sweden | No supporting documents found |
| T-28 | Maria Marcus | Maria Marcus*, Barn af min tid* ([n.p.]: Tidens Skrifter, 1987) | Escaped to Sweden | Safe-Haven document |
| T-29 | Henning Segall | Henning Segall, 'Mine Oplevelser i krigens skygge 1943-1945', *Danish Jewish Museum,* archive no. JDK178A7/1. Account written between 1980 and 1990. | Escaped to Sweden | Safe-Haven Document |
| T-30 | Arne Nathansohn | Arne Nathansohn, 'Hvad jeg kan huske', *Danish Jewish Museum,* archive no. JDK275A2/1/26. | Escaped to Sweden | No supporting documents found |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Account written in December 1992. | | |
| T-31 | Paul Brandt | Paul Brandt, 'Var Barn I Theresienstadt', *Pigtraad,* 4(1976), p. 37. | Got deported | XXV/3-90 |
| T-32 | Paul Brandt | Paul Brandt, 'Et Familiedrama', *Pigtraad,* 2(1977), p. 29. | Got deported | See reference T-31 |
| T-33 | Mélanie Oppenhejm | Mélanie Oppenhejm, *Menneskefællen – om livet I KZ-lejren Theresienstadt* (København: Hans Reitzel, 1981) | Got deported | XXV/3-144 |
| T-34 | Birgit Krasnik Fishermann | Birgit Fishermann, 'Et barn på 5 år blev deporteret', *Pigtraad-Gestapofangen,* 5(1983), pp. 110-112. | Got deported | XXV/2-105 |
| T-35 | Paul Brandt | Paul Brandt, 'Hvad der skete før Theresienstadt', *Pigtraad-Gestapofangen,* 5(1983), pp. 108-110. | Got deported | See reference T-31 |
| T-36 | Alex Eisenberg | Alex Eisenberg, 'Noget Døde I Mig', *Aktuelt,* 2nd of October 1983, p. 8. | Got deported | XXV/3-55 |
| T-37 | Cilla Cohn | Cilla Cohn, 'Hjemkomsten fra Theresienstadt', *Jødisk Orientering,* 5(1985), pp. 6-7. | Got deported | See reference T-20 |
| T-38 | Paul Sandfort | Paul Sandfort, 'Koncerten I Theresienstadt med dystert efterspil', *Pigtraad-Gestapofangen,* 17(1985), p. 194. | Got deported | Another testimony given by Paul Sandfort is linked as a primary source on Folkedrab.dk [a resource centre for high school students] |
| T-39 | Herman Krasnik | Elbe [no last name], 'De må undskylde … men jeg bliver nødt til at føre Dem bort…', *Jødisk Orientering,* 58(1987), pp. 7-8. | Got deported | XXV/2-106 |
| T-40 | Ben-Zion Epelmann | Ben-Zion Epelmann, *Rabbi Zakariaz i Ghettoen* (Silkeborg: Silkeborg Avis, 1965) | Got deported | XXV/3-28 |
| **Thirds wave of remembrance: 1993-today** | | | | |
| *Abbreviated name of source* | *Name of the eyewitness* | *Full reference to the primary source* | *What happened to the eyewitness* | *Supporting documentation* |
| T-41 | Josef Nathansohn | Josef Nathansohn, 'Omkring Oktober 1943', *Danish Jewish Museum,* archive no. | Escaped to Sweden | No supporting documents found. |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | JDK275A1/1/26. Account written in February 1993. | | |
| T-42 | Bent Melchior | Bent Melchior, *Så Vælg Da Livet* (København: Gyldendal, 1997) | Escaped to Sweden | Safe-Haven document |
| T-43 | Salli Besiakov | Salli Besiakov, 'Flugten til Sverige', *Politiken,* 7th of October 1998, pp. 3-4. | Escaped to Sweden | See also his autobiographical novel about his mother, and her escape from Belarus as a Jewish refugee arriving in Denmark: *Sonja: Russisk jøde, dansk communist: doku-roman* (København: Republik, 2021) |
| T-44 | Arne Melchior | Arne Melchior, 'Flugten til Sverige', *Jul på Falster – I by og på land,* 11(2005), pp. 94-96. | Escaped to Sweden | Safe-Haven document |
| T-45 | Georg Kustosz | Georg Kustosz, *Hvorfor Netop Jeg* (København: BIOS, 2005) | Escaped to Sweden | He is mentioned in an article written by the Historical Society on Funen regarding the Youth Aliyah before, during and after the war: https://www.histfyn.dk |
| T-46 | Herbert Pundik | Herbert Pundik, *Det er ikke nok at overleve* (København: Gyldendal, 2005) | Escaped to Sweden | Safe-Haven document |
| T-47 | Simon Kurland | Simon Kurland, *Kurland: en jødisk sportsman i krigs- og efterkrigstid* (Odense: Syddansk Universitetsforlag, 2010) | Escaped to Sweden | Safe-Haven document |
| T-48 | Maria Marcus | Maria Marcus, 'Dengang vi var jøder', *Politiken,* 1st of October 2013 | Escaped to Sweden | See reference T-28. |
| T-49 | Jan Stoltz-Andersen | Jan Stoltz-Andersen, 'Flugten til Sverige i Oktober 1943', *Københavns Stadsarkiv,* Archive no. 11254, 2013. | Escaped to Sweden | No supporting documents found. |
| T-50 | Sonja Bandmann | Katrine Rosenbæk, 'Sonjas båd kæntrede under flugten til Sverige: det var afskyeligt', *Berlingske*, 30th of September 2018, pp. 8-11. | Escaped to Sweden | Safe-Haven document |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| T-51 | Marcus Cholera | Marcus Cholera, 'Dreng I Theresienstadt', *Jødisk Orientering,* 9(1993), pp. 40-42. | Got deported | XXV/2-25 |
| T-52 | Klara Ruben Tixell | Klara Tixell, 'I Hine Dage', *Pigtraad-Gestapofangen,* 6(1993), pp. 116-117. | Got deported | XXV/2-154 |
| T-53 | Jytte Bornstein | Jytte Bornstein, *Min Rejse Tilbage* (København: Munksgaard, 1994) | Got deported | XXV/3-129 |
| T-54 | Alex Eisenberg | Alex Eisenberg, *Theresienstadt Eligi* (Århus: Klim, 1995) | Got deported | See reference T-36 |
| T-55 | Elias Levin | Elias Levin, *Min Erindringsbog om mit ophold i Theresienstadt* (København: DCHF, 2001) | Got deported | XXV/2-118 |
| T-56 | Klara Ruben Tixell | Klara Ruben Tixell, 'Jom Kippur 1943', *Jødisk Orientering,* 10(2008), p. 9. | Got deported | See reference T-52 |
| T-57 | Robert Fishermann | Robert Fishermann, *At forstå er ikke at tilgive* (København: Gyldendal, 2014) | Got deported | XXV/2-51 |
| T-58 | Ib Katznelson | Ib Katznelson, *Lad ham dø. 2-årig I Ravensbrück og Theresienstadt* (Odense: Syddansk Universitetsforlag, 2017) | Got deported | XXV/4-10 |
| T-59 | Ib Katznelson | Ib Katznelson, 'KRONIK: I 75 år kendte jeg ikke hele sandheden om min skæbne: Sådan reddede to kvinder mig fra udryddelseslejren Auschwitz', *Berlingske,* 25th of January 2020, pp. 8-11. | Got deported | See reference T-58 |
| T-60 | Ib Katznelson | Ib Katznelson, 'Den langsomme døds koncentrationslejr', *Politiken,* 27th of January 2022. | Got deported | See reference T-58 |

Appendix 2. Types of Primary Sources: 1945-2025

In this table, I will present the types of primary sources that I have selected for my thesis. I will divide them into my three waves of remembrance, and I will categorise them into sub-categories. Both books and articles had a wider audience, whether that being the Danish Jewish community in their membership periodical or the general Danish population in newspapers (national and/or regional). Lastly, I have divided the testimonies that I have selected through archives into individual testimonies and family testimonies, as the latter still spoke to a collective unit, although a rather restricted and narrow one. In sum, 57 of my sources had a wider audience in mind, while three can be classified as individual testimonies.

## First wave of remembrance

| *Type of source* | *Sub-category* | *Abbreviated name of sources* | *Number of sources* |
|---|---|---|---|
| Books | Memoirs & novels | T-1, T-8, T-9, T-11, T-15, T-20 | 6 |
| Articles | Articles in national or regional newspapers | T-2, T-3, T-4, T-12, T-13, T-14 | 6 |
| | Articles in membership periodicals | T-5, T-6, T-7, T-16, T-17, T-18, T-19 | 7 |
| Archives | Individual testimonies | T-10 | 1 |
| | Family testimonies | - | 0 |

## Second wave of remembrance

| *Type of source* | *Sub-category* | *Abbreviated name of sources* | *Number of sources* |
|---|---|---|---|
| Books | Memoirs & novels | T-21, T-26, T-27, T-28, T-33, T-40 | 6 |
| Articles | Articles in national or regional newspapers | T-22, T-36. | 2 |
| | Articles in membership periodicals | T-23, T-24, T-25, T-31, T-32, T-34, T-35, T-37, T-38, T-39 | 10 |
| Archives | Individual testimonies | T-29 | 1 |
| | Family testimonies | T-30 | 1 |

## Third wave of remembrance

| *Type of source* | *Sub-category* | *Abbreviated name of sources* | *Number of sources* |
|---|---|---|---|
| Books | Memoirs & novels | T-42, T-45, T-46, T-47, T-53, T-54, T-55, T-57, T-58 | 9 |
| Articles | Articles in national or regional newspapers | T-43, T-48, T-50, T-59, T-60 | 5 |
| | Articles in membership periodicals | T-44, T-51, T-52, T-56 | 4 |
| Archives | Individual testimonies | T-49 | 1 |
| | Family testimonies | T-41. | 1 |