

Changing Perceptions of the Holocaust

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On 5 June 2013, the expert meeting 'Changing Perceptions of the Holocaust. Competing Histories and Collective Memory' brought together scholars and professionals working within the field of history, history education, Holocaust education, and antisemitism to discuss trends and turning points in the presence of the Holocaust in contemporary consciousness.

The meeting was organized by Remco Ensel and Annemarike Stremmelaar at the occasion of the publication of *Perceptions of the Holocaust in Europe and Muslim Communities*, Günther Jikeli and Joelle Allouch-Benayoun (eds.) (Dordrecht: Springer, 2013). It was funded by the Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research (NWO) as part of the research project 'The dynamics of contemporary antisemitism in a globalizing context' and the NWO program 'Conflict and Security'.

The central focus of the meeting was on multicultural society as the context for research and as the explanatory framework to account for views and sentiments on the Holocaust. The organizers raised the question whether this approach, with its emphasis on ethnic and cultural characteristics, may suffer from ethnicism?

The event offered a platform to discuss how Holocaust analogies and invocations shape the location of the Holocaust in public memory, how the use and meaning of highly-charged terms such as extermination, genocide, occupation have been changing, and how the Holocaust serves as an identity marker or an instrument of cohesion or disintegration.