

## Impact case study (REF3)

<b>Institution:</b> Royal Holloway, University of London		
<b>Unit of Assessment:</b> 28 History		
<b>Title of case study:</b> Advancing Public Understanding of the Holocaust		
<b>Period when the underpinning research was undertaken:</b>		
<b>Details of staff conducting the underpinning research from the submitting unit:</b>		
<b>Name(s):</b>	<b>Role(s) (e.g. job title):</b>	<b>Period(s) employed by submitting HEI:</b>
Professor David Cesarani	Research Professor in Modern History	2005-2015
Professor Dan Stone	Professor of Modern History	1999-present
<b>Period when the claimed impact occurred:</b> 2014-2020		
<b>Is this case study continued from a case study submitted in 2014?</b> N		
<p><b>1. Summary of the impact</b></p> <p>The Holocaust Research Institute at Royal Holloway has contributed substantially to bridging the gulf between scholarly and public understanding of the Holocaust. Its expertise and research have influenced strategic agendas regarding how the Holocaust is reassessed and remembered, informing how Holocaust history is presented in museums and how Holocaust education is delivered in schools and the media. Its work has guided decisions relating to the UK's new Holocaust memorial, reshaped the Imperial War Museums' much-visited Holocaust Galleries, and helped drive the Wiener Holocaust Library's strategy of communicating with the public via exhibitions and public events.</p>		
<p><b>2. Underpinning research</b></p> <p>The Holocaust Research Institute is the leading British research institute on the Holocaust and one of the most prominent in Europe and beyond. Its members produce high-quality research on the causes, unfolding and aftermath of the Holocaust across several disciplines and disseminates that information to as wide an audience as possible. The research of its two Directors, Professor David Cesarani and Professor Dan Stone informs public understanding and commemoration of the Holocaust in numerous ways.</p> <p>Cesarani's research on the Nazi genocide of the Jews, underpinned by his wider analyses of European antisemitism, uniquely challenged the divide between the history of the Third Reich's policies of persecution and the victim-centred scholarship of 'Holocaust studies'. In his 2016 <i>Final Solution (R1)</i> he integrated these two perspectives, demonstrating the hugely diverse ways in which persecution affected different communities (not just in different countries, but within them too), the sense of uncertainty and, at the same time, the profound sense of shock that accompanied the violence. His research encompassed, on the one hand, the dilemmas faced by some Jews, recognising that the choices they faced were usually not real choices at all, and, on the other hand, that some Jews had room for manoeuvre, which they could use on behalf of either themselves or others, or at others' expense.</p> <p>Stone's research on twentieth-century Europe is also focused on integrating perpetrator and victim-centred accounts. His research shows that the Holocaust was by no means an 'industrial genocide' but a continent-wide crime of a deeply brutal and traumatic nature. His 2015 <i>The Liberation of the Camps (R3)</i> provided a deeply researched account of survivors' and liberators' experiences of liberation from Nazi death camps and the long, difficult years that followed. Drawing on archival sources and eyewitness testimonies, his research revealed the complex challenges liberated victims faced and the daunting tasks their liberators undertook to help them reclaim their shattered lives, Stone's research focused on the survivors and their numerous postwar problems as well as the complex responses of the Allied troops. This research has fed directly into the Imperial War Museum London's revamped Holocaust galleries, due to open in 2021.</p>		

Stone's 2016-19 Leverhulme-funded project on the International Tracing Service built on this expertise in Holocaust and European history (**R2**), resulting in a new social history of the Holocaust that is sensitive to place and to the victims' experiences (**G1**). The main focus of this research is on the ways in which the vast archival holdings of the International Tracing Service (over 30 million documents) can help us reimagine the Holocaust through the effects it had on individuals and communities. It shows, for example, the huge extent to which the Nazis and their allies created a network of concentration camps (**R4**) across Europe, the vast use of slave labour provided by the camp inmates, and the distressing nature of the last stages of the war, when camp inmates were forced on 'death marches' and were then 'liberated' in unpredictable and varied ways. It also highlights the International Tracing Service's work after the war, in tracing the steps of and mapping these forced marches, in drawing up cemetery maps indicating where camp inmates were killed on their marches, in exhuming bodies in the (usually vain) hope of identifying the dead, and in working to reunite survivors, especially children, with relatives, and in repatriating or resettling them after their physical recovery and stay in displaced persons camps. Stone's insights into the experiences of the victims, their varied trajectories through the vast Nazi camp universe and the huge scale of local collaboration across Nazi-occupied Europe have helped to shape the Imperial War Museum's redesigned Holocaust Galleries, underpinned exhibitions at the Wiener Holocaust Library (including travelling exhibitions around the UK) and informed the Holocaust Memorial Day Trust's texts for its annual commemorative ceremonies.

### 3. References to the research

#### Cesarani

**R1.** *Final Solution: The Fate of the Jews 1933-1949* (Macmillan, 2016). Available from HEI on Request. QI: Yad Vashem International Book Prize for Holocaust Research 2017; shortlisted for 2017 Jewish Quarterly Wingate Prize. Widely reviewed in the press. Sold to date 9,858 copies in UK, 12,037 in the rest of the world. Translated into numerous languages, including German, Polish and Dutch.

#### Stone

**R2.** *Goodbye to All That? The Story of Europe since 1945* (OUP, 2014). Available from HEI on Request. QI: Widely reviewed in the scholarly and general press; book of the month in *BBC History Magazine*; book of the week in *THE*.

**R3.** *The Liberation of the Camps: The End of the Holocaust and its Aftermath* (Yale UP, 2015). Available from HEI on Request. QI: Widely reviewed in the scholarly and general press and shortlisted for the Jewish Quarterly Wingate Prize. Sold c. 2,500 copies, translated into Italian (Einaudi).

**R4.** *Concentration Camps: A Short History* (OUP, 2017). Available from HEI on Request. QI: Widely reviewed in the scholarly and general press and the subject of several podcasts, blog pieces and interviews.

**G1.** Grant: Leverhulme Major Research Fellowship, 2016-2019 (£171,000): *Tracing the Holocaust*.

### 4. Details of the impact

Before the impact achieved by the Holocaust Research Institute, public understanding of the Holocaust was very much rooted in the idea of 'factory-line genocide', especially at Auschwitz. Cesarani's emphasis on the connections between the military situation in World War II and the changing Nazi policies towards the murder of the Jews, has been widely used to inform public understanding of the Holocaust. Stone's work too shows how the killing of Jews took many forms and how 'messy' the whole process was. This research has influenced the Imperial War Museums, the Wiener Holocaust Library, and the Holocaust Memorial Day Trust whose work has all shifted to recognise this more complex image of the Holocaust.

#### Informing Museums and Holocaust Commemoration

Cesarani was a founding trustee of the Holocaust Memorial Day Trust (HMDT) from 2013 and its historical consultant. In this role he advised 'on the historical content of specific resources, ensuring that HMDT continued to provide authoritative, knowledgeable expert guidance and

produce accurate, reliable material' (S1). As a member of the Holocaust Commission's 2014 Expert Group on Education set up by Prime Minister David Cameron, he contributed directly to the Commission's 2015 report, 'Britain's Promise to Remember: The Prime Minister's Holocaust Commission Report' (S2). The report followed Cesarani's recommendations that:

- a striking and prominent new National Memorial should be built in central London.
- a world-class Learning Centre should sit alongside the memorial.
- an endowment fund should be set up to secure the long-term future of Holocaust education.
- an urgent programme should be established to record the testimonies of British Holocaust survivors and liberators.

All four of the recommendations are being implemented. The UK Holocaust Memorial received the backing of Prime Minister Theresa May in 2015, and it will be located in Victoria Tower Gardens next to the Houses of Parliament. The memorial's design and content at an advanced stage of planning in 2020, when Lord Eric Pickles, the co-chair of the UK Holocaust Memorial Foundation Advisory Board, said: 'The nation needs this Memorial. It will stand next to Parliament as a permanent reminder that legislators always have a choice, either to protect or oppress human rights' (S3). Highlighting the personal implications of Cesarani's work, Holocaust survivor Mala Tribich MBE said: '*As the Holocaust recedes into history and we survivors become less able to share our testimonies this memorial and learning centre will be a lasting legacy so that future generations will understand why it is important for people to remember the Holocaust, to learn from the past and stand up against injustice*' (S3).

Cesarani's research also fed directly into policy decisions made by the Imperial War Museums about how to educate its visitors on the Holocaust. His 2016 study *Final Solution* (R1), '*profoundly informed the core approach to the galleries*' (S4). Cesarani had been involved in the original design – visited by over 8,000,000 people – and the project director recalls that '*his [Cesarani's] interventions during this process were critical to the eventual approval that the exhibition gained in academic circles and more widely*' (S1). He would also have been involved in the redesign had he not died in October 2015. Cesarani's legacy and his major contribution to public understanding of the Holocaust were recognised in a book dedicated to his research. Neil Gregor, reviewing *Final Solution* in the *Times Higher* said: '*This book may remind us of who and what we have lost, but as a legacy to a field it is hard to imagine a finer piece of work*' (S5). Visitors to the new IWM Holocaust Galleries will now learn that the Holocaust was not as systematic a process as they thought.

Stone chaired the Imperial War Museums' Academic Advisory Board for the redesigned Holocaust Galleries (opening 2021); the Content Leader for the new Holocaust Galleries at the Imperial War Museum writes: '*you have made a critical contribution to the formation of the narrative that forms the basis of the project to create new galleries, and have been a vital presence in ensuring that the content of these is consistently aligned with – and informed by – the latest historiographical thinking on the subject*' (S4). He also played an advisory role for the, both on its Experts' Reference Group and its Holocaust Memorial Day 2020 Advisory Group. The Chief Executive of the Holocaust Memorial Day Trust (HMDT) writes: Stone '*enables Holocaust education and academia to be brought to wide audiences, including lay audiences and younger audiences*', and that he '*actively and significantly assists HMDT to fulfil its central purpose of making a difference to what people know, feel and do, as a result of taking part in an event or activity for Holocaust Memorial Day*' (S6).

Stone's current research project on the International Tracing Service also led to him advising on (and speaking at the launch of) a 2016 Wiener Holocaust Library exhibition entitled *A Bitter Road: Britain and the Refugee Crisis of the 1930s and 1940s*. This exhibition received over 1,200 visitors and Stone's talk was published by the newly-opened Migration Museum and on the website [refugeehistory.org](http://refugeehistory.org). Stone spoke at a key public event connected to another Wiener Holocaust Library exhibition, *Science and Suffering: Victims and Perpetrators of Nazi Human Experimentation*, in June 2017, which received 880 visitors, as well as numerous other events at the Wiener Holocaust Library. These exhibitions and talks changed public understanding by showing how current-day issues are connected to the past and by helping the public understand the complex trajectories experienced by victims of the Holocaust.

The first fruits of Stone's research on the International Tracing Service were visible in the exhibition and lecture series co-curated by Stone with Dr Christine Schmidt at the Wiener Holocaust Library *Fate Unknown* (February-May 2018), which was seen by 1,995 visitors (the largest number of visitors to a Wiener Holocaust Library exhibition to that date) and demonstrably changed people's understanding of the impact of the Holocaust on the survivors, their families, and the shape of postwar Europe. One visitor described it as 'a magnificent "tour de force" and a fitting memory to those who were mostly forgotten'. And another wrote, in a common response: 'I cannot recall being so moved and affected by one room. The combination of the powerful complexities with the personal story is incredible.' The exhibition, which is currently travelling to other parts of the UK, was accompanied by well-attended lectures, film screenings and dramatic reading of a 1950 BBC radio play, reaching over 2,000 people (S8). Ben Barkow, the former director of the Wiener Holocaust Library, writes that Stone 'has played a very great role in helping the Library to maintain its high scholarly standards and reputation' and concludes: 'Anyone who benefits from the existence of the Wiener Library owes a debt to Prof. Stone, who has shown exceptional care and generosity to this institution and has become an invaluable partner to us' (S7).

### Changing Public Understanding through the Media and Education

Both Cesarani and Stone contributed to TV programmes and other media debates which brought the history of the Holocaust to the attention of a wider public. Cesarani's research informed *Annihilation*, which aired on Yesterday in 2015 (an eight-part documentary about the destruction of Europe's Jews, also released in Germany, France, Belgium and Finland). An excerpt from the series on YouTube has been watched 2,569 times. Cesarani was a frequent contributor to BBC Newsnight (viewing figures approximately 600,000), e.g. on 16 February 2015 when he discussed the sensitive topic 'Is it time for Jews to leave Europe?' (20,700 online views). A blog piece Cesarani wrote for the Holocaust Educational Trust in 2013 has been viewed 47,903 times. And the trailer for the critically acclaimed film *Night Will Fall* (2014), in which Cesarani was interviewed and which was broadcast around the world by major networks, has been watched online 638,311 times. These interventions have improved the general public's appreciation of the complexities of the history of the Holocaust.

Stone's contributions to TV documentaries, including *Hitler* (Discovery Channel, 2015); *The Big Picture* (Al Jazeera, 2016); *Witnesses of War* (Discovery Channel, 2016), *Pass Pass Għal Auschwitz* (*Steps to Auschwitz*, Maltese TV, 2018), and *Belsen* (Atlantic Productions, 2019) have also changed public perceptions of the Holocaust. He has also been interviewed for several press outlets, including a long interview in *Publicó* in 2017, Portugal's most respected newspaper (50,000,000 page views per month), and Turkish, Hungarian and Italian papers and journals. His writings as a Senior Fellow of the Centre for the Analysis of the Radical Right are widely read (1,793 views at least) and syndicated to several online journals, including Fair Observer and Rantt.com, and he has also written on Holocaust denial for the *Jewish Chronicle* (circulation 21,000 per week). Stone's research has changed people's understanding because they now comprehend the development of the Holocaust more clearly.

Stone's research is used to educate and inform a wide range of public audiences through lectures in the UK, the US, Italy, Germany, Romania, the Netherlands, Switzerland, Sweden, and France. In his lecture tour in Italy (January 2018), he spoke to over 500 people in 4 lectures to the general public and, in one case (Carpi), some 200 schoolchildren of sixth-form age (S9). Stone's work is also disseminated to the public via educational materials such as his document collection on the Holocaust for The National Archives, a standard resource for school pupils at KS3 and KS4 as well as the general public (accessed 58,400 times since 2017) and the 'Genocide in Our Eyes' booklet (2016) produced by schoolchildren from 14 schools led by Andrew Lawrence of Hampton School, who says of Stone that he is 'able to explain his research very clearly' and that 'his words became a central part of the booklet' (S10). Stone was also academic advisor on a KS3 textbook written by UCL's Centre for Holocaust Education, 30,000 initial copies of which were circulated in September 2020. Both Cesarani and Stone worked with

the Imperial War Museums on providing teacher training. Head of Content at the Holocaust Galleries reported, '*In terms of reach and impact of Professor Cesarani's and Professor Stone's work at capacity, the museum's current Holocaust learning programme works with 25,000 students and teachers each academic year. With the opening of the new Galleries we plan to increase capacity to 50,000 at IWM London*' (S4). After exposure to Cesarani's and Stone's research, the children understand that the Holocaust was a far more complex phenomenon than they assumed, but they are also provided with ways to navigate it.

The impact will be sustained by a collaboration formed in 2020 by the Holocaust Research Institute, Wiener Holocaust Library the University of Huddersfield and the Holocaust Survivors Friendship Association (Leeds), which brings the expertise of the four institutions together to promote Holocaust scholarship among as wide a public audience as possible, especially amongst deprived communities in the north of England.

These resources will transform public understanding of, and schools' teaching of the Holocaust by demonstrating that the Holocaust was a continent-wide phenomenon which played out differently in different places, albeit under overall German control, and by showing that the path to the 'final solution', although not straightforward, depended on an antisemitic consensus shared by the wide circle of German perpetrators and their allies.

### 5. Sources to corroborate the impact

**S1** Book edited by Larissa Allwork and Rachel Pistol, *The Jews, the Holocaust, and the Public: The Legacies of David Cesarani* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2019). Chapter 14 by Dr Rachel Century and Olivia Marks-Woldman corroborates Professor Cesarani's contributions to HMDT: 'David Cesarani and UK Holocaust Memorial Day', pp. 307-319. Chapter 15 by Suzanne Bardgett corroborates Professor Cesarani's involvement with the Holocaust Galleries at IWM: 'David Cesarani and the Creation of the Imperial War Museum's Holocaust Exhibition', pp. 297-306

**S2** 'Britain's Promise to Remember: The Prime Minister's Holocaust Commission Report' (2015). Professor Cesarani is listed as the Holocaust Commission's Expert Group Member, p. 61. Available at < <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/prime-ministers-holocaust-commission-report> >.

**S3** Lord Eric Pickles, and Mala Tribich MBE, cited in 'Secretary of State reaffirms commitment to Holocaust commemoration and education' – press release, 12 February 2020. Available at: <<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/secretary-of-state-reaffirms-commitment-to-holocaust-commemoration-and-education>> or available from HEI on request.

**S4** Testimonials provided by James Bulgin, Head of Content, Holocaust Galleries, regarding Professor Cesarani (August 2017) and Professor Stone (March 2018), and a testimonial by Rachel Donnelly, Project Manager, Second World War and Holocaust Partnership Programmer, regarding Professor Cesarani and Professor Stone (June 2020), Imperial War Museums.

**S5** Collated notable reviews in general press of David Cesarani's *Final Solution* (2016) (11 reviews) and Dan Stone's *The Liberation of the Camps* (2015) (8 reviews)

**S6** Testimonial provided by Olivia Marks-Woldman, Chief Executive at the Holocaust Memorial Day Trust: 'Professor Dan Stone – impact of work' (June 2020).

**S7** Testimonials provided by Ben Barkow, Director (July 2018), and by Dr Christine Schmidt, Deputy Director and Head of Research, The Wiener Holocaust Library: 'Statement in support of Prof Dan Stone's Research Excellence Framework Case Study, Royal Holloway, University of London' (June 2020).

**S8** The Wiener Holocaust Library exhibitions report with visitor comments (*A Bitter Road*, 2016; *Science and Suffering*, 2017; *Fate Unknown*, 2018).

**S9** Testimonial provided by Dr Laura Fontana, Head of Italian Department, Mémorial de la Shoah (June 2020).

**S10** Testimonial provided by Andrew Lawrence, Hampton School (May 2020)