

Abstract: Laub (a survivor) and Auerhahn (a daughter of survivors) are concerned with the role of the reality of the Holocaust as an unconscious organizing principle for future generations; that is, the manner in which this historical event can shape one's internal representation of reality including interpersonal relationships. They focus not on survivors but rather on those not directly affected by this event and propose that subsequent generations may construct inner psychic representations which are reflective of this external massive trauma.

There is a continuum between a real trauma and an imagined trauma so far as pathogenic effect is concerned. The authors believe that the Holocaust, to those who have not experienced it, may create an in-between state where, although the trauma may not occur (to the individual affected), the virulence of the individual's traumatic fantasy (due to the magnitude of the event imagined) approaches in potency the real event., Laub and Auerhahn illustrate their thesis by an examination of the reverberations of the Holocaust in the imagery, fantasy life, psychological conflict, and mechanisms of defense and adaptation of psychotherapy patients. They show the manner in which the Holocaust may leave an everlasting psychic imprint. .