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# MEMORIA

MEMORY • HISTORY • EDUCATION



## 'UNSEEN OBJECTS, UNTOLD STORIES, UNHEARD VOICES' AT THE NEW IMPERIAL WAR MUSEUM SHOAH GALLERY

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MEMORY**  
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We invite all of you to work closely with us. We would be grateful to receive information about events, projects, publications, exhibitions, conferences or research that we should share with our readers. We also accept proposals for articles.

Paweł Sawicki, Editor-in-Chief

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# NEW AUSTRIAN EXHIBITION AT THE AUSCHWITZ MEMORIAL

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"Far removed. Austria and Auschwitz" is the title of a new Austrian national exhibition opened on 4 October in Block 17 at the former German Nazi Auschwitz I camp.

The opening event was attended by Auschwitz survivors, an official Austrian delegation headed by President Dr Alexander Van der Bellen and President of the Austrian National Council Dr Wolfgang Sobotka, Polish Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Culture and National Heritage Prof. Piotr Gliński, co-creators of the exhibition, as well as the management and staff of the Auschwitz Museum.

The guests passed through the gate with the inscription "Arbeit Macht Frei" and the camp premises to the auditorium of the International Center for Education about Auschwitz and the Holocaust, which was the official opening venue of the exhibition.

'A nation can only consider itself proud and great if it does not sweep a national disgrace or something it is not proud or pleased about under the carpet. It is part of the history of every nation,' said Auschwitz survivor Marian Turski, who described the new Austrian exhibition as mature and thoughtful.

He noted that it is good that the new exhibition presents the historical truth: 'There is no nation or almost no nation at all, that can only be proud. At the same time, each of us must be consumed by anxiety of conscience towards those who committed detestable acts.'

'The most important thing is for you to be able to protect your generation from what happened to us. If you can create a society where human rights are respected and where there is no dehumanisation of the so-called stranger - then you will honour those who couldn't say a thing while being murdered,' Marian Turski addressed the audience.

'Racism and antisemitism did not fall from the

sky. Auschwitz did not fall from the sky. Antisemitism had already appeared in Austria before March 1938, when the Germans entered Austria and were welcomed enthusiastically in Vienna. These seeds, which had been scattered earlier, sprouted and flourished. Neighbours who had previously coexisted peacefully became enemies. They enriched themselves on the property of the Jews,' said President Alexander Van der Bellen.

'It is our wish and obligation to keep the memory of the victims alive. It is our wish and duty to remember that the victims and perpetrators were not only part of our society but were also shaped by it. Austria and, I quote here: "is partly responsible for the suffering that, albeit not the Austrian state as such, but its citizens brought upon individuals,' the president added.

'A new exhibition entitled "Far removed. Austria and Auschwitz" tells the story of the prisoners and the perpetrators who were members of our society. We cannot allow this to happen again,' Alexander Van der Bellen emphasised.

'In a moment, an exhibition will be unveiled in block 17, prepared by a specialist institution, the National Fund of the Republic of Austria for Victims of National Socialism, in cooperation with the Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum, and devoted to the history of this site, associated with Austrian citizens: victims who survived the ordeal here, but also the perpetrators who contributed to these crimes of genocide, which are still difficult to describe and understand,' said Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Culture, National Heritage and Sport Piotr Gliński.

'The presence of so many people gathered here: The survivors, representatives of the Austrian authorities, religious organisations, people



fernung  
erreich und Auschwitz

daleko, tak blisko  
tria a Auschwitz

Removed  
tria and Auschwitz



authorities, religious organisations, people responsible for cultivating memory and traces of the past, is of immense importance. There can never be too many such days, especially in this place, full of prayer, reverie, memories and reflections on how low man can fall and how precious the gift of life is. It is our duty and responsibility to remember and pass on to future generations the memory of victims - both those murdered and those who survived but have been irreparably wounded in body and soul,' stated the Deputy Prime Minister.

'I wish to thank the Austrian authorities present here for concrete actions related to remembrance: for today's exhibition and the purchase of neglected properties on the grounds of the Gusen camp. However, all present today must be aware that this process is

incomplete and that the obligation requires further actions,' Piotr Gliński added.

'The exhibition we open today remind us of every single person subjected to unimaginable suffering here. And so - this place for us, Austrian women and men, is exceedingly important. It is essential because it reveals the fractures in our history, including the fractures after 1945; fractures that still affect us today, and still affect us profoundly, and evoke our anger and sadness,' said Wolfgang Sobotka, President of the Austrian National Council.

'They affect us but define a clear mission of action for today and tomorrow. There were too many Austrians then, actively involved in the genocide crimes of the national socialist regime. The perpetrators, accomplices and accessories





were largely ignored in the previous exhibition. However, the new exhibition places the perpetrators and their deeds in the proper perspective,' he stressed.

'Auschwitz is a unique educational site for humanity. The international community of nations is bound together by the memory of the pain, suffering and murder perpetrated by the German National Socialists. Austrians also played a part in these crimes. Remembrance also means that joint efforts led us to overcome National Socialism, and Auschwitz became a symbol of the declaration "never again,' said Hannah Lessing, Secretary-General of the National Fund of the Republic of Austria for Victims of National Socialism.

'Managing the Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum is a great responsibility. It functions as the custodian of memory. Since Piotr Cywiński became the director of the Museum, Auschwitz has become a model place of remembrance - both on a European and world scale. The Auschwitz-Birkenau Foundation has ensured that many countries contribute to preserving this memory for posterity. I thank the Museum, Director Cywiński and his team for their

outstanding and motivating cooperation that has bound us very closely,' added Lessing.

'We will soon move on to the exhibition and pay tribute to the murdered. Two concepts will accompany us, and that is history and remembrance. They are very closely related but not identical. History consists of facts, dates, numbers and events. Memory is much more connected with experience, maturity and responsibility,' said director Piotr Cywiński

'Memory is the key to designing our future. Memory is rooted in the past but manifests itself in the present. And as we open this exhibition at the Auschwitz-Birkenau Memorial, we must remember that we are doing so in a place constitutive of the entire European, and perhaps even the global post-war period,' he added.

'I would like to wish everyone here today, regardless of the positions we hold, that this be a day for growing in experience, maturity, and responsibility,' he stressed.

After the ceremony, the guests paid tribute to the victims of the German Nazi concentration and extermination camp by laying wreaths at the



Death Wall in the courtyard of block 11 and participated in a guided tour of the exhibition in block 17. Lastly, they visited the site of the Auschwitz II-Birkenau camp.

The new Austrian exhibition "Far removed. Austria and Auschwitz" replaced the exhibition presented in Block 17 from 1978 to 2013.

In addition to the fate of Austrian victims of Auschwitz and the resistance movement co-founded by Austrian prisoners, the new exhibition also tells the story of the involvement of Austrians as perpetrators and accessories in crimes committed in the camp.

"Austria was part of the Third Reich from 1938 to 1945. Austria's history during the Nazi period obligates us to commemorate at least 110,000 Austrians who were victims of Nazi terror. They were murdered because they were Jews, "Gypsies" (Roma and Sinti), mentally or physically disabled people. They were persecuted and killed for their political views, religious beliefs and activities in the resistance movement or because they did not conform to the prevailing norms. Between 18,000 - 20,000 Austrians were deported to Auschwitz and later murdered or died due to the living conditions in the camp. Only an estimated 1,500 survived" - we read at the entrance to the exhibition."The

history of Austria under National Socialism also commits us to remember the co-responsibility of a substantial part of the population for permitting criminal acts of lawlessness. There were relatively few Austrians among the staff of Auschwitz, but some of them held key positions in the planning and execution of the mass murder. Although women did not have the same access to positions of authority in the camp system as men, some Austrian women participated in the crimes as supervisors, the so-called Aufseherin." - it stated.

The exhibition ends with a quote from Auschwitz survivor Ruth Kluger: "We say "Never again", but look at all the massacres that have happened in the meantime. Saying it should never happen again is absurd".

The exhibition was created by the scientific-curatorial team of Hannes Sulzenbacher and Albert Lichtblau, and the architect Martin Kohlbauer. The project to rebuild the exhibition was coordinated by the Secretary-General of the National Fund of the Republic of Austria for Victims of National Socialism, Hannah Lessing and Head of the Coordination Office of the National Fund, Claire Fritsch and her team.

E n t f e r n u n g

Österreich und Auschwitz

T a k d a l e k o ,

t a k b l i s k o

Austria a Auschwitz

F a r r e m o v e d

Austria and Auschwitz



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# DIGITAL COLLECTIVE MEMORY JOIN NEW ONLINE PLATFORM AND COMMUNITY!

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The Foundation Remembrance, Responsibility and Future (Foundation EVZ) and iRights.Lab invite you to become part of an online community dedicated to digital formats for historical-civic education. Under the name Digital Collective Memory, we have launched a platform that enables knowledge sharing, networking, online meetings and discussion.

Europe's culture of remembrance is highly fragmented. Comparisons between countries reveal different national traditions in dealing with the history of National Socialism, occupation, Holocaust or forced labor, among others. These differences are due not least to regionally specific historical experiences and sociopolitical conditions. But even within a single country, the places, potentials and approaches to historical-civic education are often highly differentiated.

In such a complex situation, it is difficult to maintain an overview of the historical analysis, let alone the digital formats on offer or the actors involved in remembrance culture in Europe. In practice, terms such as "remembrance culture 4.0," "digital cultural heritage," or "digital memory" and "digital history" are used to locate corresponding projects, but their precise definition remains blurred. So far, there is no central place where people can come together across countries and exchange ideas about approaches, solutions, challenges, and common (or divergent) guidelines for digital memory culture.

Yet the rapid pace of technological innovation and the democratization of its application possibilities make it more necessary than ever to conduct such a discourse and to involve a diversity of actors. Today, we are dealing with a great number of "players" in the field, because it is no longer just the better-known and larger places and institutions that are the only ones involved in the production, processing and communication of historical content or learning materials. They are joined by many

small private initiatives and projects, most of which are created on a voluntary basis or publicly funded. Dedicated, digitally experienced and content-savvy individuals or startups also belong to the field of digital remembrance culture.

## **Digital Collective Memory – a new community emerges**

These considerations gave rise to the idea of establishing a central online platform where members of all institutions – large and small – as well as private individuals can exchange ideas about the use of digital technologies in the context of historical education. The Berlin-based EVZ Foundation, together with the think tank iRights.Lab, have now created such a central place for exchange.

We have launched a new community called Digital Collective Memory, which consists mainly, but not exclusively, of people from Central and Eastern Europe. Here, events can be announced and discussed, feedback on projects can be solicited, and resources can be shared. The EVZ Foundation and iRights.Lab are calling on researchers, practitioners, programmers, (game) designer, employees of museums and memorial sites and everyone else involved in the creation of digital tools for memory culture to become active members of the Community!

In the long run, a place of encounter and exchange like Digital Collective Memory will help to gain new perspectives for one's own work and to let them flow into the implementation of new offerings. In this way,

by their description or by their tags



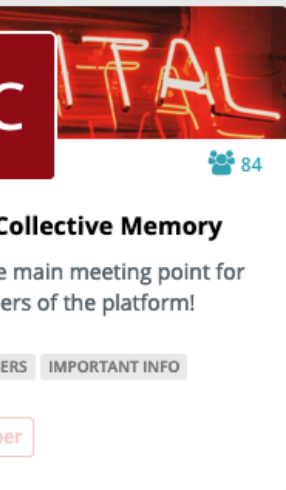
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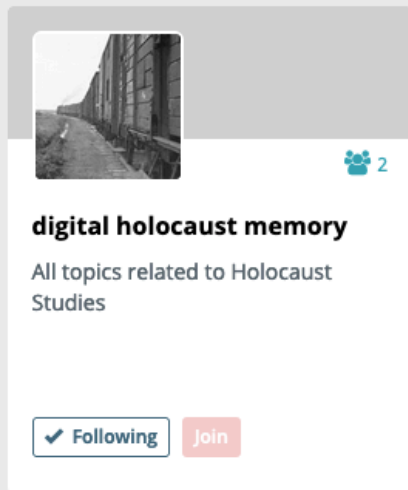
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**Collective Memory**  
The main meeting point for members of the platform!

84 members

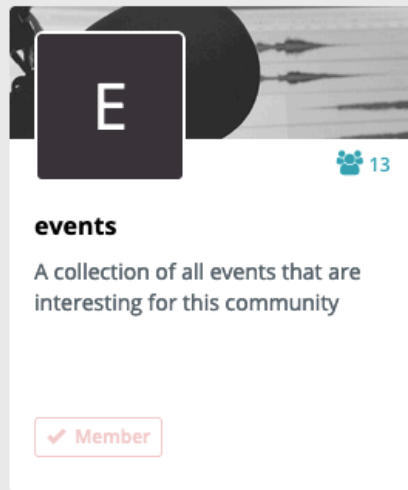
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**digital holocaust memory**  
All topics related to Holocaust Studies

2 members

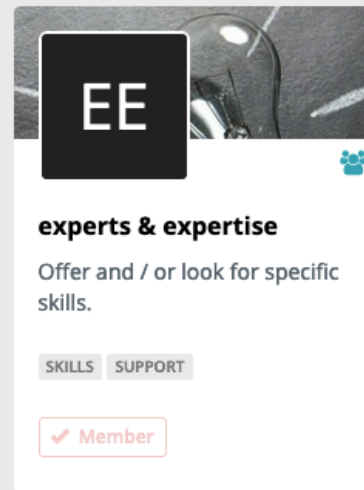
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**events**  
A collection of all events that are interesting for this community

13 members

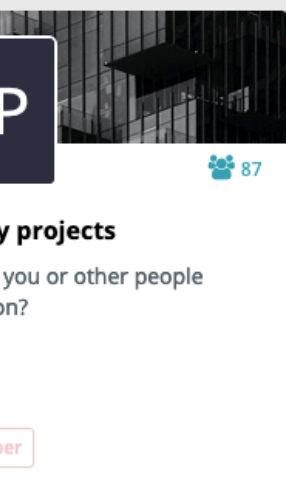
Member



**experts & expertise**  
Offer and / or look for specific skills.

SKILLS SUPPORT

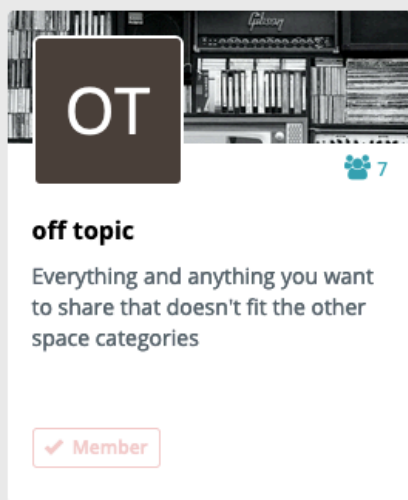
Member



**Group projects**  
Do you or other people have a project?

87 members

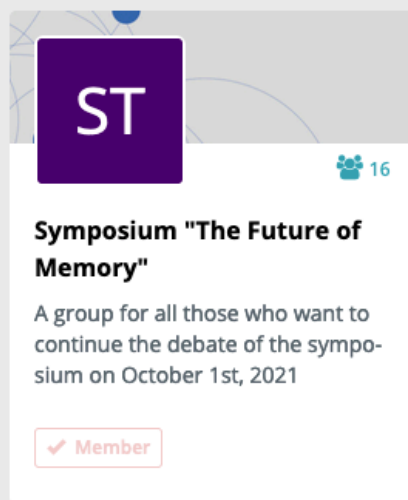
Member



**off topic**  
Everything and anything you want to share that doesn't fit the other space categories

7 members

Member



**Symposium "The Future of Memory"**  
A group for all those who want to continue the debate of the symposium on October 1st, 2021

16 members

Member

implementation of new offerings. In this way, the field of digital formats can further differentiate itself and offer meaningful points of contact in pluralistic societies. And that is precisely what is more important today than ever before. It is and must continue to be a concern to make the young target group in particular resistant to appropriation by right-wing extremist, populist, conspiracy-theory or inflammatory positions in the digital realm. The multitude of new actors revive discussions about "suitable" memorial formats and make history generally accessible to those who will no longer experience personal contact with contemporary witnesses, but have developed very specific demands for viewing and experiencing formats on the Internet.

### How can you participate?

If you are active in the field of digital memory

culture yourself, feel free to visit our platform! Anyone who wants to participate can register online. As soon as the registration is activated, the platform and all its functions are immediately available. Users are asked to create a profile that is as informative as possible to facilitate networking. If you wish, you can create a new group – a so-called space – to discuss a specific topic or project. On November 25, 2021, all members of the platform are invited to an online event dedicated to sharpen the profile of the community and further networking.

Digital Collective Memory:  
<https://memory-collective.org>  
[digitalcollective@irights-lab.de](mailto:digitalcollective@irights-lab.de)



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# 'UNSEEN OBJECTS, UNTOLD STORIES AND UNHEARD VOICES' AT NEW IWM SHOAH GALLERY

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Items on display at the Imperial War Museum's new exhibition include Holocaust survivor Gena Turgel's wedding dress from her marriage in Belsen and 'last letters' flung from trains by Jews on their way to death camps

It's the little things that catch at the heart: a bridal wreath sent to Britain on the Kindertransport; the pearl tie-pin deposited at a London branch of Barclays Bank by Marek Kellerman, a brush salesman from Bratislava, who never returned to retrieve it; a caption showing that one young Jewish woman's parents sent her off to Britain to be a domestic servant, armed with the twin "necessities" of a cookbook and an evening dress, primed to be ready for any occasion.

Then there are bigger things: Gena Turgel's wedding dress from her marriage in Belsen after liberation; an original railway carriage, typical of those used to deport the Jews of Belgium to the camps; an entire wall of more than 100 documents showing the paperwork mandatory for just one family to leave Austria; and, in front of the railway carriage, a row of almost unreadable "last letters", flung from trains by Jews on their way to death camps — unreadable because they are hardly possible to look at without tears.

The Imperial War Museum's magnificent new Holocaust and Second World War galleries open to the public next week (October 20), and each features a host of firsts, or, as the IWM puts it, "unseen objects, untold stories and unheard voices".

Even for the Jewish visitor who believes they have a familiarity with the Holocaust, there is so much to discover in the new galleries. With their opening, IWM becomes the first museum in the world to house dedicated Second World War and Holocaust galleries under the

same roof, allowing visitors to understand the connection between the progress of the war and the industrial-scale genocide carried out against the Jews.

The project has been six years in the making and cost £30.7 million. The attention to detail is incredible: many of the Holocaust rooms are brightly-lit spaces — because, as one of the curators told the JN, "we wanted to show that the Nazis did nothing in secret, so many of their crimes took place in open daylight".

Or there is even a specific typeface for the words of the perpetrators, and a separate, distinct typeface for the testimony of the victims. The latter, I am told, was designed by a pre-war Jewish typographer, but never completed. The IWM has filled in the gaps. The perpetrators' typeface is taken from an imprint of the keys on the typewriter used by Arthur Seyss-Inquart, the Nazi governor of the Netherlands. The typewriter itself is on show: he used it for countless orders relating to the deportation and murder of Dutch Jews.

Many of the thousands of artefacts, films and pictures on show were in the museum's previous Holocaust collection, but many more are new and are differently displayed. For example, a section on "book-burning" would perhaps previously have shown books on the floor or pictures of book bonfires. Now the "books" (wooden facsimiles) are restored to the shelves, so that the visitor can pick out work by, say, Sigmund Freud, and discover the fate of the author. And this exhibition no longer refers to "Kristallnacht", the notorious Night of Broken Glass in November 1938, but rather "the





View of the new Holocaust Galleries at IWM London, opening 20th October 2021.

“Kristallnacht”, the notorious Night of Broken Glass” in November 1938, but rather “the November pogroms”, to remind us that it wasn’t just property which was destroyed on November 9 and 10 1938 — 90 people were killed in the rioting.

We begin — and, bearing in mind that many of the visitors will be schoolchildren aged 14 plus — in the most heartwarming way, showing Jewish families enjoying their lives before the war. Here are thousands of ever-changing pictures and films of Orthodox and secular Jews in central Europe, laughing and messing about in boats, or like Graziella Falco from Milan, celebrating her bat mitzvah. There are football matches, swimmer and ski-ers, musicians, people shopping or strolling by a beach. In other words, you and me; people going about their daily lives with not a hint of the catastrophe waiting in the wings.

And simultaneously we are introduced to the theme of “totems” — life-size figures whose pictures appear throughout the exhibition, enabling us to meet them eye-to-eye. It is a striking thing to do and is at its most chilling in a

display showing the most senior Nazis, those closest to Hitler. Here, life-size, is Goebbels, with Goring and Himmler close by. It’s a genuinely frightening moment.

Some of the material has been lent to the IWM by Yad Vashem and the Wiener Library. Those familiar with the latter’s singular collection of Nazi “board games” will be unsurprised to see its loan of the repulsive game, “Juden Raus” or “Jews Out”, in which players had to collect a Jewish figure and dispatch him or her to Palestine. “Even senior Nazis thought this was too much”, a curator says. “They thought it trivialised their serious message about Jews.”

By 1936 Hitler was triumphantly staging that year’s Olympic Games in Berlin. But just 25 miles away, construction was underway for the Sachsenhausen concentration camp.

Up until Operation Barbarossa and the Nazi invasion of the Soviet Union in June 1941, the IWM curators believe that the Holocaust was not inevitable. But as the tide of war began to turn against the Axis powers, the frenzy to kill Europe’s Jews grew and grew, first with their walling up in





Senior Conservator, Jenna Taylor installs a fish knife belonging to Mr and Mrs Schindler. Pictured in The Holocaust Gallery at IWM London, Lambeth Road. Photographed 30th Sept 2021

walling up in ghettos and then with their transport by train to the death camps. And the cries of the victims — and those about to become victims — are louder on the walls of the exhibition. One man writes: "Shall we go? and if so, how?" Herta Nathorff, a paediatrician, says bitterly: "Father says he didn't want to sell the company. The name — it should go under, with us".

One of the most remarkable things on show is part of the Oneg Shabbat archive, a metal box containing painstakingly assembled

contemporary witness statements and documentation, organised by Emanuel Ringelblum in the Warsaw Ghetto. There were three main parts of this archive. In the first and the second, documents were stored in 10 such metal boxes and two giant milk churns. They contained material showing that Jews in the ghettos were aware of the activities of the Einsatzgruppen, the troops carrying out mass shootings of Jews in other parts of Europe. Two of the Oneg Shabbat collection were dug up post-war from their burial sites; a third, of documents also hidden in milk churns. is



believed to be buried today under the Chinese embassy in Warsaw, and has never been recovered.

Of all the thousands of images in this extraordinary permanent exhibition, a curator says that one picture is seared in her mind. "It's a young woman holding a baby. It's the last moments of their lives. She's waiting to be shot. I can't forget that picture". She doesn't say so because she doesn't need to: it could have been any one of us.

The IWM permanent Holocaust and Second World War galleries open to the public on October 20, admission free. The museum is publishing a new book of untold personal stories, *The Holocaust*, by IWM historian James Bulgin, on the same date. Personal stories also feature in an illustrated history of the Second World War, *Total War, A People's History*, by Kate Clements, Paul Cornish and Vikki Hawkins, published in partnership with the IWM.

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# HOW TO RAISE A NAZI. REPORTAGE ON FANATICAL EDUCATION

## REVIEW OF THE POLISH EDITION OF GREGOR ZIEMER'S BOOK

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**"When reading this book, we are confronted with very contemporary and painful-sounding questions: In the process of education, do those responsible for the young person's value system emphasise openness towards the diversity of the world or vice versa: do they discourage that which is Different?"**

(from the foreword by Prof. Bogdan de Barbaro)

Gregor Ziemer, an American educator, writer and correspondent, lived in Germany from 1928 to 1939, where he served as principal of an American school in Berlin. The children of American diplomats, among others, attended the school. Before the outbreak of the Second World War, he devoted himself to observing and researching the education system introduced by the Nazis. The result of his observations was a book he wrote, *Education for Death*, published upon his return to the United States in 1941, in which he detailed his observations. The book was published in Polish in 2021 and constitutes a frightening description of what politicised and doctrinally driven education can do to a young person's mind.

The impetus for examining the Third Reich's education system was an event that Ziemer writes about in the prologue to the book. On one winter's day, he witnessed a German secondary school pupil assault an American school pupil. When Ziemer decided to intervene and reported the situation to the principal of the assailants' school, he was met with incomprehension and astonishment, or in fact, approval of the violence that had taken place that afternoon. "Since 1933, I have wondered what goes on in Nazi schools and educational centres. I knew that they were the real cradles and incubators of Nazi ideology. But I wondered what is actually being taught in these schools - whether the old German system of education with its diligence, discipline and emphasis on law has been replaced by a fanatical new type of pedagogy. I was very curious to know what

methods are used and what spirit prevails there" (p. 24) - Ziemer wrote in the prologue. Gaining insight into the methods, assumptions and operation of Nazi Germany's educational institutions was not easy for a foreigner, especially an American, and particularly, a school principal. With the help of bribes, Ziemer gained the trust of the education officer, who submitted a report on the matter to the Ministry of Education. Ziemer then wrote to the Minister of National Education, Bernhard Rust, requesting he visit German schools to "understand the new Nazi methods and their successful implementation by his ministry" (p. 29). Shortly after, he was invited to meet the minister. During the conversation, which he quotes in detail in the book, he explained his interest in education in Nazi Germany, which was extraordinary in the Minister's opinion. He then received from Minister Rust the official textbook for teachers "Education and Teaching - official publication of the Reich and Prussian Ministry for Science, Training and Education of the People" (*Erziehung und Unterricht - Amtliche Ausgabe des Reichs und Preussischen Ministeriums für Wissenschaft, Erziehung und Volksbildung*). According to Ziemer, the main theses of the textbook included an emphasis on strength and physical fitness in students, unconditional obedience and therefore acceptance of a priori knowledge, and ignoring the needs of particular individuals: "Pupils who cannot achieve the desired results [...] or who show any weakness should not be admitted to secondary schools" (p. 35). According to Rust, it is essential to divide education by gender: "The system outlines a stark difference between girls





Gregor Ziemer (po lewej) i F. R. Buckley  
University of Texas at Arlington Libraries, Special Collections  
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bearers of strength. Boys and girls have nothing in common. Their goals and purpose in life are fundamentally different. Boys will become soldiers; girls will give birth" (p. 35). Accordingly, in terms of long-term goals, boys were to pursue physical development, develop knowledge of the German language, biology, mathematics and history, while girls were to primarily study eugenics (to ensure the purity of their children's race) and housekeeping. However, it is worth mentioning that party obligations were paramount. For these reasons, the timetable may have changed to suit the needs of the Party. Each school was to have a so-called *Arbeitsgemeinschaft*, or "a military-community group in the school, rejecting grades, credits or formal teaching" (p. 36). Its student members formed a kind of National

Socialist ideological community that was meant to inspire and influence the other students.

Rust was openly critical of democratic principles, contrasting them with principles based on force: "Before we can introduce a new education of Strength and properly discuss a new system of culture, a new order must prevail; a new regime inspired by the Will of Strength and Force.... The new socialist union of our people, which is the realisation of our Führer's vision, came about as a result of a brutal, sharp conflict conducted by the militant units of our Party" (p. 38). The following pages of Rust's textbook are striking in their disgust at the intellectual development of children and young people and their emphasis on unification and homogenisation of the needs of the masses,

homogenisation of the needs of the masses, instead of the development of diverse individuals: "The principal aim of the schools is to educate human beings to understand that the State is more important than the individual and that individuals must be willing and ready to sacrifice themselves for the Nation and the Führer. [...] The ideology of National Socialism is a sacred, inviolable foundation. It must not be degraded by detailed explanations or discussions. It is a sanctified unity that must be received by the disciples as a sanctified unity" (p. 40). Doubtful discussions, the search for answers to questions that troubled pupils - were foredoomed to failure, and the assumptions of Nazi ideology were to be present in every subject: from biology through history to physical education. All for the Führer.

Ziener received a ministerial permit in the spring of 1939 to visit the educational institutions of the Third Reich and soon began his tour of the educational and formative institutions that implemented Nazi ideology from the moment a child is born until the end of their life, preferably dedicated to the service of the Führer.

The Third Reich and thousands of bureaucrats in its service oversaw the lives of its citizens before their arrival into the world. As a totalitarian state, not only was female reproduction controlled, but reproductive rights were permanently denied to women whose offspring could in any way deviate from the model German citizen through their mass sterilisation. It is astonishing that the entire procedure, from the decision on permanent infertility to its physical execution, proceeded legally under the law of the time, i.e., in accordance with the law on the prevention of the birth of hereditarily encumbered offspring (Erbgesundheitsgesetz): "The undesirable, the retarded, those suffering from incurable diseases, even those of a rebellious disposition [!] will no longer have children [...]. It was the Führer's wish, and the young Germans carried out his orders. [...] I asked what type of women were subject to such discipline and was informed that they were mentally ill women, women with low immunity, women who had proven during other births that their offspring were not strong. They were women with defects" (pp. 49-50).



In caring for 'racial purity', the Nazi system tried hard to support German families: a couple that wanted to get married could do so after providing evidence of racial purity. As a wedding present, they received a copy of Mein Kampf from the party, and the party supported the young family financially by giving them a loan. If four children were born within the new family unit over four years, the loan was remitted. Unmarried but racially healthy and pure women, i.e., those who, according to the Party, could become mothers and give birth to Hitler's future soldiers, were guaranteed state support through the network of existing Maternal and Child Welfare Departments (Hilfswerk Mutter und Kind). The unmarried mothers-to-be stayed there at the expense of the state until they gave birth. During their stay, pregnant women who were insufficiently committed to supporting Nazism were given appropriate literature or even a course in Nazi ideology: "The whole concept of conceiving and bearing children was taken to a completely different level by the Third Reich. Copulating was a biological problem. Training offered in homes helped mothers and girls understand how essential frequent intimate



Walt Disney, *Education for Death* 0150 *The Making of the Nazi* (1943). Kadr z filmu nakręconego na podstawie książki G.Ziemera

frequent intimate embraces with men were to their health [...] A few weeks away from their men, daily lectures on sexual issues, stimulating literature [...] all help increase fertility rates. And that is our ambition: to increase fertility rates " (p. 58).

The Mother and Child Welfare Houses opened up a further, lasting relationship: after giving birth and returning home, the state, through officials from the welfare service (Nationalsozialistische Volkswohlfahrt - NSV), monitored how young mothers coped with raising its youngest citizens into dedicated Nazis. An NSV employee periodically visited the homes where the children lived and interviewed the mother and child to ensure that the young citizen was adequately introduced to Nazi ideology from an early age.

The first stage in the institutional implementation of Nazism was already the nurseries (Kindertagesstätte), which could be attended by German toddlers of working

parents, of course of Aryan origin. When handing children over to the care of the nurses, parents signed a "consent that while in the nursery the children would be under the Party's jurisdiction. The party could deal with them as it saw fit" (p. 73). Children's minds were inculcated with the model of obedience, serving them only the right truths in life: "[...] children were brought up in absolute discipline and obedience [...]. They learned to venerate the Führer and look upon him as the saviour of Germany. Their minds were too immature to comprehend all his great achievements, but no child left the institution without learning that Hitler was a superhuman. [...] the minds of little boys were imbued with the first great desire to become Hitler's soldiers, while the first maternal instincts were developed in girls". (p. 74). It is worth mentioning that co-educational groups were allowed in the first stage of education. In subsequent years, however, the education of German boys and girls was conducted separately, in a profiled manner. Six-year-old boys were thus becoming Pimpfs.



# JAK WYCHOWAĆ NAZISTĘ

REPORTAŻ O FANATYCZNEJ EDUKACJI



GREGOR ZIEMER

They were helped in their schooling by the textbook *Pimpf im Dienst* [Pimpf on duty], where they learned about military operations, manoeuvres, shooting, gymnastics or map-drawing. Daily marches of at least a dozen kilometres were an integral part of their training. During his visits and conversations with teachers, Ziemer did not learn of any problems related to child psychology, pedagogy, motivation or the teaching of critical thinking. The teachers were focused on something entirely different: "They were driven solely by one idea: to make the boy think, feel and act like a real Nazi" (p. 90). This was to be achieved by inculcating ideological content into as many school subjects as possible: from nature through geography and especially history. The idea of leadership, continuous struggle, expanding living space or maintaining racial purity could be discussed through the example of a poem, an observation of the life of ants or criticism of the democratic system in the United States.

The party ensured that the little citizen had little time for any reflection - after school, every

boy had responsibilities to the party: "For a Pimpf, the school day does not end at one o'clock. [...] He meets other Pimpfs at the local headquarters. There, tasks imposed by the NSV or the Party await him; [...] he performs hundreds of useful jobs - for free, of course" (p. 99). Filling the children's time also had another additional objective: to reduce the importance of the family structure and replace it with a peer group with carefully directed and only rightly accepted behaviour.

When a boy reached the age of 14, he could join the Hitlerjugend, where he continued to acquire knowledge until the age of 18. During this period, he continued his schooling, focusing on developing his physical vigour and acquiring knowledge in Party history, military geography, botany, zoology or chemistry (p. 200). The territory of the Third Reich had a system of numerous Hitlerjugend centres, including sea, air and motorised centres. According to Ziemer, about six million boys participate in various sporting events organised every year by the Hitlerjugend.

After completing their education, boys did a year's work service and then joined the army. If they wished to study, they had the opportunity to do so, but to a limited extent - the favoured courses were those that served the development of the state and its high social role: medical, legal, teaching or military. Minister Rust clearly outlined the social roles of future graduates in his instruction "Education and Teaching..." (Erziehung und Unterricht): "The men and women charged with the health and prosperity of the nation's political ideology and culture must feel part of the people, must live with the people and think like the people" (p. 221).

Young women were also allowed to study, but as Ziemer states, female students made up about 10% (p. 220) of the total number of students, which had to do with the very different approach to education for girls.

Although children's education in the early years was co-educational, at the age of six, boys and girls were separated, and their education proceeded separately from then on. The aim was to profile children for the gender-specific roles that the party envisaged for them. The role of men was to fight, that of women to bear



Germany turn fourteen, they are classified as Jungmädel, young girls. During this time, they receive the basics of education the Party deems important. Most importantly, however, they are made aware of their mission in the Third Reich - to be the parents of healthy children. Therefore, the topic of sexuality is introduced early and realistically [...] The state is primarily interested in their physical health. The Jungmädel are supposed to have a healthy body, a balanced mind and an unshakable conviction that the saviour of Germany is Adolf Hitler" (p. 113). It is worth adding that Ziemer did not elaborate on what happened to children who were unwilling to fulfil the strict roles assigned to them by the party. Shockingly, his observations showed that the familiarisation of German girls with their future role of motherhood occurred before they were physically or mentally capable of performing it: "[...] Jungmädel, received education sufficient for them to know how to read, write, and do a little bit of calculation. Most of their education concerned housekeeping and preparation for childbearing [...] Is this not their mission? [...] Is there anything more important for girls than getting married and having children? [...]" (p. 114). Young girls had a severely limited curriculum, which focused solely on learning skills valuable to a future mother and housewife: "The bulk of the day was devoted to housekeeping, eugenics and physical education. [...] These lessons provided solid knowledge of every stage of housework, cooking and caring for children and the sick. Their programme also included detailed lectures on gender issues. Rassenkunde, racial science, revealed the defects of non-Aryan races [...]. Weekends are devoted to semi-military walking tours, which often begin at noon on Saturday and continue until Sunday evening" (p. 115). It was evident that care was taken to constantly stimulate young minds with the only right and acceptable vision of their future, in complete isolation from the family environment.

One can conclude that every aspect of children's lives was strictly regulated and programmed by the Party, including the choice of literature: "German schools did not have the kind of libraries we know. Girls, in particular, are not permitted to buy random books. Any literature that mentions politics in any way can only be bought at Brauner Laden, the brown shop" (p. 124).

At the age of fourteen, girls joined the Association of German Girls (Bund Deutscher Mädel), where they consolidated the knowledge required to fulfil their only legitimate roles as mothers and wives. At the association, they continued to take lectures on housekeeping and eugenics. Ziemer reported that each year, about 500,000 Jungmädel were admitted to BDM schools (p. 179). "Every girl [...] had to learn the duties of a mother before she reached the age of sixteen so that she could bear children. Why should girls bother themselves with higher mathematics, art, drama or literature? They can bear children without such knowledge" (p. 170). Characteristically, Ziemer also cited statistics: in *Mein Kampf*, there are 30 pages devoted to boys' education and seven lines (!) dedicated to girls' education.

It is worth noting the fact that it creates a certain alternative reality that does not recognise current pedagogical, psychological or medical knowledge. Ziemer's interviews reveal the megalomaniacal confidence with which the Nazi teachers promoted what they considered to be modern methods of working with children: "[...] foreigners are finally coming to grips with the fact that we have positioned ourselves at the forefront of world education and have something to offer that the world should begin to emulate if it recognises what is good for it". (p. 142).

Fortunately, the world moved in a different direction, but Ziemer's book is undeniably a timeless warning to those responsible for children and young people's education and mental health. It is a loud warning against politically controlled, ideologically profiled education, against the liquidation of free and unrestricted culture and science, against the attempt to build a society – a homogenous and xenophobic monolith - which considers otherness to be evil and a threat. It is a clash of two forms of approach to a young person: respect, acceptance and tolerance of diversity as opposed to xenophobia, an attempt to unify gender and social roles, education in hatred to everything that is different.

Titleł: *Jak wychować nazistę.*  
*Reportaż o fanatycznej edukacji*  
Author: Gregor Ziemer  
łansł. Anna Dorota Kamińska  
Publishing house: Znak Literanova  
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# THE UNIVERSITY OF BURGOS SUPPORTS THE MEMORY OF AUSCHWITZ

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The vice-chancellor of the University of Burgos, Manuel Pérez Mateos, and Álvaro Enrique de Villamor y Soraluze, President of the National Auschwitz Birkenau Institute in Spain and Honorary Consul of the Republic of Poland in Spain, signed a cooperation agreement for the joint development of activities aimed at commemorating the atrocities perpetrated in human history, as well as demonstrating the value of solidarity experienced by the prisoners of the Auschwitz concentration camp.

The National Institute of Auschwitz-Birkenau in Spain carries out its activities in accordance with the mission of the Auschwitz Memorial. The goal of the Spanish Institute is, among other things, to assist the governments of individual regions in Spain, including universities, foundations, public and private institutions, in developing educational tools on both the history of Auschwitz and contemporary issues relating to the protection of human rights.

Álvaro Enrique de Villamor and the vice-chancellor expressed their conviction that this partnership, supported by the deputy vice-chancellor for social responsibility, culture and sport, Delfin Ortega, will bring about an increased awareness among the academic community on the values of democracy, peace and human rights.

- We are convinced that cooperation with the University of Burgos will somewhat combine two crucial elements that are essential in creating democratic societies in the European context. On the one hand, it concerns education in social and technical sciences at the university and, on the other hand, education in social values and the strengthening of memory, which we must continue to work on - said the Honorary Consul of the Republic of Poland. The President of the Institute said, "without social memory, there can be no social responsibility, which is why the agreement is of great value".

The collaboration will begin in the coming

weeks with the organisation of a conference at the Teatro Principal in Burgos, during which Vice-Chancellor Delfin Ortega shall be appointed honorary curator of the main exhibition of the Auschwitz-Birkenau Institute, currently located at the San Salvador Monastery in Oña. The meeting will also serve as an opportunity to exchange thoughts on the issues presented in the exhibition, "German Nazi Death Camp Auschwitz Konzentrationslager".

The deputy vice-chancellor explained that the conference is the beginning of this relationship but that the primary goal is to develop activities that promote remembrance, especially since the subject of Auschwitz offers the possibility for very universal and cross-sectional reflection. Mr Ortega pointed out that the directions of action will support the dissemination of knowledge in society. He also stated that a project was in place to establish a degree course at the University of Burgos in cooperation with the National Institute of Auschwitz Birkenau in Spain.

The agreement also foresees in-depth projects for education and training. - Auschwitz does not only represent the anti-values of crimes committed in the past by people; Auschwitz is also a melting pot of values found in the vast number of survivors' accounts. They spoke about people who, in the extreme world of the camp, were able to support others - often strangers selflessly - and in some cases were capable of sacrificing their lives for them - said the president of the Institute.

- The contrast between values and anti-values allows us to work comprehensively on various levels - and I am confident that together with the University of Burgos, we are initiating a vital milestone for the National Institute of Auschwitz Birkenau in Spain - he stressed.

The Vice-Chancellor Pérez Mateos thanked the Institute for its interest in retrieving social and historical memory, which reminds us of human nature.

- It has been more than 80 years, and yet we are still shaken by this story. I believe that this is how it should be. The university can play an important role here. Our students and the entire academic community need to be constantly reminded of what memory brings - which is why it is so important to work with your Institute to develop our activities - he said.

The University of Burgos is a public university. About 10,000 students are enrolled in 30 undergraduate courses and 20 doctoral programmes.

The Auschwitz-Birkenau Institute is engaged in international cooperation and offers numerous cultural, social and educational projects in close cooperation with the Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum. The Institute aims to build and continuously expand the network of people involved in the activities of memory diplomacy at the Auschwitz Museum and to reach out to those who have never visited the Memorial. The Institute undertakes these activities in cooperation with institutions dealing with the subject of the Holocaust in the world, educational and cultural institutions, associations, and people committed to these issues.

The vice-chancellor of the University of Burgos, Manuel Pérez Mateos, and Álvaro Enrique de Villamor y Soraluze, President of the National Auschwitz Birkenau Institute in Spain and Honorary Consul of the Republic of Poland in Spain



# ANTISEMITISM IN FOOTBALL: EDUCATION IS KEY

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In April of this year, a section of FC Vitesse supporters chanted " Hamas, Hamas, Jews to the gas" at a rally before the Dutch first division match against Ajax. The story made some headlines but then quickly disappeared again, as the authorities promised to investigate and the sports news agenda moved on, to the next round of matches.

But this was not a one off. To fans of the Amsterdam-based club and other sides (such as Tottenham Hotspur of London) that are perceived as Jewish due to their history or fan-base encountering antisemitism in or around football stadiums has become a depressingly familiar event in recent times. Just this October, a group holding up Israeli flags at the UEFA Conference League game between Union Berlin and Maccabi Haifa in the German capital were subjected to antisemitic abuse and doused with beer by Union supporters.

German club Borussia Dortmund are one of the few top level clubs who have consistently confronted this problem over the last few years. In 2019, they and co-founders Anne Frank House Amsterdam, fare network (Football against Racism in Europe) and Dutch side Feyenoord set up the "Changing the Chants" (CtC) project, an European Union-supported initiative geared towards educating supporters and the setting up of guidelines for the fight against antisemitism. The two-year multi-faceted project culminated in a two-day conference at the Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum and the International Youth Meeting Centre in Oświęcim on August 31st - September 1st 2021.

About 50 guests from eleven different countries travelled to the hybrid offline/online event, while more than 500 participants followed the many interesting lectures, debates and panel discussions remotely. For those present, the conference included guided visits to the Auschwitz-Birkenau Memorial, as well as a guided walk

through the town of Oświęcim and its Jewish Museum.

Andrzej Kacorzyk, Director of the International Centre for Education about Auschwitz and the Holocaust, welcomed participants in the auditorium. In his opening note, Kacorzyk reminded the audience that unopposed hate and discrimination had laid the foundations for the horrors of the Second World War: "Antisemitism, propaganda, building national pride on the basis of racism led the Germans to the crime of the holocaust, to thousands of war crimes committed in Poland and so many other European countries. That's why our meeting, our work, our activity, is so important for the world today."

In a panel on "Remembrance and Education - the potential impact on society through football and new target groups", Nataliia Tkachenko, a State Museum staff member working on educational projects, said that in the recent years the historical research has aimed at deepening and finding new perspective to different aspects of the history of the camp while in the educational work more and more focus is made to present this history through the prism of individual and personal experiences. Willem Wagenaar, a researcher working with Anne Frank House, recalled the positive impact of Feyenoord supporters meeting an older Jewish woman who was herself a fan of the Rotterdam-based club. They realised that their chants were hurting real people living in their own city. "All of a sudden, it's no longer 'the Jews.' They see a face," Steven Berger, a fan liaison officer for the club





Fot. Mareen Meyer

Berger, a fan liaison officer for the club added. He called it an "eye-opener" for many participants.

Many clubs were reluctant to tackle antisemitism for fear of upsetting sections of their fanbase, said Pavel Klymenko, Head of Policy at the fare network: "Football's reckoning with antisemitism has come late. Clubs find it very difficult to confront their own supporters." Those that do, however, have found that pointing out the role of Jewish players and supporters in the club's history has often seen a change of attitude. All speakers agreed that education, not punishment was key. "Education must be included in the regulatory sanctions framework," said Chris Gibbons, the London-based director of Inside Inclusion, a consultancy working with clubs, players and federations on equality, diversity and anti-discrimination. "Participants should be

encouraged to become agents of change themselves," he added.

In his speech outlining CtC's guidelines for the fight against antisemitism, Wagenaar emphasised that supporters' involvement was crucial. "Fans cause the problem but they are not the problem they are part of the solution," he said. "Education is not telling supporters what they cannot do, but speaking to them about topics that are of interest to the fan base, that relate to their pride in the club and in their city."

Daniel Lörcher, the head of Borussia Dortmund's Corporate Responsibility department, sees football clubs as "social actors", that can be utilised to bring about change. He expressed the hope that the concluding stage of the CtC project at the Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum was only the beginning in that respect.

# INTERNATIONAL FINE ARTS COMPETITION

## “PEOPLE DEALT THIS FATE TO PEOPLE” IN MEMORY OF AUGUST KOWALCZYK

**The August Kowalczyk International Art Competition “People Dealt this fate to People” is organised yearly by the Kossak Family Artists Youth Culture Centre No. 1 in Tychy and the Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum.**

The origins of the competition are linked to the Month of National Remembrance when the institutions mentioned above and the Auschwitz Preservation Society organised trips every April for young people from Tychy to the Auschwitz-Birkenau Memorial Site. The first city-wide competition was held in 1993 due to pupils expressing their thoughts on visiting the former German Nazi concentration and extermination camp. The huge interest in the competition led to its first nationwide coverage in 1999, and the first international edition was held in 2005. Since then, the competition has been held every year, with previous editions held biennially.

In 2013, the competition was dedicated to the memory of a long-time friend of MDK 1 (Youth Culture Centre No. 1) and co-founder of the competition, Auschwitz survivor number 6804, August Kowalczyk. August Kowalczyk, together with other former concentration camp prisoners – Grzegorz Czempas, Florian Granek, Barbara Puc, Halina Birenbaum, Barbara Kruczkowska, Artur Krasnokucki, Wacław Diakończyk, Jerzy Fijołek and Jerzy Maria Ulatowski - shared their camp experiences with the competition laureates and for many years chaired the competition jury.

The post-competition exhibitions were displayed repeatedly beyond the walls of MDK 1 (Youth Culture Centre No. 1). In 1999, an International Seminar was held under the auspices of the “Building New Bridges” Project in Jerusalem. In connection with this event, the post-competition exhibition of the 4th edition of the competition was handed over to the Israeli Ministry of Education and Culture and the

Israel Youth Exchange Council after a ceremony commemorating the victims of the Holocaust on 6 December 1999 in Jerusalem. The collection of works by young artists was donated to Yad Vashem to be presented as a travelling exhibition. In 2005, the 7th edition post-competition exhibition was presented in the Warsaw gallery under the patronage of UNICEF. The works of the competition’s 8th and 9th edition winners (2006 and 2007) were donated to the Centre for Prayer and Dialogue in Oświęcim. In 2008, the post-competition yield was presented in Poznań at the Complex of Music Schools and MDK 3 (Youth Culture Centre No.3) and in 2009 at the Archdiocesan Museum in Katowice. In January 2011, at Mariacka Street in Katowice, one could see the open-air exhibition “Child in Auschwitz. We remember...”. organised in cooperation with the Katowice Branch of the Institute of National Remembrance. In February 2020, the works of the competition winners were presented in Katowice at the COP headquarters on Młyńska Street as a commemoration of the 75th anniversary of the liberation of the Auschwitz Nazi German concentration and extermination camp. The exhibition was organised in cooperation with the Auschwitz Preservation Society, the Centre for Non-Governmental Organisations in Katowice and the Katowice Branch of the IPN Struggle and Martyrdom Commemoration Office.

Three years ago, representatives of the competition organisers decided it was necessary to introduce changes both in the execution method of the competition themes and its organisational structure. For the past three





necessary to introduce changes both in the execution method of the competition themes and its organisational structure. For the past three editions, the competition themes have created a new space for intergenerational dialogue. Participants are encouraged to produce artwork regarding contemporary images of enslavement and present their thoughts about the subject of the camp and the theme of war and enslavement. Moreover, we want the competition participants to refer in their works to the memories contained in books written by former concentration camp prisoners and to draw attention to the relevant sentences

voiced by the prisoners. We want to establish this intergenerational dialogue through such activities and create a situation in which young people talk, experience, and think about such distant historical events.

One of the forms of summing up each edition of the competition is a catalogue containing the awarded, distinguished and qualified works for the exhibition. The change of the publication's graphic layout also draws the attention of a broader group of people to these painful pages of history. Equally, however, it indicates that young people today find themselves in various

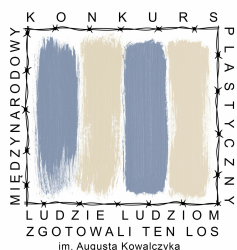


situations in which they experience humiliation, pain and suffering. The most touching works that appeared during the last three editions of the competition referring to contemporary images of enslavement arouse astonishment, surprise, and sadness and horror in the recipients. It is worth drawing the attention of future generations to the need to build respect and treat people equally, regardless of the differences that exist. Consequently, in this edition, we have decided to use the words of Marian Turski, spoken during the commemoration of the 75th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz, as inspiration for authors of artworks. These words still resonate strongly and are therefore worth recalling.

Young people over the age of 11 are encouraged to participate in the competition and are welcome to prepare works in various techniques and formats. Participation in the current edition is free of charge, which is also a key element for us, the organisers, as it allows more people to participate. Moreover, this year's summary of the competition combined with the opening of an exhibition of the awarded, distinguished and qualified works will take place at the Auschwitz Memorial. We are convinced that such an exhibition at the Auschwitz Memorial will give it an additional symbolic dimension. The exhibition is also the result of excellent cooperation between the Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum and the Kossak Family Artists Youth Culture Centre No. 1 in Tychy.

We invite you to participate in the competition and disseminate information regarding this event.

The competition rules are available at: [mdk1.tychy.pl/konkursy/](http://mdk1.tychy.pl/konkursy/)







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# THIS FASCIST LIFE: RADICAL RIGHT MOVEMENTS IN INTERWAR EUROPE – A NEW EXHIBITION AT THE WIENER HOLOCAUST LIBRARY

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The Wiener Holocaust Library and the European Fascist Movements 1918 – 1941 project are pleased to announce a new temporary exhibition, This Fascist Life: Radical Right Movements in Interwar Europe.

As right-wing radicalism grows in strength in Europe and elsewhere, this timely exhibition looks back to the first manifestations of the destructive phenomenon of fascism.

Fascist political parties, militia and movements emerged across Europe in the years after the First World War. United by ultra-nationalist ideas and similarities of style and action, these movements shaped, and in some places remade, politics and society. Fascist movements mobilised on the streets to attack their opponents and to support the accession to power of fascist parties in countries such as Italy, Germany and Austria. Later, they helped to enable German occupations and the Nazis' policies of persecution and genocide across Europe.

This exhibition focuses on the experiences of rank and file members of fascist movements in

the interwar period. It draws upon new research to explore people's motivations for joining and remaining members; their day-to-day experiences of participation in marches, rallies, orchestrated violence, sports and leisure clubs. This Fascist Life examines the role played by the rituals and symbols adopted by fascists: their uniforms, salutes and songs. It explores the significance of notions of masculinity to these groups, as well as the cross-national connections between these nationally constituted organisations.

Alongside this exhibition, which runs until February 2022, the Library will be hosting a series of virtual and in-person events examining the phenomenon of fascism across Europe from the 1920s to more recent radical right movements.





# SHANGHAI JEWISH REFUGEES MUSEUM

Shanghai is a place that has appeared on many pages of history. However, much of the complicated fate of the city and its inhabitants remain undiscovered. One attempt to preserve the memory of the extraordinary places, events and people of this city has been made by the Shanghai Jewish Refugees Museum.

The museum was established in 2007 to commemorate the Jewish refugees of the 30s and 40s of the XX century. It is located in the Hongkou district, with the Moses Synagogue as its focal point. In 2017, a project to expand the museum began, which involved expropriating houses on the west and south sides of the former Moses Synagogue site. The building has been modernised while retaining its original appearance. The exhibition space has been given a new look and enlarged to around 4,000 square metres. In addition, the number of exhibits has increased from 150 to approximately 1,000. The museum building is the only surviving historical site in China that reflects the lives of Jewish refugees in China during World War II.

At its inception in 2007, the Shanghai Jewish Refugees Museum faced the challenge of assembling enough exhibits to tell the story of the approximately 20,000 Jewish refugees who sought refuge in Shanghai's Hongkou district during World War II. Since 2010, when the museum received a toy rickshaw donated by a former Jewish resident, additional gifted items have started arriving in Shanghai. The increased interest in the museum's activities and the number of visitors to the exhibitions (before 2017, the number of visitors was around 100,000 per year) contributed to the decision to expand the entire complex. Finally, on 8 December 2020, the renovated museum located on the site of the former Ohel Moshe synagogue erected in 1927 in the Hongkou district was reopened to the public.

According to the curator of the facility, Chen Jian, the museum's primary role is to preserve the unique memory of this place and the history of the people who lived there for future

generations. Following the redevelopment, the Shanghai Jewish Refugees Museum has quadrupled its existing space. It features new multi-purpose rooms, educational facilities and nearly a thousand exhibits that refer to the history of the many Jews who found refuge in Shanghai as they fled persecution and Nazi massacres. The museum also houses recordings and testimonies from refugees about their memories, daily life, and relationship with the Chinese during those difficult times. In addition, the museum has utilised multimedia films that allow visitors to learn about history through modern technology.

Memorabilia donated by the refugees or their descendants and items donated by residents are an essential element of the exhibition. New exhibits include a knitted bag donated by Shanghai resident Jin Wenzhen, whose grandfather opened a rice shop on East Changzhi Road in the Hongkou district in the 1940s. According to her account, her grandfather received the bag in 1940, when a Jewish couple with a child suffering from fever unexpectedly turned up in the evening to borrow money. They pawned the bag and were to repurchase it when they could pay off the debt. The couple never appeared again, and the man kept the bag for many years before finally donating it to the museum. Among the unique exhibits is the white wedding dress of Betty Grebenschikoff, a Jewish refugee who spent 11 years in Shanghai and now lives in the United States. She has visited her former home on Zhoushan Road near the museum several times and, on one such trip in 2013, decided to present the unique gift to the museum.

The expanded museum also houses a library with a collection of more than eight thousand

The expanded museum also houses a library with a collection of more than eight thousand books donated by Kurt Wick, an 82-year-old former refugee who arrived in Shanghai in 1939 with his family, aged just one year.

Another unique place in the museum is the Memorial Wall, which contains some 19,000 names of people identified as Jewish refugees of Shanghai. At this point, it is important to highlight the tremendous effort of those involved in compiling this impressive list. These are just a few of the many examples that illustrate the interesting history of the Hongkou district and its residents. The museum is undertaking numerous activities to expand its current collection, so there is a good chance that visitors will discover something new with each subsequent visit.

In the past, the Shanghai Jewish Refugees Museum presented Polish exhibitions, including.

"The German Nazi Death Camp. Konzentrationslager Auschwitz" (2012) and "Samaritans from Markowa" (2016). Discussions are currently ongoing on further joint projects. It should also be noted that in the 1940s, a group of about one thousand refugees of Polish nationality stayed in Shanghai. Therefore, it is likely that there will be new exhibits and exhibitions related to the history of both Jewish and Polish refugees in the near future.

I wish to take this opportunity to extend my thanks to Mr Chen Jian, Curator of the Shanghai Jewish Refugees Museum, for his cooperation to date and for providing material and photographs for this study. I trust that the above article will encourage readers and history enthusiasts to undertake further exciting explorations.







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