69 (06/2023)

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#### 83RD ANNIVERSARY OF THE DEPORTATION OF THE FIRST POLES TO KL AUSCHWITZ. NATIONAL DAY OF REMEMBRANCE

37TH SESSION OF THE INTERNATIONAL AUSCHWITZ COUNCIL

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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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All editions: memoria.auschwitz.org

### 37TH SESSION OF THE INTERNATIONAL AUSCHWITZ COUNCIL

The activities of the Auschwitz Memorial and the work of the Stutthof Museum and its branch, the Piaśnica Museum in Wejherowo, were the main topics discussed during the two-day meeting. This was the first time in the history of the IAC that a meeting was held in Gdańsk and Sztutowo. The session was chaired by dr hab. Grzegorz Berendt.

The session started at the World War II Museum in Gdańsk with the nomination presentation for Prof. Michael Berenbaum, who was absent from the previous session.

Auschwitz Museum Director, Dr. Piotr M. A. Cywiński, provided a summary of the significant events that had taken place at the Auschwitz Memorial in the past four years since the last IAC meeting and the Museum's plans for the immediate future. He began his speech with an analysis of attendance.

'After the slump associated with COVID-19, attendance gradually increased in 2022. Based on the number of visitors at the end of May, which was over half a million, it's safe to assume that the total attendance this year may reach 1.7 million. The increase in attendance also translates into budget security for the Museum,' said Piotr Cywiński.

One of the notable events mentioned by Director Cywiński was the celebrations of the 78th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz and the March of the Living, which attracted almost 10,000 people. Thanks to generous donations from the March and the Auschwitz-Birkenau Foundation, conservation efforts have commenced to preserve the 8,000 shoes that once belonged to the youngest victims of Auschwitz. The director also spoke about several educational projects intended for different audiences, including the post-pandemic relaunch of joint educational activities between the Museum and Yad Vashem educators in Poland and Israel, a study day devoted to teaching about the history of the Second World War and the Holocaust in Ukraine, and new projects in collaboration with German companies, such as a seminar for senior managers of Bayer AG from Germany.

'The path was paved by Volkswagen. Our cooperation has been going on for three decades. After the pandemic, VW volunteer groups returned to the Memorial. Something that seemed very difficult just 10 years ago is now possible. More companies are inquiring about the feasibility of various programmes. This helps to remove certain barriers of silence,' Piotr Cywiński emphasised.

He also announced the major forthcoming event organised by the International Center for Education about Auschwitz and the Holocaust, a methodological conference aimed at experts from across the globe on "Tools from the «here and now» in teaching about the «then» - new technologies in education about Auschwitz and the Holocaust".

'The issue of technological innovations





window woodwork in Block 11 at the Auschwitz I site, the conservation of the ruins of the crematoria and brick buildings at the Auschwitz II-Birkenau site, and the forthcoming opening of a new microbiology laboratory at the Museum Conservation Laboratories. The director also stated that due to the necessary renovation of the post-war roof structure of the historic sauna building at the Auschwitz II-Birkenau site, the building would be closed to visitors for an extended period.

Furthermore, the IAC members listened to a presentation by Director Piotr Tarnowski on the operation of the Memorial at the site of the former German concentration camp Stutthof.

Director Tarnowski identified the creation of a new permanent exhibition - the concept of which he presented to the IAC members - along with the development of appropriate infrastructure to accommodate the demands of the increasing number of visitors as the most critical challenges.

## WHAT'S NEW IN AUSTRIAN HOLOCAUST STUDIES?

In the last decade, Austrian Holocaust research and education has gone digital. In this rapidly evolving framework, the EHRI Seminar in Vienna in January 2024 will address the following questions:

• What are the topics in Austrian Holocaust research that are explored using digital tools, maps, databases, and digital repositories?

• Which new findings and approaches can be generated with geo-data? And how can you use geo-data in your research?

• How can we (re-)locate documents, memories, specific events by apps and digital maps? Which new spaces emerge through this layering of digital and on-site experience?

• Which databases exist to do research on the Holocaust in Austria? How can a crossarchival approach help to identify, verify, and re-assess names, places, and events across national and linguistic borders?

• How can we address the different quality of sources (visual sources, egodocuments, oral testimonies, perpetrator documentation, forms etc.)? What are the specific possibilities and limitations of these sources, and how can these be approached through digital methods and tools?

• How can researchers address a broader public through blogs, podcasts, and online exhibitions? Which skills and tools are needed to "go public" with your research? Deadline for submission: 15 July 2023

Together with some EHRI-Austria partners, the VWI will offer a methodological seminar to present and share digital tools and methods as well as reflections on theoretical concepts that are relevant for Holocaust Studies in Austria, in Central Europe and beyond. Therefore, we offer a diverse programme including input lectures, group discussions and presentations as well as city walking tours on specific Holocaust-related topics and visits to various archives and memorial sites in Vienna.

In addition, there will be several opportunities for participants to offer brief, informal presentations on their current research on the Holocaust in Austria and receive input and suggestions from other participants and lecturers. The seminar will be held in person and in English. We are looking forward to applications from junior and senior researchers, archivists as well as people working in memorial sites or educational programmes.

The seminar is offered as part of the EHRI project and is supported by the European Commission's Horizon 2020 programme. It is organised by the Vienna Wiesenthal Institute, part of the EHRI Consortium. EHRI is dedicated to improving access to collections related to Holocaust history and providing infrastructural support for European Holocaust Studies by facilitating access to archival collections through the EHRI Portal and by stimulating innovative, interdisciplinary, and transnational research. Conferences, methodological seminars, fellowships, and workshops play a major role in fostering the exchange of knowledge and connecting Holocaust researchers, local

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640	Kellermann Irma Sara	9. 4.73	796
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### JULIA PIROTTE, PHOTOGRAPHER AND RESISTANT

Memorial de la Shoah in Parks until 30 August 2023 presents an exhibition of works of Julia Pirotte. Julia Pirotte (Golda Perla Diament) born on August 26, 1907, grew up in a poor Jewish family between Końskowola and Lublin, Poland. Her father was a miner. At 17 she was arrested for her activism in the Polish Communist youth movement and spent four years in jail. In 1934, with help from the International Red Aid organization, she fled Poland to join her sister Mindla, a refugee in France.

On the way, Julia fell hill and had to interrupt her journey in Belgium, where she took a job in a factory and married the trade unionist Jean Pirotte. In Brussels, she took night classes in journalism and photography. In 1938 and 1939, she began her photojournalism career with a study of Polish miners for a trade union magazine and a reportage in the Baltic countries for the Foto WARO press agency.

When Nazi Germany overran Belgium in May 1940, Julia fled south. With comrades she met during the exodus, the young refugee settled in Marseille because of the factories there. She began working in an aircraft plant and as a photographer on a private beach. In 1942, she was hired as a photojournalist by local publications, including Le Dimanche illustré, La Marselliaise and Rouge Midi.

Julia documented the dismal living conditions in the Vieux-Port slums, the plight of Jewish women and children interned in the Bompard camp and the operations of the maquis. She and her sister Mindla joined the Resistance very early on. As a liaison agent for the FTP-MOI group, she smuggled leaflets, weapons and forged documents. On August 21, 1944, she took part in the

liberation of Marseille, documenting the event with her camera. ulia Pirotte returned to Poland, where reconstruction was in full swing. Her brother Majer died in a gulag in the USSR and her sister Mindla was executed in Germany after her arrest for resistance. In 1946, she was one of the only photographers in Kielce just after the pogrom. Her reportage is a poignant testimony on antisemitism, which was still rife in the country of her birth. In the following months, she traveled with Polish miners being repatriated from France. In 1948, she covered the World Congress of Intellectuals in Defense of Peace in Wroclaw, making portraits of participants including Pablo Picasso, Irene Joliot-Curie and Aime Cesaire. At the same time, she co-founded and directed the Press Agency WAF.

In 1957, Julia went to Israel to experience life on a kibbutz. Back in Poland, she continued working for the Polish press, but at a much slower pace. In the 1980s, her photography began gaining recognition and was exhibited in many cities, including New York, Arles, Stockholm, Charleroi, Paris, Warsaw and Bratislava. On February 15, 1996, France awarded her the title of Chevalier des Arts et des Lettres. She died in Warsaw on July 25, 2000.



## UNIQUE PHOTOGRAPHS OF THE DEPORTATION OF THE FIRST POLES TO THE GERMAN CAMP AUSCHWITZ DISCOVERED

An exceptional collection of photographs depicting the deportation of the first Poles to the newly established German Nazi concentration camp Auschwitz, which took place 83 years ago on June 14, 1940, has been discovered and published. Digital reproductions of these significant documents were given to the Museum by a Tarnów collector Marek Tomaszewski, the author of the publication "Tarnów – KL Auschwitz: The First Transport to Hell."

"Imagine the reaction of an enthusiast, a collector of regional memorabilia, who, on a gloomy day, sitting in his room, receives a message from his colleague in Canada with an attachment. When opened, it reveals photographs of a very significant event in the history of the city and the country, of which the previously known photographic documentation is very scarce," wrote Marek Tomaszewski in the book's introduction.

The discovered album contains 96 photographs. "It is a memento from the time of service, presumably belonging to one of the members of the German Order Police (Schutzpolizei) detachment stationed in 1940 in the lower barracks on Chyszowska Street (now Mościckiego) in Tarnów. His unit escorted a column of prisoners on 14 June of that year, who marched from the Tarnów bathhouse through Dębowa, Wałowa, and Krakowska streets to the railway ramp on today's Bartla Street," one reads in the introduction.

The photos also depict Schutzpolizei officers from the lower barracks in Tarnów, the passage of the unit through Zakliczyn, and scenes related to the second transport from Wiśnicz to Auschwitz camp on 20 June 1940. Until now, historians knew only a few photographs from those tragic events. Now we can see an album that is a very significant historical source.

According to Dr. Piotr M. A. Cywiński, the director of the Auschwitz Museum, the importance of this discovery goes far beyond the regional context. "This event is comparable in scale to the discovery of the so-called Lily Jacob album depicting the transports of Hungarian Jews to Auschwitz II-Birkenau or the album by Karl Höcker with photographs of the SS garrison members from the Auschwitz camp. Marek Tomaszewski has provided the Museum with high-quality scans of the entire collection, which will become visual documents illustrating the beginnings of Auschwitz and the history of the camp's prisoners and victims," he stated.

Dr. Wojciech Płosa, the head of the Archives of the Museum, emphasized that from a perspective of the history of the largest German Nazi concentration and extermination camp, these photographs, particularly those showing the prisoners on their way to the camp, are of special significance. "None of these men, who on the early morning of 14 June 1940, marched under a heavily armed German escort to the railway station in Tarnów, knew the purpose of their journey. Many of them would never return to their loved



## 83<sup>RD</sup> ANNIVERSARY OF THE DEPORTATION OF THE FIRST POLES TO KL AUSCHWITZ. NATIONAL DAY OF

14 June 1940 is considered the beginning of the functioning of the German Nazi concentration and extermination camp Auschwitz. On that day, the Germans deported a group of 728 Poles from the Tarnów prison to Auschwitz. The group included soldiers who had fought against the German invasion in September 1939, members of underground independence organisations, secondary school and university students, and a small number of Polish Jews. They were given numbers from 31 to 758.

The commemoration of the 83rd anniversary of this event took place under the Honorary Patronage of the President of the Republic of Poland, Andrzej Duda. By a decision of the Sejm of the Republic of Poland, 14 June is observed as the National Day of Remembrance for the Victims of German Nazi Concentration and Extermination Camps.

The events commemorating the anniversary at the Memorial were attended by 13 Auschwitz survivors, the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Culture and National Heritage, Prof. Piotr Gliński, Zofia Romaszewska, who represented the President of the Republic of Poland, the president of the World Jewish Congress, Ronald S. Lauder, and representatives of state and local authorities, as well as the diplomatic corps, the clergy, organisers of the commemoration, various institutions and social organisations and all those wishing to honour the memory of the victims of the German Nazis.

Prof. Piotr Gliński began his address with a quote from Cavalry Captain Witold Pilecki: "Like all the other newcomers to Auschwitz, I found myself in conditions that contradicted my preconceived notions. Within a few days, I felt dazed and as if I had been transported to another planet. The images I witnessed were more horrific than anything depicted in Dante's Inferno."

'The camp, established to exterminate Polish citizens, was soon incorporated into the German plan for the so-called "final solution to the Jewish question", i.e., the mass murder of European Jews, and became a worldwide symbol of the martyrdom of many nations. The enormity of the suffering, anguish, physical torture and harm inflicted on the human soul in the camp outstrips the ability to verbalise it - said Deputy Prime Minister Gliński.

Auschwitz Museum Director Dr. Piotr M. A. Cywiński, noted that today it is difficult to imagine the tragedy of that first transport, which left Tarnów not for Auschwitz but into the unknown.

'It could have been labour, another prison, or camps set up before the war on German territory, or it could have been the so-called death by firing squad. They had absolutely no idea. 729 people left, and one man escaped; he ran towards the forest, shots were fired, and to this day, we do not know if he made it. Probably the first victim of Auschwitz, even before arriving at the destination. Upon reaching Cracow, they pondered whether they were heading towards the General Government or Silesia. Narodowy Dzień Pamięci Ofiar Niemieckich Nazistowskich Obozów Koncentracyjnych i Obozów Zagłady

14 czerwca 2023





'I would like to thank all those who have contributed to the realisation of this investment, especially the custodian of the Memorial - the Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum in Oświęcim - and its entire team, including the councils and all those who support the activities of the Museum, for consistently implementing the plan to increase its accessibility, eliminate architectural barriers and open it to people with special needs,' - he stressed.

Ronald S. Lauder and Joel and Ulrika Citron also provided financial support for this investment.

'I am honoured to have been able to support such a significant investment at the Auschwitz-Birkenau Museum, together with the Polish Minister of Culture and National Heritage and the European Union. It is a privilege that I could dedicate a portion of his life to preserving the authenticity of Auschwitz,' said Ronald S. Lauder, the president of the Auschwitz-Birkenau Memorial Foundation in New York, at a conference during the opening of the new Visitor Services Center.

#### The organizers of commemorative events

- Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum
- Auschwitz Memento Association
- Bielsko-Żywiec Diocesan Curia
- Castle Museum in Oświęcim

• Cavalry Captain Witold Pilecki State University of Małopolska in Oświęcim

• Department of the Institute of National Remembrance (IPN) in Kraków

• Foundation for the Memory of Auschwitz-Birkenau Victims

• Foundation of Memory Sites Near Auschwitz-Birkenau

• Foundation Monument-Hospice for the Town of Oświęcim

• International Youth Meeting Center in Oświęcim

• Jewish Center in Oświęcim

• Kraków Foundation Center for Information, Meeting, Dialogue, Education and Prayer in Oświęcim

• movart Foundation

• the Office for War Veterans and Victims of Oppression

- the town of Ofwiceim
- the town of Oświęcim
- Oświęcim commune
- Oświęcim County Office

• Province of the St. Anthony of Padua and Blessed Jakub Strzemię of the Order of Friars

• Remembrance Museum of Land of Oświęcim Residents

- Roma Association in Poland
- Society for the Protection of Oświęcim (TOnO)
- the town of Tarnów

## THE BEGINNING OF THE TERROR IN NAZI GERMANY

On 30 January 1933, the National Socialists assumed power in Germany. They established a terrorist dictatorship, deprived rights, and persecuted and murdered millions. The story of the early concentration camps in Nazi Germany is told in an exhibition at the Dachau Memorial, among others.

The concentration camps played a central role in enforcing and maintaining National Socialist rule in Germany and occupied Europe. Today, many people know the names of large concentration or extermination camps such as Buchenwald or Auschwitz; however, few have heard of the early concentration camps such as Ahrensbök or Breitenau.

The initial concentration camps were established during the first months of the National Socialist regime and frequently terminated operations within a few weeks or months. The National Socialist regime tested the tools of violence in these camps. The path to the mass murder of millions had not yet been charted but had been prepared. The early concentration camps were the beginning of terror.

The exhibition "The Beginning of the Terror" presents, in eleven chapters, the role and function played by the early concentration camps under National Socialism. Based on numerous biographies of persecuted individuals, it shows how these camps contributed to the establishment and consolidation of National

Socialist power. The 15 camps commemora formed the foundation of the exhibition. T over 90 early concentration camps within 1	Table of contents:
	The road to dictatorship
The exhibition is presented simultaneously	Mass arrests in 1933
Germany. It was held under the auspices o	
Detailed information on the exhibition and	competences
can be found on participating institutions'	Commanders and guard crews
terrors.de.	Prisoners
	Prison conditions
The exhibition can be viewed at the Dacha	Violence and murders
	Neighbourhood and public
	opinion
	Dissolution and reorganisation
	Commemoration after 1945

Ronzentrations Lager der Gtandarte 208.

## Auftakt des Terrors

Frühe Konzentrationslager im Nationalsozialismus

Eine Ausstellung der Arbeitsgemeinschaft "Gedenkstätten an Orten früher Konzentrationslager"

## THE MEADOW OF MEMORY. THE REAL ROOTS FORT THE »ROOTS OF UPRISING«

This year's March of Remembrance on July 22, 1942, will be accompanied by the "Roots of the Uprising. Resistance in the Warsaw Ghetto" exhibition. One of its elements will be a flower meadow of memory, composed of species typical of the former Muranów district.

Even before their appearance, some of them were cultivated in gardens and pots, while others grew there spontaneously as weeds. Many are common in Warsaw and its vicinity, despite the efforts to exterminate them from lawns, flower beds, or flower meadows. Several species, common in the ruins of the Jewish quarter in 1945-49, are rather rare today. It concerns the ruderal, but very thermophilic, quinoa, annual mugwort, and Virginian pepper, as well as the silene flos-cuculi often found on utility meadows, and finally, the gypsophila paniculata, which is partially protected today.

The flower meadow of memory will be created in the form of a sod system, typical of extensively used green roofs. This system will consist of elements of pots, vegetation and protective mats, substrate, filtration fabrics, internal insulation, and finally drainage, with a height of 0.1 m and a weight of approximately 110 kg/m2. The entire exhibition will take 31 m2. and the meadow itself 17 m2. Specimens collected by the creator of the meadow, Natalia Budnik, a landscape architect, were planted in pots, while native and ruderal seed plants were sown on mats, whether collected by hand or obtained from

community seed banks. Reseeding seeds in successive batches, at intervals, allow them to stretch their growth for a few weeks. The flower meadow of memory will be supplied with rainwater, retained in buckets of the pot system, and then diffused through mats to the roots. Shown exhibitions are two-year-old forms and permanent (perennials) installations transplanted into additional pots. Seeds of annual flowers and grasses and the entire swath with seeds will go to allotment gardeners.

The list of species typical for the ruins of the ghetto was prepared by Prof. Roman Kobendza (February 15, 1866-November 24, 1955), botanist and social worker associated with the Free Polish University and the Botanical Garden of the University of Warsaw, then with the Warsaw University of Life Sciences, meritorious for establishing national parks in the Kampinos Forest and the Świetokrzyskie Mountains, as well as the Botanical Garden of the Polish Academy of Sciences in Powsin. Kobendza was a person especially predestined to develop such lists. Coming from a poor, rural family, from childhood he was in contact with cultivated species and their



Henryk Hechtkopf, "Getto warszawskie – ulica Anielewicza" (1947), zbiory ŻIH

## 'THE FRANK FAMILY IN FRANKFURT AM MAIN, 1929-1933'

On 12 June 1929, exactly 94 years ago today, Anne Frank was born in Frankfurt am Main in Germany. The photos of the Frank family from that time show a carefree world; none of them reveals a hint of the political situation and unrest in Germany.

> The new temporary exhibition The Frank family in Frankfurt am Main, 1929-1933, on display at the Anne Frank House, explores the period when Germany was transformed from a democratic country into a dictatorship.

The exhibition tells the story of the Frank family in Frankfurt against the backdrop of the economic, social and political problems in Germany.

It begins with Anne Frank's birth in Germany in 1929, spotlights the rise to power of Hitler and his antisemitic National Socialist German Workers' Party (NSDAP), and ends with the Frank family's emigration to the Netherlands in 1933.

At the core of the exhibition is the life of the Frank family in Frankfurt, around which the exhibition highlights troubling developments in the city and the country.

Visitors see originals belonging to the Frank family, including a

wedding chest, and are given explanations through photos, films and texts. The exhibition shows, illustrated by election posters and ballot papers, how German democracy turned into a dictatorship.

How can you resist the erosion of democracy and the rise of authoritarianism?

Complementary to the exhibition, a short animation on this subject is on display, made by creative studio Job, Joris & Mariek. The animation is inspired by the book On Tyranny by Timothy Snyder. This American historian, specialised in the Holocaust, explains in a series of 'lessons' how resurgent authoritarian ideology can be resisted.



## "HOMOSEXUAL MEN IN THE RAVENSBRÜCK CAMP COMPLEX" EXHIBITION

On 17 June, the Ravensbrück Memorial opened an exhibition entitled "Homosexual Men in the Ravensbrück camp complex". The exhibition, prepared in collaboration with Muthesius Kunsthochschule Kiel, presents a hitherto little-researched aspect of the history of the German concentration camp Ravensbrück.

Following a welcome from the museum's director, Andrea Genest, the topic was introduced by Piotr Chruścielski, a researcher from the Stutthof Concentration Camp Museum in Poland. Then, Katharina Jesdinsky and Peter Nathan from Muthesius Kunsthochschule Kiel presented the exhibition project and conducted the visitors through the exhibition.

Additionally, students of the "Drawing and Printmaking" class presented linocuts and other artistic works created during their one-week stay at the Ravensbrück Site. Their work focuses on the life story of Gustav Fritz Herzberg, who died in 1942 in the Ravensbrück men's camp.

Besides some 120,000 women, Ravensbrück also held over 20,000 men incarcerated in a separate camp established in Nazi Germany in April 1941. These included at least 200 men deported to the Ravensbrück camp as homosexuals. They ranked very low in the prison community hierarchy.

The exhibition is the first to address the conditions and experiences of imprisonment and persecution of homosexual men at Ravensbrück. The discourse also addresses the persistence of discrimination and criminalisation post-liberation. Unlike other persecuted groups, homosexual victims were denied recognition as victims of Nazi Germany after 1945 for decades.

The exhibition primarily centres on the life histories of seven men detained in the Ravensbrück camp complex because of their sexual orientation. The board exhibition showcases their life biographies within the context of the persecution of homosexual men during the Nazi regime in Germany.

The exhibition is available for viewing until 1 October 2023, at the former mechanical workshops at the rear of the Memorial Museum grounds, from 10 am to 6 pm.

The exhibition is realised by the Muthesius Kunsthochschule Kiel in partnership with the Ravensbrück Memorial Museum. The project is implemented under the auspices of the European Parliament.

#### Homosexuelle Männer im Lagerkomplex Ravensbrück

Eine Ausstellung in der Mahnund Gedenkstätte Ravensbrück | Stiftung Brandenburgische Gedenkstätten

HOLZSCHNITT: MIA FEE SCHABBACH



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