

14 (11/2018)



# MEMORIA

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**ART FROM THE WORLD OF EXTERMINATION.  
"DAVID OLÈRE. THE ONE WHO SURVIVED CREMATORIUM III."  
UNIQUE MONOGRAPHIC EXHIBITION.**

**FACT-CHECKING  
"THE TATTOOIST OF  
AUSCHWITZ".**

**ARCHAEOLOGY AT  
THE MEMORIAL SITES –  
SUMMARY OF THE  
CONFERENCE AT  
STUTTHOF**

**"SHATTERED: POGROM,  
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**POLIN INTERNATIONAL  
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"HOW TO TALK ABOUT  
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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.

Please do share information about this magazine with others, particularly via social media.

Paweł Sawicki, Editor-in-chief

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# LINKING THE MEMORY OF THE WORLD

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LINKS TO THE MOST INTERESTING AND VALUABLE ARTICLES  
DEDICATED TO MEMORY AROUND THE WORLD (WIDE WEB)

Anti-Semitic stereotypes are alive and well in Europe, while the memory of the Holocaust is starting to fade, a sweeping new survey by CNN reveals. More than a quarter of Europeans polled believe Jews have too much influence in business and finance. Nearly one in four said Jews have too much influence in conflict and wars across the world.

One in five said they have too much influence in the media and the same number believe they have too much influence in politics

Meanwhile, a third of Europeans in the poll said they knew just a little or nothing at all about the Holocaust, the mass murder of some six million Jews in lands controlled by Adolf Hitler's Nazi regime in the 1930s and 1940s.


"The results of the poll show that **there is a need of including the elements concerning the knowledge about the Holocaust not only into the teaching of history but also into the curricula of other subjects on different stages of education.** It must be analyzed also while dealing with contemporary challenges during the classes of ethics, religion, political sciences, media or civic education.

The antisemitic or xenophobic ideologies that in the past led to the human catastrophe of Auschwitz, seem not to be erased from our lives today. They still poison people's minds and influence our contemporary attitudes in social, political, ethical, and other aspects."

Auschwitz Memorial director, dr Piotr M. A. Cywiński.

**READ THE POLL RESULTS**

## A Shadow Over Europe



One in 20 Europeans surveyed has never heard of the Holocaust. More than a quarter believe Jews have too much influence in business and finance. One in five believe anti-Semitism is a response to the everyday actions of Jews.

## **CNN poll reveals depth of anti-Semitism in Europe**

By Richard Allen Greene

President of NUSUK, Shakira Martin, reflects on visiting Auschwitz Memorial: "It was upon witnessing a friend who, upon seeing their family name amongst the victims, simply broke down into tears, that a very important message was brought home to me.."

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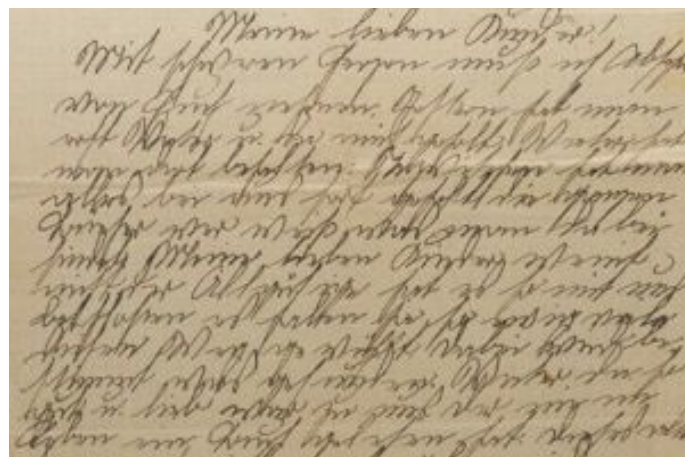


A Polish Catholic nun who was honored by Israel for helping to hide Jewish would-be resistance fighters in her convent during World War II died aged 110. Among those who hid in the small convent of nine Dominican nuns during the war was poet and activist Abba Kovner.

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The monkey's fur is worn away. It's nearly a century old. A well-loved toy, it is barely 4 inches tall. It was packed away for long voyages, on an escape from Nazi Germany, to Sweden and America. And now, it's the key to a discovery that transformed my family.

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Some drowned or hanged themselves, others jumped out of windows or took poison – but even today, it is not clear how many Jews committed suicide in the wake of Kristallnacht, exactly 80 years ago.

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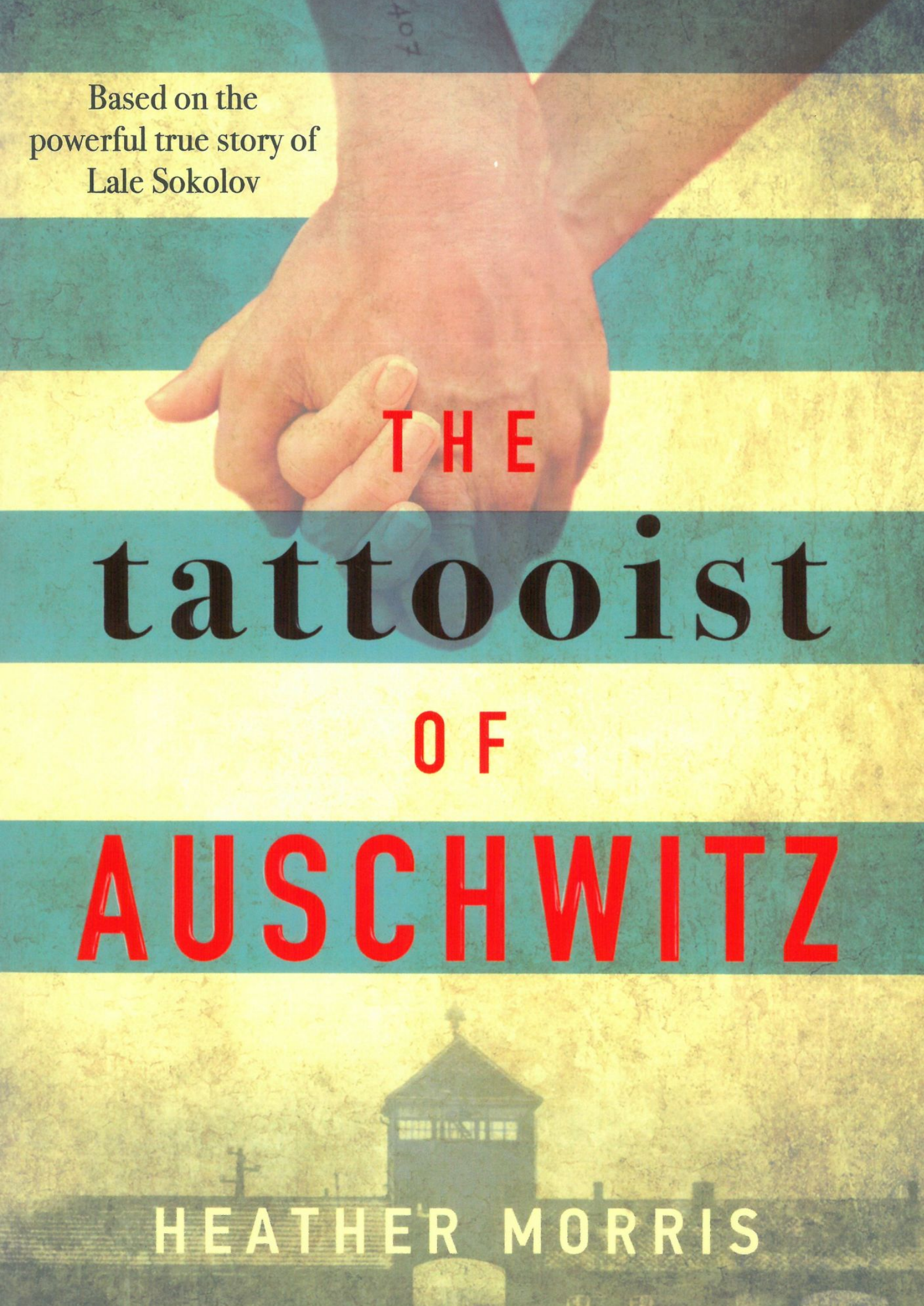
# FACT-CHECKING "THE TATTOOIST OF AUSCHWITZ"

**The reading of the novel verifies the assurance of its factual and documentary character. Although the story is built around the fate of an authentic KL Auschwitz prisoner whose stay in the camp and a part of his camp life may be confirmed by surviving archival documentation, the book, however, contains numerous errors and information inconsistent with the facts; as well as overinterpretations, misinterpretations and understatements on which the overall inauthentic picture of the camp reality is built. The book states: "Every reasonable attempt to verify the facts against available documentation has been made". Let's take a look.**

On 27 January 2018, on the 73rd anniversary of the liberation of KL Auschwitz, the book titled, *The Tattooist of Auschwitz* by Heather Morris who hails from New Zealand and resident in Australia, was published under the imprint of the Australian publishing house - Bonnier Publishing. The book has become an undisputed bestseller, and its publishing success may be proved by the fact that within a year, it has been translated into several languages, among others; German, Dutch, Spanish, Czech, Italian, Croatian, Portuguese, Ukrainian, Greek, French, Swedish and Hungarian. The Polish version translated by Kaja Gucio was available to readers in April 2018. Its popularity, as well as the huge interest and emotions, however, raises concern that this title will become for many readers a source of knowledge and imaginations about the reality of life in KL Auschwitz. Especially that both the author as well as the reviewers spare no words to emphasise the documentary nature of this title. "In memory of Lale Sokolov. Thank you for entrusting me with your story" - we read in the author's dedication on the first page of the book. "The Tattooist from Auschwitz is a unique document"; "Heather Morris meticulously reproduces the fate of a man who happened to live in the most dreadful place in the world" - the introductory reviews to the publication, inform. Finally, on the back cover, the Polish reader will find information in bold type: "Best-selling novel - based on facts - in the calibre of *The Boy in Striped Pyjamas* and *Schindler's List*".

Based on preserved documents, it can, therefore, be confirmed that Lale Sokolov (appropriately: Ludwig Eisenberg) arrived in Auschwitz on 23 April 1942 with the RSHA transport from Slovakia. However, contrary to information contained in the book, this could not have travelled through Ostrava and Pszczyna. From the surviving itinerary of deportee trains compiled by the Slovak and Reichsbahn railways directorate at the time, the trains travelled through Zwardoń, Żywiec, Bielsko and Dzierżycze (at 11:34), and then via the shortest route through Dankowice (at 12:01) to Oświęcim (at 12:28). Why, then, did the author conclude that the train passed Pszczyna along the way? Here, she probably used the modern online search engine of railway connections, which a few years ago, due to the renovation of the Dzierżycze - Oświęcim railway line, showed a significantly circuitous route: from Slovakia through the Czech Republic and Katowice. This error cannot otherwise be explained.

Among those deported the following day were 543 Jewish prisoners registered in the camp. Ludwig Eisenberg (in the camp documentation: Ludovit Eisenberg, born 28.10.1916, deported from Krompachy) was registered as number 32407 as a Slovak Jew, and locksmith by profession. The accounts of a former prisoner Stanisław Gładysz, deported to Auschwitz on 28.01.1943 and marked with number 95559 prove that he already worked as a tattooist at the beginning of 1943. He recalled that the

The background of the cover features a close-up of two hands clasped together. The hand on the left is the focus, with a tattoo on the inner wrist that reads 'A07'. The hands are set against a background of horizontal stripes in shades of teal and yellow. The overall texture is grainy and aged.

Based on the  
powerful true story of  
Lale Sokolov

THE  
tattooist  
OF  
AUSCHWITZ

The bottom section of the cover shows a dark, grainy silhouette of a guard tower with a window, set against a lighter, textured background. The tower is part of a larger structure, possibly a concentration camp, with other buildings and a fence visible in the distance.

HEATHER MORRIS

tattooing process took place in Birkenau between barracks 19 and 20 at the BIb section, and one of the tattooing prisoners was called Eisenberg.

It is also known that on 16 June 1944, Ludovit Eisenberg was imprisoned in the penal company along with eight other prisoners. In Heather Morris' novel, we find information that he frequented Block 31 at that time, which is not true; as a matter of fact, the infirmary and sickroom were located at the BIId section of this sector, whereas the prisoners of the penal company occupied Block (barrack) no. 11. The surviving book of the penal company indicates that one prisoner from the group was transferred to Mauthausen, there is no information on the fate of four prisoners, while the remaining four, including Eisenberg, were released back to the camp. It points out that only Eisenberg's name had the annotation b. a. w. (bis auf weiteres – until further notice), which would indicate that he committed a severe offence. Among the prisoners we are certain that were released, Eisenberg had the shortest stay in the penal company; barely a month (among the others; two stayed for 5 weeks, and one over two months).

Eisenberg's return to his previous duties upon serving a sentence in SK is confirmed by preserved bonus lists (Prämienauszahlung) from the period 26.07.1944 - 26.09.1944. They indicate that Ludovit Eisenberg, as a member of the Political Department Commando - Aufnahmeschreiber (responsible for registration of newly-arrived transports), received approximately once a week, the average bonus for members of this commando in the amount of 2RM. The Kapo of this commando was prisoner no. 3637 Bohdan Komarnicki who earned a bad reputation in the memory of the prisoners as a collaborator and informant, although according to these lists from 1944, he distributed bonuses equally and fairly among his subordinate prisoners. Surprisingly though, there is no mention of him in Heather Morris' book.

From the accounts of the Rapportschreiber of the Roma camp Tadeusz Joachimowski, we know that prisoners employed in this commando were placed together in barrack

number 2 at the BIle section (so-called Zigeunerlager), which indicates that Ludovit Eisenberg must have lived and worked there with the other inmates for a relatively long time. In the book, however, no other member of the Aufnahme commando was mentioned, and not even a word about Ludovit Eisenberg's membership or the existence of this commando.

The signatures on the bonus lists of the Aufnahme command prove that his supervisor was SS-Oberscharführer, Josef Hustek-Erber. However, there is no mention in the documentation on Ludovit Eisenberg of SS-Rottenführer Stefan Baretzki, who is presented in the book as the direct supervisor of the work of the tattooists. It is only known that he served as a Blockführer in Auschwitz I and later in Birkenau, however, information is lacking in the documents pointing directly to his relationship with the Aufnahme commando. It is, however, known that he frequented the ramp during receipt of new transports and had contacts with the Kanada commando, and so could have had contacts with prisoners employed during the registration of new arrivals.

From the daily employment lists of the camp's male prisoners (only surviving list of 1944), we know that in July, the Aufnahme commando comprised of a dozen or so persons (the recurring names on the bonus lists indicate its relatively stable composition), and suddenly, its number increased to approx. 30 prisoners in August. Some of the lists had a detailed position "Tätovierer" (documents from the second half of April to May 1944) - they prove that one or two prisoners were employed in the male camp as tattooists (April and the early days of May). It does not, however, indicate as Heather Morris suggests in her novel that they were the only prisoners responsible for tattooing numbers on all prisoners. We know from numerous accounts of survivors that female newcomers to Birkenau were tattooed by female prisoners employed in the Aufnahme commando. A different commando responsible for registration and tattooing was also located in the main camp. Numbers were also tattooed in the sub-camps by prisoners either seconded from the main camp, or trained on the spot to perform this activity, which indicates that a



Lfd.	Pos. Nr.	Häftlings Nr.	Vor- und Nachname	Geb. Datum	Strafzauer	1944		
						von	bis	
16.6.1944								
2325		1068	Schabenbeck Stefan	14.4.13				entf. 22.7.4
2326		11036	Perski Marian	4.4.21				entf. 22.7.4
2327		29867	Vennmann Josef	29.5.16				
2328		32407	Eisenberg Ludowik	28.10.16	b. a. w.	16.6.		entf. 10.7.4
2329		121404	Dagielski Johann	4.7.24				entf. 15.10.4
2330		125509	Praskala Adalbert	20.3.01				verl. 4. Mai
2331		R-10425	Brahjer Nikolau	- - - 21				
2332		R-10449	Karpyschew Eruich	4.4.20				
2333		R-10471	Ischyrna Piotr	19.8.15				
17.6.1944								
2334		138131	Mandakiewicz Eugen.	6.9.18				verl. 4. Mai
2335		150171	Przykuta Boleslaw	28.4.19				verl. 4. Mai
2336		150542	Wolfram Leopold	6.8.09				verl. 4. Mai
2337		167960	Dziadosz Wladysw.	27.3.20				verl. 4. Mai
2338		R-11411	Dorochow Richard	8.10.22				
18.6.1944								
2339		167169	Hydzubon Jozef	- - - 89				
19.6.1944								
2340		127723	Borowy Brestaw	5.6.10	b. a. w.			verl. 4. Mai
2341		153555	Czwaruo Stanislaw	29.10.10	b. a. w.	19.6.		
2342		153585	Gorzyński Josef	8.9.11	b. a. w.	19.6.		verl. 4. Mai
2343		153608	Kalinowski Stanislaw	1.1.18	b. a. w.	19.6.		verl. 4. Mai
2344		153766	Swiatek Josef	28.4.14	b. a. w.	19.6.		
2345		153777	Szybinski Witold	17.9.22	b. a. w.	19.6.		m/ Mauth. 17.9.
2346		153794	Witkowski Antoni	3.6.12	b. a. w.	19.6.		gestorben
2347		153826	Zorawski Jan	29.10.08	b. a. w.	19.6.		verl. 4. Mai

or trained on the spot to perform this activity, which indicates that a considerable number of persons were employed for tattooing.

Ludovít Eisenberg left KL Auschwitz in January 1945. The Kapo of his command, Bohdan Komarnicki arrived at KL Mauthausen via the same evacuation transport.

However, it is impossible based on archival documentation to recreate the camp fate of Gita (Gisela) Furman (Furmanova). We do not find any surviving documents with her personal data or relating to number 34902 issued in the women's series. Nevertheless, it should be ruled out that a prisoner who arrived at the camp on 13 April 1942 could receive such a high number, which was actually issued a year later, on 11 February 1943, in a group of Jewish women brought to the camp by the RSHA transport from the Netherlands (from the Westerbork camp). It is, however, a fact that on 13 April 1942, a female transport from Slovakia arrived at Auschwitz - but they were given numbers from 4761 to 5203. Therefore, Gita Furman was either brought to the camp on a different date or received a different number than that indicated in the book.

The lack of documents makes it impossible to give a definitive answer to the discrepancy. According to her own testimony from the Shoah Visual Archive her number was 4562. It was issued in the camp on 3 April 1942. On that day 997 Jewish women from Slovakia arrived – they received number 3763-3812 and 3814-4760.

The results of the work of historians of the Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum and literature on objects created over the years allow us to verify several other misleading information contained in the book by Heather Morris. Doctor Mengele did not conduct sterilization experiments on men but performed experiments on twins and dwarves on the inheritance of certain traits, as well as research on the Noma disease.

During the revolt, the Sonderkommando prisoners partially burned down one crematoria (the book says about blowing up two of them), and the female prisoners who

delivered the gunpowder to the prisoners did not carry it under their fingernails.

It is impossible that Lale in January 1943 managed to get penicillin for Gila who was infected with typhus. During that period the production and usage of this drug was still in the phase of research. This antibiotic became widely accessible only after the war. As regards tattooing of the Roma, we find no documents suggesting that children were exempted from this obligation, while the accounts indicate that children were equally tattooed as the adults.

The account of the murder of prisoners in a bus allegedly changed to a gas chamber does not find confirmation in any sources. This scene brings to mind movable gas chambers, but they were used in Kulmhof (Chełmno), not in Auschwitz. The information that the SS men allegedly poured a poisonous liquid [?] from a canister through a hole on the roof into the bus is utterly meaningless.

It is also unlikely that Stefan Baretzki led the prisoner Eisenberg to the gas chamber to identify the bodies of two victims mistakenly marked with the same number. First of all, a prisoner who is not a member of the Sonderkommando had no right to enter the area near the crematoria. Secondly, the numbers of prisoners sentenced to death during selection in hospitals were written down again in the camp, and their identities previously verified before entering the gas chamber.

Also full of contradictions is the scene in which two young prisoners appear in the tattooist's room asking for help for an accidental fugitive. It is difficult to determine whether the scene takes place at night (*knock on the door wakes Lale from a deep sleep.; Floodlights sweep the area of the camp*) or during the day (*Lale makes his way to the administrative block (...) Good day, Bella*). Furthermore, it is impossible for a would-be fugitive to be hanged the next day, to roam about the camp freely and move to another section (such prisoners remained in the camp detention until execution). Within this period, numbers were tattooed to all Jewish prisoners who arrived at Auschwitz.

Id. Nr.	Haftart	Häftl. Nr.	Name	Vorname	Geb. Dat.	Geb. Ort	Beruf
455.	Sch. Jude	32396	Veisberger	Josef	+18.6.27.	4.26 Krompachy	Arbeiter
456.	"	32397	Weissberger	Alexander	15.8.82	Jurske	Kaufmann
457.	"	32398	Kohn	Samuel	+6.5.12.	16.8.01 Krompachy	Privatbeamter
458.	"	32399	Ripp	Jakub	+4.6.22.	11.11.93 Maldur	Reisender
459.	"	32400	Grün	Max	+19.6.	6.2.86 Puchov	Kaufmann
460.	"	32401	Grün	Ernst	+19.6.	13.1.20 Krompachy	Gärtner
461.	"	32402	Freimann	Alfred	+6.7.	15.3.28 Hachov	Schüler
462.	"	32403	Freimann	Eugen	+19.6.	10.4.02 Margecany	Holzändler
463.	"	32404	Jakubovic	Isaak	+6.7.	9.12.18 Liptovsky Hradok, Lehrer	
464.	"	32405	Jakubovic	Heinrich	+6.7.	12.3.15 Stara-Bistrica, Arzt	
465.	"	32406	Popper	Samuel	+20.5.12.	28.9.11 Frislop	Arbeiter
466.	"	32407	Eisenberg	Ludovit	+20.5.12.	28.10.16 Krompachy	Schlossergeh.
467.	"	32408	Vadasz	Aladar	+22.6.	4.6.03 Falkusovce	Fabrikarbeit.
468.	"	32409	Engel	David	+3.6.42.	19.9.88 Nedeca	Kaufmann
469.	"	32410	Engel	Milan	+24.6.	22.1.22 Krompachy	Student
470.	"	32411	Engel	Ernst	+10.6.42.	17.3.25 Krompachy	Student
471.	"	32412	Müller	Heinrich	+10.6.11.	1.1.98 Jarovnice	Kaufm. Angest.
472.	"	32413	Mendlovic	Aron	+14.6.42.	29.7.21 Repinny	Uhrmacher
473.	"	32414	Stern	David	+19.6.	6.7.15 Ruzin	Student
474.	"	32415	Herzeg	Ernst	+6.5.42.	12.1.09 Sp. Nova Ves, Privatangest.	
475.	"	32416	Spira	Emil	+22.6.	26.11.09 Vysnie-Ruzbachy, Beamter	
476.	"	32417	Grün	Josef	+6.5.42.	25.11.83 Debrecen	Kellner
477.	"	32418	Kaufmann	Hermann	+22.5.	20.6.07 Krompachy	Privatbeamter
478.	"	32419	Zipser	Arthur	+20.5.42.	19.3.08 Krompachy	Reisender
479.	"	32420	Selinger	Koloman	+26.4.	4.5.84 Laskova	Kaufmann
480.	"	32421	Gallert	Eugen	+30.4.	29.11.92 Sp. Nova Ves, Angest.	
481.	"	32422	Birnbaum	Josef	+28.5.	14.4.88 Sp. Podhradie, Kaufmann	
482.	"	32423	Silberglad	Isaak	+16.5.42.	11.5.90 Flavno	Lehrer
483.	"	32424	Klein	Oskar	+16.6.42.	27.6.24 Vysne-Slovinky, Landarb.	
484.	"	32425	Goldberger	Zoltan	+26.6.	1.4.15 Hranovnica	Kaufmann
485.	"	32426	Fürst	Gabriel	+29.5.42.	29.8.85 Trnava	Kaufmann
486.	"	32427	Färber	Alexander	+76.5.	15.4.90 Dvorec	Kaufmann
487.	"	32428	Apotheker	Saul	+19.6.	7.11.96 Bardejov	Arbeiter
488.	"	32429	Grossvirth	Andor	+26.5.42.	3.6.95 Majorka	Gastwirt
489.	"	32430	Grossvirth	Zenon	+19.6.	6.2.28 Busovce	Schüler
490.	"	32431	Indik	Lazar	+28.6.42.	1.3.90 Lonka	Arbeiter
491.	"	32432	Goldfinger	Adolf	+27.5.42.	26.7.91 Vitanova	Kaufmann
492.	"	32433	Bloch	Rudolf	+20.7.42.	14.3.91 Sp. Stara Ves, Tischler	
493.	"	32434	Schlesinger	Samuel	+6.7.	29.8.94 Hrast	Spiritusbrenn.
494.	"	32435	Grünspan	Kiwe	+18.5.	20.7.90 Neumarkt	Färber
495.	"	32436	Singer	Leopold	+6.7.42.	25.4.88 Zakopane	Fleischer
496.	"	32437	Brodmann	Simon	+76.5.	2.10.82 Kesmark	Fleischer
497.	"	32438	Brodmann	Eugen	+23.6.	10.1.23 Kesmarok	Schlosser
498.	"	32439	Brodmann	Alexander	+1.7.42.	24.5.27 Kezmarok	Goldschmied
499.	"	32440	Goldberg	Markus	+22.6.	14.1.95 Secovce	Drogist
500.	"	32441	Goldberg	Richard	+22.6.	24.1.25 Kesmark	Gärtner
501.	"	32442	Goldberg	Kurt	+17.7.42.	2.4.28 Kesmarok	Schüler
502.	"	32443	Schustek	Geza	+14.5.	14.4.97 Lendak	Arbeiter
503.	"	32444	Kohn	Max	+22.6.42.	21.1.93 Balpotok	Kaufmann
504.	"	32445	Kohn	Erwin	+19.5.42.	27.6.27 Trnava	Schlossergeh.
505.	"	32446	Kohn	Emanuel	+23.5.42.	22.6.85 Balpotok	Kaufmann
506.	"	32447	Kohn	Eugen	+22.6.42.	12.11.27 Kezmarok	Schüler
507.	"	32448	Breitkopf	Leopold	+5.5.	14.3.90 Zbikovee	Schneider
508.	"	32449	Breitkopf	Eugen	+22.6.	22.8.17 Stara-Lubovna, Schneider	
509.	"	32450	Hammerschlag	Ignatz	+21.5.	20.10.84 Neumarkt	Klempner
510.	"	32451	Birnbaum	Moses	+10.7.	22.6.94 Kezmarok	Kaufmann
511.	"	32452	Birnbaum	David	+22.6.	3.4.27 Neu-Sandez	Schusterlehrl.
512.	"	32453	Lax	Desider	+19.6.42.	31.1.94 Kolozvar	Privatbeamter

Nothing is known about transports sent to the "camp for boys" (since numbers are not tattooed). It is also surprising that a prisoner condemned to death, with the name written manually on the transport list, could leave the camp without drawing the attention of the SS men.

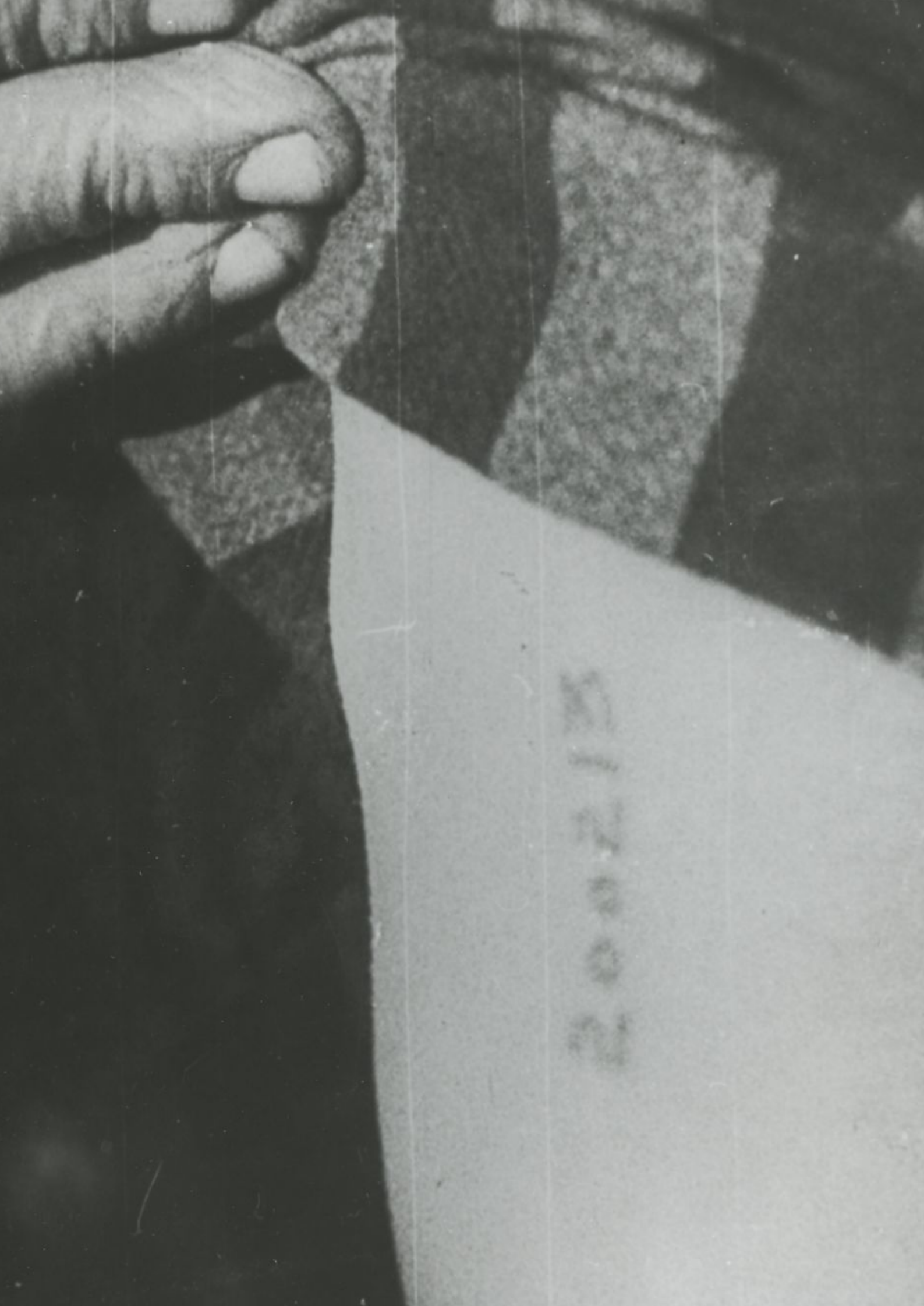
The description of the tattooists' return to the parent camp is inconsistent with the realities. In the scene, Baretzki who is supposed to escort them suggests that the prisoners return to Birkenau by themselves after work. It is highly unlikely that prisoners would be allowed to stay outside the camp area and the surrounding line of posts without an SS escort; such neglect could result in severe consequences for Baretzki.

It is just one of several examples of the questionable conduct of the SS men presented in the book. Other questionable behaviours include walking around the camp at night because upon noticing movements between the barracks in the twilight; the guards on duty at the towers could interpret it as an escape attempt by a prisoner and open fire. Furthermore, it is doubtful that the SS men would shoot without cause to random prisoners, e.g. using the latrine, or into the air, as they would have to justify the use of the weapon in their duty report. It is also impossible that they would leave the bodies of dead prisoners killed as such, drowned in the sewage ditch. The prisoners count during roll-call must tally up, so before recording the death of prisoners, their bodies had to be identified before being sent to the crematoria, and their numbers crossed out of the register. The issue that raised the major point of concern is the sexual relationship described in the book between the head of the camp SS-Obersturmführer Johann Schwarzhuber and the compelled Jewish female prisoner Cilka (the author does not provide any detailed personal data). In practice, the possibility of maintaining such a long (from March 1943 almost until the end of the camp), and according to the book, the semi-explicit relationship between a Jewish female prisoner and a high-ranking member of the SS hierarchy was non-existent. The disclosure of such a relationship would involve an accusation of

race dishonour (Rassenschande) and severe punishment for the SS man. The story of Rapportführer Gerhard Palitzsh - who for keeping intimate contacts with a Jewish prisoner was among others, detained, degraded, sent to the penal camp in Gdańsk (Danzig-Matzkau) and finally referred to the front - proves that such offences are treated seriously.

The existence of the room supposedly used for these sexual contacts raises several objections. The novel also claims that two SS men dragged Cilka from the office where she worked and led her to the Schwarzhuber room, located in the administrative building. According to the description, this room had a "huge four-poster bed, a bedside table with a lamp and chair" – of which the furnishing and purpose could not raise any doubts. In further sections of the book, we learn that Schwarzhuber spent nights with the prisoner in that bed. A map of Birkenau was placed in the appendix to Heather Morris' book, indicating the location of the administrative building (the headquarters), where Gisela Furman allegedly worked with Cilka and other female prisoners from the winter of 1943, and in which Schwarzhuber's rendezvous spot was located, in a part of the building unknown to the prisoners. Documents show, however, that the construction of the indicated building only began in the second half of 1943 and until January 1945 it was not completed, as a result of which the object was never put into use.

More irregularities can be found on the same map. The distance between the Auschwitz Stammlager and Birkenau camps was incorrectly determined (it is not 4 but less than 3 km). It is also incorrect to mark a "recreational area" in the vicinity of the "Kanada" section - this place houses purifiers, which their construction already commenced in 1942, and of course no "recreational areas" were sectioned off in the camp at all. Perhaps the author had in mind the area where an ad hoc pitch was created, on which the football game described in the book was played between the SS men and a team made up of prisoners. Assuming that such an event occurred, then it is most likely that the game in question would have taken place on the



200213

undeveloped space in the southern part of the BIIlf section. We learn in the book that the 1930 World Cup brought by one of the SS men was the stake in this match, whereas the award of this statuette only began in 1974. In June 1930, FIFA organised the first World Championship in football (so-called the World Cup), but the trophy in this competition - the Nike Golden statuette, was a challenge trophy. The winner was the tournament host Uruguay (France mentioned in the novel as the competition winner did not even make it to the semi-finals). The Italians won the next championship in 1934, and so the Golden Nike statuette remained in Italy for the next 16 years, until 1950. It is therefore impossible that the trophy was in Auschwitz in 1944. The basic concepts of the history of Auschwitz were repeatedly mistaken, for instance, in the fragment presenting Lale's dialogue with SS man (Stefan) Baretzki the Penal Company (SK) was apparently located in block 11 of the parent camp, but in May 1942 it had already been moved to the area of Birkenau. Ludovit Eisenberg's stay in block 11 and later in the penal company are two separate events occurring in two different parts of KL Auschwitz.

The claim that no prisoner detained in block 11 left the cell alive is untrue; on the contrary, most of them were released from the camp after the investigations; some also survived the war and their accounts as well. Likewise, it is not true that no one survived the stay in the penal company, as the opposite was the case in the realities of 1944. It should also be noted that while block 11 may be called a "penal block" (rather its underground cells), block 10, contrary to information contained in the book did not serve such a function.

The book's narrative does not differentiate the function of Kapo (guarding prisoners during work) from block leader (supervising in the blocks). The "Kapo" seems to personify all prison camp functions related to the control of prisoners. Similarly, the concepts of selection and registration have been erroneously used and identified - the narrative claims that these processes are conducted in parallel, i.e., female prisoners were examined in terms of capability to work during the number tattooing process. It is not true, as registration was conducted after

selection.

To sum up, then: the reality of the war, especially the historical and socio-psychological context of the concentration camp has been fictionalised and poetised in the book. The Birkenau camp is also presented as a place where prisoners move about almost freely between various parts during the day and at night, visiting friends in other sectors. The fact that particular sections of the camp were separated with barbed wire, and moving between them is strictly prohibited (and due to the presence of guards, practically impossible) is not reflected in the book. Likewise, is the strictly observed separation of residential parts dedicated to male and female prisoners. Men were not allowed to enter the premises of the women's camp without a justified reason, related to the performance of duties (only the craftsmen command were given access in order to perform specific works). This is why it was impossible that Gita and her friends could be among prisoners watching the soccer game between prisoners and the SS.

Ludovit Eisenberg's relationship with Gisela Furman described in the book is evident, and the block leader for some chocolate agrees to call the prisoner from her workplace (located behind wires, that is, outside the strict area of the camp) and lead her to the block to meet her beloved. However, due to the situation of the object marked by the author as the administrative building, Lale could not have met with Gita at the back of the building. Firstly, because to get there they would have to go beyond the camp gate, and furthermore, this building is adjacent to the SS barrack, and so hiding behind it from the sight of the SS men was merely impossible. These are only selected examples of errors and irregularities contained in the book.

It should, therefore, be stated that the book, *The Tattooist of Auschwitz* is based on the authentic history of a prisoner, whose stay and function in the camp can be documented. It also presents verifiable facts from Ludovit Eisenberg's biography. Nonetheless, upon reading the content of the novel and analysing the image of the camp depicted in it, one must conclude that his connection with the authentic

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POLITISCHER ABT. [AUFNAHME SCHREIBER]

Prämienauszahlung vom 1.8.44

Männerlager  
Birkenau

Höfll. №	NAME u. VORNAME	NATIONAL.	BETRAG	UNTERSCHRIFT
3637	Komarnicki Bogdan	P. ✓	3.50	Komarnicki 3637
42156	Katzengold. Charles	J.	3.50	Katzengold 42156
28275	GOLDMYHC Leo	J.	2.-	Goldmyhc 28275
32407	Eisenberg Ludwig	J.	2.-	Eisenberg 32407
34157	EJGIER Szaja	J.	2.-	Ejgier 34157
43094	HENRIKOWSKI Chil	J.	2.-	Henriko 43094
43335	MESSINGIER Channa	J.	2.-	Messingier 43335
43461	RONDEL Arnold	J.	2.-	ARondel 43461
49248	FURMANSKI Jechok	J.	2.-	Furman 49248
51023	Eizenstadt Benjamo	J.	2.-	Eizenstadt 51023
90047	GIEROWICZ Natan	J.	2.-	Gierowicz 90047
96100	Rath Salomon	J.	2.00	Rath 96100
96121	ROMANOWSKI Zdzislaw	P. ✓	2.-	Romanowicz 96121
96481	BURANICZ Gregor	P. ✓	2.-	Buranicz 96481
102143	ARON Lazar	J.	2	Lazar Aron 102143
43755	Dallmann Heinrich	J.	2	Dallmann 43755
Zusammen		-	35.00	

2620

Bonus list for the Auffnahme with Eisenberg's name

the image of the camp depicted in it, one must conclude that his connection with the authentic history is very loose. Much of the information presented in the book is not confirmed in sources and literature on the subject. The book should, therefore, be perceived as an impression devoid of documentary value on the topic of Auschwitz, only inspired by authentic events. The proportion between testimony and factography and the narrative fiction are definitely shifted towards literariness.

The most common and most evocative symbols of Auschwitz (such as the Arbeit macht frei gate, number tattooed on the forearm, the gas chamber, doctor Mengele) have been woven into the content. Their goal, however, is to create a background for a story, that is for the story of the great love of two young people in

the death camp. The gruesome scene taking place inside the gas chamber calls to mind the aforementioned *The Boy In The Striped Pyjamas* or the final scene of the movie, *The Devil's Arithmetic* (1999). It is perhaps not a coincidence, considering that the author had previously been involved in writing screenplays and the text based on the memories of Eisenberg was initially intended to assume such form. It finally became a novel, which the author herself emphasises, and so this book should be treated as such. It is no doubt that Morris had the ambition to write a novel similar to a document and wanted memory and history to tread in perfect harmony in the book. Unfortunately, in spite of the help of archivists (as can be deduced from the acknowledgements included in the book), she was unable to accomplish this intention.





The preliminary research, if at all conducted was not reliable, and the documentation preserved at the Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum was not taken into consideration at all. The author did not conduct factographic verification based on publicly available academic literature. The author is not a researcher, and her lack of substantive and technical competence to work on personal sources, as well as the lack of general knowledge on the realities of the camp is visible in the book. The publication does not contain any footnotes, which makes it impossible to determine the source of most information. Reading the novel inclines one to suggest that the entire text is based solely on the memory of the witness. The accounts and memories of former prisoners may be an extremely valuable material source, comprehensively used in research and camp literature (as well as non-academic),

nevertheless, the nature of human memory, especially where the events to be recalled occurred over seventy years ago requires confrontation with other sources. From today's perspective, we can only regret that no specialist in the area of camp matters was invited to work on the book because Ludovit Eisenberg's memories are the only preserved accounts of the prisoner employed in the camp as a tattooist, and if they had been collected and compiled in accordance with research technique, they could have constituted a remarkable source of knowledge. Meanwhile, they have been published in literary form, only creating the illusion of a document. Given the number of factual errors, this book cannot be recommended as a valuable title for persons who want to explore and understand the history of KL Auschwitz.

Inside the main "sauna" building where from December 1943 prisoners were registered



# ABOUT THE RIGHTEOUS IN A DIFFERENT WAY

**International Conference "How to talk about the Righteous -  
Representations in culture, meaning in education",  
Warsaw 25-27 October 2018**

From 25 to 27 October 2018 at the POLIN Museum of the History of Polish Jews in Warsaw, the international conference was held for teachers, educators and persons working with young people titled: "How to talk about the righteous - Representations in culture, meaning in education". It was another, after last year's conference dedicated to education at memorial sites that brought together more than 250 registered participants. It was dedicated to the problem of teaching about different attitudes of Poles towards the extermination of the Jewish population, as well as assistance and the rescue of Jews. The organisers provided the participants with high-quality lectures, discussion panels, workshops, acquaintance with the latest technologies used in the world when teaching the issues mentioned above. The substantive partners of the programme were: USC Shoah Foundation - The Institute for Visual History and Education from Los Angeles and the Jewish Foundation for the Righteous. The conference was supported by the US Embassy in Warsaw, the Centre for Citizenship Education and the Warsaw Centre for Socio-Educational Innovation and Training

During the three-day conference, the participants listened to a number of lectures, discussion panels, and also participated in workshops. Individual sessions were conducted by outstanding Holocaust researchers, teachers and educators that deal with this subject. The conference participants also took part in the award ceremony in memory of Irena Sendler - "For Making the World Better". The winner was selected



subject to a contest conducted by the Centre for Citizenship Education and the Association of Children of the Holocaust in Poland. For the first time, the prize was awarded to a Polish and American teacher by Irena Sendler herself in 2006. The winner of this year's edition was a Polish language teacher from the complex of schools in Szczekociny, Mr Mirosław Skrzypczak.

The International conference "How to talk about the Righteous" was officially opened by the US Ambassador in Poland - Ms Georgette Mosbacher. In her address to the conference

participants gathered in the lecture theatre - teachers, educators, cultural animators, she said: "You are the ones that change the world, the ones who educate future generations and influence people's attitudes in terms of remembering, discussing and studying the Holocaust". Further, in her speech, she pointed to the significance of this education in today's, troubled world. The words of the Israeli Ambassador to Poland Anna Azari resonated with that of the US Ambassador.

All images in this article: Museum of History of Polish Jews POLIN



.The next speaker was an employee of the Ministry of Culture and National Heritage who read the welcome address to the conference participants in the absence of the deputy minister, Jarosław Sellin. Then came the address of the vice-president of Warsaw, Włodzimierz Paszyński. His speech was received with standing ovation by the conference participants. The speaker pointed out, among others, that the historical truth about Polish-Jewish relations during and after the war and the truth about Polish aid for the Jewish population during the Holocaust cannot yield to short-term political goals. He emphatically pointed out that the depositories of this memory are teachers, for whom decency and truth should have been the main indicators in their pedagogical work.

The substantive part of the event began after the ceremonial welcome and opening of the conference by the deputy director of the POLIN Museum, Zygmunt Stępiński. It was inaugurated by Stephen Smith, PhD - executive directive of the USC Shoah Foundation and chairperson of UNESCO on Genocide Education. He gave a lecture, in which he presented the problem: "How the rescuers made difficult decisions during the Holocaust". Dr Smith's speech was illustrated with specific examples and aroused considerable interest among the audience. After a short break, female representatives of the education department of the POLIN Museum presented the latest educational offer prepared for school children and youth.

The first discussion panel titled: "Rescuing - various perspectives" attracted considerable interest. Panellists were: Aleksandra Bańkowska from the Institute of History PAN (Polish Academy of Sciences) and Karolina Panz from the PAN Institute of Philosophy and Sociology. The third member of the panel was Piotr Forecki, PhD, from the Faculty of Political Sciences and Journalism of the Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań. The discussants shared opinions resulting from their detailed research. They drew attention to the contemporary ways of talking about the problem of rescuing, indicating their determinants. The reflections of the panellists on the desirable ways of talking about these issues from the past were extremely valuable

and inspired the listeners. They pointed to the importance of the prewar period (1918 - 1939) in Polish-Jewish relations, about the possibilities of searching for the righteous in this period, emphasising that the experience of help and rescue was the experience of the few needy; for the majority, it was an unattainable experience. Therefore, emphasising the aid and rescue of the Jewish population during the Holocaust was commonplace, is not only untrue but also inappropriate. Then, the audience gathered in the lecture hall asked detailed questions, which the panellists answered.

After the break the participants took part in the long-announced show, let us emphasise the first technology in Europe called New Dimensions in Testimony. It is worth recalling that it's originator - USC Shoah Foundation since the mid-1990s has been involved in recording, developing and making available for educational purposes; the testimonies of survivors, witnesses and other participants of the Holocaust, as well as contemporary genocides. The Visual History Archive of the USC Shoah Foundation contains more than 55 thousand testimonies recorded on a digital carrier, in 34 languages (including 1500 in Polish) of the participants and witnesses of history. Access to this most extensive collection of oral history in the world is also available at the POLIN Museum. New Dimensions in Testimony is an advanced voice processing and projection technology that allows you to learn personal history through a conversation with its witness. The creation of such a recording is unique. The survivor, sitting in the middle of an illuminated semicircular stage, is recorded simultaneously by one hundred cameras. During recording the survivor responds to over 2000 questions covering a broad scope of subjects. Questions posed to the survivor are processed through a computer programme that matches them to the most appropriate, recorded statement. The exceptional feature of this technology is that with time, the accuracy of the responses searched by programme increases and the time required to search for it becomes increasingly shorter. As mention by the presenters Karen Jungblut and Stephen Smith, PhD, the technology was created in response to the



Stanlee Stahl, Executive Vice President of the Jewish Foundation for the Righteous

ever-decreasing number of survivors and witnesses of history, who could talk about past events and testify to their authenticity. The presentation of the new technology, *New Dimensions in Testimony* aroused lively discussions and reflections among the conference participants, and the major subject was the possibility of using this technology in the historical education of children and youth.

The subsequent two days of the conference were devoted primarily to workshops during which the participants divided into groups explored and discussed several aspects related to the rescue of Jews during the Holocaust, as well as post-war and contemporary narratives about events from the past. Each workshop section was preceded by a substantive lecture. It was inaugurated by Stanlee Stahl, Executive Vice President of the Jewish Foundation for the Righteous. In a very moving way, she presented several personal stories of the rescuers and the rescued. She pointed to the personal traits of the rescuers, which in her opinion was decisive in undertaking such rescue efforts. She listed, among others:

courage, friendship, altruism.

The afternoon workshop session was held simultaneously with the lecture of Agnieszka Haski, PhD, from the Jewish Holocaust Research Centre IFiS PAN. The title of her lecture, "Whole Poland saves Jews? Between reality and memory - contemporary discourse about the Righteous", indicated the uncliché and deviating approach to the dominant subject on rescuing and the Righteous. The lecturer by referring to specific examples showed the uniqueness in the attitudes of the Righteous, their action in solitude, and even against the opinion of the majority of society.

On the next day of the conference, the workshop session ran in parallel with the lecture titled: "From outside? Towards a new conceptualisation of a Polish witness", Karolina Koprowska Faculty of Polish Studies at the Jagiellonian University. The speaker introduced the listeners to a new research terminology describing the Polish experience of the Holocaust. She presented arguments justifying the deviation from the term "witness" to "outsider". Both lectures aroused considerable

as well as a number of questions. The lectures did not only provide the audience with a massive dose of substantive knowledge but above all inspired them to reflect on the educational aspect of the issues discussed. The content of the lectures corresponded with issues discussed during the workshops. Participants proposed 6 two-hour workshops, with the possibility to select two during the conference.

DDr Marzanna Pogorzelska of the Institute of English University of Opole, during her workshop, titled; "Irena Sendler rediscovered. How to teach about her and other Righteous" performed an analysis of the well-known image of the heroine, deconstructed some of its elements and together with the participants, formulated proposals regarding teachings about her and other Righteous. During the workshop, selected quotes were used from information about the heroine posted on the websites of the school in memory of Irena Sendler. In the course of their analysis, it was found among others, that: "schools perform certain sacralisation of her personality [I. Sendler] by referring to traits attributed to saints, especially female saints

when writing about the patron (love, modesty, good, sacrifice) or including her among a specific group of figures related to religion". Several conclusions were formulated in the final part of the workshop regarding ways of teaching about Irena Sendler and other Righteous.

The most significant include: a) the necessity to base the teaching on reliable knowledge based on facts, b) showing the entire complexity and contradiction of the figure, c) exposing traits that had a fundamental impact on rescuing: social involvement, organisational skills, d) appreciating the "positivist hustle and bustle", and not just the heroic acts of heroes, e) taking into account the entire context of events, e.g., the loneliness of rescuers among "their group", issues of political views and organisational affiliation before, during and after the war, f) news of anti-Semitic and xenophobic attitudes in the context of teaching about the Righteous, g) "using" the biography of Irena Sendler and those of other Righteous people to shape active attitudes of acceptance and assistance for excluded groups, e.g., refugees, ethnic minorities socially or culturally present in the local environment.




Equally extensive and rich in teaching resources and work methods, was the workshop conducted by Grzegorz Siwor from High School No. 16 in Cracow, titled: "Difficult topics of the lesson. How to talk with students about indifference, szmalcowniks and pogroms"? From the very onset, he pointed out that although teachers of humanistic subjects have multiple opportunities to discuss the topic of the Holocaust in their classes; they often shy away from the essence of the issue. They avoid such topics by fragmentarily "going through" the material and brushing it aside with a few clichés and phrases, or a more or less conscious defence against knowledge that could in whatsoever way violate the national and religious mythology and the identity status quo. In other words, the common practice in schools is to avoid topics about Jews. The workshop participants worked with a variety of cultural texts and source materials. The role of the executioner, victim and witness was discussed on the basis of Andrzej Brzozowski's film "At the Railway track", which is the adaptation of one of Zofia Naukowska's medallions. The discussion also touched the difficult subject of crimes committed by Poles against hiding Jews. Here, the source of teaching material was fragments of the Paweł Łoziński's film "Place of Birth. Władysław Strzemiński's series "My Jewish friends served as a pretext to analyse the role of a genocide crime witness. Poems by Zuzanna Ginczanka, Władysław Szlengel, Henryk Grynberg, Julian Kornhauzer and Adam Zagajewski were analysed, dealing with the subject of robbery of Jewish property, szmalcownictwo (Polish expression for the blackmail of Jews in hiding or Poles helping Jews), anti-Jewish pogroms committed by the Polish population during and after the war. The workshop classes were supplemented with the analysis of photographs documenting the robbery of Jewish property during the liquidation of the ghetto in Szydłowiec and the lynching of a resident of Grybowa Ms Suchanowa for rendering aid to Jews. The multitude of educational resources used and the subject of the workshop triggered a series of discussions and the profound reflections of the participants. It was noted that the subject of the Holocaust, genocide, mass crimes and persecutions of the civilian population raised

during school lessons arouse an unusually strong and complex psychological reaction in young people, due to fear. It was also noted that discussing the topic of pogroms, murders of the Jewish population, szmalcownictwo and plunder of property is related to the sense of national identity of young people and the deconstruction of many myths and misconceptions present in the universal consciousness. The myth; Poland - the Christ of Nations and the innocent victim, is still alive. Pupils find it extremely difficult to identify with the negative or criminal attitudes of Poles. The display a tendency to rationalise, displace or negate them. It seems understandable that young people want to emulate heroes, draw inspiration from heroic attitudes. The question then is, how do we urge them to accept the diversity of human behaviour in the past, including evil. Participants who took part in the workshop by Karolina Jastrzębska-Mitzner from the POLIN Museum came to many interesting to conclusions. "About the Righteous with the youngest. When and how to start talking?" is the title of the workshop, during which teachers considered the issue - at what age one can start learning about the Righteous. They also discussed what language to use when talking about such difficult matters with the young ones, what terms to use in describing the issues of help and rescue of the Jewish population during the Holocaust. The outcome of the workshop was the compilation of a catalogue of proposals and recommendations for those teaching the young ones about the Righteous.

The Workshop titled: "Hiding, Covering, Discovering. Experience of the Holocaust", conducted by Mirosław Skrzypczyk of the General Education School Complex in Skoczów, this year's winner of the Irena Sendler Award for "Repairing the World", was devoted to presenting various dimensions of the Holocaust experience both by Jews and Poles in the regional dimension. The workshop focused on conversations, discussions, and mutual diagnoses, conclusions and observations, showing the multiplicity of experiences during the Holocaust, as well as the interpretation of fragments of witnesses' accounts recorded with video technology. Through the analysis of specific cases of Poles'







behaviours during the Holocaust in the region they hail from and which class teacher investigates, the participants of the workshop came to a joint conclusion concerning the proximity and significance of the Holocaust experience for the Polish society, as well. It was recognised that the problem of the Righteous, witnesses, outsiders is one of the most important contemporary humanities. It is up to researchers and teachers to consider, study and popularise it in Polish society.

The last workshop conducted by Monika Koszńska from the POLIN Museum was dedicated to familiarising the participants with materials published on the international educational portal IWitness created and operated by the USC Shoah Foundation - The Institute for Visual History and Education. The lessons were titled: "Poles who rescued Jews during World War II - different shades of grey". The participants of the workshop saw fragments of the testimonies of those honoured with the title and medal of "Righteous Among the Nations". It concerned their pre-war life and experiences related to interaction with members of the Jewish community. Then, they explored the circumstances in which the Righteous took decisions to save their Jewish neighbours, friends or acquaintances from the Holocaust.

The lecturer drew particular attention to the danger of misinterpreting statements of witnesses, and warned the participants against making too hasty, and thus often incorrect conclusions from the analysed accounts of the survivors or rescuers. As in the other cases, the workshop ended with the formulation of a series of recommendations for work using the lessons posted on the IWitness portal. The conference was summed up by Aleksander Pawlicki, teacher and lecturer at the School of Education of the Polish-American Freedom Foundation and the University of Warsaw, with the lecture entitled; Can you learn to be good. The lecturer emphasised the importance of educational activities conducted during classes and breaks between them,

regardless of the subject being taught. He proved, by referring to the examples of the accounts of rescuers and the rescued presented by previous speakers that very often it is much more important to pay attention to disturbing behaviour of students towards their colleagues than the currently debated issues of history, physics or a foreign language.

He appealed to teachers to pay close attention to what kind of young people they are bringing up because they interact with them much more often and more intensively than parents and guardians. Aleksander Pawlicki's lecture was very warmly received by all the conference participants, as evidenced by the standing ovation she was given by the participants.

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International Conference titled: "How to talk about the Righteous - Representations in culture, meaning in education" was heralded as a huge success by the participants. The contents handed out during lectures, panel discussions and methodological workshops were inspiring for reflection and academic research.

The conference presentations proved once again that we can discuss in peace and dignity about complicated issues of the past, and that presenting the multifaceted problems of the Righteous does not diminish their heroism but on the contrary, emphasises the importance of their exceptional attitude in times of contempt.

Once again, teachers and educators left the POLIN Museum full of fresh knowledge, reflection, new ideas for educational activities about the Righteous with their pupils and charges. We wish them success in their lessons.

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UNIQUE EXHIBITION  
"DAVID OLÈRE. THE ONE  
WHO SURVIVED"

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"David Olère. The One Who Survived Crematorium III" - is the title of a unique monographic exhibition of the works of a former Sonderkommando prisoner in the German Nazi concentration and extermination camp, which is presented in the rooms on the first floor of Block 21 at the former Auschwitz I camp until March next year.



DAVID OLÈRE

TEN, KTÓRY OCALAŁ Z KREMATORIUM III  
THE ONE WHO SURVIVED CREMATORIUM III



It is the largest exhibition so far, depicting the moving paintings and drawings of the artist, presenting almost the entire exceptional work related to the artist's traumatic experiences in the camp. In addition to 19 paintings from the Auschwitz Museum Collections, the exhibition will display 64 works on loan from the Yad Vashem and Lohamei haGetaot in Israel, as well as the Mémorial de la Shoah from France.

While opening the exhibition, the director of the Auschwitz Museum, Dr. Piotr M. A. Cywiński noted that for the first time they managed to collect in one place the vast majority of David Olère's works. "The exhibition does not only present events that occurred in the most

secretive and secured space of Birkenau, but these paintings show the unspeakable trauma people experienced. They are also a kind of outcry to the entire world, and us for the future of this world to look different than its past," Cywiński emphasised.

The exhibition depicts subsequent stages of the extermination process, from the moment of arrival at the ramp and selection to killing in gas chambers and burning of bodies in the crematoriums, recorded just after the war in documentary drawings, and then in huge paintings. The works are accompanied by excerpts from the accounts and records of the Sonderkommando prisoners.

All images: Auschwitz Memorial

# OLÈRE

M III  
M III



Państwowe Muzeum  
**Auschwitz**  
**Birkenau**  
State Museum





The curators of the exhibition of the works of David Olère at the Auschwitz Memorial are Agnieszka Sieradzka, art historian at the Museum Collections, the artist's grandson Mac Oler and Serge Klarsfeld, vice-President of Fondation pour la Mémoire de la Shoah, who published the catalogue of Olère's works in France.

During the opening of the exhibition, Serge Klarsfeld pointed out the fact that no photos were taken inside the interior of the crematoriums. "None of the leaders of the final solution was eager to know what transpired at particular stages of the extermination when the SS men involved in the process exceeded all possible standards. Were it not for David Olère, camp number 106 144, his artistic and intellectual skills, which helped to recreate the events that transpired here we could not have visualised what the paroxysm of hatred against the Jews entailed; what selection meant," – Klarsfeld said.

"The enormous bright canvases bear the mark of his traumatic experience. In his paintings, we can see not only the extermination process but also his suffering caused by what he saw and experienced here. For many years, his work was misunderstood and underestimated. To date, it evokes conflicting emotions. However, upon looking deeper and closer at these canvases, we discover another historical fact this visual form; stages of the gruesome extermination process, which was carried out in the largest German Nazi extermination camp of Auschwitz," Agnieszka Sieradzka said during the opening of the exhibition.

"My grandfather, David Olère was an artist, painter and sculptor, but above all an important voice that spoke of peace and humanity. He survived the darkest experience of the extermination camp in Birkenau and was a firsthand witness of the tragedy and fall of humanity. He replicated his experiences and memories in his works. He wanted to show the world why such an event should never occur



never occur again. He wanted people to experience peace," said Marc Oler.

David Olère was born on 19 January 1902 in Warsaw. He studied at the Academy of Fine Arts in Warsaw. In 1918, he went to Berlin, and then later to Paris where he settled permanently. He belonged to the so-called School of Paris. He worked for various film studios (he created set designs, costumes and advertising posters), among others Paramount Pictures, Fox and Gaumont.

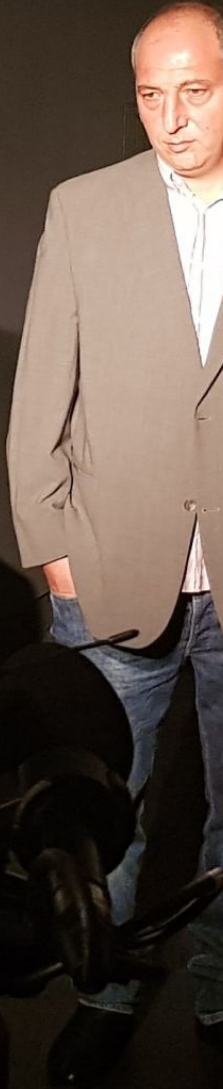
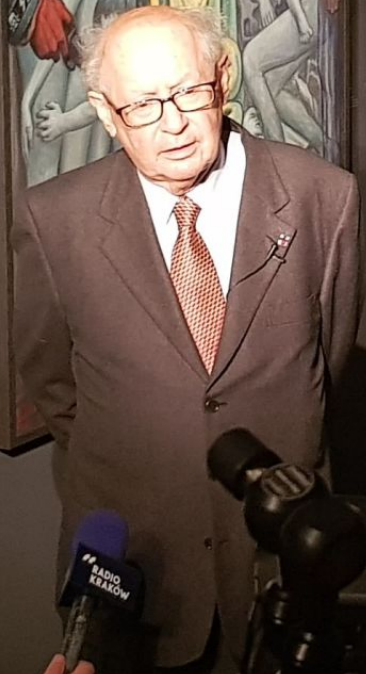
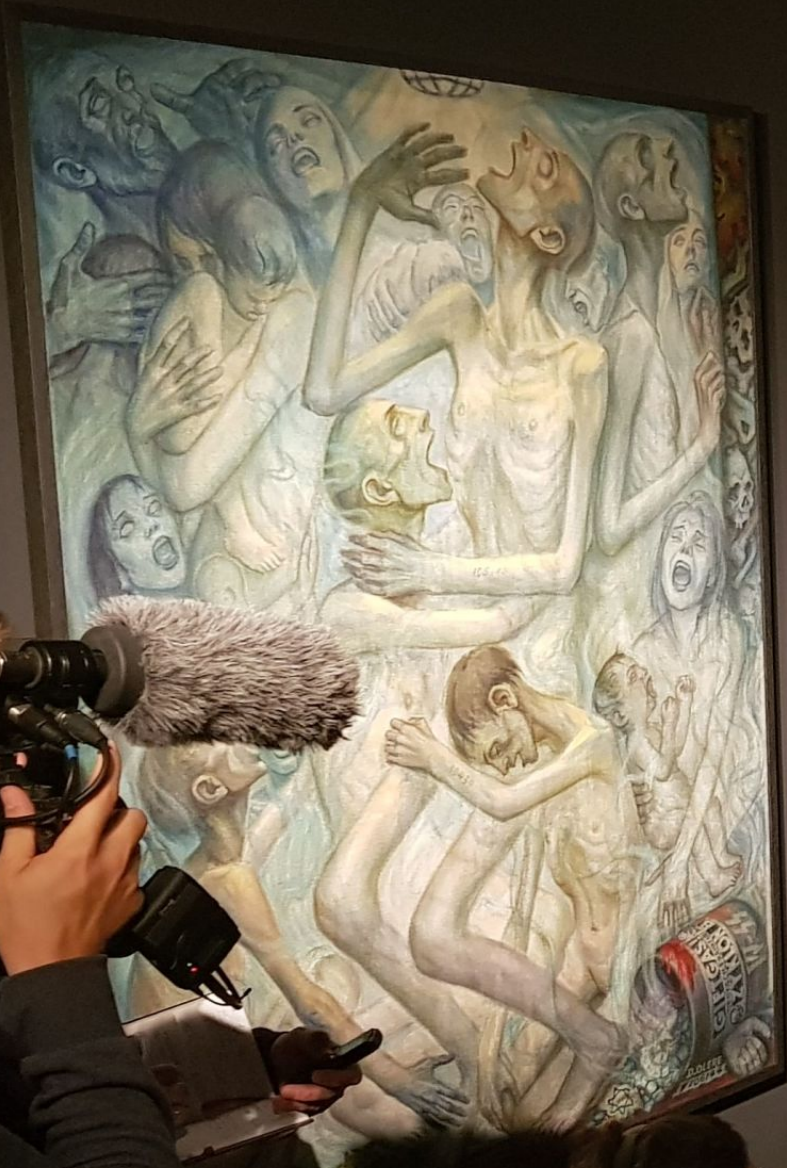
On 20 February 1943, because of his Jewish origin, he was arrested by the French police and placed in the Drancy camp. On 2 March, he was deported from here to the German Nazi concentration and extermination camp Auschwitz, where he was registered with the number 106 144. Throughout his entire stay at the camp, he worked in the Sonderkommando, a special work unit forced by the Germans to assist in the operation of the crematoriums and gas chambers.

On 19 January 1945, David Olère was evacuated from Auschwitz deep into the Third Reich. At first, he was sent to the Mauthausen camp and then to Melk, where he worked, among others, in the underground adit. On 7 April, he was transferred to Ebensee where he was liberated by the American army on 6 May 1945.

Shortly after the war a series of about 70 drawings was created, which in later years served as an inspiration for David Olère to produce shocking oil paintings. The very detailed record of subsequent stages of the extermination and scenes from the camp prisoners' life is of exceptional documentary value. It contains plans of the crematoriums and gas chambers, as well as drawings depicting scenes taking place in these buildings.

In addition to the very moving works of Olère, the catalogue that accompanies the exhibition contains fragments of the accounts and records of Sonderkommando members.









The exhibition "David Olère. The One Who Survived Crematorium III" will be presented in Block 21 at the former Auschwitz I camp site until March 2019.

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Birkenau State Museum  
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Special thanks to:  
Yad Vashem, The World  
Holocaust Remembrance  
Center in Israel,  
Ghetto Fighters' House in  
Israel,  
and Mémorial de la Shoah in  
France  
for loaning the works and  
allowing to publish the  
photographs in the  
catalogue

Elżbieta Cajzer, Auschwitz Memorial Collections

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# ARCHAEOLOGY AT MEMORIAL SITES

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On November 8th, scientific conference "Archaeology at Memorial Sites. Archaeological works versus illegal exploration. Criminal activity aimed at archaeological and martyrological heritage" organized by Stutthof Museum together with the Voivodeship Monument Conservator's Office in Gdańsk took place in the Sztutowo.



Scientific session was devoted to the role of archaeology as science at Memorial Sites, the methodology for conducting works, threats resulting from interfering in the site as well as ethics accompanying such activities.

Conducting archaeological works within former German Nazi concentration and extermination camps constitutes a particularly complex subject due to its broad context, not only historical, but mainly ethical and unfortunately formal and legal. During the conference the representatives of martyrological museums had the occasion to present their experience in the field of archaeological works, their results, to share with participants new information concerning the objects discovered as well as problems which emerged within the undertaken activities.

The presentations were divided by organizers into thematic sections, which constituted a good decision as it turned out that the spectrum of this topic is particularly broad and it touches numerous fields.

In the first part, representatives of the Stutthof Museum, Memorial Site in Bełżec, Historical Museum of the City of Krakow and the Museum at Majdanek presented the scope of conducted works, their effects and objects which appeared as a result of the undertaken activities. It was continuously emphasized that Memorial Sites constitute a special area protected not only due to the role which they had played in the history, but most of all in connection with commemorating the victims of atrocities which had taken place within their premises.

Conference images: Katarzyna Krawczyk, Stutthof Museum



What appeared particularly important it was the question of historical material obtained within the course of works, which due to its context and quantity is often perceived as mass material, i.e. homogenous from the functional point of view, but it appears in a large number within a limited space. Mass material and its formal qualification already at the stage of collecting it from the excavation in the course of activities constitutes the source of divergent emotions and is connected with subjective decisions of the archaeologists working on site.

It is worth to emphasize that legal provisions do not contain the notion of a mass object and regulations concerning the way of proceeding with relation to historical items forming so called martyrological heritage are missing, which at various subsequent stages of work with such historical items becomes the source of doubts and organizational difficulties. Martyrological heritage constitutes a new notion and it includes a number of scopes and definitions referring to different areas. What is crucial for explaining its full meaning it is the context of the place to which it refers, i.e. Memorial Sites, the premises of former Nazi concentration camps and extermination camps.

Former camp premises are in their majority subject to conservator's protection and conducting any works within them requires administrative decisions of Voivodeship Conservators from the given regions of Poland. Some of the areas historically forming the camp zone remain today under the custody of museum institutions established in order to preserve their authenticity, commemorate the victims as well as protect against potential devastation or destruction. Unfortunately, some of the areas are deprived of such custody as from the administrative point of view they do not form part of museum entities.

Martyrological heritage includes both the area subject to protection, complete historical establishment or complex together with its infrastructure (fencing posts with insulators, barbed wire, buildings, space between the buildings, the arrangement of roads and passageways, together with movable objects, items stolen from the victims (suitcases, personal belongings, powder boxes, cutlery, enamel cookware, photographs, civilian shoes, baby clothes, civilian cloths) or those manufactured in the camp and used during prisoners' everyday life (bowls, striped uniforms, clogs)).

Archaeological search during conservation of brick barracks at the Auschwitz II-Birkenau site. Photo: Auschwitz Memorial





Apart from material cultural property, so called material heritage, there also exists non-material martyrological heritage, formed mainly by the context of places often present in the accounts by former prisoners referred to by historians (crematoria, roll calls, punishments), where in some cases the reference in today's spatial arrangement of the area is absent or only partially clear. The notion of martyrological heritage emerged in the second part of the conference dedicated to legal aspects of conducting archaeological works within Memorial Sites. The following experts presented their position in this field: Monument Conservator for the Pomerania Region, acting on behalf of Monument Conservator's Office in Gdańsk, expert involved in legal aspects of archaeology representing the University of Wrocław, representative of General Police Headquarters, representative of National Heritage Institute as well as representative of Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań. During their presentations, they discussed the topic of

protection of the area of former camps and Memorial Sites, enumerated the threats that facilities of this kind have to face nowadays, presented how to minimize the risk of loss or illegal activities of third parties. Most importantly, however, the need for the amendment of law directly relating to former concentration camps in Poland has emerged during the sum-up discussion. Unfortunately, the legislator has at different levels failed to take into consideration the specific character of such places, objects and activities necessary to preserve the site and context as well as, most importantly, the memory. In those fields where the essence of the activity is to preserve the authenticity, any interference in the area becomes problematic. Dialogue seems a crucial element here and the space for it was ensured within the conference program, i.e. in the third panel relating to the ethics of conducting the works within Memorial Sites. The notion of ethics in connection with martyrology is very broad and has been discussed many times.





Archaeological search during conservation of brick barracks at the Auschwitz II-Birkenau site. Photo: Auschwitz Memorial

Ethics, i.e. the collection of commonly approved and socially accepted standards and rules, gets in such circumstances a new dimension. During the last thematic section, of major importance for the entire message conveyed, representatives of the Martyrological Museum in Żabikowo, Auschwitz-Birkenau Museum in Oświęcim as well as Stutthof Museum in Sztutowo presented their experience, reflections, remarks and proposals.

At present, basic issues and dilemmas are as follows: Should we start digging if the context is formed by Memorial Site, cemetery, authenticity and inviolability? When is interference in the land an utmost necessity? How to conduct the activities which require interference in the land?

Where is the limit between legal obligations and ethics, which is not always easy to grasp? How to conduct research in accordance with ethical principles and respect for the resting place? What about the acquired material, even if it is called mass material which can be counted in thousands? How to bear the consequences of obtaining thousands of objects deprived of individual characteristics, but important for the context of the place (conservation, storage, protection, packaging, description, sharing, and most importantly decent warehouse storage conditions, which is connected with the number of working posts and square meters, which are usually limited in historical locations)?

With all these questions asked, the majority of answers require detailed analysis and implementing some standards and rules of conduct in all Memorial Sites in order to unify the guidelines for conducting archaeological works within the areas considered as monuments, cemeteries, Memorial Sites and the sites of martyrological heritage.

Conference organizers have planned to issue the publication summarizing and completing all presentations and some of the questions are for sure going to be answered there, but at present, the discussion is still in progress and there are many topics which require thorough analysis and the implementation of legislative solutions making it possible for museum staff to conduct their activities at the expected level and aimed at one particular goal: preserving the Memory.

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# SHATTERED: POGROM, NOVEMBER 1938

## THE WIENER LIBRARY'S NEW EXHIBITION

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**Thousands of Jewish women, men and children brutalised. 25,000 Jewish men deported to concentration camps. Over 1,200 synagogues desecrated. Thousands of Jewish businesses and homes looted and destroyed. Over 100 Jews murdered.**

The events of 9-10 November 1938, commonly called Kristallnacht, are the focus of The Wiener Library's new temporary exhibition. Eighty years after Kristallnacht the Library hopes that this exhibition will shed light on how exactly those brutal events unfolded and highlight the desperate attempts of German and Austrian Jews to flee Nazism in the days and months that followed. Through the eyewitness accounts gathered by Library staff shortly after Kristallnacht, the exhibition examines responses to this unprecedented, nationwide campaign of violence. Never-before-seen documents from the Library's collection demonstrate German and Austrian Jews' desperate attempts to flee, in many cases as refugees to Britain.

### **A small brass Hanukiah**

One of the most poignant items on display is a Hanukiah, kindly loaned by Helen Stone for the duration of the exhibition. The Hanukiah originated from the synagogue in the small German village of Kommern which served just twelve Jewish families. During the November Pogrom an eleven year-old non-Jewish girl, Maria Klee, whose family took care of the synagogue, passed by the ruins and found a still smouldering brass Hanukiah among them. She wrapped it in her dress, and took it home, where the family hid it for 70 years.

Thanks to the help of a local German teacher in Kommern, in 2009 Maria found Emmy Golding, whose family had escaped the village for England in 1939. Maria gave the Hanukiah to Emmy when they met. Maria died after their reunion, and Emmy died in 2010, after which the Hanukiah passed into the possession of Helen Stone and her family.

### **First-hand testimony and accompanying digital resources**

Also on display at the exhibition is the Library's collection of first-hand testimony collected by the Jewish Central Information Office (as The Wiener Library was then known) in the immediate days and weeks following the November Pogrom. The immediacy and power of these documents is conveyed in the words of people who had seen Nazi violence against Jews.

While all 350 reports have been available online, both in German and in English since November 2015, in order to coincide with the eightieth anniversary we are pleased to announce new features including live integration with the Library's Collections Catalogue, multi-faceted search and an enhanced glossary.

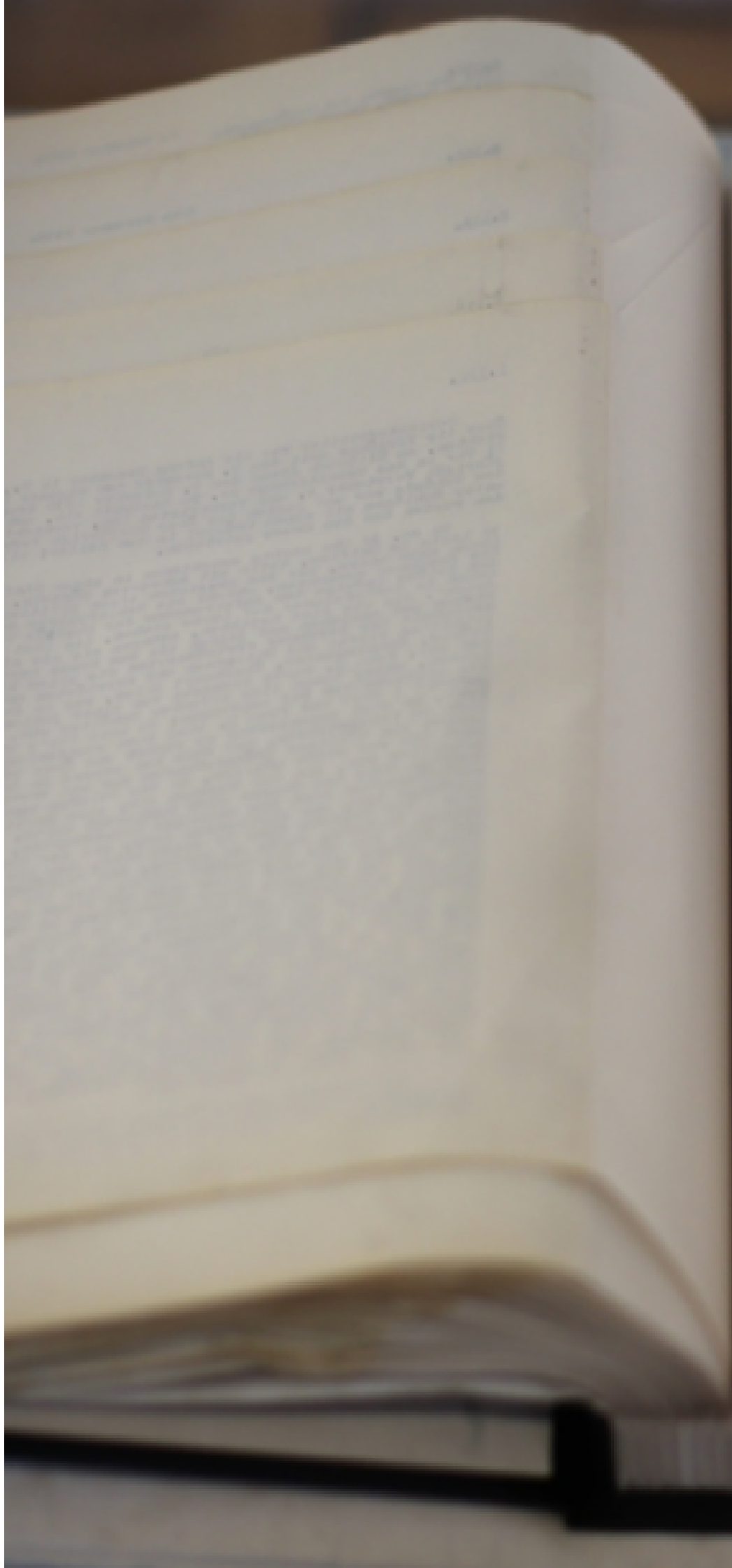




Newly curated by Dr Christine Schmidt and Dr Barbara Warnock, **SHATTERED: Pogrom, November 1938** explores the experiences of Jewish women, men and children whose lives were changed forever after November 1938. For related events and programming please visit <https://www.wienerlibrary.co.uk/Whats-On>

The Wiener Library is also holding a memorial concert to mark the 80th anniversary of Kristallnacht and the arrival of the Kindertransport. Taking place at the Liberal Jewish Synagogue on 22 November 2018, more information can be found on The Wiener Library's website.

**Shattered: Pogrom, November 1938 runs from 3 October 2018 to 15 February 2019.**



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# PASS HOLOCAUST MEMORY TO FUTURE GENERATIONS

The World Jewish Congress and UNESCO have launched a Holocaust education website this month, geared at providing students, young adults, and others with essential information about the history of the Holocaust and its legacy.

The interactive website, [aboutholocaust.org](http://aboutholocaust.org), is now available in English and is expected to be launched in dozens of languages, including Chinese and Arabic, going forward. This unique platform is specifically dedicated to providing answers to frequently asked questions and common misconceptions about the Holocaust, and contains a range of simple content,

including must-know facts, video testimonials of survivors, and the latest news updates about Holocaust educational programs and activities. At the heart of the website is the Teach-A-Friend feature, which gives users the ability to 'nominate' a peer to receive automatic emails containing information and facts.



WORLD JEWISH CONGRESS



United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

With the support of UNESCO

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+ 69



FACTS



The website was unveiled by WJC President Ronald S. Lauder, UNESCO Director-General Audrey Azoulay, and WJC Commissioner for Education and Academia Jean de Gunzburg in Paris at the UN agency's headquarters.

In launching the site, WJC President Ronald S. Lauder – who has been an instrumental figure in the preservation of the Auschwitz Memorial site – stated, "It is astounding and saddening that 75 years after the Holocaust, more than 46 percent of people worldwide have never even heard of the Nazi attempt to obliterate European Jewry, and some 32 percent believe that it is either a myth or greatly exaggerated. As we face a world without survivors or witnesses, it becomes more critical than ever to ensure that the greatest atrocity the world has ever seen never be forgotten, lest history repeat itself. We must pass this knowledge on

to our children, and their children, because by knowing the past, we can protect our future."

"UNESCO is today the primary UN agency leading the efforts in fighting anti-Semitism and advocating for the importance of Holocaust education, and we commend its professional staff under the leadership of Director-General Azoulay, on their steadfast commitment to this critical cause," Lauder added.

Visit [www.aboutholocaust.org](http://www.aboutholocaust.org) to learn more.

Testimonies

News

Contact

Teach a Friend

# THE IS POWER

is History



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# THE WEIGHT OF A LIFE SPENT BEARING WITNESS

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In the play *Drowned Or Saved* by Geoffrey Williams presented at Tristan Bates Theatre in London, decades after surviving Auschwitz, chemist and writer Primo Levi is restless as he struggles to complete a story about a character he simply cannot understand.

In search of guidance, he pulls from the memories which haunt him and inadvertently brings the characters from his past to life - though their input proves to be far more penetrating than expected.

*"Tomorrow? Tomorrow meant never... I think the last time I thought of tomorrow with any hope was on the train to Auschwitz."*

In this poignant, potent play Williams invites you to embark on Primo's cross-world journey which explores the ambiguity of human nature as defined by one of the twentieth century's greatest thinkers.

Niall Dingle and Theatre Alive! present

# DROWNED or SAVED?

A New Play by Geoffrey Williams











## Director's Note

There are three questions which I am always asked about my work:

*Why should the it be made?*

*Why should I be the one to make it?*

*Why now?*

For *Drowned or Saved?*, I have found answering these questions fairly easy, because the play is particularly personal to me and because the answers are intertwined.

I am a Jew, exploring what it means to be a member of the Jewish people by examining our history. I was driven to write *Drowned or Saved?* because I was captivated by Primo Levi's message of humanity, compassion and perseverance. His narrative offers a level-headed alternative to the wild anxiety which underpins life in the 21st Century. But I believe that there is another reason for the immediacy of this play; the voices of living survivors are disappearing. We owe them the respect of preserving and cherishing their testimony. To read their words is an important beginning, but I believe we must go further. We must actively participate in the ongoing conversation about what happened.

We cannot forget. We must not forget. Yet remembering requires effort, and it is made so much easier if we can take part in individual stories. It is almost impossible to conceptualize six million people extinguished. It is too big for the brain to hold, too tragic for the soul to bear. But maybe we can manage one

person's story. If we learn about one person, perhaps we can begin to feel the weight of all the other stories that were snuffed out before they had a chance to be heard.

My wish is that *Drowned or Saved?* becomes a tiny part of the ongoing story of the Jews. The past defines all of us and we Jews are, after all, a people of the book. To be Jewish is to be part of a colossal story, complete with contradiction and violent disagreement. I welcome your various responses, and hope that in some small way, this play may spark others to engage artistically with the history of the Jews.

**Primo Levi** (b. 1919) was a Jewish Italian writer and chemist deported to Auschwitz in a transport of 650 Italian Jews from Fossoli di Capi camp on 22 February 1944. He had been arrested in December 1943 for his resistance activity. In the camp he was registered as no. 174 517. He was transferred to Auschwitz III-Monowitz camp where he survived until the liberation on 27 January 1945.

"It happened, therefore it can happen again: this is the core of what we have to say. It can happen, and it can happen everywhere" (Primo Levi)

# GIVING VOICE TO A FOXTROT FROM AUSCHWITZ

While conducting research at the Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum last summer, music theory professor Patricia Hall became interested in a manuscript arranged and performed by prisoners in the Auschwitz I men's orchestra.

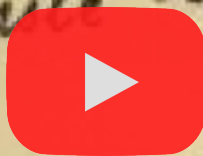
Heartbreakingly titled "The Most Beautiful Time of Life," it's a foxtrot that was likely performed as dance music for the Auschwitz SS garrison.

Thanks to The University of Michigan School of Music, Theatre & Dance this music will be returned to the world. Below you can see a fragment of one of original manuscripts from the Collection of the Memorial and to the right you can see a film documenting the project.

The image shows a handwritten musical manuscript on aged paper. At the top left, the word "Foxtrot" is written in cursive. To its right, the title "Die schönste Zeit" is written in a similar cursive hand. Below the title, the tempo marking "Moderato" is written. The music is written on a single staff in bass clef with a key signature of one flat (B-flat) and a 4/4 time signature. The notation includes various notes, rests, and dynamic markings such as *p* (piano) and *mf* (mezzo-forte). There are several slurs over the notes. On the left side of the manuscript, there is a simple line drawing of a bird, possibly a sparrow, with a sharp sign (#) written below it. At the bottom right of the page, the word "verse" is written in cursive.

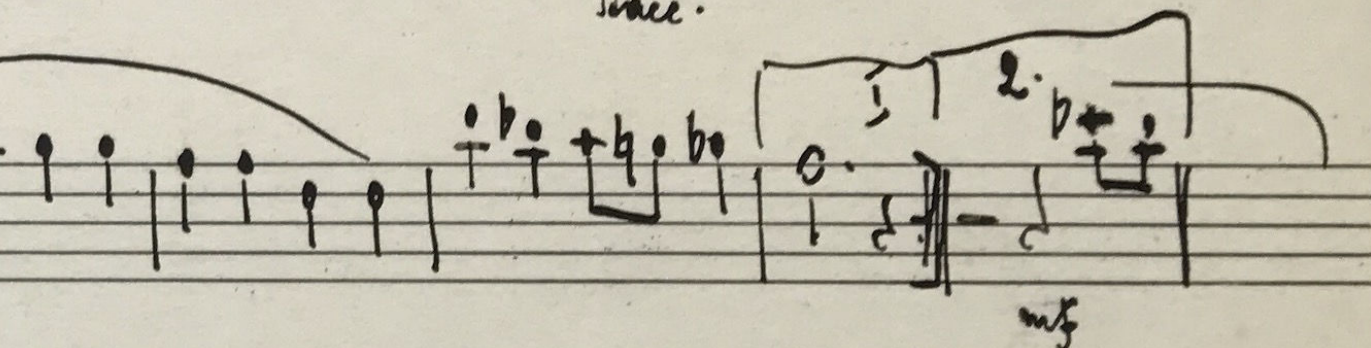
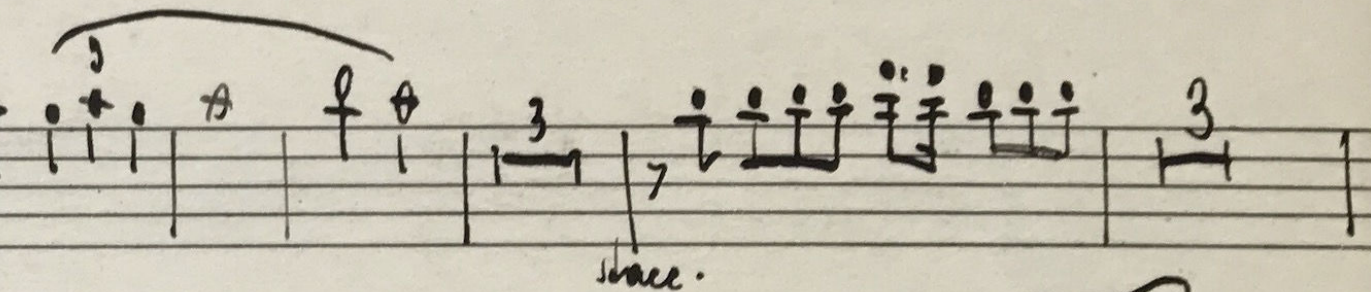
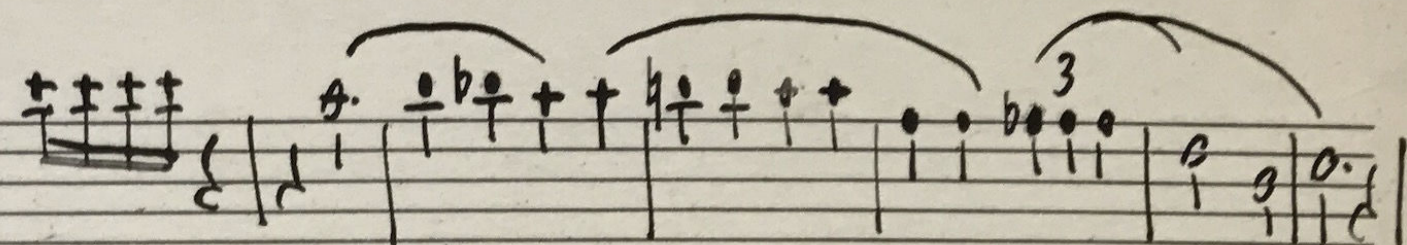
# Die schönste Zeit des Lebens

Refrain



des Lebens

Pasame





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**PUBLISHER**

Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum

**EDITOR-IN-CHIEF**

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