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# MEMORIA

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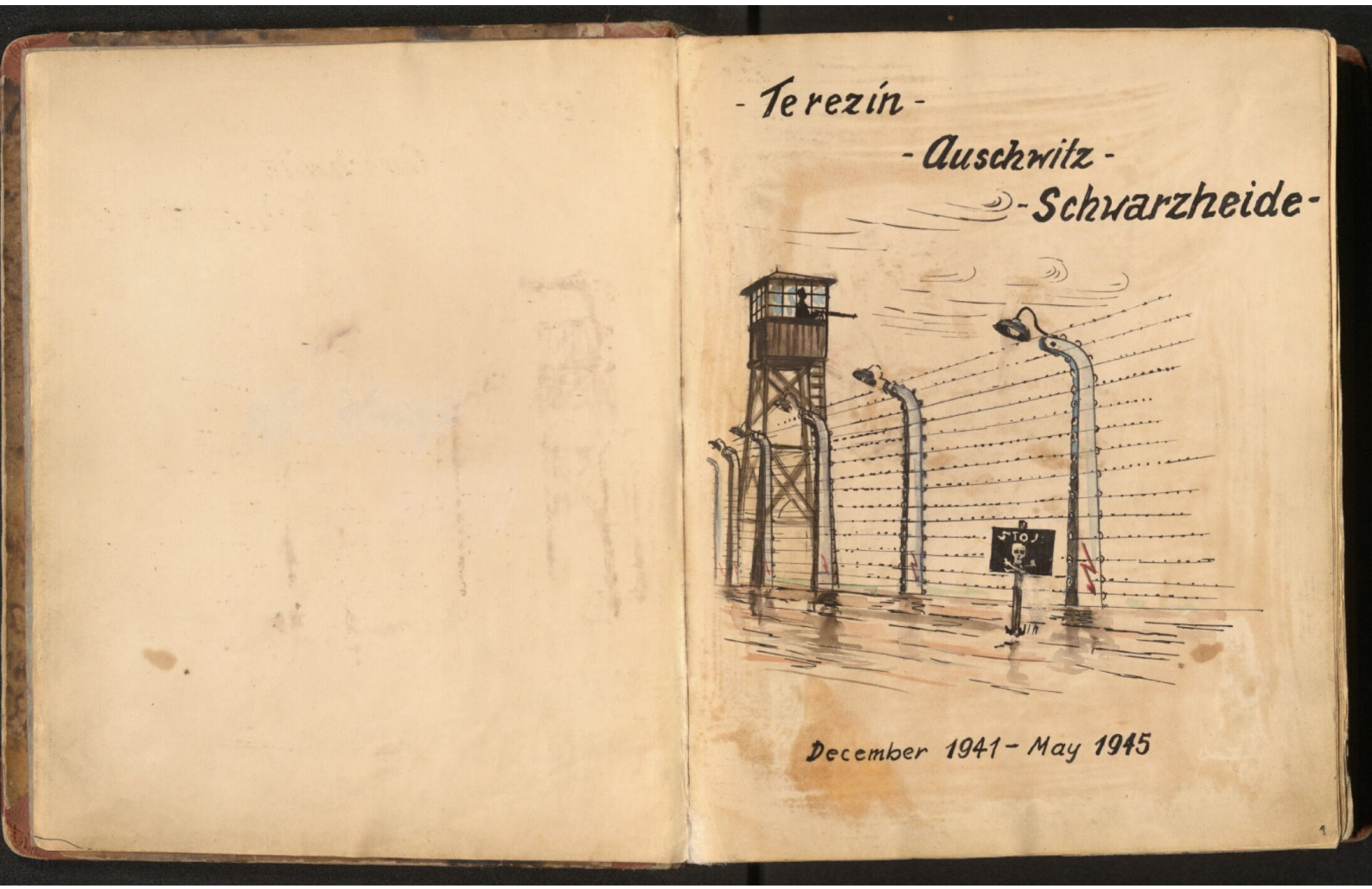


## AUSCHWITZ MUSEUM ACQUIRES THE ORIGINAL OF ILLUSTRATED DIARY MADE BY SURVIVOR ALFRED KANTOR

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Paweł Sawicki, Editor-in-Chief

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Paweł Sawicki

# NAZI PARTY MEMBERSHIP FILES ONLINE

**In the spring of 2026, a development of major significance for historians, genealogists, and all those seeking to understand the scale of German society's involvement in the Nazi regime took place.**

The National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) has released online a collection titled "Records Relating to Membership in the Nationalsozialistische Deutsche Arbeiterpartei (NSDAP)." This means public access to a vast portion of extant Nazi Party membership files, which for decades remained difficult to search and largely inaccessible to the general public. The Bundesarchiv explains that these materials originate from the former Berlin Document Center and include both the central NSDAP card index and regional files.

The scale of this release is unprecedented. According to the German press agency DPA, more than 16 million digital objects from over 5,000 microfilm reels have been made available. These records include names, dates of birth, membership numbers, dates of joining the party, and in some cases additional identifying data. German media described this publication as a breakthrough moment: for the first time since the end of the war, such a vast body of NSDAP membership records has become publicly accessible online.

The importance of this development also lies in the sheer size of the Nazi Party itself. As noted by the weekly Die Zeit, approximately10.2 million people joined the NSDAP between 1925 and 1945. CNN pointed out that this figure challenges the common social perception that support for Hitler was a marginal phenomenon within family histories. The publication of these records, therefore, carries not only scholarly value but also social weight, as it facilitates confrontation with facts that for decades were often glossed over or omitted in family narratives.

A particularly vital aspect of this story is the fact that the records survived at all. Toward the end of the war, the documents were to be destroyed. However, tens of tons of material were transported to a Munich paper mill, where they were never processed. The collection owes its survival to Hanns Huber, who did not follow the order to destroy the documents. After the Americans took over the files, their immense value quickly became evident, especially for denazification efforts and postwar legal proceedings.

After the war, these records were housed in the Berlin Document Center, and in 1994, they were transferred to the Bundesarchiv (German Federal Archives). The microfilm copies, however, remained in the United States. In its statement of 19 March 2026, the Bundesarchiv noted that it is precisely these microfilm copies, preserved in the U.S., that formed the basis of the current release by NARA. In this sense, the American side has outpaced the German federal archives in providing public access, even though the original documents have been held in Germany for years.

At the same time, the Bundesarchiv emphasized that statutory protection periods still apply in Germany. Full online access will only be possible once these periods expire—generally 100 years after a person's birth or 10 years after their death. The archive also

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Yoel Yaari

# THE CHILDREN OF BLOCK 10

**Dr. Alina Brewda, a Jewish gynecologist from Warsaw, was an inmate in the Majdanek concentration and annihilation camp. In September 1943, she was summoned to an interview with Dr. Enno Lolling, who served as the chief physician of all SS concentration camps. In Brewda he found what he was looking for: a knowledgeable and experienced gynecological surgeon. He ordered her to be transferred to Auschwitz I, the main camp in the Auschwitz complex. After being registered as a prisoner there and having a number tattooed on her left arm, she was taken to Block 10 – the only one of the camp's 28 blocks housing women.**

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A two-story, red-brick structure, Block 10 was considered one of the most horrific places in the hell that was Auschwitz.

Beginning in April 1943, it accommodated several research laboratories, in which SS physicians conducted criminal "medical" experiments on many hundreds of Jewish women.

In her postwar memoir, Brewda re calls the moment she first arrived at her new quarters and place of work: "On the steps of Block 10 I saw three Jewish children playing ... It was very surprising to see Jewish children in Auschwitz, because the Nazis saw them as being worthless and sent them to the gas chambers immediately upon their arrival."
Indeed, for almost all the Jewish children who arrived with their families in Auschwitz on transports from across Nazi-occupied Europe, crammed into freight cars, the journey ended within a few hours. On the platform after arrival the families underwent the brutal, life-or-death selection by SS physicians. As a rule, children under the age of 14 were sent straight to the gas chambers, usually with their mothers. Of the million Jews who perished in Auschwitz, about 220,000 were children.

Who, then, were the three Jewish children surprisingly observed on the steps of Block 10? What were the circumstances of their arrival in the camp, why were they kept alive in that ghastly place – and what became of them?

The most notorious laboratories in Block 10 were those run by Prof. Carl Clauberg and Dr. Horst Schumann, who developed methods for mass sterilization of "inferior" races. It also housed "Hygiene Institute" of the SS, which had been established in order to deal with the epidemic of typhus fever that had broken out in the camp, but was also used for other types of experiments on Jewish women. Dr. Brewda was appointed chief physician-prisoner of Block 10.

Two of the children she saw on the steps of Block 10 – Bronislaw See man, then 10 years old, and 5-year old Karol Umschweif – had arrived in Auschwitz on February 7, 1943, in a regular train car. They were part of a group of 11 "privileged" prisoners: Jewish scientists and their families, who had worked in the bacteriological research laboratory of Dr. Ludwik Fleck, in the city of Lvov, Poland (today Lviv, Ukraine).

Also in the group were the two boys' parents – Dr. Anna and Yakov Seeman, and Natalia and Dr. Bernard Umschweif – along with Dr. Fleck himself, his wife, Ernestina, and their son, Ryszard. All of them entered the camp without undergoing the selection process, because they had been sent to Auschwitz for work, not annihilation.
A Jewish physician and researcher, Fleck was the pupil and assistant of Polish scientist Prof. Rudolf Weigl of Jan Kamizierz University, Lvov, who had been developing vaccinations for typhus. This grim disease, caused by Rickettsia bacteria, spreads by means of lice and develops into a deadly epi demic in densely populated areas. The authorities in Nazi Germany were desperate for a vaccine as the disease killed large numbers of its own troops, as well as people imprisoned in ghettos and concentration camps. Accordingly, they allowed Weigl and his team to continue their research, at a

his fellow researchers and their families accompany him. Weber acceded and placed the group under his protection. Four months later the Lvov ghetto was liquidated.
In February 1943, when Fleck's group arrived at Auschwitz, the Hygiene Institute in Block 10 was still being built. The group was thus compelled to stay in Birkenau (Auschwitz II – the main extermination camp) together with regular inmates, experiencing the endless morning roll calls in extreme weather, the brutalities inflicted by the SS overseers and the cruel Kapos, the hunger and diseases.
However, as prisoners with special status they were not forced to do hard labor, particularly lethal, outside the camp.

During their stay in Birkenau, the members of Fleck's group, including the children Bronislaw and Karol, were tattooed with numbers on their left forearm as was customary. Unlike the adults, however, the youngsters did not wear the telltale striped pris oners' uniforms, because there were none that fit them.
On April 8, following completion of the construction of the labs in Block 10, the group was transferred to Auschwitz I. The women and children were quartered in a large room on the first floor along with some 50 female prisoners who served as "functionaries" – i.e., as cleaners, nurses, lab technicians, secretaries, room supervisors and so on – who had better living conditions than other prisoners.
Bronislaw and Anna Seeman shared one wooden plank of a three tier bunk, as did Karol and Natalia Umschweif. The plank served as both living quarters and a bed for sleeping. The men were prohibited from staying in the women's block at night. Weber had them housed in Block 20, which stood opposite Block 10 and was used as one of the wings of the hospital in Auschwitz I.

Two large halls on the second floor of Block 10 accommodated about 400 Jewish women aged 16 to 60 in three tier bunk beds. Most had been sent to Block 10 directly from the train plat form after the SS physicians found them suitable for the experiments being performed there. Others were selected by the medical officials during the daily roll calls in the women's camp in Birkenau, which housed tens of thousands of female prisoners. Every day a few of them were taken to the operating and x-ray rooms on the ground floor, where they underwent invasive treatments and surgery at the hands of the SS physicians and the prisoner-physicians who were forced to collaborate with them.

For her part, Brewda refused to take part in this criminal activity. She and three other female Jewish physicians working in the block tried as best they could to ease the pain and help heal the unfortunate women, but many of them died from infections and other complications. Other women were murdered with lethal injections to the heart and their bodies were used for pathological examinations. Those women – alive or dead – who were deemed to be of no further use to the SS physicians were sent to the gas chambers in Birkenau. Their place was taken by newly selected Jewish women.

After moving to Block 10, Bronislaw and Karol aroused mixed feelings among the female prisoners there, many of whom grieved for their children, who had been violently wrenched from them on the train platform. Others were overcome by longing for sons and daughters who had been taken into hiding in their native countries, not knowing what had become of them. The two boys, who ran around and played in the block, were a painful reminder of what these women had lost. Over time, however, the women came to love and care for them.

Within less than a month, the scientists of the Fleck group were ordered to start work in a new lab run by the Hygiene Institute, which had opened in Rajsko, an Auschwitz subcamp, about 4 kilometers southwest of the main camp. They still slept in Blocks 10 and 20 in Auschwitz I, and every day walked back and forth to their place of work, about an hour each way.

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Another survivor recalled an event that took place early one morning, when the inmates were forced to line up in groups of five ahead of roll call. "The SS bosses hadn't yet arrived, and Peter took their place," she related. "He marched quickly and confidently along our row and counted: 5, 10, 15, 20, 25. He didn't yet know all the numbers, and couldn't get past 200. We laughed so hard when we saw him marching like a little Nazi."

Male prisoners housed in nearby blocks also pampered the little boy with the innocent demeanor, who brightened the gloom of life in Auschwitz. Julius Mayer, a prisoner who served as a Kapo in the camp, recalled being punished with 50 lashes after being caught giving the boy a pair of boots. But there were also SS soldiers who liked Peter and brought him – and the other two boys – food and sweets.

Ruth and Peter Dattel lived in Block 10 for
a year and a half, until they were evacuated and sent on the death march. Little Peter had a hard time keeping up. Ruth was aided by her friend, Ilse Nussbaum; together they carried Peter on their shoulders until they were too exhausted, where upon the child had to make do on his own and lost sight of his mother. Fortunately, he was found by Dr. Alina Brewda, who had been walking behind. She handed him to an SS man whom she knew from Block 10, who was accompanying the march with a horse-drawn cart and allowed him to ride in it. Eventually, he was picked up by five Jewish Czech sisters who took pity on the boy and carried him with them. When an opportunity arose to escape from the march, they disappeared with Peter.

Ultimately, his mother Ruth survived the march and the concentration camps in Germany. Liberated by the Red Army in May 1945, she returned to Berlin and, having no idea what became of her son, appealed to the Red Cross and other aid organizations to look for him. Not long afterward, she married
a German soldier, a defector from the Wehrmacht, named Friedhoff. Finally, in September 1946, the Red Cross succeeded in locating Peter, by means of the number tattooed on his arm. The five sisters had taken Peter to Brno, Czechoslovakia, and one of them took him into her home and, along with her husband, Pavel Bauer, adopted him as
a son.

During the almost two years between the time when the child, now 7, was separated from his mother and was located by the Red Cross, he learned Czech and forgot his native German. He barely remembered his mother and was certain that she was no longer alive. Nor did he want to leave his adoptive parents, who were warm and loving.

However, when Ruth asked that he be returned to her, the gracious Bauers acceded. Mother and son were re united in January 1947 at the Czech German border in a moving ceremony that grabbed headlines throughout Germany. Of the approximately 8,000 Jewish children who were deported from Berlin to the annihilation camps, Peter was the only one to return to his native city.

The three children who were in Block 10 of Auschwitz I never saw each other again. They built new lives on three continents, established families and did their best to integrate into societies that didn't always want to hear their story. Like most Holocaust survivors, they tried to repress their memories of that horrific period and did not tell their children what they had endured – although they could never free themselves of the night mares of life in Auschwitz.

Bronislaw Seeman and his parents moved from Krakow to Paris and lived in the French capital until their death. After high school, Bronislaw went on to study geophysics and, as an

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In 1974, following some dubious transactions, Herstatt Bank went bankrupt with a debt of 1.2 billion German marks (about $435 million, at the time), which shook the national and global banking industries alike. Dattel and other senior figures were accused of fraud, forgery and breach of trust. To escape trial, the bank's owners accused Dattel of being ultimately responsible the debacle, whereupon the "golden boy" became the "international Jew" and target of a shameless antisemitic campaign in the German media, rife with clichés and cartoons and photos that played up Dattel's protruding nose.

Following 10 months in custody, in which the demons of the past overcame him, Dattel was declared unfit to stand trial. Psychiatrists who examined him found him to be suffering from a "concentration camp symptom" (the concept of posttraumatic stress disorder was not yet developed then). But the campaign of vilification against him and against his family continued long afterward.

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**Yoel Yaari** is professor emeritus of neurosciences at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem and a Holocaust scholar.
His recent book "Portrait of a Women" was published by Kinneret-Zmora.

# AUSCHWITZ MUSEUM ACQUIRES THE ORIGINAL OF ILLUSTRATED DIARY MADE BY SURVIVOR ALFRED KANTOR

**The Memorial has expanded its Collections with an exceptional document by Auschwitz survivor Alfred Kantor, who was deported to the camp from the Theresienstadt ghetto in late 1943. "The diary of Alfred Kantor" includes his drawings and notes, made both during his imprisonment and in the postwar period, constitute a remarkable visual testimony of the Holocaust and the experience of prisoners.**

The acquisition was made possible by the decision of the artist's children, Jerry Kantor and Monica Kantor-Churchill, who reside in the United States. These unique works will now receive professional conservation care and will be integrated into the Museum's collection of artworks created by prisoners and survivors, forming an invaluable visual record of the crimes committed in the German Nazi concentration and extermination camp.

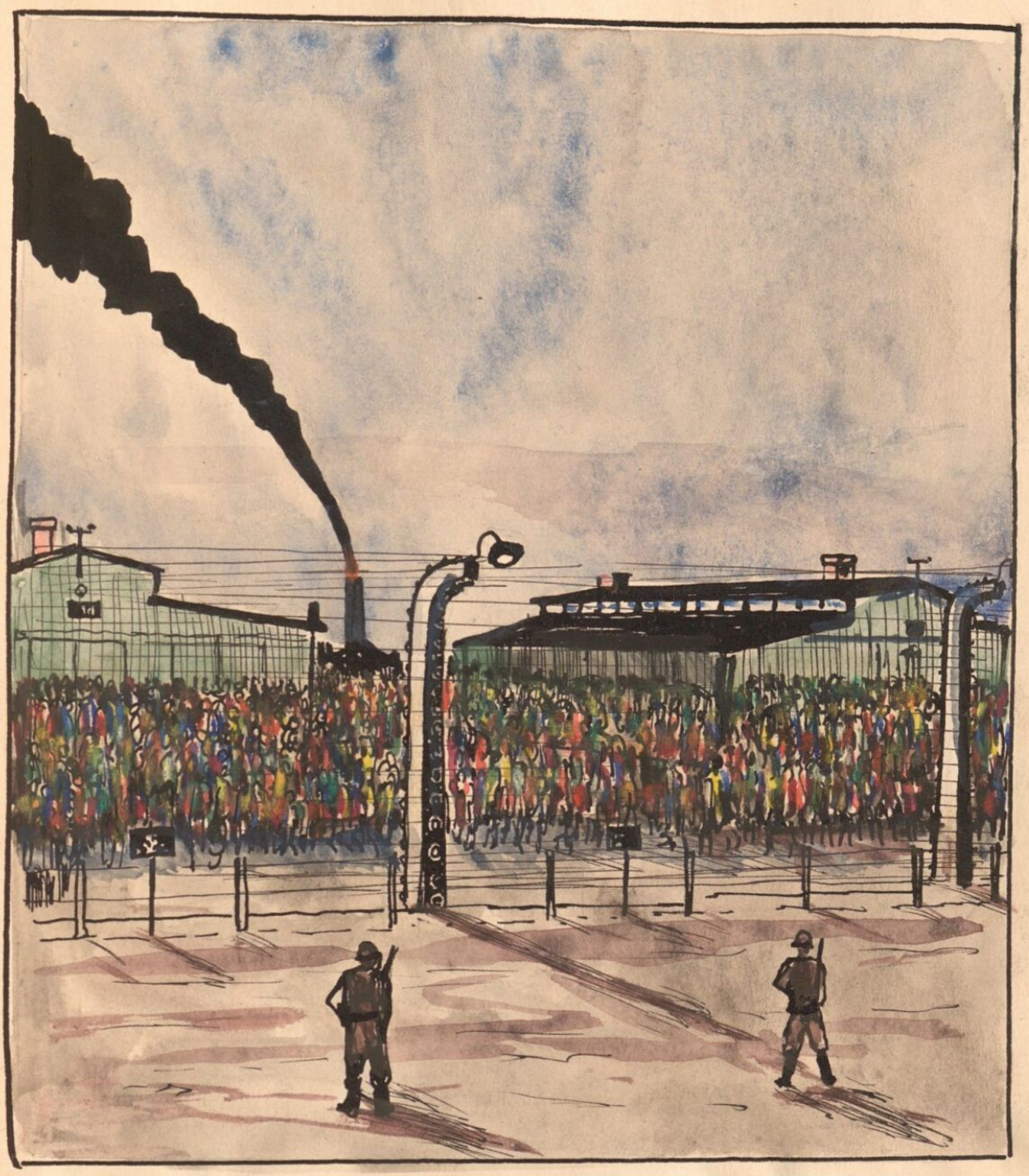
"This extraordinary visual testimony could only be acquired thanks to the family, the children of the Survivor Alfred Kantor. I am grateful for their trust and for their deep conviction that these artworks should come to the Auschwitz Memorial and Museum. They are, after all, part of this very history," emphasized the Museum's Director, Dr. Piotr M. A. Cywiński.

Members of Alfred Kantor's family stressed the special significance of the place to which they entrusted the works: "This is simply where this collection belongs. I cannot imagine it being anywhere else. The Museum staff and their expertise in preserving such materials are unmatched. This is exactly where such an important historical document should be," said Jerry Kantor.

"Auschwitz is associated with immense suffering, and so many people should understand that. When I think about what this collection represents—something created by a person who went through Auschwitz—I cannot imagine a better place for these works. This material should be where it can be properly cared for, studied, and truly understood. It feels right that it is now at the Auschwitz Museum," he added.

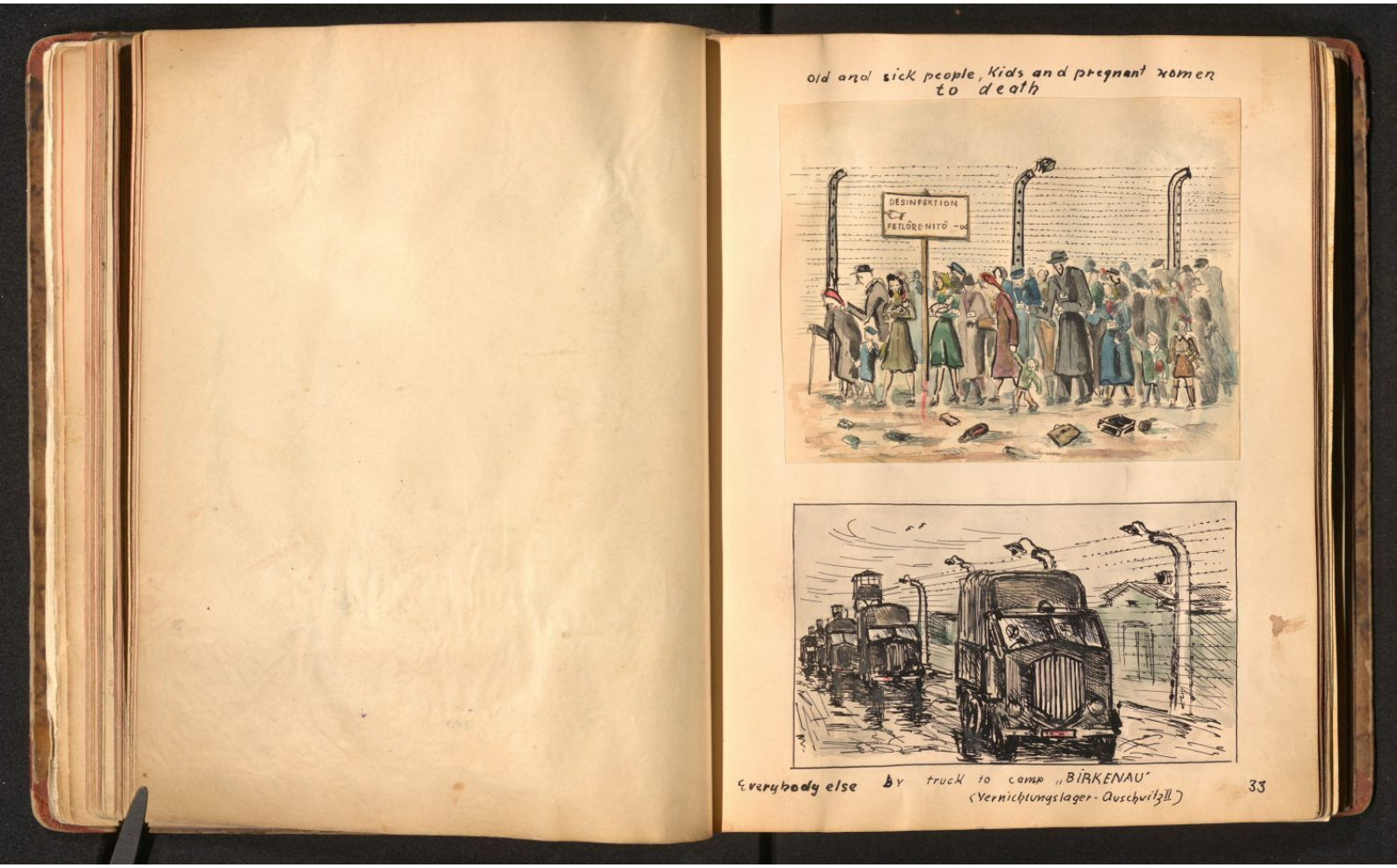
The original manuscript of "The Diary of Alfred Kantor", featuring drawings from the Theresienstadt ghetto and the Auschwitz and Schwarzheide camps, covers the period from December 1941 to May 1945. This album contains 127 pages of original watercolour drawings, together with additional pasted-in authentic documents, such as a deportation order, a yellow star and a camp number, as well as 12 drawings and watercolours, 30–35 letters, notes, photographs and travel documents from the years 1941–49.

In the postwar album, in the section dedicated to Auschwitz, the depictions include the interior of a freight car transporting Jews to the camp, the arrival at the ramp, the unloading process, the selections, the luggage abandoned on the ramp, and the transport of people by trucks to the gas chambers.



40.000 Hungarian women kept in a small camp. Their children and parents were killed, their men sent to another camp.

May 1944




calls, prisoner forced labor, living conditions in the barracks, portraits of camp perpetrators, and scenes of daily torment. Other drawings depict the smoking chimneys of crematoria, the removal of bodies from gas chambers, and the open-air burning pits. In the album there are also drawings that illustrate experiences of the author in other camps," said Agnieszka Sieradzka, a curator in the Museum's Collections.

"The family also included sketches by Alfred Kantor made on poor-quality paper, most likely created by him during his imprisonment in the camp. They show, among other things, the loading of the bodies of deceased prisoners onto carts and naked people standing in the snow following disinfection," she added.

In her view, what makes this collection so valuable is the fact that the drawings form a coherent narrative. "There is no other collection in the Museum's collection that contains such a comprehensive set of artworks telling a coherent story of one man's wartime experiences, including his time in the camps," emphasised Sieradzka.

"I don't know if there is anything truly comparable exists, but I would wholeheartedly recommend that everyone go there and see it. Auschwitz must not be forgotten. It is an profoundly moving chapter of history, nearly impossible to fully comprehend. It goes beyond what we can easily understand, yet we must confront it to ensure it never happens again. I believe people should visit Auschwitz with respect, give themselves time to truly absorb the

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# "AUSCHWITZ. NOT LONG AGO. NOT FAR AWAY" WILL BE PRESENTED AT THE UNITED STATES HOLOCAUST MEMORIAL MUSEUM NEXT YEAR

**The United States Holocaust Memorial Museum will bring the internationally acclaimed exhibition "Auschwitz. Not long ago. Not far away." to Washington, D.C. for the first time, presenting original artifacts from the Auschwitz-Birkenau Memorial and Museum and over 20 collections from around the world that have rarely been seen in the United States. For the first time on its tour, the exhibition will be free to the public.**

"Auschwitz. Not long ago. Not far away." which was created by the Auschwitz Museum and the Spanish company Musealia, will be presented in Washington, D.C. from January 2027 through spring 2029, during the construction of the USHMM's new permanent exhibition. A decade in the making, this major undertaking will ensure the history's relevance to new generations and counter efforts to deny the truth of the Holocaust.

"Having our exhibition on display at the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum marks the culmination of our excellent cooperation over the past several decades. We are grateful to our colleagues in Washington DC, under the excellent leadership of Sara Bloomfield. I am delighted that the exhibition "Auschwitz. Not long ago. Not far away' will help the Museum to continue fulfilling their important mission while their new exhibition is under construction," said the director of the Auschwitz Memorial, Dr. Piotr M. A. Cywiński.

The curators of "Auschwitz. Not Long Ago. Not Far Away" are international experts: Dr. Robert Jan van Pelt, Dr. Michael Berenbaum, and Dr. Paul Salmons, who worked closely with historians and curators from the Auschwitz Museum Research Center headed by Dr. Piotr Setkiewicz.
The exhibition depicts the successive stages of the development of Nazi ideology and describes the transformation of Oświęcim, an ordinary Polish town where Nazi Germany established the largest concentration camp and extermination center during the occupation, where approximately one million Jews and tens of thousands of people of other nationalities were murdered.

The victims of Auschwitz also included Poles, Roma and Sinti, Soviet prisoners of war and other groups persecuted by Nazi ideology, such as people with disabilities, asocials, Jehovah's Witnesses, and homosexuals. Furthermore, the exhibition includes objects portraying the world of the perpetrators - the SS men who created and managed this largest German Nazi concentration and extermination camp.

As Holocaust denial increases at alarming rates and the collective memory of the Holocaust grows more distant, a national study by the Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany found 63% of U.S. millennials and Gen Z did not know that six million Jews were murdered during the Holocaust. "Auschwitz. Not long ago. Not far away." offers an urgently needed direct encounter with the authentic evidence of the

"Auschwitz. Not long ago. Not far away." which was created by the Auschwitz Museum and the Spanish company Musealia, will be presented in Washington, D.C. from January 2027 through spring 2029, during the construction of the USHMM's new permanent exhibition. A decade in the making, this major undertaking will ensure the history's relevance to new generations and counter efforts to deny the truth of the Holocaust.

"Having our exhibition on display at the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum marks the culmination of our excellent cooperation over the past several decades. We are grateful to our colleagues in Washington DC, under the excellent leadership of Sara Bloomfield. I am delighted that the exhibition "Auschwitz. Not long ago. Not far away' will help the Museum to continue fulfilling their important mission while their new exhibition is under construction," said the director of the Auschwitz Memorial, Dr. Piotr M. A. Cywiński.

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Photo: Timothy Hursley for USHMM

# ONLINE VISIT TO THE AUSCHWITZ MEMORIAL FOR EUROPEAN PARLIAMENTARIANS

**European parliamentarians took part on 15 April in a special online visit to the Auschwitz Memorial using the platform "Auschwitz. In Front of Your Eyes." The event in Brussels was organized jointly with the Auschwitz-Birkenau Foundation as part of the observance of Holocaust Remembrance Day, Yom HaShoah.**

The aim of the meeting was to commemorate the victims of the Holocaust and to emphasize the responsibility of European institutions to preserve the memory of the Shoah. At a time when public attention is increasingly fragmented, the organizers stressed the importance of sustaining this memory and warned of the dangers of dehumanization, antisemitism, and indifference.

Among the guests at the European Parliament were the President of the Auschwitz-Birkenau Foundation and Director of the Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum, Dr. Piotr M. A. Cywiński, as well as the Foundation's Director-General Wojciech Soczewica, who also met with the President of the European Parliament Roberta Metsola.

The online visit allows participants to see both parts of the former German Nazi concentration and extermination camp: Auschwitz I and Auschwitz II-Birkenau, from anywhere in the world.

The guide's narration is delivered live, with the possibility of interaction. In addition, the educator uses multimedia materials, archival photographs, works of art, and testimonies of Survivors.

"It is our commitment to combat antisemitism in Europe with all the means at our disposal. That is why we worked across political groups to bring the Auschwitz-Birkenau Foundation to the European Parliament. This initiative like no other allows participants to experience this visit virtually and engage directly with guides on site. It is truly a unique learning experience and remembrance opportunity at once," said Sabine Verheyen, First Vice-President of the European Parliament, who co-organized the event together with Vice-President Pina Picierno and MEP Oliver Schenk.

"Remembrance is never abstract. It becomes real when we see the names on the suitcases, the shoes of the victims and the traces of lives that were destroyed. Auschwitz shows us what happens when people are stripped of their dignity and reduced to numbers. Remembering the Shoah is therefore not only a moral duty; it is also a political responsibility. A democratic Europe can only remain strong if it defends historical truth, confronts antisemitism and rejects every attempt to relativise or forget the crimes of the Holocaust. To turn away from remembrance would be to turn away from the very foundations of our democracy," emphasized Oliver Schenk.

"Auschwitz symbolizes the deepest fall of European civilization, against which the entire


Fot.: Alexis HAULOT; Parlament Europejski; © European Union 2026

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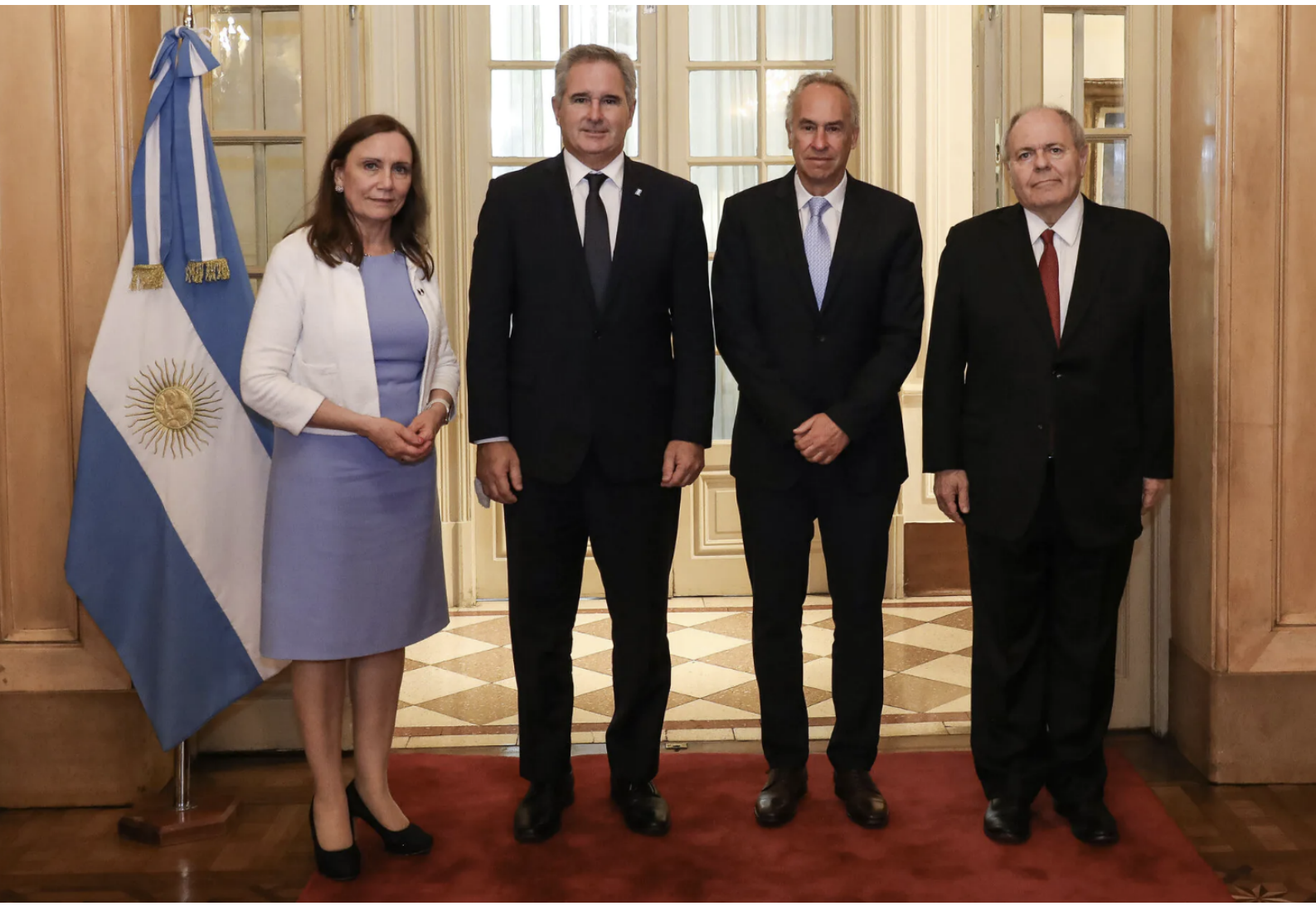
# ARGENTINA TAKES OVER IHRA PRESIDENCY FROM ISRAEL

**Argentina has assumed the Presidency of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA), with Marcelo Mindlin serving as IHRA Chair, supported by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, International Trade, and Worship.**



From left to right: IHRA Secretary-General Michaela Küchler, Foreign Minister Pablo Quirno, IHRA Chair Marcelo Mindlin and outgoing IHRA Chair Dani Dayan

One of the priorities of the Argentine Presidency will be to strengthen the IHRA's engagement with Latin America and to facilitate broader access to Holocaust archives.

The Argentine term follows Israel's tenure under the theme Crossroads of Generations, which underscored the responsibility of passing the torch of Holocaust remembrance from survivors to future generations. The Israeli Presidency saw the adoption of key IHRA resources such as theRecommendations on Teaching and Learning about the Holocaust, the reaffirmation of the Survivors' Declaration, a statement urging greater governmental protection for Holocaust remembrance institutions and practitioners amid a global rise in antisemitism and distortion, as well as a seminar for early-career Holocaust researchers. At the handover ceremony held at Palacio San Martín and hosted by the Ministry of

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"The IHRA now crosses the equator for the first time in its history. The responsibility to remember belongs to the whole world," said IHRA Secretary General, Michaela Küchler

Both IHRA plenary meetings during the Argentine Presidency will be held in Buenos Aires. The first is scheduled for 1–4 June, and the second for 2–5 November.

Each plenary session will be preceded by a dedicated conference. On 31 May, the IHRA will mark the tenth anniversary of the adoption of its working definition of antisemitism. On 1 November, a regional conference will bring together Latin American countries to focus on Holocaust history and the fight against antisemitism in the region.

IHRA Secretary General Michaela Küchler said: "The IHRA now crosses the equator for the first time in its history. This is more than a geographic milestone. It is a reminder that the responsibility to remember the Holocaust and the genocide of the Roma belongs to the whole world."

The Argentine Presidency represents a historic turning point for the Alliance. A full member of the IHRA for over two decades, Argentina becomes the first country from South America to chair the organization and host its plenary meetings. This term will be guided by the theme Expanding the Frontiers of Remembrance, reflecting a commitment to broadening the geographical and conceptual reach of Holocaust remembrance, education, and research. Addressing the audience, incoming IHRA Chair Marcelo Mindlin stated: "For over 20 years, all governments—representing various political backgrounds—have recognized the necessity of participating in the IHRA and developing educational and remembrance policies regarding the Holocaust. There is no doubt that this consistent state policy contributed to President Milei's significant decision to take on the IHRA presidency. A clear example of this enduring legacy is the adoption of the IHRA working definition of antisemitism by the Argentine state, its judiciary, civil society organizations, and other public institutions. It is a crucial tool for combating antisemitism, and our country can proudly demonstrate the effectiveness of its implementation."

More than 5,000 Holocaust survivors arrived in Argentina after the Second World War, making it home to one of the largest survivor communities in South America. Today, around 150 survivors remain in the country, serving as a vital link between lived history and future generations.

# 33RD MARCH OF THE LIVING

**On 14 April 2026, the 33rd March of the Living took place at the site of the former German Nazi concentration and extermination camp Auschwitz. Leading the march was a group of around 40 survivors of Auschwitz and the Holocaust. Among them was 98-year-old Nate (Nathan) Leipciger, who took part in the march for the 22nd time.**

"Here, in Auschwitz, we stand on the ground where silence, lies, and hatred led to the murder of millions. This is not history to be remembered only—it is a warning," said Nate Leipciger before the March began. He was born on 28 April 1928 in nearby Chorzów.

At the age of 15, Nate was deported with his family to Auschwitz from the ghetto in Sosnowiec. He was separated from his mother and sister, whom he never saw again. He survived the death march and imprisonment in several camps: Funfteichen, Gross-Rosen, Flossenbürg, Leonberg, as well as Mühldorf am Inn and Waldlager, two subcamps of Dachau. Nate and his father were liberated by American forces on 2 May 1945. In 1948, he emigrated to Canada.

"History does not repeat itself by accident. It repeats when lies are tolerated, when hatred is excused, and when good people choose to remain silent. We know where that leads. I have seen where that leads. So, we must stand—clearly, firmly, and without fear. We must stand for truth. We must stand against hatred. We must stand for each other.

Because if we do not, then we have learned nothing. And if we do—together—we will ensure that this place remains a warning, not a prophecy," he said.

The March of the Living takes place on Holocaust Remembrance Day, Yom HaShoah, which is connected to the anniversary of the outbreak of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising. "As the world faces a frightening surge in antisemitism, Holocaust distortion and denial, and a threatening global assault on the safety and security of our community, we are more committed than ever to do all we can to face and to fight these threats by teaching the lessons of the Holocaust. Understanding the result of hatred, prejudice and bigotry as well as individual and communal intolerance for another is a must as we strive to help safeguard a better tomorrow," wrote the organizers of the March.

The organizers also recalled the words of Elie Wiesel, a survivor of Auschwitz and recipient of the 1986 Nobel Peace Prize, whose 10th anniversary of death is commemorated this year:

"Memory saved the Baal Shem Tov, and if anything can, it is memory that will save humanity. For me, hope without memory is like memory without hope. Just as man cannot live without dreams, he cannot live without hope. If dreams reflect the past, hope summons the future. For the dead and the living, we must bear witness. Not only are we responsible for the memories of the dead, we are also responsible to what we d with those memories."

Among the approximately 6,000 participants—primarily young Jews from dozens of countries, as well as a group of several hundred students from Poland—were also


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# THEREFORE, GO: REFLECTIONS ON FASPE, INJUSTICE, AND MINISTRY IN UNCERTAIN TIMES

**Fellowships at Auschwitz for the Study of Professional Ethics (FASPE) promotes ethical leadership for today's professionals through annual fellowships, ethical leadership trainings, and symposia, among other means. Each year, FASPE awards 80 to 90 fellowships to graduate students and early-career professionals in six fields: Business, Clergy & Religious Leaders, Design & Technology, Journalism, Law, and Medicine. Fellowships begin with immersive site-specific study in Germany and Poland, including at Auschwitz and other historically significant sites associated with Nazi-era professionals. While there, fellows study Nazi-era professionals' surprisingly mundane and familiar motivations and decision-making as a reflection-based framework to apply to ethical pitfalls in their own lives. We find that the power of place translates history into the present, creating urgency in ethical reflection.**

**Each month one of our fellows publishes a piece in Memoria. Their work reflects FASPE's unique approach to professional ethics and highlights the need for thoughtful ethical reflection today.**

Ten years ago, the privilege of becoming a FASPE Fellow changed the way I thought about the role of a pastor leading divided communities. What's more, that was a season of my life in which I struggled with my call to pastoral ministry. I was a Clergy Fellow and nearing the end of my seminary training while my United Methodist Church was tearing itself apart. That tearing carried on for years to come.

I write these words from the pastor's office at Parkway United Methodist Church in Sugar Land, Texas. I have spent most of the decade since I wrote my original FASPE reflection as a United Methodist pastor serving local congregations in the suburbs and rural areas around Houston. In other words, despite all the reasons to avoid the turmoil of the church that made me who I am, I still felt called to and chose ministry in this church.

The work has been difficult but good. I can say with absolute confidence that ministry has blessed me with more gray hairs than when I wrote the words you are about to read. I am also certain that I was a better writer when my life revolved around seminary research papers. But in rediscovering the words of my reflection, I can see that the convictions I gained from FASPE have been borne out through what pastoral ministry demands of peacemakers in divided and violent times.

In my original piece, I reflected on two ways that German churches processed, justified, or denied the realities of Nazi atrocities: 1) by supporting rising hostilities towards Jews through either active participation or quiet indifference, and 2) by retreating from suffering and injustice into detached theology. Both remain alive and well across the spectrum of

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footnotes than leading congregations. These retreats into theology come with many advantages—less institutional upheaval, the preservation of relationships, and a consolidation of authority in a time of increasing religious decline and illiteracy. The vague peace of a retreat into theology, however, might be better described as procrastinated conflict between what is quiet and easy and, ultimately, what is right concerning the full humanity of people who suffer.

A corollary of this retreat by clergy is that the people of these churches become less likely to retreat into theology and more likely to retreat into purity as portrayed in their media of choice. In a world of vast information, charged divisions, and diverse instability, people want to feel that the identities they claim are the ones helping hold what is good together rather than picking at the seams of the world. This is, ultimately, a retreat into purity—perhaps the overlapping counterpart to a retreat into theology. It is the conviction that "I didn't vote for this" or "I don't agree with everything my candidate says." It is the right and good taken in the abstract that is detached from real world events that implicate preferred candidates, parties, actions, and outcomes.

One additional reflection I would like to add. I think there is another "retreat" common across society and therefore present within the modern church: the reliance on righteous anger to do the heavy lifting of goodness and rightness in one's life. Anger and outrage are all too common as methods, strategies, and business models rather than simply as emotions. This reliance on anger directed at the "right" targets gives the feeling of motion without actually going anywhere. Anger in the modern world is too often a naming of what is wrong from a distance—both with respect to what is wrong and with respect to those who suffer because of those wrongs. Put differently, anger can be an intoxicating form of mourning that refuses to accept and grieve the world we have built.

With this, I return to the closing idea of my original reflection—the church and all who desire to heal the hurt of those who suffer should be more invested in being present with the suffering than sharing their discontent online or with their clergy. In the years since I wrote my first FASPE reflection,
I have had to walk the road I wrote about.
I have grieved with families that have lost people they love. I've worked to address conflict along the lines of racial tensions, sexual identity, and church trauma. I have, in ways big and small, sat with the grief, unease, and suffering of people. Each of us who seek a better world must have courage to do the same without reaching for indifference, retreating into the fleeting comfort of theology or purity, or relying on anger to do the heavy lifting of making things better. We must find a way to be fully present with those who suffer without othering those whose suffering challenges us. In this, we might do good work within imperfect systems to perfect a world we're too often told cannot be bettered.

**Reflection (2016)**
I applied to FASPE in the midst of the deep uncertainty and insecurity that comes with pursuing ordination in a church that is tearing itself apart. The United Methodist Church is locked in a decades-long insular, theological struggle over same-sex marriage and the ordination of openly gay clergy. Recent significant shifts in the political landscape have entrenched the partisan ideologies of
a failed leadership and intensified our inability or unwillingness to work together amidst difference. The opportunity to study the reaction of German clergy to the cultural shifts surrounding Adolf Hitler's rise to power seemed like an intriguing vantage point from which to grapple with my own questions and concerns about the United Methodist Church. While it would be absurd to draw conclusions that assume Nazi Germany and the Holocaust are equivalent to conflicts in the United Methodist Church today, I found that the example of German clergy proved helpful in exploring my thoughts. This brief reflection will consider

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silence, indifference, or even spite toward their Jewish neighbors. When some called on the churches to interfere with the boycotts, the archbishop of Breslau, Cardinal Adolf Bertram, urged other German bishops to stay silent, saying the boycott was "solely an economic matter"—an area of life that in his view stood outside the bishops' sphere of activity. Bertram vindictively added in his letter, "the press that is predominantly in Jewish hands has been totally silent regarding the persecution of Catholics in various countries." Cardinal Michael von Faulhaber, the archbishop of Munich, wrote a letter after the initial boycotts to Vatican Secretary of State Cardinal Pacelli, stating that "it is, at this time, not possible to intervene because the struggle against the Jews would at the same time become a struggle against the Catholics, and because the Jews can help themselves, as the hasty breaking off of the boycott shows." Although these are but two examples, they demonstrate that Catholic leadership was aware of Jewish persecution and feared retribution if the Church were to speak out. They largely remained silent.

A second response that I want to touch on is the temptation to take refuge in theology disconnected from the reality of those who suffered most. As anti-Jewish acts worsened and the war began, both Catholic and Protestant clergy sought to use theology to justify their behavior, relinquish responsibility, and insulate themselves and their followers from the horrors of reality. Take, for example, the Kirchenkampf (church struggle) that occurred within the Protestant church. The two prominent factions in this battle were the so-called "German Christians," generally portrayed as Nazis and Nazi sympathizers, and the "Confessing Church," largely viewed as the noble resistance against Hitler. Yet, neither of these groups can be characterized so easily. The German Christians represented a fusion of Protestantism and German nationalism that saw the future of both the Protestant church and the German nation

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a mythic former glory. The Confessing Church, on the other hand, strongly protested Nazification and state control over the church and its sacraments, as well as the notion that
a Christian's highest loyalty was owed to the state rather than to God. The famous Barmen Declaration, authored by renowned theologian Karl Barth, is still treated as an authoritative source on the proper relationship between the church and the state for modern Reformed Protestantism. While such notions did indeed represent resistance to Hitler's attempt to bring the church under his authority, perhaps it is too much of a leap to characterize this pushback as resistance to Nazi policies of discrimination against Jews. Said differently, the enduring work of the Confessing Church concerned itself with what was heresy and not what would enable the Holocaust. While certain values from this movement should not be uncritically diminished, the ideological and theological struggles of the church provided a way to retreat in the face of suffering and injustice. These clergy and other religious thinkers addressed the state and its relationship to the church, not the regime's attack on Jews and other minorities.
Similarly, the Catholic Church emphasized theological abstractions in the face of war and terror. Church-state relations deteriorated following a series of state power grabs, such as the legal identification of religion and heritage (rather than faith) (i.e. Jews that converted to Catholicism were still considered Jews by blood) and Hitler's concordat with the Vatican. During this period, German bishops issued a "joint-pastoral letter in which they reminded their clergy to limit their public complaints or rebuttals against the government to blatant attacks on Catholic 'dogmatic and moral teaching.'" Further, if the clergy were going to refute Nazi ideology, they were to "fight against the false teaching and the lie, but never against the mistaken and lying person."
Another instance of the retreat into theology is to be found in the behavior of Konrad von Preysing, the bishop of Berlin. As the war dragged on and rumors of both an imminent German defeat and Nazi extermination camps spread, von Preysing increasingly used the language of suffering to frame his sermons and articulate his theological views. For von Preysing, the heart of Christianity was the suffering of Christ and by extension the suffering of his followers. Christians, according to von Preysing, should focus on and appeal to the mercy of God and celebrate the suffering and crucifixion of Christ. In 1944 near the end of the war, von Preysing called for all congregations to reconsecrate themselves "to the sacred heart of Christ." For him, this was the proper response to the woes on the German home front, the faltering war effort, and rumors about the fate of European Jews. This seems, in hindsight, a theological effort on

approach systemic injustice. It is easy to say that German clergy should have spoken out against injustice; the pressing question is why we might believe this to be true. In my view, it is misguided to say German clergy speaking out against injustice would or might have prevented the horrors of the Holocaust. Ultimately, this is wishful, uncritical optimism that teaches us nothing. Rather, we can view the failure of the German clergy not as a failure to prevent all that happened but rather as a failure to insist that Jews were fully human, suffering, and worthy of empathy.

In my view, the mission of the modern church and its clergy is not simply to advocate for a vision of justice or to operate within the acceptable and encouraged channels of advocacy and organizing. This essentially relegates our obligations and our duties to government services and non-profit organizing. The church and its clergy are not called only to provide material and monetary resources. We are called to speak out against injustice and humanize through our presence. We are not called only to food drives that ship cans of food we don't eat to people we don't know but to bring together those who have enough and those who do not. We are not called only to advocate for more resources for the homeless but to be those resources for them. We are not called only to demand moral institutions but to be a moral institution. Rather than simply point out and denounce injustice, we the church and we as clergy should intentionally seek out, know, love, and be present with those who suffer—because nameless, faceless justice might as well be known as a prolonged, more comfortable injustice.

My return from FASPE brought me back into the ongoing struggles of the United Methodist Church concerning same-sex marriage and openly gay clergy. Its general conference, held only

approach systemic injustice. It is easy to say that German clergy should have spoken out against injustice; the pressing question is why we might believe this to be true. In my view, it is misguided to say German clergy speaking out against injustice would or might have prevented the horrors of the Holocaust. Ultimately, this is wishful, uncritical optimism that teaches us nothing. Rather, we can view the failure of the German clergy not as a failure to prevent all that happened but rather as a failure to insist that Jews were fully human, suffering, and worthy of empathy.

In my view, the mission of the modern church and its clergy is not simply to advocate for a vision of justice or to operate within the acceptable and encouraged channels of advocacy and organizing. This essentially relegates our obligations and our duties to government services and non-profit organizing. The church and its clergy are not called only to provide material and monetary resources. We are called to speak out against injustice and humanize through our presence. We are not called only to food drives that ship cans of food we don't eat to people we don't know but to bring together those who have enough and those who do not. We are not called only to advocate for more resources for the homeless but to be those resources for them. We are not called only to demand moral institutions but to be a moral institution. Rather than simply point out and denounce injustice, we the church and we as clergy should intentionally seek out, know, love, and be present with those who suffer—because nameless, faceless justice might as well be known as a prolonged, more comfortable injustice.

My return from FASPE brought me back into the ongoing struggles of the United Methodist Church concerning same-sex marriage and openly gay clergy. Its general conference, held only a few months prior, could easily have been described as a retreat into theology. I felt deep disappointment and frustration as I watched the church that shaped me into who I am today descend into backbiting and underhanded political maneuvers. Feeling defeated, I decided to skip church on a Sunday morning and run errands instead. Walking around the store with my wife, I paid attention to the other people walking up and down the aisles: a mother buying food for her family, a father never making it more than a few steps without a child running down an aisle or telling him to look at this or that tired, bleary-eyed employee. It dawned on me that these people likely have no idea about my frustrations with church infighting over the election of an openly lesbian bishop, and most likely wouldn't care if I told them. I was struck by how the all-consuming division of my church seemed disconnected from the realities of the people I passed in the store. This is, of course, an assumption. The church's treatment of gay people has produced real pain and suffering. Perhaps I was witnessing the retreat, the distance, and the disconnection that enable insulated insiders to fight over power and money and think they are fighting about something else. Theological retreat may speak deeply to particular communities, but in practice it does not reflect the full range of possibilities and realities. It seems to me that the cost of a modern retreat into theology via a relentless pursuit of some sort of facile, pyrrhic theological purity is the failure to be present within and reflective of the lives of everyday people. This is not to say that theological understanding is unimportant, but the pursuit of theological purity can be a form of abstraction that further removes the church from the lives of people, especially those who

# LIVE2TELL: THE SHOAH MEMORIAL ACCOMPANIES PHOTOGRAPHER GILLIAN LAUB IN HER SURVIVOR PORTRAIT PROJECT

**On Tuesday, 14 April, world-renowned American photographer Gillian Laub returned to the Shoah Memorial. As part of the Live2Tell project, she presented prints of the portraits taken on 12 November last year to the Holocaust survivors featured in them.**

During that session in November, 62 Holocaust survivors agreed to be photographed at the Shoah Memorial and also to take part in poignant and in-depth interviews about the questions they ask themselves today and the hopes they hold for younger generations.

Among them were six survivors of the camps and ghettos: Larissa Cain, Esther Senot, Ginette Kolinka, Evelyn Askolovitch, Frania Haverland, and Arlette Woland. The Shoah Memorial was fully mobilized in support of this project, thanks to the dedicated work of its documentation staff, as well as the commitment of the volunteers, interns, and temporary staff present that day.

The Shoah Memorial extends its sincere thanks to the Claims Conference, Dr. Ruth Kinet, and Cornelia Levy, as well as to the associations Passerelles and UDA, for their valuable support and the trust shown throughout this collaboration. It also expresses its gratitude to Gillian Laub and Kira Pollack for choosing the Memorial as a place of remembrance, encounter, and transmission for this international project.

Live2Tell is an international project dedicated to meeting survivors around the world, led by Gillian Laub, an internationally renowned American photographer, and her producer, Kira Pollack. These portraits are soon to be exhibited in Paris, Berlin, Miami, and New York.

# IMAGES OF IDENTITY. THE COLLECTION OF THE PRE-WAR JEWISH MUSEUM IN BERLIN

**The Jewish Museum in Berlin only existed for five years, but it managed to assemble an impressive collection of sculptures, paintings, prints, and Judaica. After the November Pogrom in Germany, also known as the Kristallnacht, the authorities dissolved the museum, and the items from its collection became scattered around the world or were irretrievably lost. What survived was a so-called iconographic archive – over four thousand cardstock boards holding photos, engravings, and drawings documenting the wealth of pre-war Jewish art and culture. After the Second World War, the collection was discovered in a post-German warehouse in Lower Silesia. Following the expropriation of former German property, the State Treasury of Poland handed over the archive to the Jewish Historical Institute in Warsaw, where it has remained until today.**

Held seventy-five years after the collection arrived in the Jewish Historical Institute, the exhibition Imagery of Identity. The Collection of Pre-war Jewish Museum in Berlin will be the first showcase of the iconographic archive. The exhibition seeks to revive the memory of an institution whose work was brought to an abrupt close and of the project documenting Jewish culture in which it had engaged on the eve of its dissolution. It investigates the importance of images – photos, engravings, and reproductions – for growing and passing down knowledge of the history and identity of the Jewish community.

The exhibition's storyline begins with how the Jewish Museum in Berlin came to be, who its creators were, and in what social and political context it operated. The Museum opened on 24 January 1933 – a mere a week before the Nazi Party came to power – as a space for displaying Jewish art and cultural heritage in Germany. The narrative then takes us to the times of war: the exhibition's evacuation to Lower Silesia by the Reich Security Main Office, its post-war discovery by the Poles, and its eventual arrival in the Jewish Historical Institute in Warsaw.

The main part of the exhibition presents the iconographic archive as a useful tool for systematising knowledge on Jewish history and culture. By juxtaposing images, figures, and events, we can build a unique visual narrative of the Jewish community. The materials in the archive cover a vast stretch of Jewish history, from antiquity to the 1930s. The chief idea of its creators was to assemble a visual compendium on the history and culture of Jews, as well as on their contributions to the development of European – particularly German – culture.

Each board can be considered a visual testimony to the pre-war life of the Jewish community before the Holocaust.
What makes the archive unique is the breadth and diversity of the collected materials. The boards hold photos of artworks, reproductions of engravings and drawings, but also press clippings, invitations, or materials sent to the Museum by individuals or institutions. Some document the operation of the Museum itself, other come from various distinct contexts and places. The assembled archive paints a nuanced picture of


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# RENOVATION OF THE GUSEN CONCENTRATION CAMP MEMORIAL SITE: PRESENTATION OF CURRENT PLANS AND INTERIM RESULTS

**On 16 April 2026, around 60 visitors accepted the invitation of the Mauthausen Concentration Camp Memorial and the Burghauptmannschaft Österreich to attend a presentation of the preliminary results concerning the redesign of the Gusen Concentration Camp Memorial. The event was held at the Langenstein municipal hall. giving the local population an opportunity to learn about the current state of the planning process and to engage in discussion.**

Following a welcome by representatives of the Mauthausen Memorial, the municipality of Langenstein, and those involved in the project, Gerd Erhartt (querkraft architekten) and Kieran Fraser (Landscape Design) presented key elements of the current concept. The presentation included the future layout of pathways and the overall use of space. In the landscaping, vegetation will play a vital role in providing shade, marking the original camp structures, and creating a buffer zone to transition into the surrounding area. A primary objective is to highlight historical traces and incorporate existing archaeological remains into the project. Central to the discussion was the question of how to address the invisible and find appropriate forms to make it manifest.

Christian Dürr, curator at the Mauthausen Memorial, then provided an update on the curatorial concept. In recent years, five extensive research projects have been launched, addressing, among other things, the experiences of former prisoners, the collection of photo and video material, and the documentation of perpetrator biographies. The site's postwar history and the perspectives of local witnesses are also being included. All findings will be integrated into the curatorial concept, which is to be completed by the end of the year and will serve as the basis for future exhibitions.

Simultaneously, an educational framework tailored to various target groups is being developed, aimed at enabling longer stays and more in-depth educational formats in Gusen.

In conclusion, Barbara Glück, Director of the Mauthausen Memorial, outlined the forthcoming steps. Planning is already underway, and construction is currently scheduled to begin in mid-2027. Ensuring the greatest possible transparency for the public and maintaining an open dialogue remain central elements in the ongoing development of the Gusen Memorial.


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**EDITOR-IN-CHIEF**

Paweł Sawicki

**ASSISTANT EDITOR**

Agnieszka Juskowiak-Sawicka

**EDITED BY**

Bartosz Bartyzel
Marek Lach
Łukasz Lipiński



**CONTACT**

memoria@auschwitz.org