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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.

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Paweł Sawicki, Editor-in-Chief

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The last convoy

When the 77th convoy left the camp at Drancy on 31 July 1944, destined for Auschwitz, Paris was already waiting for liberation. The Allies had already landed in Normandy on 6 June. However, Alois Brunner, the SS commandant of Drancy, intensified roundups to form a convoy of at least 1,310 Jewish deportees, including more than 300 children. Upon arrival at Auschwitz, the majority of them were sent to the gas chambers. Only 251 deportees survived the camps.

The 'Convoy 77' project invites students to research and rebuild the lives of the 1,310 deportees. It was launched in 2015 by the Convoi 77 association (created by descendants of the deportees) and is supported by the French Ministry of Education, the French President, the European Union and many other organisations.

Eight lives

During the spring of 2020, my ninth grade students researched eight deportees who, according to the convoy list, were born in Lithuania. Our investigations were lengthy and very moving, completed in difficult lockdown conditions where contact with my students and the archives could only take place online. Yet, thanks to a long quest through the archives of different countries (France, Lithuania, Germany, Switzerland, Austria and the United States) and extraordinarily rich genealogical websites, complemented by information from the families of the deportees and other contacts, eight lives have been rebuilt. Now we may say that Abraham Delberg, Zofia Borensztejn, Doba and Berthe/Basia Levine, Henri/Henoch Levin, Aron Simanovitch, Walter/Wole Zavadier and Salomon Zilber are more than names on a list of deportees.

Abraham Delberg arrived in Paris at the beginning of the 20th century, shortly after completing his military service in the Russian army. He settled down with his wife, Sarah, and began work as a tailor. During the German occupation, he was robbed before being arrested.

Henoch Levin, from Vilnius, arrived in Paris in 1926 to study medicine. In 1939, after the outbreak of the Second World War, he enlisted in the French Foreign Legion and francized his name. After the 1940 armistice, however, the collaborationist and xenophobic Vichy regime subjected former foreign volunteers to forced labour. In Auschwitz, Henri Levin survived until the evacuation of the camp in 1944, suffered and survived a death march, but sadly died in Mauthausen in March 1945.
Doba Levine, a seamstress, settled down in Paris in 1913 with her husband Peretz and their daughter Basia/Berthe. After the outbreak of the First World War in 1914, Peretz enlisted in the Foreign Legion – he died during the battle of the Somme in 1916. A widow of war, Doba was nevertheless deported with her daughter Berthe.

Aron Simanovitch is the most famous of the eight deportees, the “secretary of Rasputin”. After the murder of Rasputin and the Russian revolution, he managed to flee and settle down in Berlin and later in Paris. There, he became a gambler and a gambling promotor of bad reputation...

Walter/Wole Zavadier was one of the deportees whose life was the most difficult to rebuild. He was born in Sauliai, but a few years after his birth his father left for South Africa, where he became a famous doctor and even took part in the Boer Wars. Walter studied to become an engineer, first in Saint
Petersburg and, from 1909, Vienna. His brother Nathan left for Switzerland to study medicine. His mother stayed alone in Sauliai until 1915, when the Russian army burned the city and forced her to evacuate to Ukraine. After the war she joined her son in Vienna. She died there in 1939 after the Anschluss. By that time, Walter had taken refuge in Paris, where he survived thanks to money sent from his father and his brother Nathan, who left for the United States in 1940.

Among the eight deportees, Salomon Zilber is the only one to have survived the camps. Born in Skaudvilė, working for the Lloyd Orient & Palestine travel agency in Paris during the interwar period, he fled to Southern France in 1940 and took refuge in Nice, were he was arrested in 1944. After the war, he left for Israel in 1951. His famous brother Moshe Zilberg, a judge of the Israel Supreme Court, had lived there since 1929.

At first, Zofia Borensztejn was thought to have been born in Volno/Vilno/Vilnius but was in fact from Wolno/Wolynsk in Ukraine. Thanks to this error we discovered a very moving familial destiny. Zofia’s father was a merchant, but in 1920-1921 we found Zofia with her mother and sisters in the Rovno refugee camp, full of Jews fleeing Ukrainian pogroms – Zofia’s father had died. Her mother and sisters left for the United States, but Zofia married a man from Warsaw. They settled down in Paris and opened a sewing workshop. In 1942, Zofia’s husband and son were deported. Zofia was arrested two years later. Her daughter, Riva, had already run away from the family home to escape arrest and survive on the street. After the war, Riva Boren became a painter and married the writer Jacques Lanzmann; they lived together for two years. Jacques was a friend of Jean-Paul Sartre and Simone de Beauvoir, and the brother of the famous Claude Lanzmann, who later made the film Shoah and made of this Hebraic word a synonym for ‘Holocaust’.
In November 2020 (04.11-26.11) an international on-line conference was held on the reception of current studies on the Holocaust. The conference entitled "The Holocaust: between global and local perspectives" was the 10th-anniversary edition of the academic project "Genealogies of Memory" organised since 2011 by the European Network Remembrance and Solidarity (ENRS).

What are the latest trends in Holocaust research? Why is it worth going back to the original - and sometimes unrecognised – sources? How does the memory of the Holocaust change in an increasingly globalised world, and what role can local experiences play in the globalisation process? What impact do new digital technologies and social media have on forms of Holocaust commemoration? These are the most critical issues discussed during the conference "Genealogies of Memory - The Holocaust: between global and local perspectives", organised on-line by the European Network Remembrance and Solidarity (ENRS) in November 2020.

The mission of the ENRS and Genealogies of Memory
The European Network Remembrance and Solidarity (ENRS) is an international project that aims to research, document and disseminate knowledge about the history of XX century Europe and ways to commemorate it, emphasising the period of dictatorships, wars and social opposition to enslavement. Members of the Network are Germany, Poland and Slovakia, as well as Hungary and Romania. Albania, Austria and the Czech Republic participate as observers.

The ENRS initiated "Genealogies of Memory" as a cyclical project in 2011 in response to the growing interest in social memory in Central and Eastern Europe and worldwide. The project aims to facilitate academic exchange among scholars from Central and Eastern Europe and promote research on memory in the international academic community. For more details: www.genealogies.enrs.eu

One of the major tasks of the "Genealogies" is to create a forum for dialogue between historical studies (including the history of historiography) and memory studies (social, cultural and their transformations). The search for a balance between these two areas of knowledge also seems relevant for research on the Holocaust. In addition to the exchange of knowledge within the academic circles, the two-way approach (history and memory studies) also invites memory practitioners (including educators, museum workers, representatives of memorial institutions) who carry out their activities in/towards the challenges of today to a partnership discussion.

The Genealogy project initiators, Małgorzata Pakier, PhD, and Joanna Wawrzyniak, PhD, emphasise that the historical and memorial approach has an inherent potential for complementarity. In their words: "Our proposal is to look at the issue of memory with historical sensitivity. We want to draw attention to what is seemingly obvious, i.e., the fact that historical experiences shape certain memory processes". Historical sensitivity to the pluralism of the past was undoubtedly the fundamental premise of our conference entitled Holocaust: between global and local perspectives.
the fundamental premise of our conference entitled Holocaust: between global and local perspectives.

What is also characteristic and essential for the series of events on the Genealogies of Memory - and what was particularly striking in this year's edition of the project - is the democratic polycentricity of the sources of presented knowledge and applied practices. For years, Pakier and Wawrzygniak have emphasised the need to define the specificity of the problem regarding Central and Eastern Europe's history and memory at the "grass-roots/regional" level. However, they suggest doing it in such a way that observations, reflections and conclusions are not in isolation/opposition to what is created in the broader "global", "international" or, as Prof. Daniel Levy (one of the keynote speakers of this year's edition) suggests, "cosmopolitan" dimension. Recognising the importance of complementary and egalitarian optics for a critical but also creative discussion around the issue of social and cultural memory of the unfolding historical events of the XX century, we have this year invited universities, research institutions and, above all, institutions of Jewish Remembrance, representing a variety of geographical, political and cultural domains (including Foundation Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe, Berlin; Mémorial de la Shoah, Paris; Wiesenthal Institute for Holocaust Research, Vienna; Ghetto Fighters Museum, Israel; Emanuel Ringelblum Jewish Historical Institute, Warsaw; Warsaw Ghetto Museum).

**Genealogies of Memory 2020. Contexts**
The main objective of this year's conference entitled Holocaust: between local and global perspectives was to assess the current state of research on Holocaust memory. The last decades have resulted in a significant broadening of research in the field of Holocaust Studies. They have set out completely new directions, addressed less obvious topics, used unusual research tools and drew on previously unrecognised source materials. Most importantly, however, the Holocaust was looked at from different cognitive perspectives,
cognitive perspectives, without leaving it all to historians. In preparing the programme, the conference organisers were aware of this state of affairs. Therefore, in addition to outstanding historians (Omer Bartov, Audrey Kichelwski, Katarzyna Person), we also invited literary scholars (Roma Sendyka, Dorota Głowacka, Mindaugas Kvietkauskas), cultural anthropologists and sociologists (Jackie Feldman, Eva Kovács, Daniel Levy), memory practitioners (Adam Karpel-Fronius, Lior Inbar) to collaborate with us.

In turn, the conference's in-depth research objective was to discuss the interdependencies and tensions arising between the universal (global, transnational) scale of Holocaust memory and memory rooted in a particular space and culture of historical experience (at the local, ethnic, national level). Thus, we were interested in the mutual impacts between different scales of memory, including both mutual inspiration and conceptual misuse: hence, questions were asked about both the ontological (this issue was addressed in a speech by Ewa Domańska or Katarzyna Maja Grzybowska) and phenomenological (Piotr Cywiński, Jie-Hyun Lim) boundaries of the universalisation of memory, as well as the contemporary, international significance of the microcontextualisation of memories (Omer Bartov, Johanna Lehr) about the Holocaust experience.

The contexts in which we decided to hold an academic discussion resulted, on the one hand, from the fact that we noticed the impact of the previously mentioned globalisation processes on the subject matter discussed (the risk of a deepening universalisation of the meaning of the Holocaust event was addressed, and the risk/opportunities resulting from the increased introduction of on-line and virtual media into educational practices; these issues were addressed, among others, in the lectures of Jackie Feldman, Josefine Honke, Nastassya Ferns). On the other hand, it was an expression of the need for an empirical turnaround in research on the Shoah, which is increasingly often postulated and shared by the organisers, and consequently, for the presentation of innovative potentials lying in local sources ("innovative" particularly for international communities, as Agnieszka Wierzcholska, Magda Heydel, Peter Davis, Marta Janczewska pointed out in their speech).

While developing the conference programme, we also wanted to draw attention to the ethical dimension of the issues raised (especially given the challenges/crises of the post-global world). We consider the juxtaposition of two perspectives (local and global) to be important also because only an expanded perception seems to make it possible to transcend the paradigm of the Holocaust as a "historical event", thus opening the possibility of its interpretation in the context of "anthropological experience". Consequently, the experience where a central focus is on the voices of victims/survivors and their narration (including: "the 'local' historical narrative, which in many cases did not appear in the canon of literature on the Holocaust, because it was created in the languages of Central and Eastern Europe). It is also central for understanding the constant need for protecting human rights and listening to the voices of those in need in the XXI century (the topic of ethical responsibility for studies/holocaust education in the times of contemporary crises appeared in the lectures of Piotr Cywiński, Daniel Levy, Olof Bortz, Ida Richter, Danielle Lucksted, among others).

The Holocaust: between local and global perspectives. Conference Programme
This year's conference, which took place in November 2020, was a symbolic event for several reasons. Firstly, it addressed an issue fundamental to the mission of the ENRS (and also required a particular sensitivity towards research). Secondly, it was the 10th-anniversary edition of the academic project "Genealogies of Memory". Finally, it was the first time such a large event was organised by the Network on-line. However, it is thanks to the need to introduce new technological solutions that we can share with you today, the full archive of our event on YouTube.

The authors of the concept for this year's conference were Małgorzata Pakier, PhD, (ENRS) and Małgorzata Wosińska. However, without the substantive and logistics support of Gábor Danyi (ENRS), members of the Programme Council, and above all, trust (in the
of Gábor Danyi (ENRS), members of the Programme Council, and above all, trust (in the chance of success of an international academic undertaking in times of the pandemic) of the main partners of the event, i.e. the Berlin Foundation Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe and the Institute of Sociology at the University of Warsaw - this year's Genealogies of Memory could not have been implemented to such an extent, in terms of visual quality, and (most importantly) intellectual sensitivity and the attendance of the participants and audience.

The programme of the event - the Holocaust between global and local perspectives - consists of eight meetings and is an 'intellectual journey'. We begin this journey from a universal perspective, in which questions about the ethics and responsibility of Holocaust memory are resolved. We then continue the journey through local stories (including the earliest historiographies of the Holocaust history), memories, languages and landscapes of Central and Eastern Europe to head towards the borders of Western Europe and ask questions about cross-border memory and its contemporary reception. Another direction is Israel, where "living memory" of the past is confronted with the global technologies of the digital age. By asking the question about new media, we naturally return to questions of a universal nature, completing our journey with a global diagnosis of Holocaust studies and discussing the future challenges facing researchers and memory practitioners.

In the first session entitled, Practical Ethics of Holocaust Memory In the 21st century, the subject of 'responsibility' for Holocaust memory and its moral and ethical consequences for the contemporary world (consequences developed in educational, social, academic and museum activities). Piotr Cywiński, PhD, Director of the Auschwitz-Birkenau Museum and Memorial, gave an introductory lecture on Remembrance in - and for - the 21st century fundamental for our event.

The next session entitled, The Ringelblum Archive as the Earliest Historiography of the Holocaust and its Impact on International
Research was conducted by the Director of the Jewish Historical Institute, Professor Paweł Śpiewak, and an introductory lecture (Genocide from Below: Rewriting the Holocaust as First-Person Local History) was given by Professor Omer Bartov. Prof. Bartov's lecture makes us realise how important it is - for a full understanding of the process of shaping the roots of Holocaust studies – that is to turn to the voices of the victims and their (semantic and symbolic) grammar of recording the border experience. These voices are, indeed, exemplified here by the Ringelblum Archive (Underground Archive of the Warsaw Ghetto).

The Third session: Borderland Memories in Europe. Renegotiating Holocaust Remembrance begins with an incredibly heartbreaking (because it painfully makes listeners aware not only of the topicality of the traces of the Holocaust memory in Austria but also of several mechanisms used today to deny it) speech by Professor Éva Kovács of the Vienna Weistental Institute entitled, Forgetting by Remembering: On the Europeanisation of Local Memories of the Shoah. The other speeches of the session, complementary to the introductory lecture, show types of social tensions that, due to traumatic experience at different national levels (especially in borderland spaces), are becoming a task for the entire European community.

The exacerbated problem of local borders/nuances (this time, however, in the scope of language and literature) and recognising the need to consider them on an international scale in contemporary, critical studies on the Holocaust offers us another session: Overlooking the Local Dimensions of the Holocaust. Language and the Cultural/Spatial Politics of Transmission. The programme of the session (in the form of a "special event" was designed by the Jagiellonian University Professor Roma Sendyka and her team). The introductory note, Local Addresses in Holocaust Diaries: Reconstructing the Lifeworlds of Young Jewish Diarists in Vilnius was delivered by Professor Mindaugas Kvičiauskas (Lithuanian literary scholar, acting as Minister of Culture of the Republic of Lithuania at the time of the conference).
The fifth session: Forensic Environments of the Holocaust and its Memory is a continuation of the journey into the depths of local landscapes. During the meeting, we look at all aspects fundamental to the development of Holocaust memory - the environmental perspective (including forensic and biological). An inspiring lecture by Professor Ewa Domańska, prepared in collaboration with a research team (Mikołaj Smykowski, PhD, Jacek Małczyński, PhD) and entitled The Environmental History of the Holocaust: Chances and Challenges help to pose a question (interestingly developed by successive panellists) about the universal relevance of humanistic research on a physical landscape marked by death.

Leaving the local landscape and its empirical and environmentally sound cognitive perspectives, in the sixth session entitled, Translation and Travel of Holocaust Memory between Europe and Israel, we move towards space where the Holocaust memory is of particular significance. With the introductory lecture by Professor Jackie Feldman from Ben Gurion University of the Negev (The Vanishing Body of the Witness: Transmission of the Shoah in a Digital Generation), together with the panellists, we pose questions contemporary trends in Holocaust education, in which periods, the direct inter-generational transmission is dominated by new media and the virtual world.

The seventh session: Holocaust Memory: Diagnosing the Global Effect is when our conference journey symbolically "circles round", allowing us to return to questions fundamental to contemporary and future studies on the Holocaust and memory education. The introductory lecture by Professor Daniel Levy entitled Mnemonics and its Discontents: Between Integration and Contestation, which in a way corresponds with Piotr Cywiński, PhD, initial reflections for our event, proposes a critical diagnosis of the opportunities and threats resulting from the universalisation of the experience of the Shoah in the globalised XXI century. Levy's reflections were also explored in-depth and critically by successive panellists.

The last event of the conference the Holocaust between global and local perspectives - which we particularly encourage you to acquaint yourself with, as it enables you to listen to our keynotes in the form of active dialogue - is the debate: Holocaust Memory and Research in the 21st Century: Between the Global and the Local, recapitulating our deliberations (but also inspiring us to pose new questions). The final meeting is led by Małgorzata Pakier (ENRS), and her guests are Ewa Domańska, Éva Kovács, Jackie Feldman and Daniel Levy.
A NOTEBOOK WITH CAMP POEMS BELONGING TO FORMER PRISONER BOŻENA JANINA ZDUNEK HAS ENRICHED THE ARCHIVES OF THE MEMORIAL

The Auschwitz-Birkenau Museum is the largest museum institution and has the resources to ensure that such unique documents are treated appropriately. It is of particular importance to me that the notebook returns to the place of tribute to the victims,' said Professor Zdunek.

It is known from the post-war testimony of Bożena Janina Zdunek that the origins of this extraordinary collection of camp poetry most likely date back to the autumn of 1943. 'It was about then that the female prisoners in their limited spare time recited by heart the poems they had heard and remembered, which were created in the camp. It is not entirely clear how Ms Zdunek came into possession of the notebook, which, as the inscriptions on its cover indicate, was to serve as a register of camp numbers of deceased female prisoners. Perhaps she managed to obtain this notebook thanks to the ingenuity and courage of the female prisoners involved in the camp resistance movement,' said Dr. Wojciech Płosa, head of the Museum Archives.

Bożena Janina Zdunek had two notebooks of this type in the camp; however, one of them was stolen from her along with a bag in which she kept her prisoner possessions.

The notebook, in broad lines on 32 pages, contains texts of 17 camp poems, written in different writing styles. They include, among others, works by Krystyna Żywulska (actually Sonia Landau): "Marsz" (March), "Apel" (Roll-call), "List do Matki" (Letter to the mother), "Taniec" (Dance), "Mamo, bądź, zdrowa" (Mom, stay healthy). These are poems that constitute the canon of camp poetry from KL Auschwitz. 'The notebook donated by Professor Adam Zdunek is an extraordinary and precious document. The very history of the creation of this collection of poems draws attention, and it must also be noted that it is a testimony to the great willpower to live and attachment to culture, which were characteristic of female prisoners. Amid the horrible daily realities of the Birkenau camp, they found the strength and time to collect what was so ephemeral, lyrics of camp poems created by female prisoners as snapshots of immense suffering and longing for freedom. Such actions undoubtedly required great courage and determination,' added Wojciech Płosa.

He emphasized that the notebook will be a priceless supplement to the collection of camp poems stored in our Archive: 'There are only very few examples of poems written in the camp. The majority of the collection is poetry texts remembered by former female and male prisoners, which were reproduced from memory after the war.'

Bożena Janina Zdunek (née Musiewicz) was born 29 June 1918 in the village of Siwki in The Auschwitz-Birkenau Museum is the largest museum institution and has the resources to ensure that such unique documents are treated appropriately. It is of particular importance to me that the notebook returns to the place of tribute to the victims,' said Professor Zdunek.

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Bożena Janina Zdunek (née Musiewicz) was born 29 June 1918 in the village of Siwki in
Nowe kremy mówią
Wysoko w górach śniegu w głód
Biesiada ciepła obok

Odgarniam jakiś mroźny mroź
Stonowany ruchem z czoła
I slyszę w moj srebrzystym śniegu
Jak w bajce łom, złoty skoł
A Szczęśliwy mi zapiera dech
I codziennie głęboko
Widok wymiotnych naszych tarł
Księguma i równina
Do niesłyszących górskich mów
Za niespy w widoku czaszy
A duszą...

Odziało jest śnieg i chłodnym podziem</p>
Wołyń. She attended the famous Krzemieniec Secondary School, and in the 1930s, after moving to Warsaw with her parents; she continued her education at the Queen Jadwiga Middle School. During the occupation, she became involved in the resistance movement.

In 1943 she was arrested and deported to KL Auschwitz on 22 June 1943. She remained in the camp until the end of August 1944, when she was transferred to KL Ravensbrück. At the end of April 1945, following the action of the Swedish Red Cross, she found herself among the group of female prisoners who were released and taken to Sweden. In 1948 she married Jerzy Januariusz Zdunek, a Warsaw insurgent and former prisoner of the Stutthof camp.

The director of the Polish Institute in Stockholm, Paweł Ruszkiewicz, recalled the moment he first saw the notebook of Bożena Janina Zdunek: 'I was invited to Mr Zdunek's house. It is a moment I will remember for the rest of my life when the documents were pulled out of the closet and among them, the notebook. We immediately agreed that it should be presented to the world on a broader scale because we owe this above all to Mr Zdunek's mother, the female prisoners, Mr Zdunek and his children.'

In cooperation with the Swedish Red Cross, the Institute created an exhibition that tells the story of the camp notebook.

'Bearing in mind the condition of the notebook, we knew from the very beginning that it required conservation. The transfer of the notebook to the Museum, which has supported with content and media from the very beginning of the project, is indeed a culmination of the entire undertaking and an impulse for further activities. We intend to publish a reprint of the notebook with a translation into Swedish,' added Paweł Ruszkiewicz.
'For us, every document and personal memento is essential, because they allow us not only to learn about the history of Auschwitz as a camp institution but also to move to a personal level and show the individual fates of people. My sincere thanks to the professor for his trust and for donating this unique notebook. It is indeed an extraordinary volume of poetry, which is a testimony to the fact that for those imprisoned in Auschwitz, poems were a way to combat humiliation and dehumanization,' said Auschwitz Museum Director Dr. Piotr M. A. Cywiński.

'At the same time, I continue to appeal for the donation of all documents and memorabilia connected with the history and victims of Auschwitz. Here, at the Memorial, they will be protected, preserved, studied and exhibited. It is also worth mentioning that documents from family collections are not available for researchers and are therefore not used in creating canons of historical narration,' Cywiński added.

Bożena Janina Zdunek was a member of the Association of Polish Veterans in Sweden and financially supported several Polish and Catholic institutions in Sweden and other countries. She was also very active in the sphere of education. She regularly met with Swedish youth to talk about concentration camps and the tragedy of World War II. She died on 2 June 2015 in Karlskrona.
Frames captured in the photographs show images of several well-known individuals at a specific time and situation. Their gestures, facial expressions or body language indicate specific personal, political or official circumstances. Through an in-depth analysis of sources, relations, details previously imperceptible in the photographs, it was possible to reconstruct in an unprecedented fashion, the mindset and reasons of involvement for those who met then. The book is, primarily, a collective portrait of the SS men in the period of late autumn 1941, which was decisive for the fate of millions of men and women. A routine visit among SS men to Stutthof reflects in many ways the great politics, ambition, animosity and everyday life of the Nazi apparatus of violence.

The visit of the SS Reichsführer and head of the German police to the Stutthof camp on Sunday 23 November 1941 was a one-off and very significant event in the history of the camp. A few hours stay of H. Himmler in Stutthof essentially changed its organisation and scope in the subsequent years of the war and incorporated the camp into the state concentration camp system of the Third Reich following a personal decision of the head of the SS. The set of photographs taken during the visit is also the only known set documenting the Stutthof camp during its existence - it shows the perpetrators and infrastructure of the camp in autumn 1941.

The head of the SS was in the camp during a short recess between frequent trips to the eastern front and meetings with Hitler devoted to the conceptual design of the 'final solution to the Jewish question'. Meanwhile, he was dealing with disputes and informal struggles with opponents in the Third Reich's circle of decision-makers and was also involved in an informal relationship with his secretary. He was 41 years old at the time and was at the pinnacle of power and significance.

Contrary to appearances, a visit to the camp was not the primary purpose of Himmler's several days' visit to Pomerania and Gdańsk. Another interesting conclusion, which has remained unnoticed so far, is that during the...
visit, the head of the SS was accompanied by three top-ranking SS generals and heads of important government structures under Himmler. All the dignitaries drove together in a special and very prestigious car assigned to the SS Reichsführer by Adolf Hitler. The car was an attribute of power and significance and had the registration number "SS-1".

In the camp, the honourable host was 34-year-old Max Pauly, an old fighter of the Nazi movement, member of the NSDAP until 1928 and of the SS since 1930, who headed the Stutthof camp from September 1939 and participated in many extermination actions. He knew Himmler undoubtedly from other situations, but this time he received him officially and was keen to further his career. He was tensed and excited. A similar tension was felt by members of his staff, who, dressed in the best uniforms and adorned with all their decorations, served as a background for the delegation during the passage through the camp.

Himmler spent most of his time in Stutthof on occasional meetings with SS-men in the newly commissioned command headquarters building. He spent only a few minutes in the prisoner part of the camp, where he saw the interior of a room and the craft workshop. He devoted much more attention and words to observing the camp rabbit house or the sewage system. Afterwards, he spoke and listened to speeches for an hour in the hall, where SS waiters in white uniforms brought a humble "war" working breakfast. In the end, he signed the visitors' book. On the evening of the same day, he was again at Hitler's war quarters near Kętrzyn. He never visited Stutthof again, nor did he deal specifically with its affairs.
Despite the appearances of routine and normality that accompanied this visit, reflected in the preserved iconographic material, it had far-reaching effects and was not just a meeting between clerks and their boss. A small group of several people in uniforms with SS runes talked over a working breakfast about the life, work and death of the tens of thousands of prisoners who were to be sent to Stutthof camp in subsequent years. These two hours in November 1941, and the perpetrators' dialogue on the camp's bookkeeping and logistics aimed at making it more efficient, are also a discourse about the daily lives of the perpetrators and the classic 'banality of evil', in a very local and down-to-earth version of a small camp that soon became the state concentration camp of Stutthof.

The stories of Himmler's visit to Stutthof would not have existed if the album with photographs taken especially for this occasion had not survived until today. Several dozens of these photographs were taken by the famous Gdańsk photographer who took, among others, the iconic photo of the battleship "Schleswig-Holstein" that fired shells at Westerplatte on 1 September 1939. The name and fate of the prisoner is known, who at the commander's orders prepared and calligraphed captions under photographs with Himmler's image. Until the evacuation of the camp, the album was kept in the office of the commandant's office and was undoubtedly a valuable memory for the SS men throughout the years of Stutthof's existence.

Title page of the commemorative album made in Stutthof after H. Himmler's visit.
Source: AMS, file no. I-IF-1, p. 1
The album and camp documents which were taken away in the winter of 1945 were found by former prisoners in the summer of 1945 and transferred to the Polish Red Cross, and subsequently to the Prosecutor's Office of the Special Criminal Court in Gdańsk. It served as evidence at the 1947 trial of the SS men from Stutthof. It returned to Stutthof after the Museum was established in the late 1960s. It is a unique source, which, as the latest book proves, should not be read exclusively in the visual layer. The perfectly clean and symmetrical camp depicted in the photos did not reflect reality. Only a few shots in the distance show people who had been turned into slaves and prisoners in Stutthof. They stood in the background but were the subject of this story. The experience of a concentration camp for prisoners was not a nice short walk, a conversation or a snack over coffee...

If one were to mark a symbolic chapter in the history of this place and the influence of individual decisions on the fate of thousands, then H. Himmler's seemingly one-off and episodic visit to Stutthof camp would be an example of an event beyond which nothing was as it was before. It is worth recalling how seemingly small things and events can affect the fate of communities and individuals.

THE IHRA LEIPZIG PLENARY

Hosted by Germany in Leipzig, Germany’s Federal Foreign, Minister Heiko Maas, provided the welcome address, in which he explored how the pandemic has deeply affected Holocaust institutions around the world, with many now fighting for their survival, while highlighting that in many countries, the future of Holocaust education and research is now on the line.

Minister Maas called upon the 34 IHRA Member Countries to uphold their commitments to promote Holocaust education, underscoring that “Our future as democratic and inclusive societies depends on it”. He continued to explain that the IHRA can play a unique role by setting international standards in exploring new ways to commemorate the Holocaust in this new context, at the event which closed a milestone year for Holocaust remembrance.

These calls were reflected by Ambassador Michaela Küchler, who is the current IHRA Chair, representing Germany for the IHRA in 2020, a historic year. She called upon the record number of delegates to be guided by the motto, “Remembering and working in a digital context.” She also highlighted the importance of exploring innovative solutions to the challenges presented by the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, and its worldwide effects at the three-week event, which culminated in early December.

The record number of delegates from the IHRA’s 34 Member, 1 Liaison and 7 Observer Countries, as well as the IHRA’s 8 Permanent International Partners, reflected on how remembrance events took place. For example, many remarked on how the 75th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz-Birkenau (27 January 1945) and the 20th anniversary of the IHRA’s formation had been marked at an international ministerial meeting in Brussels in January, whereas the events to commemorate the end of the Second World War and the genocide of the Roma (2 August) were held virtually.

The issue of digital Holocaust education, its opportunities as well as the challenges it presents, featured prominently in the Education Working Group meetings. The IHRA’s decision-making body, the Plenary, was provided with a report by the Museums and Memorials Working Group on how to support Holocaust-related institutions, many of which are at risk of permanent closure because of the pandemic.

The Leipzig plenary meetings’ digital format also encouraged further participation beyond the IHRA community. A senior representative of the International Council of Museums (ICOM) discussed the impact of COVID-19 on museums and memorial sites, helping inform the report provided to the Plenary. The Plenary Session also featured an impulse lecture by Nico Nolden from the University of Hannover, who spoke on the representation of the Holocaust and the Second World War in digital games.

Special features and events also included an online production by Theaterverein K on the Kroch family of Leipzig, and an online screening of “Voices for a Better World: The Legacy of Testimony,” a film commissioned by the German Presidency of the IHRA based on oral history interviews by the Association.
of Jewish Refugees. Other recorded video messages included those from directors of museums and sites around Leipzig, as well as musical pieces from composers like Erik Satie, performed at various sites across Leipzig. Next year’s plenary meetings will be hosted by the Greek Presidency, with Swedish and Croatian Presidencies to follow in 2022 and 2023 respectively.

About IHRA

The International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance unites governments and experts to strengthen, advance and promote Holocaust education, research and remembrance and to uphold the commitments to the 2000 Stockholm Declaration and the 2020 IHRA Ministerial Declaration.
Chelsea Football Club, in partnership with Jewish News and renowned British Israeli street artist Solomon Souza, are today launching the exhibition 49 Flames - Jewish Athletes and the Holocaust.

Last year, Chelsea FC and club owner Roman Abramovich commissioned Solomon Souza to create a commemorative mural of Jewish football players who perished during the Holocaust. The final piece was presented during an event at Stamford Bridge observing Holocaust Memorial Day 2020.

The club has now worked with Souza to develop an extended exhibition featuring Jewish athletes who were killed by the Nazis during the Second World War. The art installation and virtual exhibition is part of Chelsea FC’s Say No to Antisemitism campaign and funded Mr. Abramovich.

The name 49 Flames refers to the number of Olympic medalists who were murdered during the Holocaust.

The exhibition aims to tell the story of the Holocaust through the eyes of Jewish athletes. Of the 15 athletes featured, profiles highlighted include Alfred Flatow and Gustav Felix Flatow, German Jewish gold medalists at the first modern Olympics held in Athens in 1896. The cousins, both gymnasts, would die of starvation in the Theresienstadt concentration camp during the Holocaust. Also featured is German Jewish track and field athlete Lilli Henoch, who set four world records and won 10 German national championships, in four different disciplines. In 1942, Lilli Henoch and her mother were deported to Riga where they were murdered.

The exhibition includes contributions from leading voices against antisemitism from around the world such as President of Israel Reuven Rivlin, the Israeli politician and human rights activist Natan Sharansky, UK Government antisemitism adviser Lord John Mann, Lord Ian Austin, Karen Pollock of the Holocaust Educational Trust, Jewish Agency chairman Isaac Herzog, Holocaust survivor and champion weightlifter Sir Ben Helfgott, The Anti-Defamation League’s (ADL) Sharon Nazarian and others.

Commenting on the launch of the exhibition, Frank Lampard said: ‘Sports has an enormous power to unite people and by sharing the stories of these athletes, we hope to inspire future generations to always fight against antisemitism, discrimination and racism, wherever they find it.’

Emma Hayes added: ‘This is so important as we know that sport has not been immune to the horrors of the past. This exhibition brings back some of the darkest moments of our history. We see the Holocaust through the eyes of male and female athletes from around the world. The stories of Jewish athletes such as Lilli Henoch, Anna Dresden-Polak and Gertrude Kleinova remind us why we as a club and individual sports professionals can never take our freedoms for granted.’
Unfortunately, the authors of the exhibition have not avoided a serious mistake. One of the sportsmen is a Polish skier Bronisław Czech, prisoner of the first transport of Poles to Auschwitz (no. 359), who perished in the camp on 5 June 1944. He was presented as "Polish Jewish sportsman". After the intervention of the Auschwitz Museum, the adjective "Jewish" was removed, but without explaining it in the content of the exhibition, the viewer will still learn about his story in the context of Jewish athletes murdered in the Holocaust.