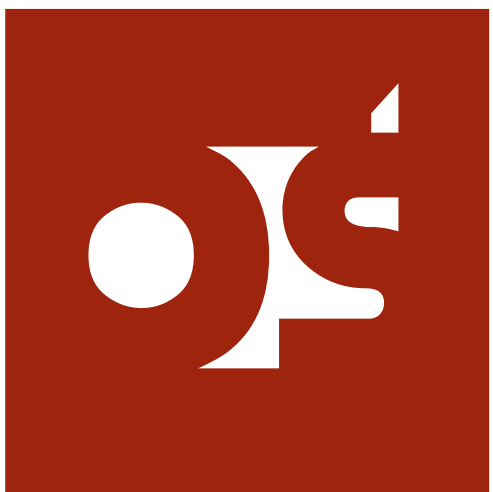


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PEOPLE

HISTORY

Eingetragen

schriftliche Anzeige des Arztes Dokte

Auschwitz vom 11. November 1941

D..... Anzeigende

Vorgelesen, genehmigt und

Die Übereinstimmung mit dem  
Erstbuch wird beglaubigt.

Auschwitz, den 14. 11. 1941

Der Landesbeamte  
In Vertretung

Der Landesbea  
In Vertretung

Quakernack

odesursache: Versagen des Herzens und Kreislaufes

Schliessung de..... Verstorbenen am..... in.....



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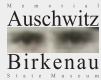
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**Photographer:**

Paweł Sawicki

**PUBLISHER:**Auschwitz-Birkenau  
State Museum

www.auschwitz.org.pl

**PARTNERS:**Jewish  
Center

www.ajcf.pl

Center for Dialogue  
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www.centrum-dialogu.oswiecim.pl

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**Editorial address:**„Oś – Oświęcim, Ludzie,  
Historia, Kultura”  
Państwowe Muzeum  
Auschwitz-Birkenau  
ul. Więźniów Oświęcimia 20  
32-603 Oświęcim  
e-mail: os@auschwitz.org.pl

## EDITORIAL

November is the month during which we commemorate two sad anniversaries. November 22, 1940 the first execution by firing squad was held in Auschwitz. A year later, November 11—Polish Independence Day—the Germans held executions at the Death Wall in the courtyard of Block 11 using a silenced small caliber weapon. We are able to recount these events now through the testimony of witnesses as well as archival documents.

In the November Oś, you will also find information about online courses prepared by the International Center for Education about Auschwitz and the Holocaust, an article devoted to the visit of students and professors from Voronezh at the Center for Dialogue and Prayer, and a report from the Polish-German seminar intended for organizers of study visits to memorial sites. The pages dedicated to the Jewish Center include the reflec-

tions of a participant of the program. Why do we need tolerance?

We also draw your attention to a photo report from the Way of the Cross at the site of the Auschwitz II-Birkenau former concentration camp. ■

Paweł Sawicki  
Editor-in-chief  
os@auschwitz.org.pl

## A GALLERY OF THE 20TH CENTURY

For the second time in this publication, I am resubmitting a text that I have published in print. This time it is from the article written a few years ago and published in "Gazeta Krakowska." I do not do so because of a lack of current topics—there are more than enough of them: from yesterday, today, and those that will appear tomorrow! But some things from the past, some events and places where they have occurred, still seem to have a subjective and emotional value.

"In the mid-60s, of the century leaving us, I happened to be employed for some time—more out of curiosity than need—at the Tobacco Industry Plant located in our city, commonly called Monopol. In huge fermentation chambers, on all floors of a large building, the fermentation of fresh tobacco leaves was taking place. In the great halls at night, in the dark and light buzz of electric motors, one could wander endlessly—the pungent smell of fresh tobacco, rusty dust of crushed tobacco leaves, and the smell of tobacco on my clothes and hair. This was quite a mysterious and slightly incredible sight, where every dark corner seemed to crawl with moving shadows, where an aura of mystery en-

veloped in gloom seemed to emanate. The memory of the fact that these buildings, consisting of their vast and expansive halls and corridors, were used during the War as a part of a Nazi death camp did not fade. That it was here that the prisoners sent in the first transport to Auschwitz were housed for a time. That here they had to accept the suffering and humiliation, that they died, were killed... Our responsibilities: the shift foreman and me, his assistant and a helper, included watching over the correctness of the technological process of fermentation and, if necessary, interfering in this process. The foreman, after completing his mandatory duties took a little nap, knowing that I will stand by all the time, alert and ready, while reading something or doing, at this point and time not completely necessary, writing. And so we passed the night hours in a small guard booth!

But this night was different! Out of the silence that surrounded us, there was a sudden scream, sob, painful yelp that emanated from an undefined location. A hoarse wailing lament—neither a song nor a repeated piercing cry that echoed in the high vaults of the halls in the middle of the night! We were caught

up with a sudden wondering fear. Did anyone get lost in one of those huge halls, on one of the floors, corridors, stairways—and is horrifyingly begging for help? That's impossible! Certainly no one is or can be here! This appalling croon cannot be in this place and time, and it has no trace of human character! So what is it? The explosion of the sudden noise did not last long, maybe a quarter of a minute—and then all was still. After a brief shock and subconscious fear, we recovered the quality of our logical thinking and ability to clearly assess facts.

It was the internal speakers system of the internal intercom installation hanging in the halls, it was the factory's central broadcasting center that 'transmitted' this amazing program in the middle of the night, a concert of a cry and wail—without human inspiration, without anyone's participation. Broadcasting system's room was locked and sealed, and of course, at this time there could not have been anyone inside. An inspection of this place the next day confirmed the existing state of affairs: the device transmitting equipment had the dust cover intact, as the broadcasting center had not been working for a long time! But this night, howev-

er, it 'emitted' its program. It was turned on somehow or it was by some miracle that it issued this overwhelming, mysterious requiem!

The calendar hanging on the wall indicated that it was the third day of November, the final night of All Souls' Day. Someone may have wanted to let us know that they are currently here. Perhaps some energy or bio-accumulation inside the building consisting of a tragic origin years ago, the atoms of pain and despair that exploded, running, fired the energy for the sudden emotion that very night. Maybe it was our own emotions, even unconscious, that detonated 'an explosion of time' at that moment, the cry of the past?... The magic and mysticism, parapsychology and surrealism, or perhaps an acoustic, technological curiosity? And the coincidence of the events with the time in which they occurred—All Souls Day—a thing entirely coincidental.

Often, after many years, we talked about this with Foreman Franciszek, still not knowing anything and not understanding. Now he may know everything on the other side of all understanding and knowledge..." ■

Andrzej Winogrodzki



The buildings of the former Tobacco Monopoly. Photograph taken during the war

Photo: A-BSM





## DIGITAL MEMORIAL MONUMENT: NAMES OF DEPORTEES TO AUSCHWITZ FROM THE LUBLIN AREA

The Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum has posted on its website the names of Poles from Lublin deported by the Nazis to the Nazi German Auschwitz concentration camp during World War II. The database is more than a valuable source of historical information; it is also a monument to the memory of people whose lives were tragically scarred by Auschwitz.

"This time, we are giving all interested parties access to data on about seven thousand Auschwitz prisoners deported from the Lublin District. The data is based on the Memorial Book about deportees from Lublin and other localities in the Lublin area, published last year by the Museum," said Krzysztof Antończyk, head of the Auschwitz Museum Digital Repository. "We have thus completed a project to memorialize Polish men and women sent to Auschwitz by the German Security Police and Security Service from the four occupation districts of the General Government. At present, we are offer-

ing electronic access to data from the districts of Warsaw (twenty-six thousand names), Cracow (eighteen thousand), Radom (sixteen thousand), and Lublin (eighteen thousand)," said Antończyk. At present, there is access at [www.auschwitz.org.pl](http://www.auschwitz.org.pl) to a database with information on about 180 thousand Auschwitz prisoners registered by the Germans. The information comes from more than seventy archival groups of original German records including the "death books," the record book of the Zigeunerfamilienlager (the so-called "Gypsy family camp"), the lists of new arriv-

als, the daily prisoner count books, and the records of the so-called camp hospitals. The Digital Repository now contains over 650 thousand discrete records. In many cases they consist only of the prisoner number, without the name or date of birth. This makes identification a long, painstaking process. In coming years, there will be Internet access to an enriched range of documents currently undergoing analysis by archivists and documentation specialists at the Auschwitz Memorial.

2bart



The digital repository servers

### EXCERPT FROM A MEMOIR BY STANISŁAW TOMASZEWSKI, PRISONER NO. 72239, DESCRIBING HIS ARRIVAL IN AUSCHWITZ AND HIS FIRST DAY IN THE CAMP:

"They opened the doors of the train car. The blood-curdling screams of the SS men, the vicious barking of the dogs, the sound of blows from the clubs wielded by the henchmen who were prisoner functionaries who had come from the camp and the rifle butts of the SS escort, the aggressive growling of the dogs that jumped on us and tore away chunks of our clothing and flesh. Groans, weeping, prayers, curses, and the blinding glare of the spotlights playing over us—this was the setting for 'disembarkation' on the ramp at Auschwitz. Lined up in rows of five, hounded by the dogs, we were pushed and shoved through the gate of the camp. The camp was still asleep. We stood, waiting. We were not allowed to sit down. There was great uncertainty over what would come next. Would we go to the showers or to the gas chamber? I read the inscription over the camp gate—*Arbeit macht frei*—for the second and the tenth time, while alternately praying and thinking about how to get out of there. The gong sounded, the signal for the camp to wake up. Lights went on in the barracks. An incredible uproar arose and we heard voices shouting commands in German, curses, and cries. Prisoners came running out of the blocks. Within a short time, a deathly silence fell and we could hear only brief reports in German. I understood them. The Blockführers were informing the Rapportführer about the number of prisoners in their blocks. After a moment, there were shouts and commotion once again, and calls to form up into labor *kommandos* (groups). I could not believe my ears—an orchestra was playing a march."

### EXCERPT FROM A MEMOIR BY ERNESTYNA BONAREK, IN CAMP UNDER THE NAME LASSOK, DESCRIBING HER ARRIVAL:

"The boxcar, with 68 women prisoners from Lublin Castle crowded inside, stopped at some station. One of the women looked out through the tiny peephole. 'Oświęcim,' she cried, fainted, and fell to the floor. A moment later, they unlocked the train car. From all directions we heard the shouts of the SS men, bellowing: *Raus!* They lined us up in rows of five. The stronger women supported the weaker. Spotlights illuminated the area... They herded us somewhere in the darkness of night. Our procession lasted for perhaps half an hour, before we saw new barbed wire, guard towers, and a gate with the inscription *Arbeit macht frei*. After passing through it, I had the impression that I had entered a vast cemetery where living beings, no longer bearing much resemblance to people, were being buried. 'We're not going to get out of here,' I told my sister. I immediately regretted having done so, because she trembled at the words and clutched my hand tightly. We walked along the main road through the middle of the camp. Around us was deathly silence. The disturbing odor of burned human bodies hung in the air. At the far end of the camp, next to the barbed wire that marked off a sector of the men's camp, stood the long building known as the 'sauna.' They forced us inside. It was dimly lighted. We had trouble recognizing each other. All around us was silence. They left us alone. Mortal dread appeared on every face. Each of us was asking herself the same question: What's going to happen to us? Is life in these conditions possible? Will they keep us alive, or kill us?"

### AN APPEAL

Unfortunately, despite the best efforts of the authors of the Memorial Books, it has not yet been possible to establish the names of everyone deported to Auschwitz. We are therefore addressing an appeal to former prisoners, their relatives, and all other persons who are in possession of camp documents—letters, death certificates, telegrams with death notifications, or receipts for the mailing of parcels—to submit these documents (or copies of them) to the Museum archives. Postwar materials or any other information making it possible to commemorate the greatest possible numbers of Auschwitz prisoners and victims are also valuable to us.

### THE LUBLIN MEMORIAL BOOK

*Księga Pamięci. Transporty Polaków do KL Auschwitz z Lublina i innych miejscowości Lubelszczyzny 1940-1944* [Memorial book: transports of Poles to Auschwitz from Lublin and other localities in the Lublin area 1940-1944, in Polish] was published in 2009. The Lublin District was intended to play the role of the "agricultural backbone of the General Government" and the extensive territory of the Zamość region was designated for German settlers. Under this policy, the Nazis deported 7,199 Polish men and women to Auschwitz from this area. The book was launched at Lublin Castle.





## THE SIGNIFICANCE OF EDUCATION ABOUT AUSCHWITZ: THE PROGRAM BOARD OF THE ICEAH MEETS

The Program Board of the International Center for Education about Auschwitz and the Holocaust has met at the Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum.



ICEAH Council meeting

Photo: Bartosz Bartyzel

Members of the Board heard a report on the Center's work over the past year. There was much discussion of the innovative educational programs addressed to inmates of penal institutions in Małopolska and Silesia, and to people with learning disabilities. The Board also listened to an overview of the e-learning platform that is being prepared. Testing of the first six Internet lessons will begin this year.

Auschwitz Museum Director Dr. Piotr M.A. Cywiński outlined the new introductory exhibition and plans for the new visitor service center that is intended to

make things easier for the more than one million people who come each year to see the authentic site of the Nazi German Auschwitz concentration camp and extermination center.

There was also discussion of the degree to which the ICEAH should expand its efforts to cover the subjects of genocide, violations of human rights, and the prevention of crimes against humanity. "There is a tendency to downplay education about the Holocaust in favor of the prevention of genocide and crimes against humanity or human rights. The International

Center for Education about Auschwitz and the Holocaust is also confronted by this challenge," said Dr. Piotr Trojański, academic advisor to the ICEAH and a lecturer at the Pedagogical University in Cracow.

Members of the Board stressed the significance of

education about Auschwitz in the process of forming the attitudes of young people. "Historians are concerned with gathering facts, while education gives them meaning. Our goal is for people who visit this place to be able to say years later that it was an important experi-

ence for them, which made an impact on their attitudes, morality, values, and the way they see the world. That's our job," said Dorit Novak of the Yad Vashem Institute in Jerusalem. ■

*pasa/jarmen*

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Photo: Bartosz Bartyzel

ICEAH Council meeting





# EDUCATION THROUGH THE INTERNET AT THE ICEAH

The International Center for Education about Auschwitz and the Holocaust has started a pilot educational Internet program, using an e-learning platform. Online courses will be dedicated to the history of the Holocaust as well as elementary topics relating to the history of Auschwitz. Taking part in the program will be free of charge.

The section devoted to the history of the Holocaust will be divided into two lessons: "Holocaust: problems of terminology and interpretation," as well as "Anti-Judaism and anti-Semitism: the events that led to the Shoah." The second part of the Internet course about the history of genocide is set to start next year. The topic section dealing

with the history of Auschwitz will consist of four lessons: "The expansion of Auschwitz during the years 1940-44," "Living conditions within the Auschwitz Concentration Camps," "Groups of prisoners within the Auschwitz Concentration Camp," as well as "The SS Garrison." The lessons consist of a historical introduction, frag-

ments of testimony from former prisoners, photographs and archival documents, examples of art made within the camp, as well as educational exercises. Specialists from the Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum and the Pedagogical University in Cracow are the authors of the project. The pilot program has started November 25, 2010.

To take part in the project, we invite all those who are interested, and especially: teachers, students, and pupils of post-middle schools. Taking part in the pilot program is free of charge.

The project is being conducted under the auspices of the Ministry of Culture and National Heritage program, entitled "Edukacja



Photo: A-BSM

A plan of the Auschwitz Camp



Plus" [Education Plus] as well as from the Auschwitz-

Birkenau Museum's own resources. ■ agjus

The e-learning platform is an informational system that is supplied with tools that are to serve to organize the educational process that will provide for a high level of interactivity by the user. With the help of the elements that make up the system, we can prepare, collect, and provide educational materials, moderate discussions, organize work in groups, as well as keep statistics and monitor the process of teaching and learning.

(Source: E-learning Center of AGH)

## An interview with Dr. Jacek Marciniacki of the company Eduserwis, which is implementing the e-learning system at the Auschwitz Museum

**Why did you decide to cooperate with the Auschwitz Museum in implementing the e-learning project?**

We treated the selection of our company to implement the e-learning project at the Auschwitz Museum as an honor. Euroserwis is a company, which has implemented and designed many projects during its many years in business, and has built and created tools and educational methods for distance learning for many different institutions and organizations. However, none of the projects done by us so far has dealt with a place so important to the history of Poland and the world, a place that has shaped our European identity. We believe at a time when the Internet has become an important (and unfortunately sometimes false) source of information for many young people, it is vitally important to bring the true knowledge about the Holocaust and Auschwitz and spread it using the help of the methods and tools that are linked to the needs and expectations of this particular group. We know well that the Internet contains quite a bit of unchecked information, often misleading, but over all rather shallow. The initiative of the

Auschwitz Museum will make access to reliable and deeper knowledge that is supported by the authority and respect of the institution much easier.

**Will teaching about such a delicate subject be a challenge for you?**

We were very concerned by this project. The essence of distance learning in the Internet environment in the existing model, WBT (Web Based Training) is to build upon the substantive content in electronic form, supplemented with elements of an educational and interactive multimedia. These elements are not intended for entertainment, but are intended to replace the interaction between teacher and student in a traditional classroom. Prior to the construction of courses we were worried that the introduction of precisely those elements would not produce the intended effect on the participants, but only the reverse; in other words, we did not want to make it seem that the content is being trivialized, or that it appears that the content is inappropriate in the context of issues which relate to the courses. For each part of the project we take care that the multimedia content com-

pliments and deepens the immersion in the subject, while not dominating it—hence the emphasis on a minimalist approach, hidden in a way as the presented content.

**What does the process of creating e-learning courses look like?**

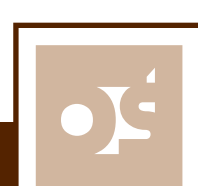
The methodology combines the separation of roles and responsibilities between the three actors of the production process of the course: the person responsible for the content of the educational material, the methodology of distance education, and the team responsible for implementation. The task of the person responsible for the content of the educational material (in this project, these were the specialists from the Museum) is to develop the course content as well as taking care at each stage of the project to ensure its quality. The role of the methodology is to propose the division of contents into small portions of knowledge (the learning units, professionally called "learning objects") and to propose such multimedia and interactive elements that will be most appropriate within a given batch of material. The teams dealing with the project's implementation are graphic designers and multimedia developers, who are responsible for the technical creation of the course. In the case of the courses created

for the Auschwitz Museum, the role of the person coordinating the work of all the education specialists was exceedingly important, and that vital role was played by Agnieszka Juskowiak-Sawicka. Thanks to her efforts, it was possible to cooperate completely and bring the project to a much higher standard.

**When it comes to education, a visit to the Memorial Site is exceptionally important due to the emotional experience of the authentic site. The Internet lacks this element, but the Internet course gives the teacher, as well as the student other elements that are not available while visiting the Memorial.**

The entire solution is designed primarily for a remote training model based on asynchronous techniques, in other words those in which the learner and the teacher do not have to meet at the same time online. Learners primarily work by themselves in completing next parts of the course as well as in doing work in groups, such as on discussion forums. This approach allows for individualized work with the possibility of discussing the topics proposed, which are moderated by experts from the Auschwitz Museum. But this is not the only model. The solutions can be created that will be used to conduct such training in a mixed model, in

which some classes will be conducted remotely, and some in a traditional classroom. This will allow you to completely change the emphases in the teaching process: remote techniques can be used for things such as discussing the issues raised and the meetings may work for a traditional workshop session. The project will also develop tools for the provision of e-learning courses directly on the website. This will help to prepare individuals for visits to the Memorial Site. If e-learning courses are complemented by methodological recommendations for teachers, then a completely new quality of preparation can exist for school groups who will visit the Museum. The open courses are also an opportunity for many people to get to well organized, credible, and in-depth knowledge about the Holocaust and Auschwitz. As for the emotional aspect, courses that are created carry a huge emotional load—this is something that we have personally experienced while working on their creation. The illustrative texts that are full of details, supplemented by photographs and sound testimonies, all sorted and delivered systematically, triggers an incredible amount of emotion—certainly in some sense comparable to the emotions that are experienced while visiting the sites of Auschwitz and Birkenau. ■





## TOGETHER, INSTEAD OF ALONE. PART II

From October 21 to 24, 2010 at the International Youth Meeting Center once again a Polish-German seminar took place intended for organizers of study tours to the Auschwitz Memorial Site.



Participants of the seminar

This meeting was directed primarily to Polish and German multipliers that did not have yet the experience in the conduct of study visits, as well as to those active in this field who were looking for partners for joint Polish-German projects. The seminar was held in cooperation of the IYMC in Oświęcim and Action Reconciliation/Service for Peace (ASF e. V.). Financial support was provided by the Polish-German Youth Cooperation.

The goal of the meeting was to assist in finding a partner in organizing of study tours to memorial sites. Such trips, due to their nature, require adequate preparation, not only by the organizers, but also by young people. Making visits as Polish-German groups not only enables you to develop empathy and understanding from different points of view, but is also conducive to dialogue, exchanging views, and experiences.

The seminar included both theoretical and practical work, during which participants had the time for individual discussions as well as for developing and working on projects.

The training began with an introduction of all the participants present as well as getting acquainted with the concept and history of the International Youth Meeting Center and the Action Reconciliation/Service for Peace (ASF e. V.). The following day, participants had the opportunity to visit the former concentration camp of Auschwitz I and the former death camp Auschwitz II-Birkenau. For many of the participants this was their second visit, and therefore they had the opportunity to get a deeper sense of the educational opportunities that arise from the authenticity of this place. The guide made the participants aware of the various aspects and topics related to the history of Auschwitz, which can be later built upon to work with groups of young people.

During the following part, Anna Meier presented a description of the educational work carried out by the IYMC. She also introduced various international projects which had been or are currently being implemented. Participants took a great interest in the project that she is now in charge of, "History in biography."

Next, Peter Larndorfer, an educator from the former concentration camp of Mauthausen, discussed the issue of pedagogical work with young people in places of remembrance. He put particular emphasis on the importance and the current perception of these sites by contemporary society. At the same time, a discussion started about how to properly prepare young people for visits to such sites. He

also spoke of how to present knowledge on the topic of death camps. In the evening, Dorota Bartos from the Polish-German Youth Cooperation presented the objectives of the organization and discussed the possibilities of financing projects that deal with Polish-German relations. During the practical part of her presentation, participants had the opportunity to familiarize themselves with the way they had to complete and file applications.

On the third day while presenting "The methods of working with young people at memorial sites," Peter Larndorfer shared his thoughts on working with young people in German-speaking countries, and then he also presented the proposals for making these educational activities systematic. Particular attention was devoted to working with young people at the memorial sites (for example, talking about emotions and setting rules). The second part of the meeting was devoted to "an exchange of ideas." The Polish and German participants, divided into small groups, had the opportunity to create their own project and search for a partner in the framework of an international youth exchange. There was also time for individual discussions on the exchange or organization of joint trips to the memorial. Participants had the opportunity to ask specific questions about the possibilities of financing projects, organized jointly with the ASF e. V. as well as the IYMC in Oświęcim.

In order to show different perspectives of interpreting the meaning of the history of the city of Oświęcim, ASF e. V. volunteers gave guided tours to seminar participants through the city, creating the opportunity to learn about the historical and modern face of Oświęcim. The program has completed with a trip to Cracow, the main reason was to visit Nowa Huta, as an example of postwar Polish history. For many participants it was a special, previously unknown, dimension of the city.

In conclusion, the participants stressed the crucial importance that visits by young individuals to memorial sites should be preceded by thorough preparation. Attention was drawn to the issue of organizing study tours that include visits to places such as Cracow, which should always be done separately. The role of Polish-German dialogue and exchange of views were also highlighted. The training yielded many useful suggestions, initiatives, and ideas for the organization of study visits. Many of the participants positively assessed the opportunity to establish contacts with people from both Poland and from Germany as well as the opportunity to take the first step in preparing their own project.

A joint visit by Polish and German young people to a memorial site for a study tour allows them to look at history from a different perspective and gives the opportunity for discussion and reflection on their shared history. ■

Joanna Trościńska, ASF Berlin



Participants of the seminar





## LÜBECKER KNABENKANTOREI IN OŚWIĘCIM

On October 15, the Foundation for the International Youth Meeting Center, in collaboration with the Parish of St. Joseph the Worker, invited residents of Oświęcim and the region to a performance by the Boys' Choir of Lübeck (Lübeck Knabekantorei an St. Marien). The choir has performed in Oświęcim during their tour of Poland, which included: Zielona Góra, Legnica, Wrocław, Oświęcim, Częstochowa, and Cracow.



Photo: IYMC

Boys' Choir of Lübeck

The choir was founded in 1948 in Lübeck's St. Mary's Church, which has a long choral tradition. Today the Lübeck Boys' Choir consists of two concert choirs, each having about 50 young singers. More than 100 boys aged from five, working in various groups with a young staff in preparation for performances. Artistic director and choir director, Michael D. Mueller, along with his choir work annually to develop new programs of the secular and

sacred choral music that is performed in Germany and throughout Europe. Boys' Choir is required to represent the Hanseatic city of Lübeck.

The culmination of recent years has been performing music during the ceremony to mark the state visit of Queen Margarethe II of Denmark in Lübeck. The choir, which includes performances of Maurice Durufle "Cum Jubilo" and Gabriel Faure's "Requiem" in its repertoire,

arrived in Oświęcim at the initiative of Ryszard Pyritz, a member of the Rotary Club of Oświęcim.

Included in the young singers' from Germany program in Oświęcim, were also a tour of the city, visit to the Jewish Center, and a meeting with the choir and orchestra of the Karol Szymanowski National Music School. The German boys' choir with great pleasure accepted the invitation of school director

Mrs. Celestyna Czarnynoga, who along with Mrs. Lidia Szczerbowska, deputy director, and many teachers from the school personally greeted the guests. Also, the school's students prepared a fantastic reception for young singers. Choristers from Lübeck visited the school where children learn to play a variety of instruments, took part in a lesson on rhythm, practiced with the school orchestra and choir, with whom they could sing well together.

An absolute surprise for the guests from Lübeck were the performances prepared for their visit by the youngest pupils, who with great commitment and effort presented their abilities to play instruments on the school's stage. The intention of the organizers was to create cooperation between the choirs of Oświęcim and Lübeck, through the making of music together. ■

*Olga Onyszkiewicz*

## ABOUT THE HOLOCAUST FROM A CHILDREN'S PERSPECTIVE: AN EDUCATIONAL WORKSHOP FOR YOUNG PEOPLE TAKING A STUDY TOUR TO THE IYMC

Shortly after the liberation of the first part of Poland's territories by the Red Army, the newly formed Central Jewish Historical Commission began collecting documentation of the Holocaust. Survivors were interviewed about their fate during the Nazi persecution—these interviews also included children. Moving testimony from interviews conducted so far show almost unknown strategies for survival and experiences of Jewish children in Eastern Europe.

"This war became the first in the history of war that was consciously turned against children. This was not about all children from occupied countries, but the representatives of a very specific group: the Jewish children, all of these children without exception. Jewish children, regardless of age, gender, or talent, because of the will of Hitler and his inner circle, due to the silent agreement or mock ignorance of most of German society as well as the passive behavior of the majority of occupied Europe's population, were sentenced to death. Today, historians estimate that out of nearly 6 million Jewish victims of the Holocaust there were more than 1.5 million children under the age of 15." ■  
*Prof. Feliks Tych.*

They reveal an entirely new perspective—these children were lucky to survive in a small hiding place, in a forest, or camp. After the war, they could bear witness to the persecution which they suffered. The workshop deals with the fate of Jewish children: Jankiel Baran, Esther Borensztain, Jerzy Himmelblau, Alexander Jakobson, Fela Kokotek, Maria Mławska, Inge Rothschild, Motel Waks; and the development of the protection of children's rights after World War II and the Holocaust.

In 1978 through the initiative of Polish Committee for Human Rights at the United Nations, work began on the draft Conven-

tion on the Rights of the Child. On November 20, 1989, the UN General Assembly adopted the Convention on the Rights of the Child. The child is treated as an individual who has their own rights and freedoms, which are protected.

Workshop will familiarize participants with the complex picture of the world during World War II and the Holocaust, and look at the reality of war through the eyes of Jewish children. It also aims to develop an understanding and empathy for the fate of Jewish children in Poland during the war and the understanding of the mechanisms of social stigmatization, discrimination, exclu-

sion, and injustice in the context of the historical events. In addition, the workshop deals in the contemporary understanding of the origins and background of human and children's rights after World War II and the Holocaust as well as developing the ability to recognize injustice in their own environment, strengthening the motivation and courage to work in the civic sphere. ■

**Length of workshop: 3 hours**  
**Age: 16-19**  
**Group Size: up to 30 individuals**  
**Language: German**  
**Led by: Elżbieta Pasternak**



# “I’M HAPPY THAT I’LL DIE AT LEAST ON NOVEMBER 11”

November is the month during which we commemorate two sad anniversaries. November 22, 1940 the first execution by firing squad was held in Auschwitz. It was then that 40 Polish prisoners were shot to death. A year later, November 11—Polish Independence Day—the Germans held executions at the Death Wall in the courtyard of Block 11 using a silenced small caliber weapon. That day, 151 people lost their lives.

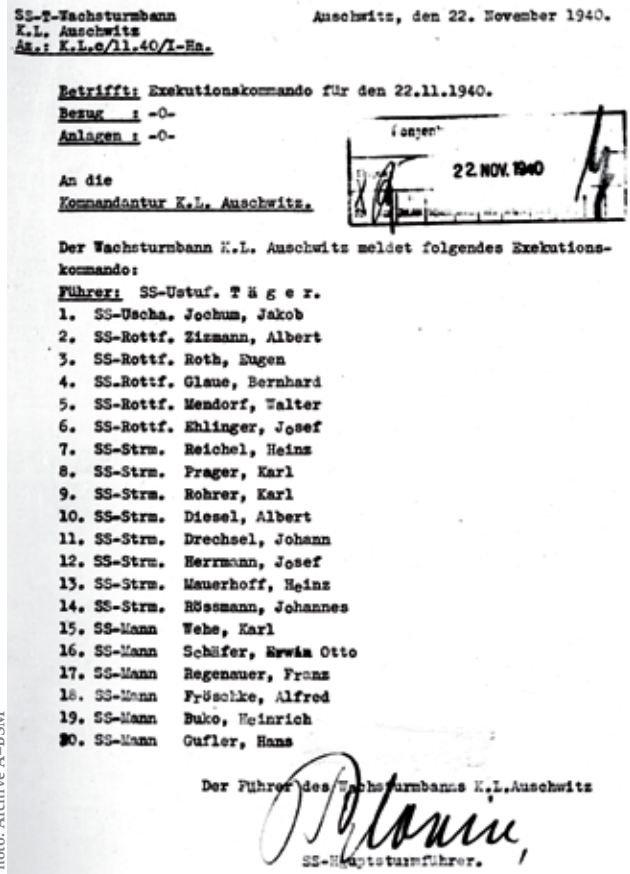
Executions in 1940 were ordered in retaliation for the alleged acts of violence and assault against members of the police force in Katowice. These killings were ordered on November 18 by the higher commander of the SS and police in Breslau (now Wrocław), SS-Gruppenführer von dem Bach-Zelewski. Four days later, the commandant’s adjutant, SS-Obersturmführer Kramer confirmed in writing the acquisition of 40 Poles identified as professional criminals from their prison from Katowice. From a list sent to him by the *Staatspolizeistelle* in

Katowice, the individuals were chosen by none other than the leader of the SS, Heinrich Himmler. At about 11 o’clock all the prisoners were rounded and rushed from work back into the camp.

The action began at 12:00, where the current headquarters of the PKS bus company is located. The whole operation lasted 20 minutes. The executions were managed by SS-Obersturmführer Fritzsch. Each prisoner was shot by two SS men. The execution commando consisted of 20 SS camp guards. On the same day in the camp

office 40 separate protocols for executions were also submitted. In the “post-mortem examination” (*Leichenbefund*) section it was written—shot through the heart.

One of the witnesses to the executions was Władysław Fołtyn. In his testimony we read: *On the day of November, 22 1940, I was working as a carpenter—a forced laborer in the carpenter’s workshop in the next barrack, equipped with machinery and equipment taken by the camp authorities from the Salesian workshop in Oświęcim. The barrack was located opposite the*



Auschwitz SS men involved in the executions that took place on November 22, 1940

existing guardhouse that is currently at the Auschwitz Museum in Oświęcim, near Crematorium I. The condemned individuals were awaiting execution in the region of the internal parking lot of the current Museum and the SS led ten of them at a time to a nearby pit [which remained during the war because it was a place where gravel had been excavated previously—ed. PS]. The condemned had their hands handcuffed behind their backs. From time to time, we could hear bursts of rifle shots from the firing squad, and then single shots. At the same time, I did not see the shooting because the executions took place in the bottom of the deep pit. Many SS men and SS officers looked on. Beside the pit, on a small hill of earth, there was a machine gun set up that was probably to protect against any possible rebellion by the condemned. In any case, it was not used at this time. After the executions had finished, the SS who had been taking part were put in formation and marched back to barracks in the vicinity of the Tobacco Monopoly. I remember that as they passed near the current museum guard building they began to sing: “Heili, Heilo...”. To

collect the bodies of the executed, a cart pulled by prisoners was sent, and it later stood for a time with the bodies of murdered before the entrance to the crematorium. Along the way, and in front of the crematorium, quite a lot of blood had bled from the bodies of the condemned, this was then washed away with a rubber hose connected to a nearby tap.

In his memoirs, *He who saves one life*, Jerzy Bielecki, a former prisoner, described the time when he and his fellow prisoners had to take bodies to the crematorium: The roll call was still ongoing, when somewhere from a short distance rifle shots could be heard, carried by the echoes between the buildings that were around us. The shots were repeated every few seconds, building up the feeling of horror. The gunfire continued for about fifteen minutes, then suddenly it fell silent. Before the command came to disperse to the blocks, Kapo Otto, in charge of labor, smiling sincerely as usual, came running in our direction: “Vorsicht, ten volunteers for the good work!” ... At first no one knew how to get down to this bloody work. The SS helped

*Transportliste*  
Katowitz, den 21. November

**V e r z e i c h n i s**  
über die Personen, die für die Erschiessung am 22.11.1940 kommen.

Lfd. Nr.	Vor- und Zuname	Geburtszeit und Ort	Name der Eltern	Wohnort
1	Paul Barabas	2.2.99 in Sedzielce	Paul B.u. Anna g. Symek	Otschkow
2	Alois Biegun	16.10.14 Wiepsch	Andreas B.u. Agnes g. Holevka	Wiepsch
3	Josef Bienik	7.2.02 Rychow	unehelich Anna B.	ohne
4	Michael Dsida	2.8.84 Gottschalkowitz	unehelich Anna D.	Fless
5	Peter Gradzik	1.4.05 Dombrowa	unbekannt	Dombrowa
6	Adam Grzebinoga	11.10.90 Ulinka-Mala	Michael u. Jadwiga Habinak	Dombrowa
7	Richard Günther	28.9.90 Pirkental	unehelich Julie G.	ohne

A portion of the list of prisoners who were shot on November 22, 1940

Photo: Archive A-BSM





Collections Department, A-BSM



Władysław Siwek "The Death Wall"

Photo: Paweł Sawicki



The Death Wall

us immediately, beating and kicking us all over, while at the same time pushing people toward the murdered victims' bodies. Rollwagen drove closer. Tailgate of the box was opened. I ran to the nearest body, grabbed the shoeless feet. The shot were without hats and shoes, their hands were tied with wire. I pulled a corpse by the feet in the direction of the stationary cart. The hands of the deceased being tied behind their back hampered the work, so the SS man gave the order to flip the body face down. Indeed—this was much easier, but the face grabbed the ground with the chin lumps and clumps of withered grass, hopping on the uneven ground, making a gruesome impression....

When the hatch of the car was closed, we stood at attention. All the eyes showed exhaustion, the faces were pale and frightened. The striped uniforms were soiled with human blood.... Those standing on the earth covering the bunker were all herded towards the heavily loaded Rollwagen and we headed toward the trees sticking out from behind the crematorium chimney. Soon, the overloaded truck rolled through the gate of the rectangular, concrete yard surrounded by a high fence and stopped. The tailgate of the cart was opened and the Germans with redoubled force drove us to begin unloading. A smaller group was told to pull the corpses lying on the platform by the legs down,

while the rest to take them into the vast room next to the crematorium. Only now could it be seen that drops of blood were dripping from the wagon here and there. Heads of the bodies being taken down made a dull thud, hitting the hard concrete. If a corpse's head fell with its face on the concrete—where the nose and mouth had been, there was only a shapeless pulp.

Less than a year later, on the same day that Independence Day is celebrated in Poland, the Germans at Auschwitz for the first time used the method of a shot, point blank, to the back of the head. The executions took place in the courtyard of Block 11. The

condemned were taken to be executed at the Death Wall alone, naked, with their hands tied behind their back. Before the execution, the prisoners had a number written on their chest. Present at the execution were the camp commandant, supervisor, and camp doctor. In total, 151 prisoners were shot that day: 80 Poles transported from Mysłowice and detained until their execution in the bunker of Block 11, 44 prisoners from the camp, summoned by the Political Department, and 27 other prisoners, who were imprisoned in the bunker for various offenses between October 10 and November 2, 1941. This last group was probably one of the first groups of victims from an inspection of the bunker of Block 11. During this type of review, among the prisoners imprisoned there, a selection was carried out condemning them to death, transferring them to the penal company, or releasing them back into the camp. On November 11, 1941, in the bunker, there were 33 prisoners, four were left in bunker, one transferred to the penal company, one moved back into the camp, while 27 prisoners were shot.

During the trial of Auschwitz commandant Rudolf Höss, former prisoner Ludwik Banach, who served as janitor in block 11 testified: *The first execution using small caliber weapons took place on November 11, 1941. I saw the executions from a window on the first floor of Block 11, the third room, where I was staying as a commander of the room. At the time of the executions, it was not allowed for us to be on this side, but despite the prohibition I secretly entered that area. The execution took place in such a way that the prisoner was brought out naked, with his hands tied, and was then shot in the back of the head by Rapportführer Palitzsch who used a small caliber rifle. Such executions were held individually. Those present at the executions where the*

*camp commandant, camp manager, and doctor.*

In his postwar report, Captain Witold Pilecki, who was one of the founders of the camp underground organization, wrote that among the victims of executions that were deliberately carried out by Nazi Germany on the anniversary of Poland regaining its independence, was among others Lieutenant Tadeusz Lech from the vicinity of Bochnia: *The Political Department did its work and what resulted was the shooting of prisoners of the homeland related issues. Camp authorities took special joy of when they gathered a larger group of Poles to be shot on days when once national holidays had been celebrated here in Poland, our homeland. As a rule, we had more "mayhem" on May 3 and November 11, and once an additional group of Poles were executed on March 19 ... With the help of 44 and 45, I got into the woodworker's shop. What facilitated my transition was the fact that the woodworker's unit was a sub-unit of the carpenter's shop, in which I had worked for a few months... Work continued. Beside me, there sat on one side this always cheerful first rate friend, 42, on the other side—friend 45. On the morning of November 11, 1941, the 42 came up to me and said, "I had a strange dream, I feel that today they'll 'blow me away.' Perhaps it is a just a thought, but I'm happy that I will die on November 11 at least." Half an hour later at a morning roll call his number was read among the other numbers. He said goodbye to me warmly, asking me to tell his mother that he died joyfully. A few hours later he was dead. [the numbers in the report are names encoded by Witold Pilecki – ed. PS]*

Ludwik Banach in his testimony spoke about how further executions took place: *From that day, such executions took place every day, with more or less people, sometimes it was three, four, sometimes twenty. In*





1942, when Aumeier was Lagerführer, the small caliber weapon was upgraded. A magazine for 25 bullets was added and the executioner didn't have to reload a bullet every time, as before, he just repeated. Due to this, two condemned were brought to the wall at the same time and after shooting one, the executioner cocked the weapon, and immediately shot the other. The shots were fired from a distance of 20 cm, and were almost inaudible. The bodies were removed by prisoners from the Revier, who then took the bodies to the crematorium. Sometimes, during the executions, there were two guns present and four prisoners were led to the wall at the same time... All executions took place in the courtyard of Block 11. They took place either before noon or in the afternoon, and in the case of larger executions throughout the day. Mainly, certain hours were chosen, when prisoners were off at work.

The book, *KL Auschwitz seen by the SS*, that was published in 1976, contains the memoir of SS-Rottenführer Pery Broad, who was stationed at the Auschwitz Concentra-

tion Camp from April 1942 until January 1945. He started his posting as a guard and then moved to work in the Political Department. This is an excerpt dedicated to how death sentences were carried out by shooting: At the stone wall in the courtyard of Block 11 a black wall is set up. This wall, consisting of black insulation boards, became the final milestone in the existence of thousands of innocent people who did not want, in exchange for material benefits, to betray the motherland; prisoners who escaped from the Auschwitz hell, but the bitter fate would have it, they were shot, nationally conscious men and women from all countries occupied by the Germans. The executioner is the Rapportführer [Gerhard Palitsch - ed. PS] or caretaker supervisor of the prison. So as not to draw attention of passers-by on the road that runs close to the wall, they use a small caliber rifle with a magazine for about 10 to 15 shots. Aumeier, Grabner, and their chosen lackey hiding a prepared a gun behind his back ready to shoot, are all standing casually, drunk with the awareness of their power. In the background there are a

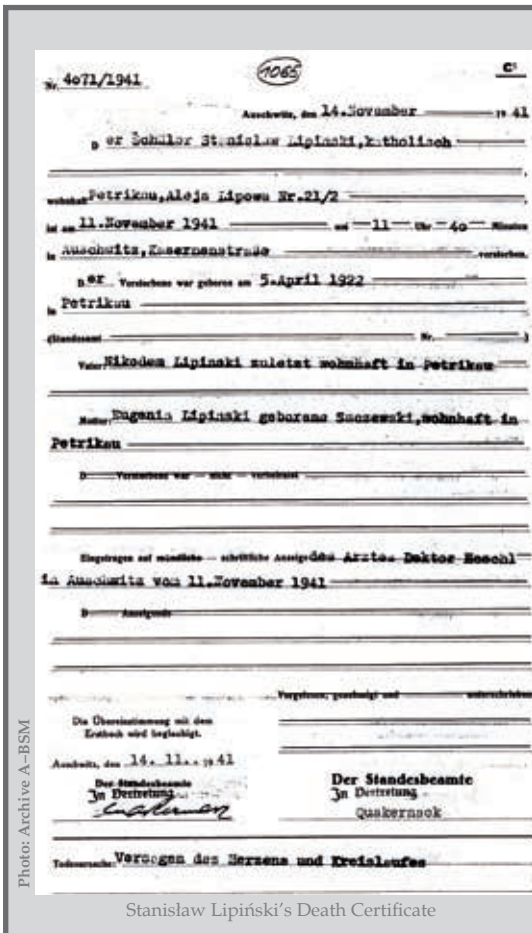
few frightened undertakers waiting with stretchers to meet the sad duty. They cannot hide the horror that is painted on their faces. Near the black wall there is a prisoner with a shovel. Another prisoner, chosen from among cleaners, bring the first two victims over running. He holds them by the shoulders, pressing their faces to the wall... Although these were swaying skeletons—many of them had vegetated in the stinking basement cellar, in which not even an animal could possibly tolerate—barely standing up on their feet, many of them still, at the last second, were yelling "Long live Poland" or "Long live freedom." In such cases, the executioner's lackey hurried to shoot them in the back of the head or attempted to silence them with brutal blows.... Regardless of whether they were men or women, young or old, almost without exception, the same situation could be witnessed: the individuals garnered the last of their remaining strength to die with dignity. There was no begging for mercy, it was often a last look of abysmal contempt, for which those sadistic murderers were only able to answer with a sadistic rage. Barely

audible, there was one shot after another. Wheezing, the victim fell. The executioner assessed whether the shot to the back of the head, done from a few centimeters away, was on target. With his shoe, he stands on the forehead, pulling the skin back so that he can see if the eyes show death. Aumeier and Grabner are watching professionally. When the shot victim is still wheezing, one of the two SS führers orders that: "He needs to get it once more." A shot in the temple or the eye finally ends the miserable life. The carriers of the corpses rush back and forth, with the bodies loaded on stretchers and throw them into a heap at the other end of the yard. There, more blood drenched bodies lie. Long after the deed, a thin stream of blood pours from the back of the head, covering the back. In spite of this, without any sign of emotion, a prisoner with a shovel full of sand covers the foaming puddle of blood. He does this every time two corpses are transported from the spot. The executioner is still mechanically loading the gun, and carrying out one execution after execution. When there is a break for some reason, he

puts the gun off to the side and whistles some song or consciously and casually speaks on any subject to the person standing beside him.

As existing documents show, that other than Palitsch, executions were perpetrated by the following SS men: Stiewitz, Wilhelm Clausen, Wilhelm Gehring, Wilhelm Emmerich, Gerhard Lachmann, Bruno Schlage, Walter Quackernack, Herbert Kirschner, Wilhelm Boger, Oswald Kaduk, Wilhelm Nebest, Erich Schulz, Wasyl Burek, Friedrich Löwenday, Wosnitzza, Hans Aumeier, Hans Stark, and Bruno Pfützte. In accordance to the orders given by the head of the office group B of the SS WVHA Lörner on August 1, 1942, for each day in which these men took part in executions they were to receive a larger ration that consisted of 100 grams of meat as well as one-fifth of a liter of vodka and five cigarettes.

Written by: Paweł Sawicki  
With thanks for assistance from  
Szymon Kowalski and Dr. Adam  
Cyra



Stanislaw Lipiński's Death Certificate

One of the individuals shot November 11, 1941, from the group selected out of the bunker in Block 11 was Stanislaw Lipiński, who held the camp number 22036. He was a student, born in Piotrków Trybunalski in 1922, and brought to the camp from the Radom District just over two weeks before his execution. The camp photo of Stanislaw Lipiński, a page from the bunker book, and his death certificate can be found in the Museum Archives. In the field "cause of death," it is written: heart and circulatory system failure. ■



Fragment of the bunker book including Stanislaw Lipiński's name







# WHY DO WE NEED TOLERANCE? POST-SEMINAR REFLECTIONS

*It's never too late to give up our prejudices*

Henry David Thoreau

Tolerance can be spoken about anywhere. However, there is a place where tolerance is spoken about in a particular way—Oświęcim. This is exactly where a series of meetings took place in the first anti-discrimination program to be implemented in Poland, entitled *Why do we need tolerance?*, which is organized by the Jewish Center. The program's logo shows a hand tattooed with a concentration camp number and next to it are the significant words "No more such numbers."

The seminar began with a tour of the Auschwitz Museum. Our guide was Katarzyna Nowak, who in an unconventional way told us about the history of the camp. I'll remember the visit through images: the washed-out faces of women being led to the crematorium shown on the photographs hastily taken by prisoners, pictures of Gypsy girls so skinny that it appears that they could not survive, hundreds of photographs from family albums from before their imprisonment, found in account books that were discovered in the camp: photos of mothers with children laughing, crawling babies, fathers, grandparents—written beside the photo the fate of these people, telling you that from the entire family only one person survived. I also remember the "posed" photos from the camp's liberation, that were taken later, when the Russians had the right equipment (as well as when the weather was already better).

Having the site of the former concentration camp of Ausch-

witz on our minds, we started a discussion about tolerance at the Jewish Center. The seminar was led by Prof. Barbara Weigl, psychologist, who is interested in ethnic stereotypes and prejudices. In her research, she has shown that stereotypes function already in the consciousness of small children, who are just learning to read and write. This simplified system of beliefs is not changed during the entire process of their education. Negative emotions are brought about in those studied by Gypsies, Jews, and Russians. The children's perception of those who are "different" is undoubtedly the effect of the beliefs of adults, as well as the lack of understanding of what we do not know.

Stereotypes are tied to prejudice, that are firm and negative judgments against mainly ethnic and racial groups. They are present in the life of almost everyone, and from resentment to hate there is a slippery slope. How easy it is to become biased, was proved by the results of the experi-



Participants of the seminar *Why do we need tolerance?*

ments conducted by psychologists Philip Zimbardo and Jane Elliott. In his research, Zimbardo created a situation of isolating worse and better groups, resulting in bringing out of the members of the experiment the "Lucifer effect." The film *Blue-Eyed*, which summarized the many years of research done by Elliott, well illustrates the mechanisms of such divided groups. The researcher in charge of the experiment caused behavior that led to discrimination against disadvantaged groups by dividing people into those inferior (blue-eyed) and the better (dark-eyed). This experiment was to show the situation of African-American society in the United States.

In Poland the most discriminated against group are the Roma. Fr. Józef Tischner wrote about this nation that does not have its own written history, that it is a "river of blood and tears." In the Auschwitz Concentration Camp, twenty-three thousand of them lost their lives. Not many of us know that during the Second World War, the Roma had their own Irena Sendler—Alfreda Markowska-Noncia, who during the War saved several dozen children of various nationalities. Looking at the Roma from the other side teaches humility, because the Roma are not only begging Gypsies. They are a group that has a very interesting culture, with a strong ethnic identity, linked to tradition and strong familial ties.

The seminar ended with a visit to the Jewish Center and Synagogue, where we were given a guided tour by Maciej Zabierowski. In Oświęcim before the war, there lived around eight thousand Jews, and those who survived the war and returned to Oświęcim counted less than two hundred individuals. The exhibition *New Life* shows the fate of the survivors. Reality following the Holocaust was so different than from before the war that the Jews were leaving Oświęcim. In 2000, the last Jewish person living there—Szymon Kluger—died.

The Auschwitz-Birkenau Museum, Jewish Center and Synagogue are historical memorial sites—memorials

important to our nations. We should renounce prejudices and try to get to know each other and accept what is different. Tolerance is one of the virtues of peaceful co-existence. Each step in the direction of tolerance is an important step. ■

Beata Wróblewska\*  
IV Liceum Ogólnokształcące  
im. Marii Skłodowskiej-Curie  
in Chorzów

\* Beata Wróblewska participated in the fifth anti-discrimination program, *Why do we need tolerance?*, that had taken place October 16 and 17 at the Jewish Center in Oświęcim.



Participants of the seminar *Why do we need tolerance?*



Participants of the seminar *Why do we need tolerance?*





# AGAINST STEREOTYPING—THE SECOND TO LAST MEETING OF THE PIONEERS OF TOLERANCE

In early November, the second to last meeting in multicultural series *Pioneers of Tolerance* took place. A group of 25 male and female volunteers from Oświęcim area schools meet monthly at the Jewish Center to learn about people in Poland who belong to ethnic and social minorities.

So far, guests of our program have been: Azat, a student of Armenian origin, a Polish-American Jew named Nitzan, Fode from Senegal, and three Muslim teenagers from the Upper Silesia: Asma, Agata, and Amin.

The initiative in selecting individuals from a minority group was left

up to the students who jointly decided to invite to the next meeting a person who is homosexual. This is how Aleksandra, a student of Polish philology at the Jagiellonian University, and Tomek, a high school student from Cracow came to the Jewish Center.

The guests shared their

personal experiences with the *Pioneers of Tolerance*—from ignorance and intolerance they have experienced as well as examples of openness and support given to them. Thanks to this unique meeting, the participants of the *Pioneers of Tolerance* program were able to confront widespread stereotypes about homosexuals through personal experience in doing interviews with their peers belonging to this group.

The last time the *Pioneers of Tolerance* will meet is in early December to sum up the year-long project and again contemplate how to confront prejudice and discrimination around us. ■

Maciek Zabierowski



A meeting of the *Pioneers of Tolerance*

Photo: JC



A meeting of the *Pioneers of Tolerance*

Photo: JC



A meeting of the *Pioneers of Tolerance*

Photo: JC

# INAUGURATION OF THE JEWISH CENTER'S WEEKEND PROGRAM



Students from the USA attending an educational program

Last weekend in October marked the inauguration of a new educational program at the Jewish Center for American students who study at European universities. Thirteen individuals from universities in Denmark, France, Spain, Ireland, Italy, UK spent four days in Cracow and Oświęcim learning the Polish and Jewish history of both cities.

The program of the visit included, among other things, a study tour of the Auschwitz-Birkenau Memorial and Museum, a meeting with Zofia Łyś, a former prisoner of Auschwitz, and Mirosława Gruszczyńska, who to-

gether with her family saved Miri, a Jewish girl, from a nightmare of the Holocaust. Participants also visited the Jewish Center, which includes a museum and the Chevra Lomdei Mishnayot Synagogue.

Oświęcim alone made a good impression on the students, who remember it as a vibrant and colorful city with a long history and peaceful coexistence between Jews and Poles. ■

Maciek Zabierowski



Students from the USA attending an educational program



Students from the USA attending an educational program

Photo: JC

Photo: JC



Students from the USA attending an educational program

Photo: JC





# GETTING TO KNOW ONE ANOTHER

On October 28-31, at the Center for Dialogue and Prayer, a Polish-Russian seminar took place: *Different memories of World War II—a shared responsibility for the future*. Its goal was to present the various dimensions of the memory of Auschwitz.

At the invitation of the Center for Dialogue and Prayer (in cooperation with the State Higher Vocational School), professors and students from the State Pedagogical University in Voronezh, as well as representatives of the Regional Center for Oral History located there, and the Russian Orthodox Church came to Oświęcim.

Through historical memory, the events that took place in the past are often interpreted very differently by the state, political parties, even the older generation that participated in the creation of this history. The history is changed and adapted to the needs of the collective memory, which everyone can relate to. Sad and shameful historical events are often forgotten or marginalized, and the successes, even the smallest and not of greater importance, are presented in the pages of history as the most memorable.

During the three-day seminar, the Polish and Russian sides decided to meet and to learn about different historical perspectives. A series of lectures was initiated by Fr. Dr. Manfred Deselaers of the Center for Dialogue and

Prayer in Oświęcim, who presented the history of Auschwitz from the Jewish and German perspective. During the following days a lecture entitled *Polish memory of WWII* was presented by Zbigniew Klima of the State Higher Vocational School, while the Russian perspective was presented by Natalia Timofeyev from the University of Voronezh.

On the last day the perspective of the churches was presented: the Orthodox (*Russian Orthodox Church during the Second World War and theological treatment of the problem*, a lecture by the deputy director of the Orthodox school in Voronezh, Sergei Ulanov) and the Catholic (*The Polish Catholic Church during World War II and theological treatment of the problem*, a lecture by Fr. Łukasz Kamykowski, director of the Institute for Ecumenism and Dialogue of the Pontifical Academy of Pope John Paul II in Cracow). The seminar ended with a joint prayer—Catholic vespers as well as the Russian Panichida. Participants of the seminar, students of Russian culture as well as philology under the care of Renata Kecmaniuk from the State



Photos: CDP

Fr. Manfred Deselaers' lecture on the various perspectives of remembrance about Auschwitz

Higher Vocational School, together with students and professors from the Universities of Voronezh participated in lectures, meetings, and discussions; including the program during which they visited the Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum and Marian Kołodziej's exhibit, *Images from Memory* in Harmeże.



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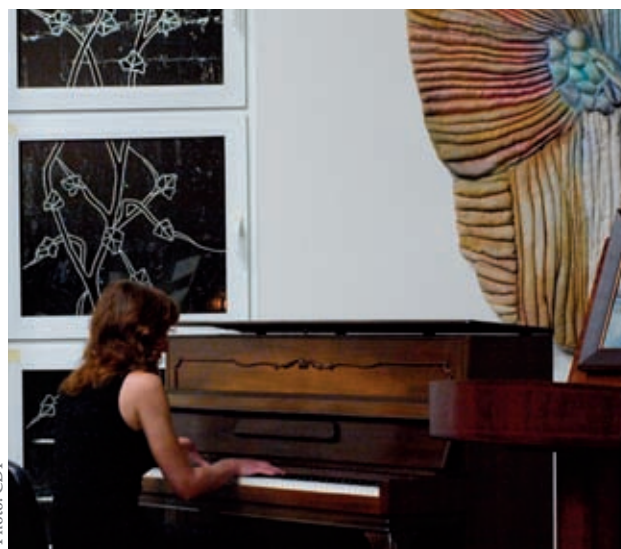
Photos: CDP

Russian dolls made by students at the University of Voronezh



Photos: CDP

A group visiting the Polish and Russian national exhibit. Participants photographed in the Polish exhibit.

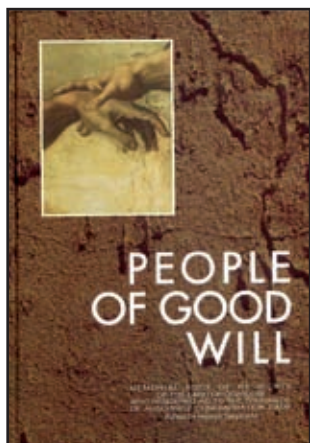


Photos: CDP

Classical music concert conducted by Dr. Larisa Vakhtel







Born on February 24, 1918 into a peasant family in Wilczyska, Gorlice powiat, the son of Mikołaj and Genowefa, née Krzysioń. He had a sister, Jadwiga (born 1921) and a brother Kazimierz (born 1919). He graduated from the Chrobry *Gimnazjum* in Nowy Sącz in 1937. From 1937 to 1939, he studied law at the Jagiellonian University in Cracow. He became involved in the socialist movement at this time, joining the Union of Independent Socialist Youth (ZNMS) and even winning a place on its executive council. When the ZNMS was transformed into the Union of Independent Academic Youth, he remained active in the new structure. In 1939, the university suspended him because criminal charges had been brought against him for making an allegedly inflammatory speech at an event hosted by the Workers' University Society (TUR) in Chechlo, near Olkusz.

In September 1939, he fled eastwards, getting as far as

## PEOPLE OF GOOD WILL

ADAM RYSIEWICZ  
(1918-1944)

Lviv, before returning to Cracow around the New Year and joining the underground Polish Socialist Party Regional Workers' Committee (OKR-PPS). In March 1940, the OKR-PPS sent him to the parts of the Cracow *województwo* that had been annexed by Germany, to start up and oversee the socialist underground there. This assignment covered the Land of Oświęcim, and he cooperated with Jan Nosal of Brzeszcze, the leader of the local socialists. In mid-1941, Rysiewicz became secretary of the OKR-PPS in Cracow, after the Gestapo arrested his predecessor, Józef Cyrankiewicz, in April. Rysiewicz also edited the underground newspapers *Naprzód* [Forward] and *Wolność* [Freedom].

He was the founder and commander of the Polish Socialist Party People's Guard armed unit (GL PPS). He was the inspiration behind the successful bombing of the Cracow *Arbeitsamt* (Labor Office), which destroyed the lists being drawn up there of people designated for shipment to Germany as slave laborers. At the turn of 1942/1943, he set up the Socialist Death Battalions, also known as the Socialist Storm Battalions, which operated in the foothills of the Carpathian Mountains under the aegis of the GL PPS. From December 1943 until February 1944, he was commander of

the Regional GL PPS.

He organized the smuggling of military personnel and socialist activists into Hungary during the occupation. He was also active in aiding Jews by finding hiding places for them and supplying them with false identity documents. He helped organize escapes from German captivity and set up the "Nowy Sącz trail" for fugitives escaping to Hungary. From the time when Auschwitz Concentration Camp went into operation, Rysiewicz was instrumental in aiding the prisoners there. From his position in the Cracow underground, he coordinated the relief actions carried out by the local socialist organizations in the Oświęcim, Chrzanów, and Jaworzno areas. In this mission, he cooperated closely with the PPS activists Jan Nosal and Edward Haloń in Brzeszcze, and Franciszek Mazur in Jaworzno. He was one of the founders of the Committee to Aid Concentration Camp Prisoners (PWOK) in Cracow in mid-1943. Made up mostly of socialists and peasant conspirators, this committee aided the prisoners in a wide variety of ways, supplying them with food and medicine, organizing escapes, and receiving from the camp resistance movement documents containing evidence of the crimes committed by the SS, which were then passed

on to the Polish government in exile in London. The Archives of the Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum in Oświęcim contain a rich collection of secret messages, reports, and documents smuggled out of the camp to the PWOK. Rysiewicz was a very active member of the PWOK. He personally acquired money for the purchase of medication for the prisoners, and took part in smuggling Auschwitz es-

capees across the border into the General Government. He initiated escapes by prisoners. During the preparations for one escape from Auschwitz, he was surprised by the Germans at the train station in Ryczów near Spytkowo, on the border between the Reich and the General Government, and was killed, along with two comrades, in an exchange of gunfire on June 24, 1944. He was buried in the cemetery in Ryczów. In 1958, his body was exhumed and re-interred in the cemetery in his birthplace, Wilczyska. He never married. In the underground, he went by the pseudonyms "Skiba" and "Teodor." ■

Henryk Świebocki

## FROM GANOBIS'S CABINET

Once upon a time in the garden of a friend of mine, on one of the paving stones I noticed the words which were imprinted on it during its production, "EISSNER BETTER OŚWIĘCIM." I did not think it could have been a contemporary product and started to search for information on the origin of this concrete memento.

It turned out that the stone with the strange words came from a nearby sidewalk that had undergone repair. This one was only suitable for replacement. Immediately, I went to the place where it was found and discovered that there were more of them. For

that this is by chance that they remain there to this day. For now, however, for their sake, I cannot tell where they are. One thing is certain: if they continue to lie there, the weather can cause irreversible damage to the historical inscriptions.



A paving stone

now, I am waiting for their removal and want to make sure that no one will throw them out while the work is being performed. When they are in my hands, one will certainly stay in my collection, two will be donated to the Jewish Center and Museum at the Castle, respectively.

The artifacts come from a Jewish company called "Eisner i Better," which ran a concrete plant in Oświęcim before the War. The place where you can find antique stone is also connected with the history of the city, and I don't think

It is a pity that we are trampling antiquities all the time and we pay no attention to this, even though they lie almost in the very center of the city. And supposedly there are so many guardians of monuments and history enthusiasts who are not doing anything to collect these artifacts for the growing Museum in the Castle, or the Jewish Center that has been in existence for the past ten years. If we leave the artifacts alone, we will not be in the position to save our Oświęcim History. ■

Mirosław Ganobis

## VESTIGES OF HISTORY FROM THE COLLECTIONS OF THE AUSCHWITZ MUSEUM



Unknown Author, Album with Greetings, Auschwitz Concentration Camp 1943-1944

with string. All pictures and texts were created by hand. The author's name is not known. The last page bears only one signature, Romek, signed in pencil. The nature of the greetings inside is extremely personal. Each individual the work is addressed to is listed by name and the wishes are personal: "Emi has to happily return to Hamburg with her father", "My wish for Rachel is that she can go on her long awaited honeymoon with Srulek", "For Hania, I wish a return to her husband and children", and so on. While at the end he wrote "And most of all I wish all the rest to return home." Despite the humorous nature of the drawings and the optimistic tone of this color greetings book, it helps us understand the drama of women, ripped away from everyday life as well as their loved ones. People trapped behind the barbed wire of the camp, uncertain of what tomorrow

would bring, wrote greetings to each other as humans do living in normal conditions where this is commonplace; writing about what for them have become distant and often unrealistic dreams: home, wedding, travel, grandchildren, and just the prose of life. The St. Nicholas gift takes on added significance in camp conditions. It is touching proof of the fact that, despite the harm and injustice pervasive in the camp, still the needs of other human beings are perceived and felt. The watercolor with St. Nicholas is accompanied by a text: "Since we're lazy, St. Nicholas has come to us last. However, he was very saddened, because he still had to go to Budy and he didn't have any gifts, so I gave this book instead of any presents." ■

Agnieszka Sieradzka  
Collections Department, A-BSM





# PHOTO JOURNAL

Gathered congregation participated in the Way of the Cross held at the former Auschwitz II-Birkenau camp in Brzezinka. Those present prayed for the murdered prisoners and the victims of the camps. The Way of the Cross was held on the roads of the former death camp by the Dean of the Oświęcim Deanery, Fr. Krzysztof Straub. ■



Photo: Dominik Smolarek



Photo: Dominik Smolarek



Photo: Dominik Smolarek



Photo: Dominik Smolarek



Photo: Dominik Smolarek



Photo: Dominik Smolarek

