

# The Holocaust in Poland

## A Guidebook



# March OF THE LIVING

## Dear March of the Living Participant:

You are about to embark on a trip that will forever change your life. In addition to serving as a highly emotional journey, your March of the Living experience will enlighten you educationally as well. We hope that you will take these lessons back to your home communities and share them with those around you so that we can best ensure that the types of atrocities will never again occur.

The March of the Living is providing you with the enclosed educational information that will help guide you through your stay in Poland. These materials were prepared by some of the world's leading Holocaust historians and educators in cooperation with the Yad Vashem Holocaust Memorial in Jerusalem.

While this can in no way replace the experience that you will receive by visiting the sites, it will serve as an invaluable resource for your time in Poland and upon your return home.

The March of the Living, since our first program in 1988, has educated many tens of thousands of people of the bitter realities of the Holocaust and the need to combat hatred and intolerance at all costs. Your decision to join this community of modern witnesses to history brings with it the responsibility to tell others what you have seen and to stress the importance of remembrance. At a time when the world is in danger of forgetting this most difficult past, it is incumbent upon all of us to ensure that we never allow that to occur.

Sincerely:

Richard L. Linn, Jr.  
Chairman  
March of the Living





Jewish Material Claims  
Against Germany

We are deeply indebted to the Conference on Material Claims against Germany for its generous support of the March of the Living throughout the years. Scholarships and educational materials made possible through funding provided by the Claims Conference have enabled many thousands of people from around the world to participate in educational programs offered by the March of the Living in Poland and Israel. Since 1951, the Claims Conference - working in partnership with the State of Israel - has negotiated for and distributed payments from Germany, Austria, other governments, and certain industry; recovered unclaimed German Jewish property; and funded programs to assist the neediest Jewish victims of Nazism. The Claims Conference has allocated more than \$600 million to organizations meeting the social service needs of Holocaust survivors, and engaging in education, research, and documentation of the Shoah.

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Yad Vashem – The International School for Holocaust Studies  
The Holocaust Martyrs' and Heroes' Remembrance Authority

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## **To Forget | Arye Palgi\***

I would like to wake up one morning and discover that there was no Holocaust. That it was only a fable. A passing nightmare. I would like not to remember anything. Not to tell, not to pass on, not to gather any more testimonies, not to build any more monuments, not to explain again and again what lambs are and what slaughter is, what pain is and what courage is.

I would like memorial days to be canceled, along with their stifled tears, bewildered sorrow and pity, and their sterile catharsis.

I would like a life free of the Holocaust, clean of Holocaust. Without trains, without camps, without death marches, without furnaces, without this repeated, debilitating fear.

I would waive the gestures of respect for the survivors, the looks of awe and pity at the sight of the numbers tattooed on arms. I would like there to be no explanations, no movies, no plays, no Holocaust culture, and none of the mockery surrounding the Holocaust industry and Holocaust festivals.


I would like not to defend the uniqueness of the Holocaust, its Jewish exclusivity, its worldwide, historical distinctiveness.

I would like to separate the images from there, which arise at times of existential danger to us and to other nations. I would like to cut the associative connections when we offend against others.

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\*Arye Palgi is a journalist, a member of Givat Oz Kibbutz, and a Holocaust survivor.





It would be easier for me without all of this. I would  
be liberated. Free. As if I was born anew.  
Without complexes and without compensation.

But the Holocaust is not a weight tied to my feet.  
It is a burden lying on my soul. There is no letting go,  
no throwing away, no getting rid of it. We need to learn  
to live with it, to pretend that we are used to it.  
To groan in secret.

So to feel the relief of fulfilling a duty, I will  
go, this year too, in a few more days, to yet another annual  
memorial ceremony, to remember what I would have liked  
to forget, to meet what I would have so liked  
to pass by.

Good morning Holocaust and heroism. I am here. We are here. Longing to  
forget. Addicted to memory.  
Prepared for the lessons.  
*Arye Palgi, Good Morning Holocaust and Revolt [Heb.], Sifriat Poa'alim and  
Moreshet, Tel-Aviv, 1996, p. 11.*



## Po-lan-ya – A Fable

This is a traditional fable from our forefathers who came from Poland.

The People of Israel saw that the persecutions were continuing, the troubles were reoccurring, enslavement was growing, and the kingdom of evil was issuing decrees until there was no resistance to the foes of Israel.

They stood on the road and asked the ways of life,  
which way should they take to find rest for their souls?

A note fell from the sky – go to Poland.

And so they went, and they came to the land of Poland, and they gave the king a mountain of gold. And the king received them with great honor. God had pity on them and made the king and his ministers merciful towards them.

The king allowed them to settle in all the lands of his kingdom, to trade throughout the length and breadth of the land, and to serve God according to their religion. And the king defended them from every foe and enemy. And the People of Israel dwelt safely in Poland for many years.

They engaged in commerce and in every craft and labor.

And God commanded a blessing unto them and they were blessed in the land. They became renowned amongst the Gentiles, and they traded in the surrounding lands and they cast coinage as well...

And while they were in the country they found a forest where trees grew, and each tree was one tractate of the six books of the Mishnah, carved on the trees. This was the Kabzin forest in Lublin. And they said to one another, we have come to a country where our ancestors dwelled long ago.

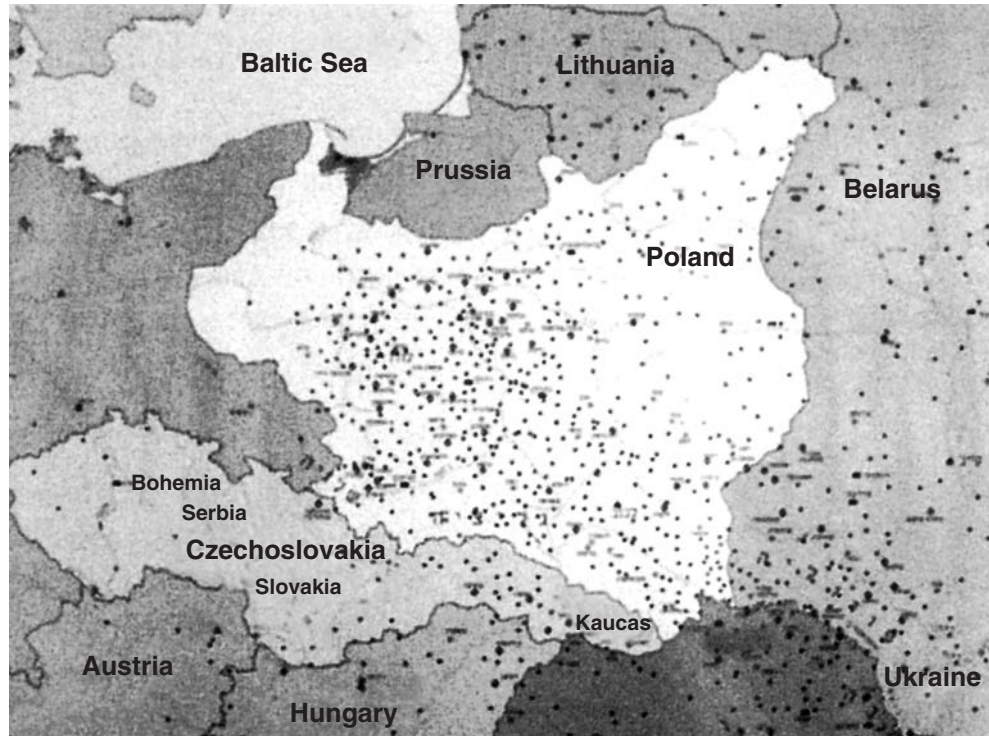
And why was it called Poland?

The assembly of Israel said before the Almighty, Lord of the Universe - if it is not yet our time to be redeemed, here ("po") we will stay ("lin") in the night of our exile until you bring us to the Land of Israel.

An extract taken from: Shmuel Yosef Agnon, *Elu Ve-Elu*, Second Volume, Tel-Aviv and Jerusalem, Shoken, 1959-1962, p. 403.



## Map of the Jewish Communities in the Interwar Period

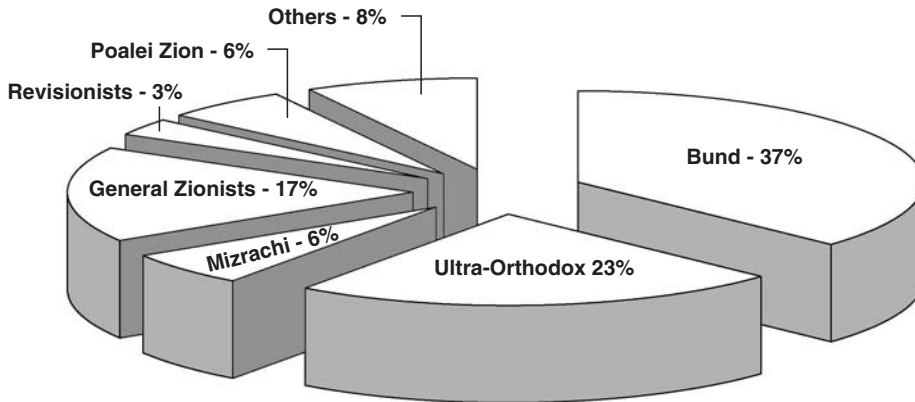


“Suddenly all the places where  
Jews had lived for centuries,  
for even more than a thousand years,  
vanished without trace.  
And I thought that many years from now,  
a long time after the killing,  
perhaps Jews might want to hear  
about the places that vanished,  
about the life that was and is no more.”

Roman Vishniak as quoted in *Journey to Poland: in Search of a Vanished World*, Beth Hatefusoth, The Nahum Goldman Museum of the Jewish Diaspora, Tel-Aviv, 1990.

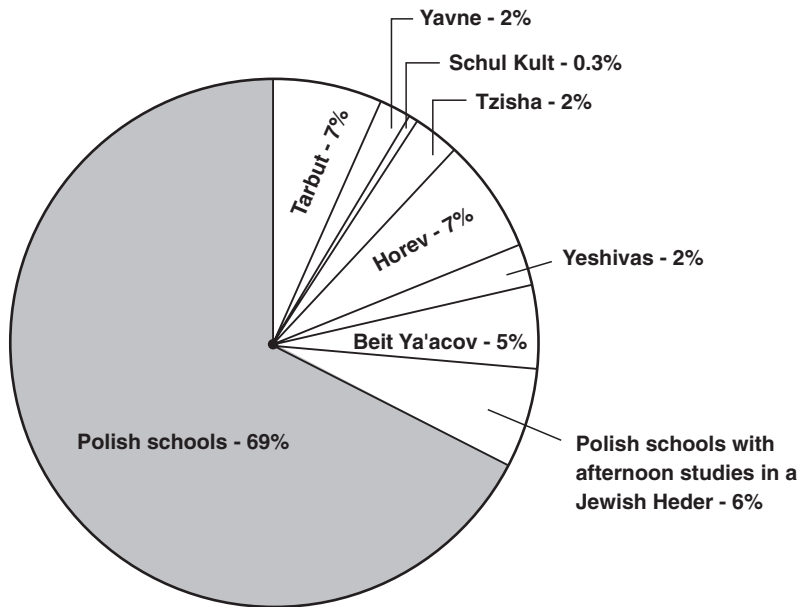
# The Jews of Poland in the Interwar Period

## Politics



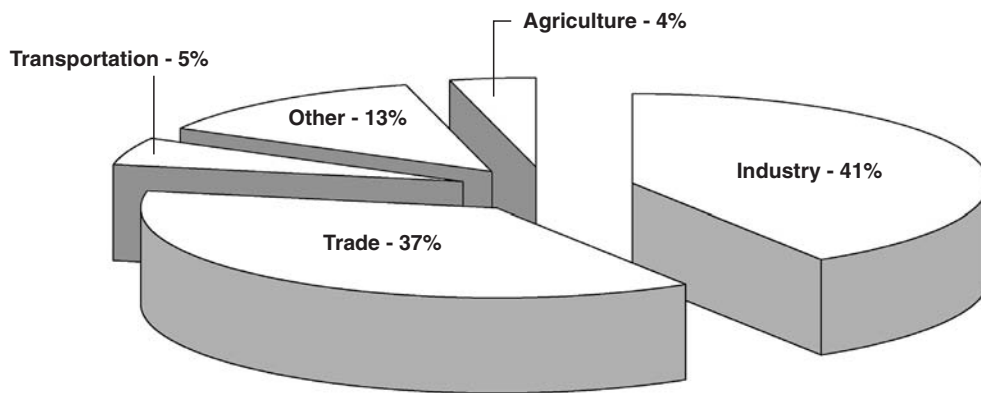
The data represents a general assessment based on a combination of the electoral data for the Polish Sejm (parliament) and the Jewish communities.

## Education

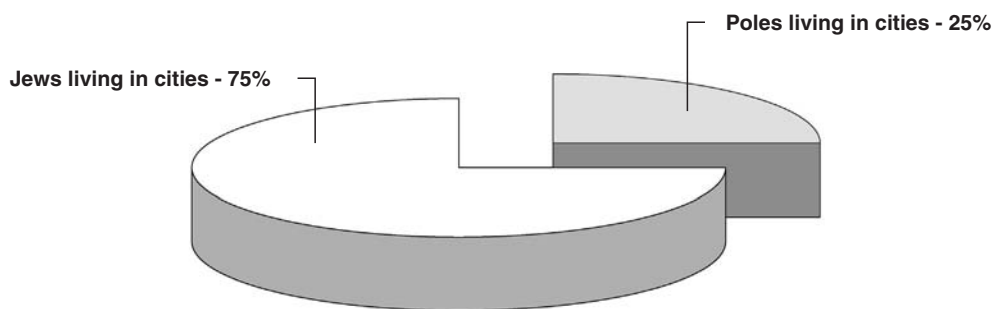
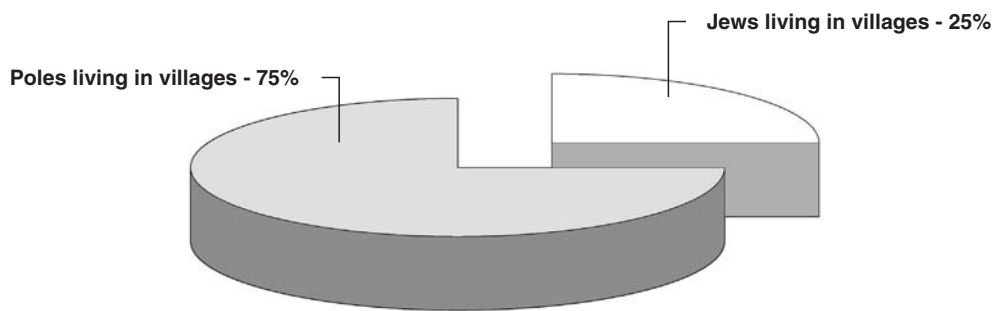




## Employment



## Urbanization



## Warsaw

### Warsaw and the Jews

Capital of Poland with around two million inhabitants. The history of the city is complex. In the middle of the 16th century it was chosen as the capital of Poland. During the period of Independent Poland, between the two World Wars, Warsaw was the centre of Jewish activity for culture, politics, and religion. On the eve of the Holocaust there were three major centres of Jewish life: New York, the Yishuv in Eretz Israel, and Warsaw. 375,000 Jews lived in Warsaw on the eve of World War II.

The Jewish community in Warsaw was established in 1414. Until the 17<sup>th</sup> century the city's Jews worked in trade, hostleries, business, industry, were suppliers for the Polish Army, and served at the court of the monarchy and Polish nobility. In the 18th century, during the partitions of Poland, some Jews were expelled from the city and the Russian Army slaughtered Jews in Praga, a suburb of Warsaw. Despite this there was a continuing wave of emigration of Jews to Warsaw and the Jewish community stood at 11,830 by the end of the 18th century. Jews in Warsaw were subjected to a restriction of rights and prohibitions, heavy taxes were imposed, and most Jews lived in a separate area of the city.

### Religion, Culture, and Politics

In the middle of the 18th century there was a substantial Hassidic presence in the city, whose growth was comparable to that of the Haskala movement. These two factions greatly influenced the identity of the Jews of Warsaw until the Holocaust. During that same period the Jewish community of Warsaw grew to become the biggest in Europe. The Jews of Warsaw also showed the same signs of the struggle over questions of national Polish identity that were seen in the rest of the society.

From the 19<sup>th</sup> century forward the Jews were active in internal politics and culture and within Polish-economic circles. These activities were characterised by the range of ideas that existed in society from socialism and communism to Orthodox Judaism. In the 20<sup>th</sup> century these activities formed the basis of political parties including: the Zionist parties (the general Zionists, Poalei Zion and so forth); the Bund, and the religious parties (Mizrachi and Agudat





Yisrael). In addition to the political awakening amongst Warsaw Jewry and the influence of Polish Jewry in general, there was also an extensive cultural awakening. Many books and newspapers in Hebrew, Yiddish, and Polish were published in Warsaw. Yiddish literature and theatre flourished and Warsaw was the centre of creativity that influenced the Jews in the United States and Eretz Yisrael. Well-known artists of the period included: Avraham Goldfagen (The Yiddish Theatre), Ester Kaminska, Yudaleib Peretz, Issac Beshavis Singer, Y. Anski, and others.

### **The Period of the Holocaust**

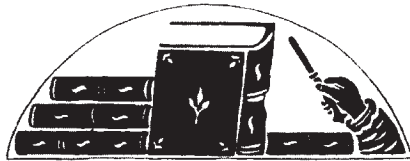
At the outbreak of World War II, Jews were almost a third of the population of Warsaw. Under German occupation the Jews of Warsaw were humiliated and isolated and subjected to new anti-Jewish legislation such as: restriction on riding the trams, wearing the blue Star of David, signs outside shop windows, and more. In November 1940 the Jews were forced into the biggest ghetto in Europe. The conditions in the ghetto were hard and were characterized by overcrowding, hunger, lack of heating materials, and diseases, which led to approximately 4,000 people dying each month. In the Warsaw Ghetto there was an underground archive called “Oneg Shabbat”, which was headed by Dr. Emanuel Ringelblum, and because of this archive we have a great deal of information on the happenings in the ghetto. In addition, there are many diaries that were written in the ghetto, which also supply information on the reality of life in the ghetto.

Between the 22<sup>nd</sup> of July and the 12<sup>th</sup> of September 1942, the Germans began mass deportations from the Warsaw Ghetto to the Treblinka Extermination Camp where the Jews were murdered. On the 19<sup>th</sup> of April 1943, the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising began, fought by members of the youth movements who caused the “mighty” German Army many problems. The Germans put down the Uprising, and whilst some of the fighters escaped to Polish Warsaw and others were taken to camps most of the fighters were killed during the Uprising. The area of the ghetto was totally destroyed by the Germans. A year later the Polish Uprising began and by its end, Warsaw, the capital of Poland, was virtually destroyed. Only a small number of the Jewish community of Warsaw survived the Holocaust. Today a synagogue is used as the activity centre for the remaining few thousand that belong to the Jewish community of Warsaw.

## Common Symbols on Tombstones in Jewish Cemeteries



**Charity Box** – symbol of generosity  
The deceased was a generous person, who donated to the poor



**Books** – symbol of wisdom  
The deceased was a scholar who studied the Torah and the Talmud; maybe a teacher or one who used to study and read the Torah in the Synagogue.



**Combination of Symbols**  
Charity Box – symbol of generosity  
Books – symbol of wisdom  
Lion – Jewish symbol “Gur Arie Yehuda”



**Symbol of Levy**  
The jug and bowl and the Levite jars, one of the Levite duties was to wash the priests' hands before the blessing.



**Symbol of the Priest (Cohen)**  
The hands raised in blessing, the priests used to raise their hands and bless the congregation before prayers.





**Eagle** – the eagle has many meanings, including holiness and safekeeping (the deceased keeping his loved ones safe).



**The Tree of Life** – a major symbol, connected with agriculture, nature, and the seasons of the year. The Tree of Life appears in several forms, among them, here, a broken tree (the sense of loss) and a Griffin (with the head and wings of an eagle and the body of a lion), a common motif on Jewish gravestones.



This is the tombstone of a dear, respected, and generous man  
This saying appeared sometimes on the tombstones of the notable benefactors of the community.



**Candles** – a symbol commonly seen on the tombstone of a woman  
Among the precepts to be followed by women, lighting candles denotes a devoted woman.  
On this tombstone the candles are broken – a symbol of loss.



**Deer** – in Yiddish *Hirsh*.  
An illustration for the blessing of the Tribe of Naftali, one of the 12 Tribes, “Naftali is a hind set free...”

## Tikozin – Tiktin

A town in the district of Bialystok, in northeastern Poland.

The Jewish settlement was founded in 1552, following a charter given to the Jews by the local prince. In 1642 a spectacular synagogue was built in the shape of a fortress. In 1670 the community was given representation in the Council of Four Lands (the Jewish council). The Jews of the town owned flourmills and trading centers. The town's commerce was conducted during the weekly market days, on which Jews, Poles, and others traded. Until the Holocaust, there was wide-ranging Jewish political activity in the town, including the "Halutz" movement and there was also a range of Jewish schools from the Zionist, religious, to other schools. On the eve of the Holocaust there were some 2,500 Jews living there, constituting a majority in the town.

### During the Holocaust

At the outbreak of the war, German army units occupied the town, imprisoning the men in a church for three days without any food or drink. At the same time the soldiers went through the houses, pillaging whatever they found. After a month and a half, the town was given over to Soviet control, under the Ribbentrop-Molotov agreement.

For over a year the Jews of Tiktin lived quietly and safely under the patronage of the Soviet government. Some of them held important positions in the local government. On June 22, 1940, the Soviets retreated from the town due to the outbreak of Operation Barbarossa – the German surprise attack on the Soviet Union.

At the end of June 1941 the Germans entered Tiktin. Some two months later the Germans forced the Poles to dig three large pits in the Lopochowa Forest, on the outskirts of the town.

On August 24, 1941, the order went out for all the town's Jews, other than the sick and disabled, to present themselves the following day at 6am in the town square. The next day all the Jews arrived at the square wearing winter clothes and equipped for the journey. At 7 o'clock the Gestapo trucks arrived. The Germans arranged the Jews in groups of four according to height, with the





women, children, and the elderly on one side and the men on the other. They were led to the Lopochowa Forest in a column, and as they walked they were struck with whips.

In the forest they were shot with machineguns and thrown into the pits, which had been dug earlier. On this one day over 1,400 Jews of the Tiktin community were murdered. The next day the Germans went through all the houses in town and took out the women, old people, and children who had stayed at home. Over 700 people were taken away, and their fate was the same as that of those murdered the previous day. In this way the ancient Tiktin community was destroyed.

Approximately 150 of Tiktin's Jews managed to escape, most of whom were killed during the attempt. Those caught in the area of Tiktin were taken to the third pit in the Lopochowa Forest. At the end of the war only a few survivors remained from the Tiktin community.

## Treblinka

One of the three extermination camps established as part of Aktion Reinhard. Treblinka Extermination Camp was located in the northeastern part of Poland and began operating in July 1942. Treblinka was one of the centres for the murder of Polish Jewry, and the first Jews to be murdered there were from Warsaw. From the 23<sup>rd</sup> of July to the 21<sup>st</sup> of September, during the period of the Great Deportation from Warsaw, hundreds of thousands of Jews were killed at Treblinka. Jews from Warsaw, from all over Poland, Slovakia, Czechoslovakia, Greece, Macedonia and other areas were brought to Treblinka and murdered. Exterminations at Treblinka continued until April 1943.

Treblinka was situated in an area, and designed in such a way, that enabled it to conceal the atrocities that were taking place. For example: the train came inside the camp and there were signs on the platform for a waiting area, cafeteria, and directions to other villages. Within the camp was a building disguised as a hospital, which in reality was used as a place to kill the elderly and the sick. On entering the camp the victims had to hand over all their valuables, which were then sorted and sent to Germany. They then had to remove all items of clothing, the women's hair was shaved, and they were then forcibly pushed into the gas chambers where they were gassed. A parochet (a synagogue curtain) was hung over the entrance to the gas chamber and on it was inscribed: "This is the gate of the Lord through which the righteous shall walk."

During this time, approximately 800 Jewish prisoners were forced to remove the bodies from the gas chambers and take them for burial in the trenches. This team of Jewish prisoners was called the Sonderkommando. This forced labour was inhumane and most of the prisoners realized that they would also eventually be sent to their deaths.

The camp was organized and run by the Germans. The camp commandant was Franz Stangl, who had previously served as commander of the Sobibor Extermination Camp. Stangl's deputy was Kurt Franz. They were assisted by 20-30 SS men who had previously participated in the euthanasia program, and about 90-120 Ukrainian soldiers who worked as camp guards and were also involved in the killing process. On the 2nd of August 1943 the Jewish prisoners of Treblinka revolted. Only 70 individuals managed to escape and survive. After the prisoner uprising the camp was totally destroyed and all

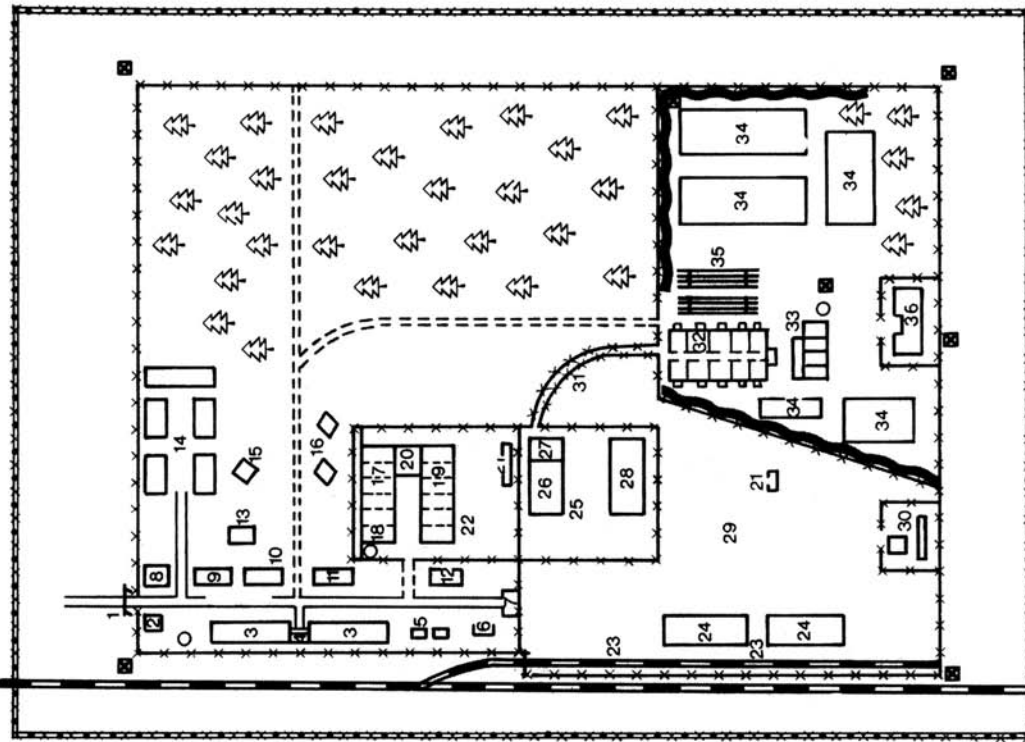




traces of its existence were covered up. The land was ploughed under and an agricultural farm was built on top of this place where at least 870,000 Jewish victims were buried.

During the 1960's a stone monument was built on the site. On the stones next to the monument are written the words "Never Again" in many languages. The stone monuments honour the Jewish communities that were murdered at Treblinka and there is also an "individual" stone to honour the doctor, writer, educator, and humanitarian, Janusz Korczak (Henryk Goldszmit), who was murdered in Treblinka in August 1942 along with the children of the orphanage he ran.

## Plan of the Treblinka Extermination Camp (Spring 1943)



### Administration and Staff Living Area

1. Entrance to the camp and Seidel street
2. Guard's room near the entrance
3. SS living quarters
4. Arms storeroom
5. Gasoline pump and storeroom
6. Garage
7. Entrance gate to Station square
8. Camp command and Stangl's living quarters
9. Services for SS – barber, sick bay, dentist
10. Living quarters of Domestic Staff (Polish and Ukrainian girls)
11. Bakery
12. Food-store and supply storeroom
13. The barrack in which "Gold Jews" worked
14. Ukrainian living quarters and latrines – "Max Bialas barracks"
15. Zoo
16. Stables, chicken coop, pig pen
17. Living quarters for Kapos, women, tailor shop, shoe-repairs, carpentry shop, sickroom
18. Prisoners' kitchen
19. Living quarters for men prisoners, prisoners' laundry and tool room
20. Locksmith and smithy
21. Latrine
22. Roll-call square








### Reception Area

23. Station platform (ramp) and square
24. Storeroom for belongings taken from victims – disguised as a station
25. Deportation square
26. Barrack in which the women undressed and relinquished their valuables
27. Room in which women's hair was cut
28. Barrack in which men undressed, also used as a storeroom
29. Reception square
30. "Lazaret" – execution square
31. "The Tube" – the approach to the gas chambers

### Extermination Area

32. New gas chambers (10 chambers)
33. Old gas chambers (3 chambers)
34. Burial pits
35. "The Roasts" for burning bodies
36. Prisoners' living quarters, kitchen and latrines

### Key:

- Main road ———
- Minor road - - - - -
- Woods 
- Well 
- Watchtower 
- Barbed wire 
- Anti-tank obstacles 
- Railway 
- Earth wall 



## Lublin

### Lublin and the Jews

Lublin is one of the oldest cities in Poland and is located in eastern Poland. Lublin was the centre of industry, transport, learning, and culture. There were two universities, a medical school, many schools of higher learning, a school of technology, and a school of the arts. It was the capital of the Lublin district and served as the administrative and economic centre for a wide area. Jews have lived in Lublin from the 14th century. In the 16th and 17th centuries Lublin was transformed into a centre for the study of the Torah, the most important centre in Poland. The city was called the “Jerusalem of Poland” and its intellectuals were known as the “wise men of Lublin”.

### The Most Prominent Rabbis Were:

Rabbi Shalom Shachna – Shachna received a permit from King Zigmunt the First to live within the walls of the city and manage his business affairs. He was the Rabbi of Lublin in 1520. In his yeshiva, the future great rabbis studied. These included Rabbi Moshe Isserles known as Ha’Rema from Kracow.

Rabbi Yitzhak Horowitz, “The Prophet of Lublin”, was one of the central Hassidic visionaries and his great opponent, Rabbi Azriel Horowicz, was called “The Iron Head”.

“The Yeshiva of the Sages of Lublin” was built in this city in the 20th century. The yeshiva opened the way for changes in the world of yeshivot, through the intensity of study, number of hours the students studied, as well as changes in yeshiva living. The founder of the yeshiva, Rabbi Meir Shapira, was the originator of a concept that exists to this day, of studying “The Daily Page”. Every day a page of the Gemorah was studied by Jews all over the world. This allowed for both a disciplined process of study and a performance of the mitzvah of Torah study. Rabbi Meir Shapira was the last rabbi of the Jewish community in Lublin.

On the eve of World War II, 122,000 people lived in Lublin. Approximately one third of this population, or 40,000 individuals were Jewish.

## The Era of the Holocaust

The first step according to the German's plan was the occupation of the Jewish centre of Lublin. The Germans immediately began persecuting the Jews by sending them to work camps, physically attacking them, and confiscating Jewish property and possessions. In November 1939 the Jews were evicted from their homes on the city's main street. In the same month they were forced to sew the Jewish Badge onto their clothing and were restricted to certain parts of the city. At the end of March 1941 the ghetto was established and more than 34,000 Jews were concentrated there. It was forbidden to go outside of the ghetto without a special permit. In the summer of 1941 there was an outbreak of Typhus in the ghetto and all efforts to contain the disease failed due to the conditions in the ghetto including: hunger, malnutrition, overcrowding, and a lack of medications. The Jews of Lublin were amongst the first victims in the area of the General Government to be killed in the gas chambers of Belzec.

The deportation to the Belzec Extermination Camp began on the 17<sup>th</sup> of March 1942. The Germans deported up to 1,400 Jews a day. On the 20<sup>th</sup> of April the deportations stopped after around 30,000 Jews had been deported. Most of the Jews were murdered in Belzec whilst a few were murdered in the forests surrounding the town. The surviving members of the community numbered around 4,000 and they were concentrated in the neighbourhood of the Small Ghetto where the conditions were inhumane.

On the 2nd of September 1942 an Aktion began in the Small Ghetto and after the selection approximately 2,000 Jews were sent to Majdanek Concentration Camp. Another Aktion saw the deportation of 1,800 Jews to Majdanek. In July 1944, a short time after the Germans had withdrawn from the city the last Jews who had worked for the Third Reich were murdered. Until the liberation of Warsaw and the General Government in January 1945 Lublin was the temporary capital of Poland, and the site of institutions created specifically for the welfare of the survivors.





## Majdanek

The Majdanek Camp was established in October 1941 and was located in a suburb of Lublin in eastern Poland. The camp existed until 1944 and during the course of its existence the purpose and aims of the camp changed. Originally the camp housed Russian prisoners and only later did it become a concentration camp. In addition the camp was also used as a forced labour, transit, and extermination camp. During the years 1940 and 1941 the Poles withdrew from the area, the Germans occupied it and there was an influx of Jews for forced labour from the area of the Reich.

The camp was surrounded by a double barbed-wire electric fence with 18 watchtowers. The camp consisted of five different areas – “fields”, with 227 barracks, some of which were used for living purposes, others for administrative and labour purposes.

Around 500,000 people entered Majdanek. Approximately half of the camp prisoners were killed due to the harsh living conditions, lack of a sewage system, hunger, cold, diseases, and the cruelty of the Germans. Hundreds of thousands of Jews were murdered in gas chambers after going through a selection in the square. Living conditions in the camp were extremely hard especially during the building of the camp. The prisoners were forced to build the camp without even the most minimal necessities. The striped prisoner uniform was paper thin and did not protect the inmate from the cold and damp conditions. In order to try to protect themselves, the inmates used the paper from cement bags. However if they were caught, this offense was punishable by 25 lashes. The barracks were wide open and intended to house 250 people, but there were times when there were almost 500 people in a barrack. Inmates of the camp rose daily between 5-6 in the morning, submitted to a barrack inspection, organised into a morning work detail, and set out for forced labour. The work continued all day with only a short break for a lunchtime meal, which contained very few calories. The life of a prisoner in Majdanek hung by a hairsbreadth and much luck was needed in order to survive the harsh days in the camp.

On the 3<sup>rd</sup> of November 1943 18,000 Jews were killed in an aktion that was part of an operation called “Erntefest” (Majdanek visitors can stand next to the largest of these graves). The Germans abandoned the camp when the Red

Army was approaching, and during their flight they destroyed documents and set fire to many buildings including the large crematorium. The Red Army liberated Majdanek in July 1944.

Over the years the site of the camp has been changed into a state museum and additional memorials have been added such as a statue at the entrance and a memorial containing the ashes of victims of the camp.

At this memorial the visitor ends his tour of the site. Here the words “Let our fate be a warning to you”, serves as a reminder that at Majdanek terrible violence was committed by men against their fellow man.





## Last Will and Testament

My beloved child, my poor child Pierre,

I am going to die tomorrow. Be comforted by the idea that your father is going to die solely because he is a Jew.

I am going to die on the first day of Hanukkah; it is strange.

Forgive me that not everything with us and between us was as it should have been. Now there is no one close to you left alive.

I am giving you, through ---, my gold watch and 500 francs.

My bag, containing various manuscripts, is still in apartment P, and in hotel M there is a suitcase with a package of books. Try to hand the manuscripts over for editing. I have lived my whole life for the sake of Russian literature.

It was the most precious thing to me. Don't forget your poor mother, don't believe anyone who tells you negative things about your mother and me.

God alone can serve as a judge.

Be brave, be honest, be Jewish. Love of our Jewishness is always just.

God will be with you as long as you are with him.

I am going to die tomorrow morning. There is still much left for me to do. I have sinned much but always atoned for my sins. True and honest atonement was my only power. My last thoughts are of God, my work, and you, my dear child, my poor son.

Do not forget your father. It is such a shame that I cannot see you, even one more time. But I will always be with you. Send my best regards to R. The memory of him and of mother will be with me until the end.

Pierre, little Pierre, why does everything end this way?

I am lost for words. Am I scared? Hardly. Perhaps just afraid of the pain. But to live... to live... I would have liked to live for much longer.

May God save us, and my people, my poor people.

I kiss you, my poor child, stay loyal to me (I hope), and may all the things that have happened to me serve to guide you. Pray for me and fight like a Jew.

I close, and return to God.

I kiss you, Pierre, Pierre, my Pierre,  
Your father

The letter is taken from the book *"These are My Last Words..." Last Letters from the Holocaust*, Yad Vashem, Jerusalem, 2003, p. 199

## Krakow

Krakow, the third largest city, is the historic capital of Poland and for hundreds of years has represented an important centre in culture and art. In Krakow there are many historic buildings, the most central of which is the Wavel Palace where the graves of the kings of Poland and other important figures are buried. The first university in Poland, the University of Jugiellonian, was established in Krakow in 1364. Krakow was not destroyed during World War II. After the war new industrial suburbs grew up around the city. Around 800,000 people reside in Krakow today.


### Krakow and the Jews

Krakow was the historic capital of Poland from the 10<sup>th</sup> to the 16<sup>th</sup> century, and there were Jews in Krakow from the beginning until World War II. The first testimonies of Jewish life in Poland exist from the end of the 10th century. From 1304 a Jewish neighbourhood existed within the city, and one of the city's gates was called "The Jews Gate". The Jewish community of Krakow enjoyed a letter of expanded rights that were given to the community in the 14th century by Casmir the Great. During the period of the "Golden Age" of Poland Krakow was the centre of spirituality. The most renowned of the scholars of the era was Rabbi Moshe Isserles. In the 16th century the capital of Poland was moved from Krakow to Warsaw. This caused a loss of stature for the city in general and the Jews in particular.

During the division of Poland, Krakow became the capital of western Galicia under the rule of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. This period improved the situation of Jewish Krakow and these Jews won rights that their brothers in the capital of Warsaw did not have under Russian rule. At the same time voices calling for the Independence of Poland were heard in Krakow. One of the figures in this fight was Barak Yoslovic a soldier in the Kosciuskzko Army, another was Rabbi Meisels, the first Rabbi of Krakow and later a member of the Polish Sejm.

During the era of Independent Poland there was a population of 300,000 in Krakow. 56,000 of them were Jews. Between the two world wars the Jewish community was composed of both Hasidic courts and enlightened secular Jews. In Krakow there existed a progressive synagogue called "The Temple", which was not far from the "Stibilim" (prayer houses) of the Hasidim. The Zionists who were active in the field of politics through the youth movements,





cultural nights, and other means represented a third faction. Western culture was reintroduced shortly after the period of Austro-Hungarian rule and from that time the fight for the right of emancipation and equal rights became part of the Jewish community's agenda.

### **The Era of the Holocaust**

During the Nazi occupation Krakow became the capital of the General Government and Wavel Palace became the headquarters of Hans Frank the General Governor. The Krakow Ghetto was established on the 21<sup>st</sup> of March 1941, in the quarter of the city called Podgorze, which was far away from centre of the city and Wavel Palace. At the time the ghetto was closed there were up to 18,000 Jews concentrated there. This was after 40,000 Jews had been expelled from Krakow. This population of 18,000 lived in 300 houses, in very stressful conditions, People had to live in storage spaces, attics, rooms under staircases and in basements. In July 1941 the death rate in the Krakow Ghetto was thirteen times greater than it had been on the eve of World War II. A period of intense cruelty by the Germans began on 14<sup>th</sup> of March 1943. Some Jews were murdered on the spot, some were deported to the extermination camps of Belzec and Auschwitz-Birkenau, and the remainder were sent to work or to the Plaszow Camp, which had been built in a suburb of Krakow on land belonging to Jewish cemeteries.

During the German occupation, a Jewish fighting underground had been organised. On the 22<sup>nd</sup> of December 1942 the members of the underground, all of them members of youth movements, revolted and killed German soldiers and officers who were at the café "The Signora". During this action they killed eleven Germans and injured others. Most of the fighters were caught, tortured, and killed.

Krakow was liberated on the 19<sup>th</sup> January 1945 with the city itself being relatively unscathed. A organization was formed to bring groups of Jewish survivors back to the city. The first group that arrived was a group of seventeen children from Auschwitz who were housed in an orphanage.

The neighbourhood of Kazimierz, the symbol of the wealthy and prominent Jews who had lived in Krakow for hundreds of years, remains to this day.

Today the Jewish community is very small and prayers are recited in the synagogue of the Rabbi Moshe Isserles.

## Judaica



A Hanukkah Menorah



Spice Box (besamim) and holder for a Havdalah candle



A jug (laver) for the ritual washing of the hands in Jewish tradition



Scroll of Esther, which is read on the festival of Purim



A pointer – an accessory used for reading the Torah



A Kiddush and Havdalah wine goblet, which is used on the Sabbath and festivals





A Torah Crown – placed over the Torah scroll to adorn it



Sabbath Candlesticks



A Silver breastplate draped over the Torah scroll for adornment



A Torah curtain – a cover for the Holy Ark, where the Torah is kept in the Synagogue



A Torah Scroll.



A Mezuzah – Mezuzot are fixed on doorposts of Jewish homes



A box for the Citron (etrog), which is used on the festival of Succot

## Plaszow

Plaszow was a forced labour camp and later a concentration camp.

The camp was established in the autumn of 1942 in a suburb of Krakow, and the official name of the camp was “The Forced Labour Camp of the Police Inspector and the SS in the Area of Krakow”.

The building of the camp began in the summer of 1942 on land that had belonged to Jewish cemeteries, the Jewish community and Poles who had been evicted from their homes. The camp was expanded systematically, and was surrounded by a double barbed wire electric fence about four kilometres long.

On the 14th of March 1943, the Krakow Ghetto was liquidated, with many of the Jews being deported to the Belzec Extermination Camp where they were killed. Around 2,000 Jews were killed in the streets of the city and around 8,000 were deported to Plaszow. At the beginning of July 1943 a separate camp was established for Polish prisoners. These prisoners were political prisoners, criminals, gypsies, and Jewish children.

There were over 50 barracks in the camp and there were workshops including a locksmith’s workshop, an upholstery workshop, an electrician’s workshop, and others. As in other camps, Jewish possessions were collected, sorted, and sent to Germany. The camp commandant was Amon Goeth, the main perpetrator responsible for the brutal crimes committed against the prisoners, including torture, mass murder, selections, murder “through work”, and his personal participation in the murders.

Around 8,000 Jews were murdered in Plaszow.

In the early summer of 1944, with the Red Army approaching, the camp was disbanded and prisoners were sent to other camps. At the end of May 1944 2,000 Jews were sent from Plaszow to Auschwitz where they were killed in the gas chambers. In September 1944 the Germans dug up two of the biggest mass graves and burned the bodies in an attempt to cover up all the evidence of murder. The burning of the bodies lasted six weeks.

On the 14<sup>th</sup> of January 1945 the last remaining prisoners were marched from Plaszow to Auschwitz.

Today, on the site where the camp once stood, there is a statue commemorating the camp and the fate of its prisoners. Two additional statues were erected to acknowledge the Jewish Identity of the victims.





## Auschwitz

Auschwitz was the biggest concentration and extermination camp created by the Nazis. The camp was established 60 kilometres west of Krakow, bordering the Polish town of Oswiecim, in western Galicia in Poland. The weather in this area was particularly bad, causing the prisoners to struggle daily with the heat, cold, and the muddy ground. Auschwitz was part of a system of camps; the first was Auschwitz I, which was a concentration camp that was referred to as “the mother camp”. Based there was the commandant who was responsible for this complex of camps, which included Auschwitz II - the Auschwitz-Birkenau Extermination Camp.

Surrounding the camp was an area of 40 kilometres that was called an “empty area”. It was also “under the jurisdiction of the camp”. These camps became the most notable symbol of the Holocaust. Just by speaking the name, images of industrial murder and the Nazi terror of World War II come to mind.

The Auschwitz camps were operational until January 1945. Between the 17th and the 21<sup>st</sup> of January 56,000 prisoners were taken from the camps on “Death Marches”. The SS guarded the death marches and many died as a result of exhaustion, hunger, and beatings.

### Auschwitz I

On the 14<sup>th</sup> of June 1940, 728 Polish prisoners arrived at Auschwitz from the town of Tarnow. In the camp there were sixteen buildings that had previously been used as a Polish army base before it came under German control. Most of the administrative staff were experienced SS who had been transferred to Auschwitz. The commandant of the camp was Rudolf Hess. The camp grew continuously and its population included intellectuals, churchmen, political prisoners, and others. The residents of Oswiecim were evacuated, including both the Jews and some of the local Polish population. In March 1941, there were 10,900 prisoners most of them Polish.

Auschwitz I was originally a concentration camp not an extermination camp. Despite that hundreds of thousands victims died because of the terrible living conditions including malnutrition, forced labour, violence, torture, medical experimentation, and gassings.

Today Auschwitz I is used as a state museum commemorating the suffering of the Polish people and the Jewish People. The buildings serve as exhibition sites displaying both the history of the camp and the conditions of the prisoners.

## Auschwitz II Birkenau

The extermination camp Auschwitz-Birkenau became operational in October 1941 and continued until January 1945. The camp was designed for the comprehensive implementation of the extermination of European Jewry - "The Final Solution of the Jewish Question". The number of Jews who were murdered at Birkenau stands at one million two hundred thousand.

This camp was the largest and the most active of all the killing centres. The technical and industrial organisation of the camp was improved upon by the Germans to the extent that systematic murder reached unparalleled proportions.

The history of the extermination camp Auschwitz-Birkenau is one of exploitation and murder. During a visit to Birkenau one can learn about systematic murder, gas chambers, and crematoria. One can also learn about the life of the prisoners in the camp through testimonies, photographs, and others artefacts and documents.

Most of the victims were Jews from all over occupied Europe and upon arrival at Birkenau most were murdered immediately. Only a small minority was chosen for forced labour, where most did not survive for longer than a few months.

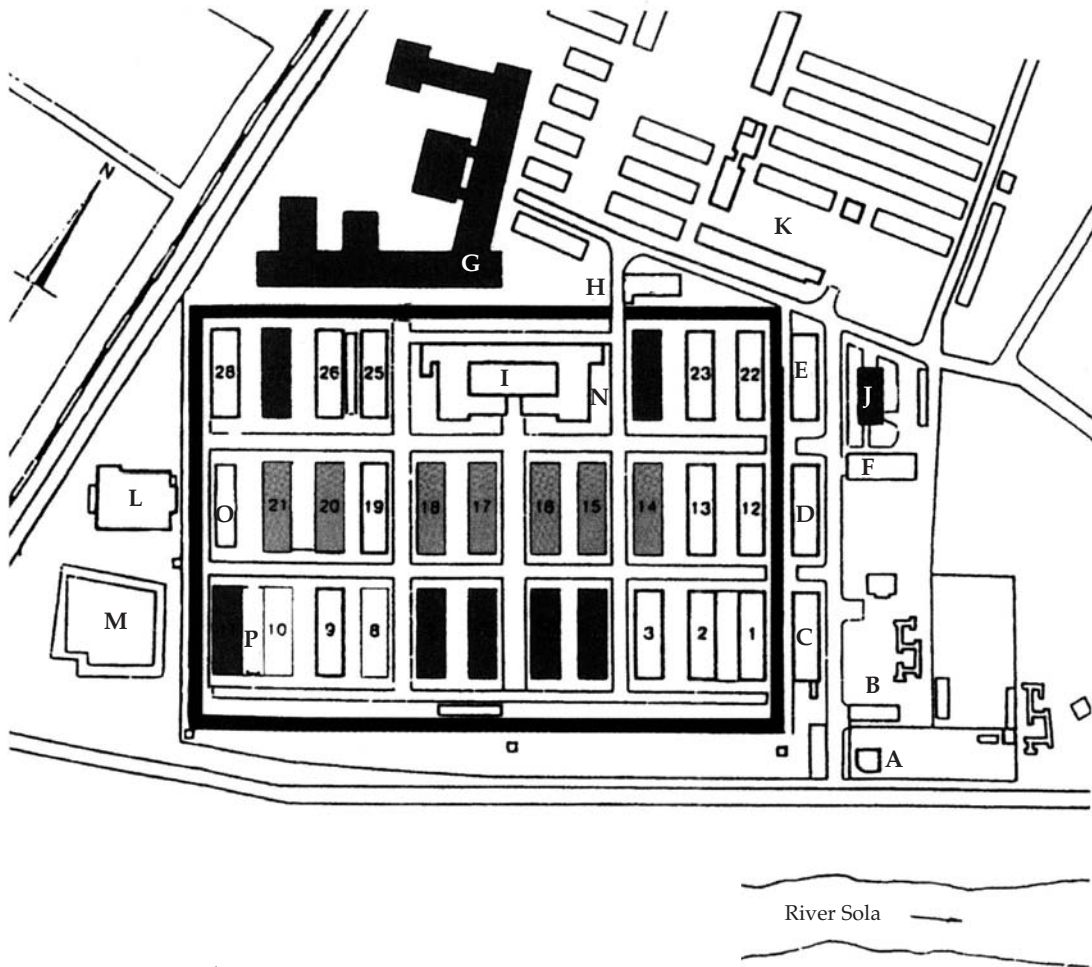
In Birkenau life and death went hand in hand. Day and night the prisoners faced the constant threat in the smoke of the crematoria. In addition there was the threat of selection and those who did not have the strength to stand were taken to the gas chambers and murdered. The Jewish prisoners in Auschwitz witnessed the day to day workings of the crematoria. The desire to survive lived in the dark shadow of death.

The Birkenau Extermination Camp was abandoned and the Germans fled before the Red Army arrived. The camp sustained minimal damage and was left mostly intact, even though the crematoria and the gas chambers had been destroyed. Today the site of Auschwitz I, the concentration camp, also remains. About three kilometres separates the two camps.

Over the years many people have tried, through books and art, to describe the great destruction of humanity that Auschwitz-Birkenau symbolises. The writer and survivor of the camp Katzetnik describes Birkenau as "Another Planet", and the Jewish philosopher Adorno says that there is no place for poetry after Auschwitz. Questions of humanity, compassion, modesty and beauty accompany a visit to Auschwitz. And still the most pressing question remains unanswered: "Where was mankind?"

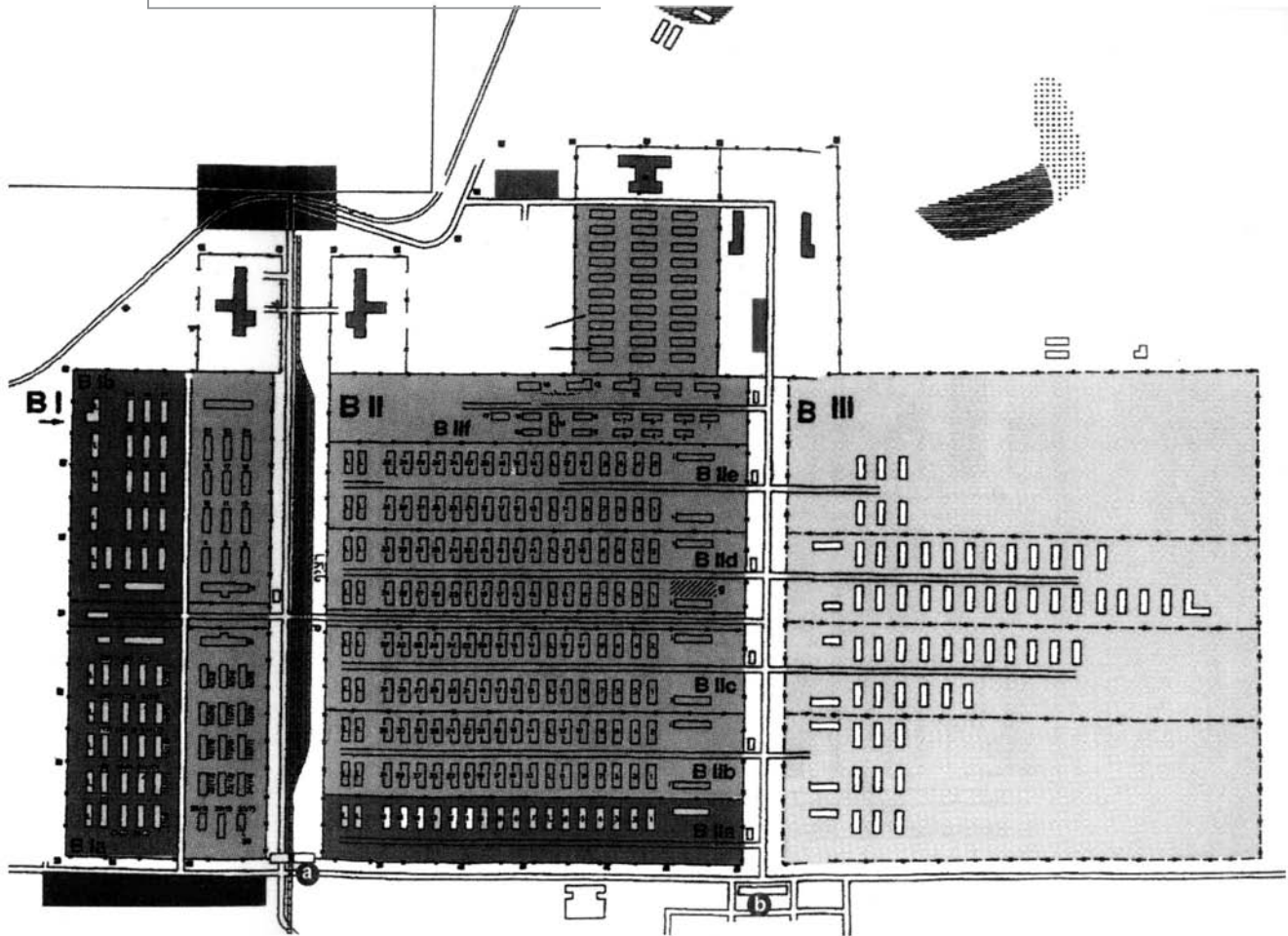


## Map of Auschwitz



- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A. House of the camp commandant</li> <li>B. Main guardhouse</li> <li>C. Offices of the camp commandant</li> <li>D. Offices of the camp administration</li> <li>E. Hospital for the SS</li> <li>F. Offices of the Political Section (Gestapo)</li> <li>G. Registration of new prisoners</li> <li>H. Entrance gate with inscription Arbeit Macht Frei ('Work makes you free')</li> <li>I. Kitchen</li> <li>J. Gas Chamber and Crematorium I</li> <li>K. Stores, stables, garages and workshops</li> <li>L. Warehouse for belongings taken from deportees and for canisters of the Zyklon B used for mass gassings</li> <li>M. Gravel pit (site of executions)</li> <li>N. Place where the camp orchestra played</li> <li>O. Laundry</li> <li>P. SS guardroom</li> <li>Q. Wall where prisoners were executed by shooting</li> <li>1-28. Blocks housing prisoners</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4. Block with a display showing destruction</li> <li>5. Block with evidence of destruction</li> <li>6,7. Blocks showing the lives of prisoners and their living and sanitary conditions</li> <li>10. Medical experiment block (closed to the visitor)</li> <li>11. Death Block</li> <li>27. Jewish Booth</li> </ul> |
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- 
- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 10px; background-color: black; margin-right: 5px;"></span> Blocks open to the public at large and displays various exhibits</li> <li><span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 10px; border: 2px solid black; margin-right: 5px;"></span> The camp fence</li> <li><span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 10px; background-color: grey; margin-right: 5px;"></span> Blocks dedicated to displays from various countries</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>14. The Soviet Union</li> <li>15. Poland</li> <li>16. Czechoslovakia</li> <li>17. Yugoslavia, Austria</li> <li>18. Hungary</li> <li>20. France, Belgium</li> <li>21. Italy, The Netherlands</li> </ul> |
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## Map of Auschwitz II – Birkenau



- a. Main entrance to the camp through the main watchtower
- b. Camp commandant and SS living quarters
- c. Canada II (Effektenlager)
- d. Railway platform (Ramp) – The place where “selections” were made from May 1944
- f. Mass graves of Soviet prisoners of war
- g. Execution site within the camp BIIId
- h. Disinfection hut within the camp BIIb/BIIa
- I. Kitchen hut
- L. Latrines and washrooms
- 30. Experimental block of Dr. Schumann within the camp BIIe
- BIIa Between March until August 1942 – Camp for Soviet prisoners of war and male prisoners; Between August 1942 until January 1945 – Camp for female prisoners
- BIIb Between August 14 until July 1943 – Camp for male prisoners; Between July 1943 until January 1945 – Camp for female prisoners
- BIIa From August 1943 – Men’s quarantine camp
- BIIb Between September 1943 until 11-12 July 1944 – “Family Camp” of Jews from Theresienstadt

- BIIc From June 1944 – Camp for Jewish prisoners, mainly Jewish women from Hungary
- BIIId From July 1943 – Camp for male prisoners
- BIIe Between February 1943 until 2 August 1944 – “Gypsy Camp”
- BIIIf Between July 1943 until January 1945 – Hospital for male prisoners
- BIII Between June 1944 until 6 October 1944 – Under construction, to be used as a camp for Jewish prisoners, mainly Jewish women from Hungary. Camp language called this section “Mexico” – the building was never completed

- Remains of the camp
- Remains of the original buildings
- Area of the camp that no longer exists
- Buildings that were added for the memorial site



## Time Line

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### 1933

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- January 30      **Adolf Hitler's Appointment as Chancellor of Germany**
- March 24      First concentration camp is built at Dachau for German political prisoners
- April 1         A one-day boycott against Jewish businesses in Germany

### 1934

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Signing of the non-aggression pact between Germany and Poland

### 1935

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- September 15    **Publication of the Nuremberg Laws**
- Divestiture of citizenship from Jews of Germany and prohibition against marital relations with Jews

### 1936

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- August 1        The Berlin Olympics

### 1938

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- February 10     **The "Anschluss"** – the annexation of Austria to the German Reich
- October 5        Marking Jews' passports with the letter 'J'
- October 6        The Munich Agreement, which gave the Sudetenland (part of Czechoslovakia) to the Germans
- Annexation of parts of Czechoslovakia by Poland
- November 9 -10 **"Kristallnacht"** – **"The Night of the Broken Glass"**, which was followed by the arrival of masses of refugees into Poland

## 1939

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- March 15 Occupation of all of Czech territories by Germany  
Presentation of an ultimatum to the Polish Government regarding changing the Versailles treaty and transferring territories from Poland to Germany  
August 23 Germany and Russia sign a pact that divides Poland between them. The agreement is known as the Ribbentrop-Molotov Agreement
- September 1 **Outbreak of World War II – Germany invades Poland**
- September 3 Britain and France declare war on Germany
- September 21 Heydrich’s Schnellbrief – Directive concentrating Jews in the General Government area of Poland to ghettos and the formation of Jewish councils
- October 8 Establishment of the first ghetto in Piotrkov Tribunalski
- November 23 Publication of a decree requiring all Jews in the General Government to wear a Jewish badge
- November Banishment of members of Jaglom University in Krakow to concentration camps in Germany

## 1940

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- April 27 Establishment of the Auschwitz Concentration Camp, which was initially intended for Polish political prisoners
- April 30 Establishment of the Lodz Ghetto
- May 10 Germany invades Belgium, Holland, and Luxembourg
- June 10 Italy joins the war on the side of Germany
- June 22 France surrenders to Germany  
The Germans execute people from the political, religious, and social leadership of Poland
- November 15 Establishment of the Warsaw Ghetto  
Polish resistance movements begin to form





## 1941

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- March 20 Establishment of the Krakow Ghetto
- June 22 **German invasion of the Soviet Union – Operation Barbarossa**
- June 23 Beginning of the mass murder of Jews by the Einsatzgruppen – Mobile Killing Squads
- The establishment of a Polish army in the Soviet Union – the Anders' Army
- September 3 First trial of Zyklon B` gas to kill Russian prisoners in Auschwitz
- September 29-30 The murder of 33,771 Jews of Kiev in Babi Yar
- December 7 Pearl Harbor – the outbreak of the war between Japan and the USA
- December 8 The first deportation of the Jews of Lodz to the Chelmno Extermination Camp where they were murdered in gas trucks

## 1942

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- January 20 **The Wannsee Conference -**
- Coordination of the different German ministries to carry out the “Final Solution”
- February 8 First deportation of Jews from Saloniki, Greece to Auschwitz, forced labor and death
- June 4 Murder of Reinhard Heydrich by the Czech Resistance
- September 12-22 Mass deportation from the Warsaw Ghetto – 300,000 Jews were deported and murdered in Treblinka Extermination Camp
- July 28 The establishment of the Jewish Military Organization (ZOB) in the Warsaw Ghetto
- The publication of Zofia Kossak’s proclamation calling on the Poles to protest German actions against the Jews. The proclamation started a debate on Polish responsibility for the murder of the Jews

- November –December The Battle of Stalingrad – the Russians succeed in warding off the German attack
- December 4 The establishment of the Polish Council to Aid Jews, “Zegota”, in Poland

**1943**

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- February 26 First deportation of Gypsies to Auschwitz, where they were murdered
- April 19 **The Outbreak of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising and subsequent liquidation of the ghetto**
- April 16 The Germans reveal and publicize mass graves of Polish officers, murdered by the Russians at Katyn
- August 2 Uprising of Jewish prisoners in Treblinka
- August 16 - 20 Bialystok Ghetto Uprising during liquidation of the ghetto
- October 1 - 2 Campaign to save most of Denmark’s Jews, with the aid and under the patronage of King Christian X of Denmark
- October 14 Uprising of Jewish prisoners in Sobibor. Most were killed during the escape and only 50 prisoners survived. Following this uprising the camp was liquidated
- November 3 “Harvest Festival” – murder of 42,000 Jews in the camps of Travniki, Poniatowa, and Majdanek

**1944**

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- March 19 **Germany invades Hungary**
- May 15 – July 9 Deportation of 437,000 Jews of Hungary to Auschwitz-Birkenau where the majority were murdered
- July General Sikorski, Prime Minister of Poland-in-Exile, dies under mysterious circumstances
- June 4 The liberation of Rome by the Allies
- June 6 D-Day, the Allied landing in Normandy
- July 20 Unsuccessful attempt by German officers to assassinate Hitler





- July 24 Liberation of the city of Lublin and the Majdanek camp
- September Polish Uprising in Warsaw. About 200,000 Poles were killed and the city of Warsaw was destroyed
- October 7 Sonderkommando Uprising in Auschwitz. The rebels blew up one of the gas chambers. All the rebels were killed

### **1945**

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- January 18 **“Death March” from Auschwitz**  
58,000 prisoners are sent west towards Germany, 15,000 die on the way
- January 19 Liberation of the cities of Lodz and Krakow by the Red Army
- January 27 **Liberation of Auschwitz-Birkenau** – 7,650 prisoners were found in the camp
- April 23 The Red Army reaches Berlin
- April 30 Hitler commits suicide
- August Atom bombs dropped on Japanese cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki by the USA

## A Glossary

### The Jewish World in Poland

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#### **Agudat Israel**

A party that was active amongst the Jews of Poland and was represented in the Sejm (the Polish parliament). Agudat Israel was part of a world-wide organization of Haredi Jews whose origin was in the orthodox community of Germany. The central idea of Agudat Israel is: "the sovereignty of the Jewish people is God, the Torah is the ruling law, and the Holy Land has always been the destined land of the Jewish people, therefore it is the Torah that determines every action of Agudat Israel".

Today Agudat Israel is active in Israel and is represented in the Knesset.

#### **Beit Ya'acov**

A network of schools for ultra-Orthodox girls in Poland, founded by Mrs. Sarah Schenirer. Lessons included Jewish studies, the precepts to be followed by women, and practical subjects. The Beit Ya'acov schools were in response to orthodox parents fears of the temptation of Zionism and other ideologies and the attraction of knowledge and education. Beit Ya'acov schools still exist and are found in countries around the world.

#### **Blood Libel**

One of the false accusations that Christians leveled against the Jews. The accusation was that Jews kidnapped Christian children and used their blood to bake the unleavened matzo (bread) for Passover. The blood libels frequently served as an excuse for pogroms against the Jews.


#### **Bund**

A Jewish socialist party. This party sought to create social, political, and cultural autonomy for Jewish society in Poland. The party gathered strength during the 1930's and was a prominent rival of the Zionist movement.

#### **Charter ("Privilegia")**

The charter was a document that gave dwelling and protection rights to Jewish





residents in Poland. The first charter was signed in 1264 by Prince Bolislav of Kalish, and later the charter of Casmir the Great was signed and extended.

### **Council of Four Lands**

Umbrella organization of the Jewish communities in the kingdom of Poland, operating during the 16th -18th centuries. The organization was founded in order to collect taxes from the Jewish residents. The council became the central leadership of Polish Jewry, unifying the Jewish communities in Poland. The Council of Four Lands was a symbol of the peak of Jewish political and economic autonomy in Poland.

### **The Daily Page (Daf Yomi)**

The life's work of Rabbi Meir Shapira, head of the "Yeshivat Chachmei Lublin" (The Wise Men of Lublin Yeshiva). One page of Gemara (Talmud) is dedicated to each day, and is studied throughout the world. Every seven years a complete cycle of Talmud study is completed. This project reflects two central ideas. One, the unity of Israel - the entire Jewish world studies the same page on the same day; and the second - to resolve the difficulties of the layman in studying the whole Talmud.

### **Hasidism**

A social religious movement founded by the Baal Shem-Tov. Among the principles of Hasidism: intention, devotion and happiness in prayer and performing God's commandments. Hasidism gives a central role to the "Tsadik" who gathers around him a group of Hasidic followers (a "court"). The movement spread throughout Eastern Europe from the 18th century, and has become a prominent and influential trend in Judaism to this day. However, a split developed among Polish Jews between the Hasidim and the Mitnagdim, and this split also persists in the ultra-Orthodox circles today.

### **The Hasidic Courtyard in Gur**

In 1859 Rabbi Yitzhak Meir Rotenberg Alter founded a Hasidic court in the town of Gur, some 30 km southeast of Warsaw. Gur Hasidism was renowned for combining the outlook of Rabbi Menachem Mendel of Kotzk with the central trends of Hasidism. Over time it became one of the largest of the

Hasidic courts in Poland, and was among the initiators and proponents of the “Agudat Israel” party. This Hasidic court moved its residence to Israel on the eve of the outbreak of World War II.

### **Kehila (Community)**

A social structure characteristic of a religious and cultural minority living amongst a different majority. From medieval times until the modern age, Jews lived in communities, which supplied all their basic needs from birth to death such as: the synagogue, cemetery, Mikve (ritual bath), slaughterer, rabbi, educational institutes, and others. Today there are many Jewish communities all around the world that serve their populace.

### **Mitnagdim**

This religious movement defined itself in contrast to the Hasidim. The Mitnagdim centered their world around profound study of the Torah. This movement was led by the Gaon Rabbi Eliyahu, one of the most important rabbis in Lithuania in the 18th century. Consequently, Vilna became the center of the Mitnagdim movement.

### **The Pogroms of 1648-49**

Pogroms committed by Ukrainian farmers under the leadership of Bogdan Chmielnitzki in the years 1648-1649. Tens of thousands of Jews were killed during these pogroms and their homes were destroyed and their property stolen. These pogroms changed the composition of the Jewish population. The pogroms of 1648-49 were carved into Jewish history as the physical and cultural destruction of the Jewish community in Poland.

### **Rabbi Elimelech of Lijansk (1717-1787)**

One of the leaders of Hasidism in Poland, a third generation descendant of the Baal Shem-Tov. The belief amongst the Hasidim that the Tsadik had the power to connect and mediate between man and God was attributed to Rabbi Elimelech. Amongst his students was the Seer of Lublin.





### **Rabbi Menachem Mendel of Kotzk (1787-1859)**

Jews had already settled in Kotzk at the end of the 17th century, but the town became famous as an important Hasidic center in Poland when Rabbi Menachem Mendel Morgenstern, called the Kotzker Rabbi, came in 1829 with his students from Tomashov Lubelski to Kotzk, a town in the area of Lublin in eastern Poland, where he established his court. The Rabbi did not speak often, nor did he spend much time with others. However from the little he spoke, important Halachic precepts were created.

### **Rabbi Shalom Shachna (born?-1558)**

The Chief Rabbi of Lublin. Rabbi Shachna founded a yeshiva in the city, in which the great Torah scholars of Poland studied, among them HaRama (Rabbi Moshe Isserles). Rabbi Shachna developed a method of teaching the Talmud and the Mishnah, which was called the "pilpul" (fierce debate) method.

### **HaRama (1525-1572)**

Rabbi Moshe Isserles, Chief Rabbi of Krakow and head of a yeshiva. Among the greatest interpreters of Halacha in Poland. His most famous book is "HaMapa" – which is a guide to the Shulchan Aruch, the Code of Jewish Law. HaMapa continues to be a central text on Halacha to this day. HaRama was also renowned for his method of interpretation, which aimed to connect Halacha with everyday life.

### **The "Seer of Lublin", Rabbi Ya'acov Yitzhak Horovitz (1745-1815)**

Among the leaders of the Hasidim in Poland, he was called the "seer" as it was said that he could see on a person's forehead the roots of his soul, his former incarnations, and his sins. The Seer of Lublin was regarded as the founder of popular Hasidism in Poland, opening up the court of the Tsadik (the righteous leader) to every Jew.

### **Shtetl**

Shtetl in Yiddish is a small town. The Jews of Eastern Europe lived for centuries in towns. Jews often constituted half of the town's residents and were sometimes even the majority. A "kahal" was usually elected in these communities, headed

by a rabbi, which had considerable authority over the community and created an entire framework, starting from birth and ending with Jewish burial. The frameworks of life in the shtetl were autonomous and allowed Jews to shape their own lives. This way of life began to be undermined in the 19th century, with the migration to larger cities, and as a result of the appearance of nationalism and secularization. During the Holocaust all these towns were destroyed, along with their residents, lifestyle, and culture.

### **Yiddish**

Yiddish is the language of Eastern European Jewry. It is mainly a combination of German and Hebrew. Yiddish was created in Germany by the Ashkenazi Jews who were influenced on the one hand by the German language spoken around them and the desire to create a language different and distinct from that of the Germans on the other. Along with the different migrations to Italy, France, and later Poland, Yiddish also “migrated”, and for a while served as a link between the Jews living in these countries. From the 18th century, Yiddish disappeared in Western Europe but remained the language of Eastern European Jews until World War II.


### **Death Marches**

A term for the transportation of convoys of concentration camp prisoners whilst under heavy guard, over long distances, in inhuman conditions and on foot. During the death marches the accompanying guards abused the prisoners and killed them. Even though death marches were quite common throughout the war, the main death marches took place from the evacuation of the concentration camps to the end of the war. The evacuation of the camps and the death marches lasted until the last day of the Third Reich. It is estimated that about a quarter of a million prisoners, among them many Jewish prisoners, were killed or died during the death marches.

### **Displaced Persons Camps**

Camps set up by the Allies in Germany, Austria, and Italy. At first the occupation governments failed to acknowledge the problem of displaced Jews, but later separate camps were set up for them. Teams from UNRRA, the JDC and other





Jewish aid organizations ran these camps. Life in the displaced persons camps was eventful and full of vitality despite the difficult circumstances.

### **Gypsies (Roma & Sinti)**

The Roma and Sinti were among the groups persecuted by the Nazi regime as an anti-social element. The Nazis distinguished between pureblooded Sinti and Roma and mixed blood Sinti and Roma, and between the Sinti and Roma from permanent settlements and nomadic Sinti and Roma. The Nazis usually imprisoned the Sinti and Roma in the occupied territories in Europe and from there sent them to Germany or Poland, for forced labor or death. The total number of Sinti and Roma murdered is very hard to determine but estimations are between 150,000 to 500,000.

### **Jedwabne**

A Polish town, northeast of Warsaw. On July 10, 1941, 1,600 of Jedwabne's Jews were murdered by their Polish neighbors. The truth about this exceptional event has recently received international attention, which in turn has provoked a public debate in Polish society, which has regarded itself only as a victim of the Nazis and not as murderers of Jews.

### **Josef Mengele, (1911-?)**

A doctor and SS officer, who became known as the Auschwitz Angel of Death. From June 1940 he served in the medical corps of the Waffen SS. In May 1943 he began working in the Auschwitz death camp, where he served until its evacuation. Mengele was ostensibly involved in medical experiments, and carried out selections among the Jews that were brought to the camp. In his experiments, Mengele concentrated mainly on twins and dwarfs, using them as lab rats. After the evacuation of Auschwitz he moved to the Mauthausen concentration camp. After the liberation of Mauthausen all traces of him disappeared.

### **Judenrat**

"Jewish Councils" appointed by the Germans for Jewish communities in occupied Europe. In some cases this body had a different name: Aeltestenrat (the Council of Elders) or Judenraete. In most cases the Judenrat's jurisdiction

covered only one locality, but there were regional Judenraete and even national ones. The Germans used the Judenrat to pass on their orders to the Jewish public, and the Judenrat, for its part, tried to represent the Jewish community to the Germans. The Judenrat faced its most severe dilemma in light of the German's order to supply quotas of Jews for deportation to the death camps.

### **Kapo**

The nickname of the leaders in each labor unit in the camps, appointed by the SS. Sometimes the word refers to collaborators in general, or to prisoners with different roles in the camps. The Nazis gave the Kapos a role in the discipline and terror apparatus in the camps. In practice, there were those among them who were quite cruel, whereas others demonstrated compassion whenever possible.

### **Mischlinge**

The offspring of mixed marriages between Jews and non-Jews. First degree half-castes or half-Jews were defined as those who had two Jewish grandparents, did not belong to the Jewish religion, and on September 15, 1935 were not married to a Jew. The Nazis wanted to make the status of the first degree Mischlinge the same as that of the Jews.

### **Musselman**

A common name among the concentration camp prisoners for a prisoner on the verge of death due to hunger, exhaustion, and acceptance of his fate. The characteristics of a Musselman were: no flesh on his body, skin stretched tight over his bones, a bewildered and expressionless stare, and the inability to stand up steadily.

### **Nisko and Lublin Plan**

A Nazi plan, devised around the fall of 1939, to be a territorial solution to the "Jewish Problem". This plan consisted of deporting Jews from the Third Reich to the area of Lublin. A few thousand Jews were deported to Nisko, but the plan was cancelled in the spring of 1940 due to technical problems and objections by the civilian government in Poland to thousands more Jews coming in to the territory of the General Government





## **Nuremberg Trials**

Trials that the Allies conducted in a military court of law in Nuremberg during the years 1946-1948, in which about 3,000 Nazi war criminals were brought to trial. The main trial was against 22 Nazi officials.

## **Oneg Shabbat**

A code name given to the underground archive founded and operated by Dr. Emmanuel Ringelblum in Warsaw during the period of occupation and the ghetto (also called the “Ringelblum Archive”). Ringelblum started the archive at the beginning of the war. The archive strove to systematically collect evidence of what was happening in the Warsaw ghetto and in occupied Poland. In the midst of the Great Action (deportations) in the ghetto, in August 1942, the archive documents were hidden underground. In January and April 1943 more documents were hidden. The archive was sealed in metal containers and milk cans and was hidden in different places around the ghetto. Two of the three parts of the archive were discovered a few years after the war. These unique documents are kept in the Jewish Institute of History in Warsaw.

## **Operation Barbarossa**

The German code name given to the invasion of the Soviet Union on June 22, 1941. With the invasion of the Soviet Union, the mass extermination of Jews in the areas occupied by the German forces began.

## **Operation Reinhard**

The code name given to the extermination of Jews in the area of the General Government in occupied Poland, in the framework of the “Final Solution”. As part of the operation, three death camps were set up: Belzec, Sobibor, and Treblinka. The camps were set up near railroads, in isolated areas, and near the eastern border of Poland. The operation took place between March 1942 and November 1943, during which time over two million of the Jews from the General Government were murdered.

## **Repatriation**

The return to Poland by the few Polish Jews who had escaped at the outbreak of war to the Soviet Union. Repatriation was conducted according to an

agreement signed by Poland and the Soviet Union, and enabled the return of Jews and Poles with Polish citizenship to Poland. According to estimates, by the end of 1946 about 250,000 refugees had returned to Poland. After 1946 refugees continued to arrive, although in smaller numbers.

## **SD**

The security service of the SS, the SD was the intelligence service of the Nazi party and a central arm in the execution of the “Final Solution”. In 1931 Himmler set up a core intelligence service group, headed by Reinhard Heydrich. A year later this body became the security service of the SS. The SD’s main role was defined as tracking down and tracing enemies of the party. In 1935 the “Jewish Section” in the SD began to form a policy and methods action, with the view that Jews were by nature enemies of the state and the regime.

## **“She’erit Hapleta” – Holocaust Survivors**

After the war the name “She’erit Hapleta” was given to the Jewish survivors and refugees who refused to rebuild their lives in Europe, especially in Eastern Europe, due to antisemitism. Most of them gathered in the displaced persons’ camps, demanding to emigrate from Europe, mainly to Israel.


## **Sobibor**

A death camp set up as part of Operation Reinhard near the village of Sobibor, in the eastern part of the Lublin district in Poland. Extermination in the camp began in May 1942, and during the period of its operation about 25,000 Jews were murdered there. A few escape attempts from the camp succeeded. An uprising broke out in Sobibor on October 14, 1943, during which 11 SS men and a few Ukrainians were killed. About 300 prisoners escaped, but most of them were killed during the pursuit. After the uprising the camp was dismantled and in its place an agricultural farm was built.

## **SS**

At its inception the SS was a unit of Hitler’s bodyguards, and over time became the “most racially pure” guard unit and the main implement of terror in the Third Reich. At the head of the SS apparatus stood Heinrich Himmler. The organization operated according to racial ideology: recruits had to prove





that they were “racially pure” going back to 1700, and membership in the organization was conditional upon an “Aryan” appearance.

### **Vichy**

A pro-Nazi regime was established in the southern part of France after the fall of France in June 1940 and was led by Marshal Petain. In October 1940 Vichy anti-Jewish legislation, the “Jewish statute” was initiated. The Vichy regime attempted the Aryanization of Jewish property and during the deportations even collaborated with the Germans, first deporting foreign Jews and later also deporting French Jewish citizens.

Israel Guttman, *Shoah and Memory*, Yad Vashem and the Zalman Shazar Center, Jerusalem, 1999.

## **The Holocaust – Central Concepts/Terminology**

### **Umschlagplatz**

The area bordering the Warsaw Ghetto where trains arrived. Jews were transported from the Umschlagplatz and deported to concentration and extermination camps. Fences enclosed the area. The train's cars were sealed and brought the ghetto's Jews to the death camps, primarily Treblinka.

### **Euthanasia**

Mercy Killing. A secret Nazi programme designed to kill all those whom the Nazis deemed undesirable to the German nation - the mentally and physically handicapped. In euthanasia institutions poison gas was used to murder the victims. This programme was started at the outbreak of war and was officially stopped in September 1941, although it continued until the end of the war. Around 100,000 people were murdered through the euthanasia programme.

### **Einsatzgruppen**

“Action Groups” that were formed from the German police force, the SD (Security Service of the SS) and local perpetrators. The Einsatzgruppen acted in the areas of the German occupation. There were four groups of Einsatzgruppen that followed the German Army during the invasion of the Soviet Union in June 1941. Their principle objective, according to the Reich Security Office, was the murder of the Jews in those areas. The Einsatzgruppen's killing methods included the use of gas vans and executions at pre- arranged killing sites.


### **Aktion**

The concentration of Jews by the Germans in ghettos and villages for the purpose of deportation and murder. Aktions were characterised by violence and terror.

### **The Jewish Fighting Organisation (ZOB)**

The Jewish Fighting Organisation was established in the Warsaw Ghetto on the 28th of July 1942. Members of youth movements formed the group during the Great Deportation from the ghetto. After the deportation more people





joined the group. The organisation sent couriers to other ghettos to share ideas of resistance, and to forge ties with the Aryan side in order to obtain weapons. The ZOB stood at the head of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising, and during the uprising the Jewish fighters fought against the great German force for a month. Most of the fighters fell in the Uprising, including their commander, Mordecai Anielewicz.

### **Belzec**

An extermination camp in southeastern Poland and one of the “Operation Reinhard” camps. The camp became operational in March 1942. Around 600,000 people were murdered in Belzec, mostly Jews but also thousands of Gypsies. Operations in the camp were discontinued between December 1942 and the spring of 1943 during which time the Germans forced the Jewish prisoners to uncover and burn all the bodies in an attempt to cover up all traces of the murders.

### **General Government**

The name of the administration that was established by the Germans on the 26th of October 1939 to control the part of conquered Poland that was not annexed to the Third Reich. The capital of the General Government was Krakow and Hans Frank was the Governor General.

### **Ribbentrop-Molotov Pact**

The non-aggression pact and economic contract between the Soviet Union and Germany that was signed on the eve of World War II. The pact included a secret intention, to divide areas in Eastern Europe between the two countries. The agreement was to divide Poland between them. The agreement lasted less than two years, until the invasion of the Soviet Union by the Germany in June 1941.

### **The Wannsee Conference**

The Wannsee Conference began on the 20th January 1942 in a suburb of Berlin. Its agenda was the Final Solution and its implementation. Organised by Heydrich, the conference was by invitation only and it attempted to seal the fate of the eleven million European Jews.

### **Sonderkommando**

German for “Special Unit”. These units, comprised mainly of SS, had special missions in the Final Solution: murdering Jews and covering up the murders. The name Sonderkommando is also given to a group of Jewish forced labour prisoners in the death camps who had the gruesome task of going into the gas chambers and removing the corpses and taking them to be burned or buried. A unit of the Jewish Sonderkommando organised a revolt in Birkenau in October 1944.

### **Chelmno**

Extermination camp situated seventy kilometres west of Lodz. It was the first camp to murder Jews by gas, and the first site, outside the occupation of the Soviet Union, to murder in the name of the Final Solution. Jews from Lodz and the area of the Wartegau were deported to Chelmno. Chelmno had three gas chambers. On the 7th of December 1941 Chelmno Extermination Camp became operational. Around 320,000 people were murdered at Chelmno; about 98% were Jewish.

### **Treblinka**

One of the three death camps active in “Operation Reinhard”. In July 1942, with the deportations from Warsaw, the murder of Jews began in Treblinka. The camp was modelled upon the Belzec and Sobibor camps, and was similar in its use of poison gas as a method of extermination. Jews from Warsaw and other areas of Poland were brought to Treblinka, as were the Jews from Slovakia and Theresenstadt. 2,000 Gypsies were also deported to Treblinka. In August 1943, a revolt broke out in the camp and shortly after this the Germans destroyed the camp. Around 870,000 Jews were murdered at Treblinka.





## Poland

### **Armia Krajowa – A.K – Army of the Nation**

A large underground anti-Nazi organization in Poland, numbering 40,000 people. The organization consisted of people from the entire political spectrum – from the traditional left to the right. The organization was under the authority of the government-in-exile. Its attitude and policy towards Jews was very complex and not uniform, for some of its members helped the Jews whilst others persecuted them and even cooperated in their murder.

### **Armia Ludowa – A.L – Army of the People**

An underground anti-Nazi organization in Poland, numbering 5,000 people. The organization was under the authority of the Communist Party and the Soviet Union. The organization occasionally included Jews within its ranks.

### **Battle of Grunwald**

In 1410 a battle took place in the city of Grunwald that sealed the fate of the kingdom of Poland at that time. In this battle, the Poles succeeded in fending off the Teutonic Order, which until then, was a real threat to the existence of Poland. The golden era of Poland began after this battle and lasted for about 200 years, seeing Poland become one of the largest kingdoms in Europe.

### **Casimir the Great (1310-1370)**

King of Poland, Casimir the Great built and founded villages and towns. He built walls around 30 cities and built about 50 fortresses. In 1356 he established a court of law in Krakow, and in 1364 he established the University of Jagiellonian there. In the time of Casimir the Great the charter for Jews in Poland was expanded and confirmed.

### **Catholicism**

A major branch of Christianity. The centrality of the Pope is one of the important principles of the Catholic faith. The Pope is considered to be God's representative on earth. The place of Mary, the mother of Jesus, is central in Catholic belief

and she is considered to be the mother of all. The Catholic Church has seven sacraments: Baptism, Reconciliation, Eucharist, the Rite of Christian Initiation (Confirmation), Matrimony, Holy Orders, and the Anointing of the Sick. The ancient Greek word “Catholic” means generality and universality. The Catholic Church defined itself with this term in contrast to other churches that were established in the East.

### **Grabowski**

The Polish Minister of Finance in the 1920s, responsible for the imposition of taxes and anti-Jewish legislation in the period between the two world wars and up to the establishment of the Pilsudski’s regime. Grabowski’s economic policy caused a large emigration from Poland (starting in 1924). About 80,000 Jews left Poland for Palestine at that time, as part of the fourth “Aliya” which was nicknamed the “Grabowski Aliya”. Many of them later returned to Poland.

### **Joseph Pilsudski, (1867-1935)**

One of Poland’s most important political, military, and social figures of the independence movement of Poland. Pilsudski fought against the division of Poland and was one of figures who led the way for the establishment of an independent Poland. From 1926 until his death in 1935 he was the leader of independent Poland. Pilsudski objected to restrictive proposals regarding minorities in Poland, amongst them the Jews. He believed in the ability to maintain a democratic regime, tolerant of minorities, even in a state in which 40% of the citizens were not Polish. For the sake of democratic leadership Pilsudski sometimes acted in an undemocratic way and with a firm hand, but during his regime Poland gained strength and a social and economic balance was achieved.

### **Katyn**

A town located in the center of Belarus. In August 1941 the grave of more than 4,000 murdered Polish officers was found in the area. For many years the Poles thought the Germans had committed this crime, but research has documented the fact that the massacre was committed by the Russians.





## **Romanticism**

A stream of thought in culture, the arts, and politics, which had a noticeable influence on the shaping of Polish identity. Among the well-known romantic figures in Poland were the composer Friedrich Chopin and the national poet Adam Mickiewicz. Romanticism flourished during the periods of division in Poland and the period of Polish Independence. The saying “for our freedom and for yours” was the motto of Romanticism, placing man as a freedom fighter in every place in the world.

## **Szlachta**

Szlachta in Polish means aristocracy. The aristocracy in Poland had considerable influence over the church and the common people, among them the Jews. The Polish szlachta owned estates, property, and lands throughout the kingdom. The farmers were subordinate to its laws, and more than once Jews served as mediators between the aristocracy and the farmers. The aristocracy created cultural and social customs and frameworks that influence Poland to this day.

## **Sejm**

The Polish parliament

## **Solidarity**

A Polish protest movement that started under the leadership of Lech Walesa, who later became the president of independent Poland in 1990. The movement began as an underground movement against the communist regime and brought together three elements of Polish society: the laborers, the church and the intelligentsia. The heart of its struggle was Poland’s independence from the Russians.

## Accessing the New Central Database

Access the Central Database of Shoah Victims' Names –  
now on Yad Vashem's website:

[www.yadvashem.org](http://www.yadvashem.org)

The Database is the result of an ongoing campaign, begun over 50 years ago by Yad Vashem, to gather the names of the Jews who perished in the Holocaust. It is an attempt to commemorate and preserve the legacy of each individual victim.

### Join the International 11th Hour Campaign to gather names of Holocaust victims

We have recorded three million names to date, but many are still missing. *This is a race against time - search the site today, submit unrecorded names and pictures, and help ensure that every Holocaust victim has a place in our collective memory.*




**"...I should like someone to remember that there once  
lived a person named David Berger."**

- David Berger in his last letter, Vilna 1941

### How to redeem names from your family history:

1. Gather information – talk to your family: As you may not know about relatives who might have perished in the Holocaust, we recommend that you first contact your family: parents, grandparents, aunts, or uncles to collect as much information as possible about all of those persons that might have been murdered, including photos if available. As a guide, use the fields of requested information on the attached form, known as a "Page of Testimony," for submitting biographical details of commemorating Jews who perished in the Shoah. See Sample page attached.



- 
2. If you have family members who were murdered in the Holocaust, search the Database to verify whether or not they are already registered.
  3. If they are not, you may either submit names and details online via the site, or use the attached Page of Testimony (photo copy and use one for each victim) and send them to **Yad Vashem. Hall of Names, POB 3477, Jerusalem 91034, ISRAEL**

#### **Help others redeem names:**

You can help Holocaust survivors within your community (e.g. a neighbor, at a senior citizen center, a home for the elderly, etc) to register names of victims who were murdered in the Holocaust. Approach the survivor and ask if they would be willing to cooperate in this project by sharing information about the family members they lost in the Holocaust for the purpose of filling out Pages of Testimony according to the model described above.

To start a community service project for gathering names either through your school, synagogue, or community center contact:  
[names.outreach@yadvashem.org.il](mailto:names.outreach@yadvashem.org.il)

#### **Activity for March of the Living participants:**

*Isak Grossfeld, a librarian, was born in Krakow in 1901 and murdered in Majdanek in 1942..*

One of the most effective ways of relating and connecting to the cities and camps that you will visit during the March of the Living is by identifying the names and reading the stories of the Jews who lived and died in those locations.

Prior to your departure, we encourage you to search the Database for names of victims from the towns and camps that you will be visiting. By retrieving the individual names and discovering the details of their lives - when and where they were born, their occupations and when and how they perished, you give each victim a face. Download several Pages of Testimony and take them on the march.

As you stand in Warsaw, share the names and the stories with your group. Take turns reading the names from the Pages of Testimony out loud and ensure that they will never be forgotten. Do the same in Krakow, in Majdanek,

in Auschwitz, and anywhere else that you go on your March. This way you will retrieve the identities and remember the individuals in the places where they lived and died.

*"We want future generations to know our names..."*

Letter found in the ruins of the Siauliai Ghetto

**More suggested activities using the Online Names' Database:**

Use the Database to expand your knowledge of the Holocaust – one person at a time.

1. Use the "Advanced Search" to look for victims who have the same birth month as you, or the same first or last name.
2. Click on the photos of the people on the search page and you will learn about the biographical details of their lives.
3. Click on the "Stories of Behind the Names" feature on the left hand side of the screen. Through pictures and information from Pages of Testimony, you can learn about the people and communities the Nazis destroyed. Links lead you to a wealth of related images and text culled from the online educational resources of Yad Vashem's International School for Holocaust Studies.

For suggestions on how to incorporate the Database in formal and informal educational frameworks contact: [stories.names@yadvashem.org.il](mailto:stories.names@yadvashem.org.il)



# YAD VASHEM

The Holocaust Martyrs' and Heroes' Remembrance Authority  
Hall of Names



# יד ושם

רשות הזיכרון לשואה ולגבורה  
היכל השמות

## Page of Testimony דף עד

דף עד לרישום והנצחה של הנספים בשואה; נא למלא דף עבור כל נספה בנפרד, בכתב ברור ובאותיות דפוס.  
Page of Testimony for commemoration of the Jews who perished during the Holocaust; please fill in a separate form for each victim, in block capitals



תפקיד יזכרון השואה והגבורה-תשי"ג 1953 קובע בסעיף מס' 2 כי 'תפקידו של יד ושם הוא לאסוף אל המולדת את זכרם של כל אלה מבני העם היהודי שנפלו ומשור את נפשם, ולחננו ומרדו באויב האנטי ובקורבניו ולהציב שם זכר להם, לקהילות, לארגונים ולמוסדות שחורגו בגלל השתייכותם לעם היהודי'.  
The Martyrs' and Heroes' Remembrance Law 5713-1953 determines in section 2 that: 'The task of Yad Vashem is to gather into the homeland material regarding all those members of the Jewish people who laid down their lives, who fought and rebelled against the Nazi enemy and his collaborators, and to perpetuate their names and those of the communities, organizations and institutions which were destroyed because they were Jewish'.

Maiden name: שם משפחה לפני הנישואין: Gruenewald		Victim's family name: שם משפחה של הנספה: Gruenewald	
Previous/other family name: שם משפחה קודם/אחר: Margot		First name (also nickname): שם פרטי (גם שם חיבה/כינוי): Margot	
Approx. age at death: גיל משוער בעת המוות: 17	Date of birth: תאריך לידה: 12.6.1926	Gender: מין: M/F ז/נ	Title: תואר:
Nationality: נתינות: German	Country: ארץ: Germany	Region: מחוז: Westphalia	Place of birth: מקום לידה: Bielefeld
Victim's father: שם משפחה: Gruenewald	First name: שם פרטי: Albert	Victim's mother: שם פרטי: Selma	Maiden name: שם לפני הנישואין: Wolf
Victim's wife/husband: שם פרטי: single	No. of children: מס' ילדים: single	Family status: מצב משפחתי: single	Maiden name: שם לפני הנישואין: single
Address: כתובת: single		Country: ארץ: Germany	Region: מחוז: Westphalia
Member of org./movement: חבר בארגון/תנועה:	Place of work: מקום העבודה:	Profession: מקצוע: none	Residence before deportation: מגורים לפני הגירוש: Bielefeld
Address: כתובת: Bielefeld Muehlenstr. 7 Germany Westph. Bielefeld אירועים / פעולות ומקומות בזמן המלחמה (מעצר / גירוש / גטו / מחנה / צננות מוות / מסתור / בריחה / התנגדות / לזימה): Places, events and activities during the war (prison / deportation / ghetto / camp / death march / hiding / escape / resistance / combat):			
Date of death: 1943 / 1944	Country: ארץ: Germany	Region: מחוז: Auschwitz	Place of death: מקום המוות: Gaschamber
Circumstances of death: נסיבות המוות: Gaschamber			
אני, הח"מ, מצהיר בזה כי העדות שמסרתי על פרטיה נכונה ואמיתית לפי מיטב ידיעתי והכרתי. I, the undersigned, hereby declare that this testimony is correct to the best of my knowledge.			
Previous/maiden name: שם משפחה קודם: Gruenewald		First name: שם פרטי: Helmut	
State/Zip code: אזור/מיקוד: England	City: עיר: England	Apt.: דירה: England	Entrance: כניסה: England
Relationship to victim (family/other): הקרבה (משפחתית/אחרת): brother	הנני ניצול השואה: כן/לא I am / I am not a survivor	Tel.: מס' טלפון: England	Country: מדינה: England
בזמן המלחמה הייתי במחנה / בגטו / במסתור / בזהות בדויה / ביערות / במחתרת (הקף בעיטל) / During the war I was in a camp / ghetto / forest / the resistance / in hiding / had false papers (circle relevant options)			

Date: 20.4.1999 תאריך: 20.4.1999 Place: Bristol England מקום: Signature: [Signature]

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