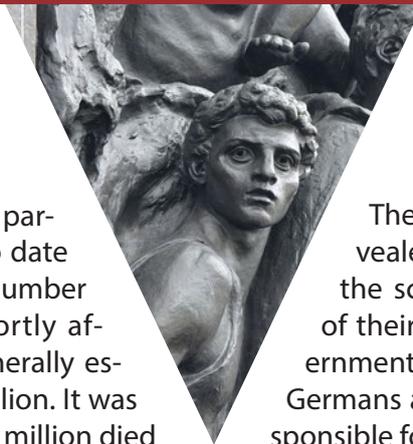


# THE AFTERMATH OF THE HOLOCAUST

## Context

Historians of the Second World War, particularly the Holocaust, have not to date been able to determine the exact number of Jews murdered at that time. Shortly after the war, the number was generally estimated to be approximately six million. It was recognised that approximately four million died in camps and the remaining two million in other locations, primarily ghettos, and as a result of mass executions by Einsatzgruppen in the East. These numbers were cited by the International Military Tribunal in Nuremberg and were based on German statistics. These statistics are nevertheless inexact, because not all documentation on all German crimes against Jews has been found. Additionally, the Germans documented the Holocaust with varying precision. Some aspects were scrupulously recorded while others quite generally. As the war neared its end, the Germans deliberately destroyed evidence of their crimes. Moreover, post-war shifts of borders and migration rendered estimates of the number of survivors difficult. Also significant was the attitude of rescued Jews themselves, who for various reasons did not wish to divulge their Jewish identities after the war and continued to live under the false identity adopted during the occupation. Attempts in subsequent decades to further specify estimates of Jewish victims have produced different effects. Currently, it is accepted that from 5.1 million to six million Jews died during the Holocaust, i.e. approximately two-thirds of the European Jewish population and one-third of all Jews in the world.



The painful truth was nevertheless revealed, despite German attempts to hide the scale of their crimes and destruction of their evidence. Still during the war, governments of Allied countries fighting the Germans announced a court trial for those responsible for crimes committed in occupied territories. This includes a declaration of 13 January 1942 signed in London at a meeting headed by the Prime Minister of the Polish government-in-exile Władysław Sikorski. Representatives of nine allied countries issued a written document on the post-war prosecution of crime perpetrators. The exposed extent of genocide that took place during the war meant that public opinion in the free world demanded that all those guilty be swiftly punished immediately after the war. Even before its end, it was possible to draft a legal basis upon which future indictments would be handed down. The following types of crimes were distinguished: 1. Crimes against peace (preparation and declaration of war); 2. War crimes (breach of treaties and war conventions by the Germans), and 3. Crimes against humanity (murder, slave labour, theft of property, persecution for racial and political reasons). Nuremberg was selected as the location to try the key German war criminals. Ten years before, laws discriminating against Jews had been announced in this ancient German city (as the Nazis perceived it). The International Military Tribunal prepared the trial and raised charges against 22 German political, military and business leaders.

The prosecution of German criminals proved to be very complicated in the realities of post-war Europe and with little effect, as only a small number of perpetrators were duly penalised. Essentially, the punishment of all German criminals and accessories to their crimes during the occupation has not been successful. Many chief decision-making political figures of the Third Reich did not live to see the end of the Second World War, whereas others effectively hid after it ended. The passage of time has diminished the chances of bringing people responsible for the Holocaust to justice. Outstanding remains the matter of material and moral satisfaction of those harmed by the Third Reich, for example, through payment of compensation. Also, not all matters surrounding assets of murdered Jews have been addressed and property restitution is not smooth in many countries. This is due to many factors, including political, social and cultural ones.

Holocaust remembrance and a commemoration policy related to it have evolved over decades since the end of the war. Immediately after these tragic events, however, countries focused on reconstruction, economic recovery and social stabilisation rather than promoting Holocaust memory.

One of the consequences of the Second World War was the emigration of Jews from Europe. This particularly affected East-Central European countries, including Poland, associated with locations where the Germans carried out the Holocaust. Emigration also reflected an increasingly articulated need for Jews to have their own homeland where they could live safely. When analysing the Holocaust aftermath, the impact of these events on the birth of the independent state of Israel cannot be overlooked. In 1948–1953, more than 300,000 European Jews reached this country, although many Jews also emigrated to the United States, Australia and Western European countries such as Sweden. Among those leaving for Israel were activists and fighters from the resistance movement, who were perceived as heroes. They created their own associations and institutions and the most important kibbutz and Ghetto Heroes Museum (Lohamei HaGeta'ot) whose co-founders were Warsaw ghetto survivors Cywia Lubetkin and Icchak Cukierman. Many other surviving Jews also reached Israel. Their physical and mental condition varied and after their wartime and occupation experiences they

often required financial aid and healthcare. They did not always feel well in the newly formed Jewish state, which from the start of its existence had to fight for independence and only began building its own infrastructure. Although those very ill received good care, there were generally no conditions for their rehabilitation. Later, many of them decided to leave Israel.

It is worth noting that for many Holocaust survivors the year 1945 did not mean the end of problems. Their adaptation to new conditions was often slow. Trauma associated with the loss of family, destruction of a local community and irreversible losses from pre-war life, frequently portrayed as idyllic, led to various reactions. Some individuals felt compelled to describe German crimes and traumatic experiences of the occupation. Others, in turn, remained silent by hiding their difficult emotions within. For decades, Holocaust survivors found it difficult to speak about their own tragic experiences. Opening up was not helped by the fact that the social environment in which they lived after the war frequently did not comprehend the problems they had faced. This applied to European, American and Israeli societies of the time. Such an approach toward the Holocaust was particularly painful in Israel, which became a shelter for most survivors. The modern state focused on development and strengthening of independence while propagating the image of the Jew as a strong kibbutz member working for Israel did not understand their pain and did not even want to listen to them because weakness or victimhood was not part of this ethos. European Jews were perceived as cowardly and incapable of armed resistance to their oppressors. It was commonly feared that stories about the Holocaust could weaken the combative spirit among Israeli youth. Therefore, this subject was hardly addressed. If it was, for example, in history textbooks, the focus was always on the heroism of resistance movement members. Some change came with the establishment of the Yad Vashem National Memory Institute in Jerusalem in 1953. In the years to come, Holocaust survivors initiated a debate on German war and occupation reparations. Also raised was the problem of collaboration of certain Jews with the occupier, as well as the responsibility of *Judenrat* members and the Jewish police for the tragic fate of their fellow countrymen. As regards their perception by the rest of Israeli society, the turning point was the trial of Adolf Eichmann

in Jerusalem in 1960–1961 which ended with Eichmann sentenced to death by hanging. It became an opportunity for a public debate and the processing of certain issues from past years. The Holocaust gradually became a vital element of the historical narrative. Another event that received media coverage was the 'second Auschwitz trial' that began in Frankfurt on Main on 20 December 1963. The defendants were 22 SS members at the KL Auschwitz camp. Ultimately, 18 were sentenced (six to a life term) and four acquitted.

More wars and a serious threat to national security reminded Israelis of what happened to the Jewish nation in Europe in the 1930s and 1940s. Witnesses to those events and survivors (not only fighters) became a part of this narrative. Their testimonies were recorded, archived and made public. They began to visit schools where they shared their experiences. As a consequence, the Israeli parliament included the Holocaust as a mandatory subject in the middle-school history curriculum in 1981. Student visits to memorial sites and museums became a part of educational programmes. Over the years, Holocaust remembrance has been recognised as a foundation of Jewish national identity.

The memory of the Holocaust has also gradually seeped into public consciousness in other countries. Mass culture, particularly the cinema, has played a vital role in this process. It started with the airing of *Holocaust: The Story of the Family Weiss* by the American NBC network at the end of the 1970s. Another milestone was a film by Claude Lanzmann titled *Shoah* released in 1985. Both these productions as well as other works of the 1990s such as *Schindler's List* or *The Pianist* stimulated interest in the Holocaust. As a result, many people began to delve into recollections of Holocaust survivors. There was also a growing number of individuals who professionally studied the Holocaust. Another form of cultivating the memory of Holocaust victims was the creation of museums in former death and concentration camps as well as the expansion of educational projects dedicated to the Holocaust. Vital support for these actions came from specific governments, which founded an international organisation in 1998 called the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (now the Holocaust Remembrance Alliance) to consolidate their actions. Later, other international organisations dealing with the history

of the Second World War also saw the promotion of Holocaust memory as their objective. One of them is the European Network of Remembrance and Solidarity at the initiative of which, inter alia, this educational package has been made possible.

Despite numerous forms Holocaust commemoration, study of documents, recorded witness accounts, and its coverage in mass culture and education, attempts to negate the Holocaust have persisted in many parts of the world over the years. This takes place despite overwhelming evidence of the genocide launched against Jews by the Germans. Almost immediately after the war, efforts were made to demonstrate no such genocide, or at least none on such a large scale. Articles and books were published in West European countries (France, Germany) and the US attempting to reduce the number of the victims. Some authors argued that the Holocaust was an invention of Zionists seeking to legitimise the existence of Israel. Later some denied the fact that the Holocaust took place at all and the very existence of gas chambers, crematoria or mass executions taking place. Witnesses were accused of making things up. Although these claims may frequently be peddled by academics, they do not withstand the weight of evidence. In order to discourage more such theories and to demonstrate to deniers that they cannot act with impunity, Holocaust denial is a punishable offense in many countries.

Genocide committed against Jews during the Second World War has been recognised by many historians, philosophers, religious scholars and sociologists as an extraordinary event in history. Some compare it to an earthquake after which minor tremors occur, namely further instances of genocide. Mention can be made of events in Cambodia, Rwanda, the Balkans and elsewhere that arose from, for example, ethnic, racial or religious hatred. Although memory of the Holocaust, its causes, course and the tragic consequences of dividing people into superior and inferior has taken root, discrimination and its tragic consequences still persists throughout the world.

The Holocaust teaches us not to be passive and indifferent to wrongdoing, injustice and evil. Knowledge of mechanisms leading to such events clearly shows how important it is to foster an attitude of tolerance towards differences and diversity. The Holocaust of Jews as well as

genocide of and discrimination against other national or ethnic groups and religious and sexual minorities show how tragic consequences of uncritically repeated stereotypes and prejudices can be. They show the danger of blindly following charismatic leaders capable of manipulating people, particularly those who resort to various stereotypes and fears while rejecting diversity to draw crowds. The Holocaust warns us that every society, regardless of how culturally, scientifically or technologically advanced, may lose its ability to distinguish between good and evil.

Stories of help to the Jews constitute an important, albeit only one, part of Holocaust history. The stories that we know are exceptional. They concern a small number of survivors and rescuers. Both groups had to make an enormous effort that did not have to end well at all. Stories of help nevertheless tell us much about interpersonal relations in extreme

conditions and in the face of repression, betrayal by the dearest, poverty and hunger. They are therefore never simple, unequivocal or black and white. They include accounts of tipoffs from neighbours or exploitation of the Jews' tragic plight, as well as examples of boundless dedication, empathy and deep lifelong friendship. Stories of aid given to Jews during the Holocaust, even though they concern specific historical events, have universal significance. This is our heritage through which we learn more about people, their behaviour in the face of tragedy as well as the power of opposition to discrimination and human will to survive. Today, the memory of assistance given to people who found themselves between life and death during the Holocaust has a moral dimension for us. It serves not only to impart knowledge about the heroes of that time but, above all, to have their humanity serve as a guideline for us.

# THE AFTERMATH OF THE HOLOCAUST



## Chart 1. THE DIRECT CONSEQUENCES

### Unit 1

KL Auschwitz prisoners shortly after the camp's liberation, 1945. Clips from *The Chronicle of Liberation* shot by Soviet film operators. Public domain



**A statement by Alexander Vorontsov of Moscow, a camera operator in the Soviet military film crew that recorded the liberation of Auschwitz:**

A ghastly sight arose before our eyes: a vast number of barracks (in Birkenau) [...] People lay in bunks inside many of them. They were skeletons clad in skin, with vacant gazes. Of course we spoke with them. However, these were brief conversations, because these people who remained alive were totally devoid of strength, and it was hard for them to say much about their time in the camp. They were suffering from starvation, and they were exhausted and sick. That is why our interviews, such as they were, had to be very brief. We wrote down the things they told us. When we talked with these people and explained to them who we were and why we had come here, they trusted us a bit more. The women wept, and – this cannot be concealed – the men wept as well. You could say that there were pyramids on the grounds of the camp. Some were made up of accumulated clothing, others of pots, and others still of human jaws. I believe that not even the commanders of our army had any idea of the dimensions of the crime committed in this largest of camps. The memory has stayed with me my whole life long. All of this was the most moving and most terrible thing that I saw and filmed during the war. Time has no sway over these recollections. It has not squeezed all the horrible things I saw and filmed out of my mind [...].

The script of the documentary film *Die Befreiung von Auschwitz* [The Liberation of Auschwitz] by Irmgard von zur Mühlen (Chronos-Film GmbH, West Germany), commissioned in 1986 by the Holocaust Memorial Council of the USA. APMAB, Scenario Fond, vol. 53, p. 23–26, 29, 40.

KL Auschwitz prisoners shortly after the camp's liberation, 1945. Clips from *The Chronicle of Liberation* shot by Soviet film operators. Public domain



**From an account by the Polish Red Cross volunteer Maria Rogoż, a registered nurse, who lived in Krakow after the war:**

After the liberation in 1945, my comrades in the organisation suggested that I go to work on the grounds of Auschwitz Concentration Camp, in the hospital for former prisoners. Although they stressed that this meant caring for extremely exhausted persons in camp conditions, I agreed without hesitation. I reported on 24 February to the appointed place, where a dozen or so people were waiting to travel to Oświęcim. [...] We reached the place late in the evening. They sent us to lodgings in one of the buildings on the grounds of the former Main Camp. [...] We went to work in the hospital without delay. I did not personally possess adequate preparation for that work [...]. The sight of the rooms full of patients made a shocking impression on me [...] when I went in there for the first time. There were about two hundred ex-prisoners in the building [...]. There were women on the ground floor and men upstairs [...]. They lay in multi-tiered camp bunks, covered in blankets of a very good sort that came from the so-called 'Kanada', the camp storehouses. These blankets, like the straw mattresses, were very dirty with excrement. A thick, unpleasant odour prevailed in the rooms. Iron stoves helped heat the rooms. I immediately went on duty in a room with eighty women in it. Eleven women died during the first night shift in that room. I had to remove the corpses from the bunks myself and carry them to the corridor. Early in the morning, orderlies carried these corpses out of the block. All night, from various corners of the room, I heard calls: 'Schwester! Schieber! Sister! Bedpan!' The patients were suffering from Durchfall, or starvation diarrhoea. So I spent all my time giving them the bedpan. There was no one to help me. There were many difficulties associated with caring for the ex-prisoners. Above all, the patients had to become accustomed to food. In the difficult nutritional conditions, the only food available for the patients was grated potato soup, which was administered to them almost like medicine, one tablespoon per person, three times a day. The portion of soup was increased each day. [...] The PRC Camp Hospital in Oświęcim was independent, but cooperated closely with the Soviet army field hospital for former prisoners that was operating at the same time. [...] At first, the mortality among the prisoners [...] was horrific. In a later period, this mortality diminished considerably, until in the end there

were hardly any deaths at all. More and more ex-prisoners left the hospital each day. In general, special transports were organized for the discharged. They travelled by truck. On several occasions, special missions from abroad took ex-prisoners with them.

State Museum Auschwitz Birkenau in Oświęcim.

### Holocaust-related losses of the Jewish population.

Source: Shoah Exhibit at the Auschwitz Memory Location

\*together with Jews in lands annexed to the Reich or occupied territories

### Number of Holocaust victims

<b>Austria</b>	<b>65,000</b>	<b>Norway</b>	<b>738</b>
<b>Belgium</b>	<b>24,000</b>	<b>Poland</b>	<b>2,930,000</b>
<b>Bohemia and Moravia</b>	<b>78,150</b>	<b>Romania</b>	<b>380,000</b>
<b>Bulgaria*</b>	<b>11,344</b>	<b>Slovakia</b>	<b>70,000</b>
<b>Denmark</b>	<b>116</b>		
<b>Estonia</b>	<b>2,000</b>	<b>Soviet Union:</b>	
<b>Finland</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>Belarus</b>	<b>233,000</b>
<b>France</b>	<b>76,000</b>	<b>Ukraine</b>	<b>532,000</b>
<b>Germany</b>	<b>165,000</b>	<b>Russia</b>	<b>70,000</b>
<b>Greece</b>	<b>54,000</b>		
<b>Hungary</b>	<b>565,000</b>	<b>The Netherlands</b>	<b>102,105</b>
<b>Italy</b>	<b>8,156</b>	<b>Tunisia</b>	<b>250</b>
<b>Latvia</b>	<b>71,500</b>	<b>Yugoslavia</b>	<b>45,000</b>
<b>Libya</b>	<b>600</b>		
<b>Lithuania*</b>	<b>220,000</b>		
<b>Luxembourg</b>	<b>1,950</b>		
		<b>Total:</b>	<b>5,706,880</b>

### EXERCISES:

#### Look at the photographs, read the text and answer the following questions:

- What did KL Auschwitz prisoners look like immediately after its liberation?
- How does Alexander Vorontsov describe the Birkenau camp immediately after its liberation?
- What was the reaction of prisoners to the sight of Red Army soldiers?
- In what physical and psychological state were the freed prisoners?
- What impression did the camp make on Alexander Vorontsov?
- How does Maria Rogoż recall her work at the Polish Red Cross hospital in Auschwitz?
- What were the Jewish losses in specific countries?
- Which country had the highest number of Jewish victims and which the lowest?
- Which country had the highest number of murdered Jews and which had the lowest?
- Were only European Jews victims of the Holocaust?

#### Search for additional information and think:

- What is the reason for large disparities in the number of Jews rescued in specific countries?
- What was the state of health of Jews returning from concentration camps and coming out of hiding?
- What organisations helped them return to life?
- What happened to Jewish children who lost their parents during the war?
- What were the problems facing Jews returning to their hometowns?
- Why did many decide to stay in camps for displaced persons (DP camps)?

## Unit 2

The clothes distribution centre at the Bindermichl camp for displaced persons. USHMM



A Jewish school in Lower Silesia. Many Jews settled in this region of Poland after the Second World War. They lived there in more than 40 locations. Exhibit 'Jews in Lower Silesia in 1945-1970' at the Ethnographic Museum



A wedding celebration in the Bergen-Belsen DP camp. USHMM



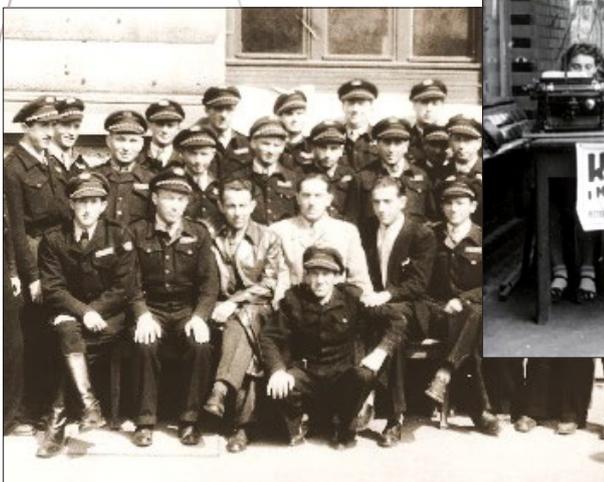
The funeral of the Kielce pogrom victims, 1946. PAP



Children waiting for ice cream in the Foehrenwald DP camp (Bavaria, Germany). USHMM



The Gerszon Dua House of Culture founded in Legnica on 14 January 1951. <https://portal.legnica.eu/aktualnosci/jak-zyli-zydzi-w-powojennej-legnicy-poznaj-historie-miasta,14231,1,6.html>



A group portrait of members of the Jewish police force at the Stuttgart DP camp. USHMM



A secretarial and typing course organised by the Organisation for the Development of Industrial, Artisanal and Agricultural Skills among the Jews of Poland (ORT), 1946.

Photo: Ethnographic Museum, branch of the National Museum in Wrocław, Poland

**Displaced Persons (DPs)** – people driven from their homelands as a result of armed conflicts, in this case the Second World War. This was a term of the UNRRA (United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration founded in 1943) for people, who, as a result of war, were expelled or escaped from their countries. In January 1945, this organisation estimated the number of such people (DPs) to be 13.5 million, among whom 250,000 were Jewish. After several months and repatriation campaigns, the number decreased by 1.5 million Poles, Ukrainians, Jews and others who did not want to return to their homelands occupied by the Soviets and lived in what was called DP camps until their later emigration.

**The survivor Eliezer Adler recalls:**

The desire for life overcame everything – in spite of everything I am alive, and even living with intensity.

We took children and turned them into human beings [...]. The great reckoning with the Holocaust? Who bothered about that [...] you knew the reality, you knew you had no family, that you were alone, that you had to do something. You were busy doing things. I remember that I used to tell the young people: Forgetfulness is a great thing. A person can forget, because if they couldn't forget they couldn't build a new life. After such a destruction to build a new life, to get married, to bring children into the world? In forgetfulness lay the ability to create a new life [...].

**A testimony of Haim Avni, an emissary from Eretz Israel:**

Everything is seen in too sharp a light and is heard too loudly. Everything is beyond the human scale; and if you have breathed that air, you will understand that here live people who have already experienced their deaths long ago. Camp eyes are still saturated with the visions of suffering, camp lips smile a cynical smile, and the survivors' voices cry, 'We have not yet perished'.

[https://www.yadvashem.org/yv/en/exhibitions/dp\\_camps/index.asp](https://www.yadvashem.org/yv/en/exhibitions/dp_camps/index.asp)

## EXERCISES:

**Look at the photographs, read the texts and answer the following questions:**

- *Who were displaced persons? How many were there and where were they from? What percentage of them were Jews?*
- *What were the living conditions of surviving Jews living in DP camps?*
- *How did they try to create a substitute for normality there?*
- *Where did Jews in Poland mainly settle after the war? What Jewish institutions existed there?*
- *What was the 'reckoning with the Holocaust' mentioned by Eliezer Adler?*
- *Why was it difficult for her to build a new life after the war?*
- *Why does Eliezer Adler state that the desire to live can overcome everything?*
- *Do you agree with Eliezer Adler that the ability of creating a new life was forgotten?*
- *How does Haim Avni describe the surviving Jews who stayed at DP camps?*
- *Why people who stayed at these camps are said to have long survived their own death?*

## Search for additional information and think:

- What were DP camps? What living conditions prevailed there?
- How was Jewish life in Poland reborn after the war?
- What were the problems and challenges facing Jews who decided to return to their countries of origin?
- What problems did Jews face in returning to normal life?
- How did they deal with the wartime trauma?
- What dilemmas did Jewish Holocaust survivors face?

## Unit 2



Jewish immigrants at a port in Israel (1947). Public domain



The declaration of the independence of Israel in 1948. Public domain



The ship Hagana with Jewish migrants in Israel (1947). Wikimedia Commons



Joy in the streets of Tel Aviv on the day when the founding of the state of Israel was proclaimed, 14 May 1948. AFP/EAST NEWS

### A report in *Baltimore Jewish Times* from 25 July 1947:

[John Stanley] Grauel [a Methodist minister and American Christian Zionist leader. He was a crew member of the famed refugee ship the SS Exodus-1947 and a secret Haganah operative] was put on the ship for one purpose — because it was very probable the British were going to be able to take the Exodus. It was the largest effort ever done in terms of movement of refugees. So, if the ship was taken, somebody has to get the information out,' Klinger said. 'They said he was a journalist. What

**A testimony of Tova Ben-Menachem (Giza Mandel):**

his real job was, if the ship was taken, was to tell the story. Because they knew people wouldn't believe the story if a Jew told it. But what if a Christian told the story? It would be received differently, and that's exactly what happened.

<https://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/quot-exodus-1947-quot-illegal-immigration-ship>

The good days passed quickly. One morning we were given khaki coloured uniforms with caps shaped like boats and the girls were told to embroider the words 'Exodus 47' on the right side. We weren't told the meaning or significance of the word and we didn't ask. We carried out the order and we were photographed for the last time in the institute, wearing the uniforms. The next day army trucks rolled into the institute and, without explanation or indication of where we were going, we were ordered into the trucks.

We still didn't know where we were headed when we finally reached the train station. We were told to get out of the trucks and to board the train. We were really happy – a real passenger train! And there, facing the door of the car in which I sat with my sister, I saw my parents, both of them crying, and then we were told that we were on the way to Eretz Israel and they told us that they knew of the plan to send children to Israel on their own, with the parents joining them several weeks later, after arriving on a different ship. But the Sochnut [Jewish Agency for Palestine] disappointed the unfortunate parents, because there was no such plan for them. The real plan was to send 4,500 children, together with a few elderly people and young pregnant women, all of us holocaust survivors.

[...]

The passages inside the ship were narrow and I understood immediately why we couldn't bring our backpacks with us. The ship's interior was lined with wide shelves that served us as beds. We had to lie on our sides, packed closely together. The situation was that when one wanted to turn over all the others had to turn over, too.

[https://israelforever.org/history/exodus/a\\_struggle\\_for\\_survival\\_a\\_testimony\\_of\\_life\\_on\\_exodus\\_1947/](https://israelforever.org/history/exodus/a_struggle_for_survival_a_testimony_of_life_on_exodus_1947/)

**An excerpt from Dov Freiberg, a survivor of Sobibor on the Exodus journey:**

I was convinced that if the Germans were beaten and I would survive and remain alive, the free world would receive me and other survivors, with open arms and we would all live together in a 'Paradise-on-earth'. And now, just two years after the liberation, fate finds us, my colleagues and I, sailing the seas as if ostracized from human society, in terrifying conditions, asking only to be allowed to settle in our own country – a country full of difficulties and dangers of its own – with no chance of success. We are surrounded by threatening warships which could sink us on the spot with one salvo.

And in those same moments, a thought flashed through my mind – what magical power there is in the words 'Land of Israel' and in the blue and white flag, that we are so ready to fight to the last, without hesitation, refusing to accept or consider all and any reasonable estimate of the

obvious results of the imminent confrontation between these unequal forces. We, who during the war years, had struggled with seemingly supernatural powers just to remain alive, stood, now, ready to sacrifice ourselves for the sake of our sovereignty over a land which did not yet exist and on whose ground we had not yet trodden [...].

[https://israelforever.org/history/exodus/dawn\\_on\\_the\\_horizon\\_survivor\\_of\\_sobibor\\_on\\_the\\_exodus\\_journey/](https://israelforever.org/history/exodus/dawn_on_the_horizon_survivor_of_sobibor_on_the_exodus_journey/)

## EXERCISES:

### Look at the photographs, read the texts and answer the following questions:

- In what conditions did Jews who survived the Holocaust travel to Palestine?
- Why did Jewish refugees sailing to Palestine take journalists on board their ships?
- Who were the passengers on the Exodus 47? In what conditions did they sail? What organisation handled this trip?
- Why was Dov Freiberg disappointed by the attitude of the British, who hindered his journey to Palestine?
- What can explain the immense determination of Jewish refugees to reach the Land of Israel at any price?
- What did the proclamation of the independence and founding of the State of Israel look like?

### Search for additional information and think:

- Was the post-war emigration of Jews to Palestine legal? Who organised it? In what conditions did the travel take place?
- What significance did the creation of an independent Jewish homeland in Palestine have for Jews who survived the Holocaust?
- In what circumstances did the proclamation of Israel's independence take place?
- Why did the Jews have to fight for their homeland? Why was there a war with Arab countries? What was the course of the war for Israeli independence? How did it end?

## Chart 2. THE RECKONING

### Unit 1

The defendant's dock at Nuremberg. In the first row, members of the military and political leadership of the Third Reich (left-right): Herman Goering, Rudolf Hess, Joachim von Ribbentrop and Wilhelm Keitel. USHMM



A meeting of the War Crimes Executive Committee, which decided on the arrangements for the Nuremberg War Crimes trial. Public domain/USHMM



Public domain/USHMM

**Nuremberg trial** was a trial of key Third Reich criminals accused of four types of offenses: conspiracy to commit international crimes, crimes against peace, war crimes and crimes against humanity, conducted in Nurnberg in 1945–1949. The principle of criminal liability of statesmen for international crimes had been applied for the first time there and then. The trial of main war criminals at the International Military Tribunal took place between 20 November 1945 and 1 October 1946. The Tribunal included judges from France, Great Britain, the US and the USSR. The indictment covered 24 people and eight organisations and groups: the Reich's government, political leadership of the NSDAP, SS, SD, Gestapo, SA, as well as the General Staff and Chief Command of the Wehrmacht. In its judgment announced on 30 September/1 October 1946, the Tribunal sentenced twelve defendants to death, including Herman Göring, Joachim von Ribbentrop, Wilhelm Keittel, Ernst Kaltenbrunner, Alfred Rosenberg and Hans Frank. Three of them were given life sentences, including Rudolph Hess, several were given prison terms while Hans Fritzsche, Franz von Papen and Hjalmar Schacht were acquitted. Those condemned to death were executed on 16 October 1946 with the exception of Göring (who committed suicide) and Bormann (not found). The SS, SD, Gestapo and the political leadership of the NSDAP were named criminal organisations. Additionally, twelve trials took place before the US Military Tribunal sitting between 9 December 1946 and 11 April 1949 at which, among others, doctors, lawyers SS members, frontline generals, Einsatzgruppen leaders, higher ministerial officials and others were tried. In total, 185 people were charged, 177 sat as defendants, four committed suicide and four were found incapable of being tried. Among the accused, 25 were given the death sentence (of whom twelve were executed and one extradited to Belgium, where he died), 19 sentenced to life and 98 to prison, whereas 35 were acquitted.

**The agreement on the prosecution and punishment of the major war criminals of the European Axis. Signed at London on 8 August 1945.**

**The following acts, or any of them, are crimes coming within the jurisdiction of the Tribunal for which there shall be individual responsibility:**

- a) Crimes against peace: namely, planning, peroration, initiation or waging of a war of aggression, or a war in violation of international treaties, agreements or assurances, or participation in a common plan or conspiracy for the accomplishment of any of the foregoing;
- b) War crimes: namely, violations of the laws or customs of war. Such violations shall include, but not be limited to, murder, ill-treatment or deportation to slave labour or for any other purpose of civilian population of or in occupied territory, murder or ill-treatment of prisoners of war or persons on the seas, killing of hostages, plunder of public or private property, wanton destruction of cities, towns or villages, or devastation not justified by military necessity;
- c) Crimes against humanity: namely, murder, extermination, enslavement, deportation, and other inhumane acts committed against any civilian population, before or during the war, or persecutions on political, racial or religious grounds in execution of or in connection with any crime within the jurisdiction of the Tribunal, whether or not in violation of the domestic law of the country where perpetrated.

[https://www.un.org/en/genocideprevention/documents/atrocity-crimes/Doc.2\\_Charter%20of%20IMT%201945.pdf](https://www.un.org/en/genocideprevention/documents/atrocity-crimes/Doc.2_Charter%20of%20IMT%201945.pdf)

**An excerpt from the sentences of the Nuremberg War Crimes Trial.**

**Judicial President Lawrence: In accordance with Article 27 of the Charter, the International Military Tribunal will now pronounce the sentences on the defendants convicted on this Indictment.**

Defendant Hermann Wilhelm Goering, on the counts of the Indictment on which you have been convicted, the International Military Tribunal sentences you to death by hanging.

Defendant Rudolf Hess, on the counts of the Indictment on which you have been convicted, the Tribunal sentences you to imprisonment for life.

Defendant Joachim von Ribbentrop, on the counts of the Indictment on which you have been convicted, the Tribunal sentences you to death by hanging.

Defendant Wilhelm Keitel, on the counts of the Indictment on which you have been convicted, the Tribunal sentences you to death by hanging.

Defendant Ernst Kaltenbrunner, on the counts of the Indictment on which you have been convicted. The Tribunal sentences you to death by hanging.

Defendant Alfred Rosenberg, on the counts of the Indictment on which you have been convicted, the Tribunal sentences you to death by hanging.

Defendant Hans Frank, on the counts of the Indictment on which you have been convicted, the Tribunal sentences you to death by hanging.

Defendant Wilhelm Frick, on the counts of the Indictment on which you have been convicted, the Tribunal sentences you to death by hanging. Defendant Julius Streicher, on the count of the Indictment on which you have been convicted, The Tribunal sentences you to death by hanging.

Defendant Walther Funk, on the counts of the Indictment on which you have been convicted, the Tribunal sentences you to imprisonment for life

Defendant Karl Doenitz, on the counts of the Indictment on which you have been convicted, the Tribunal sentences you to ten years imprisonment.

Defendant Erich Raeder, on the counts of the Indictment on which you have been convicted, the Tribunal sentences you to imprisonment for life.

Defendant Baldur von Schirach, on the counts of the Indictment on which you have been convicted, the Tribunal sentences you to twenty years imprisonment.

Defendant Fritz Sauckel, on the counts of the Indictment on which you have been convicted, the Tribunal sentences you to death by hanging.

Defendant Alfred Jodl, on the counts of the Indictment on which you have been convicted, the Tribunal sentences you to death by hanging.

Defendant Arthur Seyss-Inquart, on the counts of the Indictment on which you have been convicted, the Tribunal sentences you to death by hanging.

Defendant Albert Speer, on the counts of the Indictment on which you have been convicted, the Tribunal sentences you to twenty years imprisonment.

Defendant Konstantin von Neurath, on the counts of the Indictment on which you have been convicted, the Tribunal sentences you to fifteen years imprisonment.

The Tribunal sentences the Defendant Martin Bormann on the counts of the Indictment on which he has been convicted, to death by hanging.

I have an announcement to make. The Soviet Member of the International Military Tribunal desires to record his dissent from the decisions in the cases of the Defendants Schacht, von Papen, and Fritzsche. He is of the opinion that they should have been convicted and not acquitted.

He also dissents from the decisions in respect of the Reichs Cabinet, the General Staff and High Command, being of the opinion that they should have been declared to be criminal organisations.

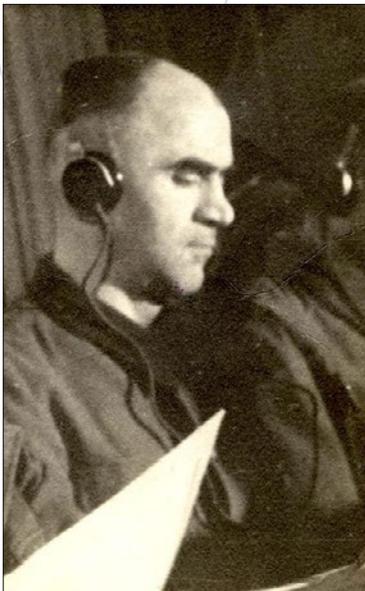
He also dissents from the decision in the case of the sentence on the Defendant Hess, and is of the opinion that the sentence should have been death, and not life imprisonment.

This dissenting opinion will be put into writing and annexed to the judgment and will be published as soon as possible.

(The Tribunal adjourned.)

Source: Public domain/ Nuremberg Judgement Sentences

Aumeier and Muhsfeldt were previously convicted of crimes committed at camps in the Third Reich but the Americans decided to transfer them to Poland to also assume responsibility for crimes committed in Auschwitz. During the trial, the court recognised the concentration camp administration as a criminal organisation. Following the trial, 23 of the defendants were sentenced to death by hanging (sentences of two defendants were subsequently changed to life imprisonment), 16 were sentenced to prison from life to three years and one was acquitted. The death sentences were carried out on 24 January 1948 at the Montelupich prison in Krakow. AIPN



Krakow, Poland, after the war. the trial of Rudolf Höss, an SS officer and former commandant of KL Auschwitz camp, 1947. Yad Vashem



The execution of Rudolf Höss, former commandant of KL Auschwitz carried out on the grounds of the former camp on 16 April 1947. PAP

Krakow, Poland, the first Auschwitz trial, Maria Mendel, a defendant from the guards' staff, 1947. AIPN



Defendants at the trial of the Ravensbrück camp staff, which took place in Hamburg in 1946–1947. On trial were SS supervisors (Margarete Mewes, Dorothea Binz, Elisabeth Marschall) and kapos (Carmen Mory, Vera Salvequart, Eugenia von Skene). Collections of the Polish Source Institute in Lund



## EXERCISES:

**Look at the photographs, read the text and answer the following questions:**

- *What trials of war criminals took place immediately after the war? Where and when did they take place? What tribunals were convened to try them?*
- *Representatives of which Allied countries did the International Military Tribunal in Nuremberg include?*
- *What sentences were passed in Nuremberg? Who was convicted and who was acquitted?*
- *How do you assess the punishment meted out against war criminals tried in Nuremberg?*
- *What people were tried in the trial of staff at KL Auschwitz and KL Ravensbrück?*

**Search for additional information and think:**

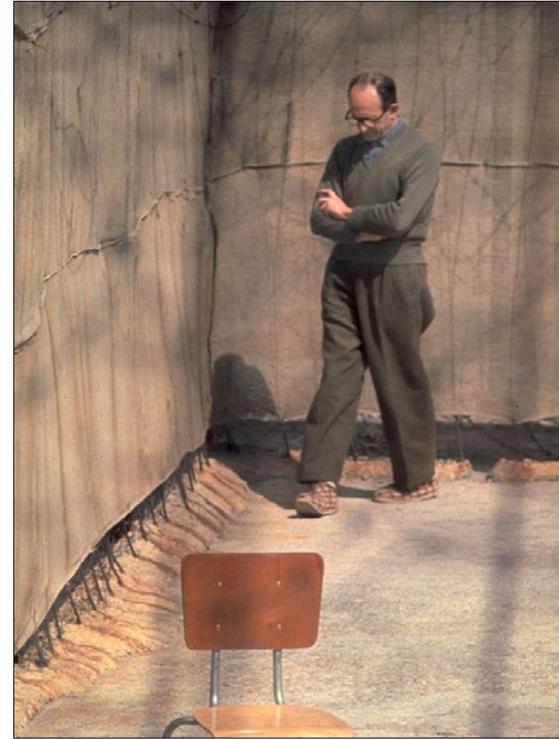
- *What was the course of the trials of war criminals organised immediately after the war?*
- *On what basis were the war criminals tried? What charges were made against them?*
- *Why were some trials held in countries where given persons committed crimes?*
- *Why were certain executions of Nazi criminals carried out publicly?*
- *Think about the problem of guilt and punishment for war crimes and crimes against humanity, particularly the Holocaust. Were they properly settled?*
- *How do you understand the meaning of responsibility in the context of the Holocaust?*
- *Can the circle of those responsible be limited to people holding the highest positions in the German state?*

## Unit 2



Adolf Eichmann, 1942.

Public domain



Eichmann in the yard of Ayalon Prison in Israel, 1961. Public domain/  
Government Press Office (Israel)



Adolf Eichmann at his trial in Jerusalem, 1961. He was evasive in describing his role in the extermination unit and claimed that he was responsible only for transport. 'I never claimed not to know about the liquidation,' he testified. 'I only said that Bureau IV B4 [Eichmann's office] had nothing to do with it.' Public domain

**Eichmann Adolf** (1906–1962), a member of the SS, high state official, head of the Jewish affairs department in the Gestapo. He was responsible for the 'final solution to the Jewish question'. In 1932, he joined the Austrian Nazi party. In 1934, he began his official career in the security service (SD), where he became chief specialist for Jewish matters and was considered an expert on Zionism. In 1937, he even briefly visited Palestine to consider the possibility of moving Jews there from Nazi Germany. From September 1938 he headed the Office for Jewish Emigration Affairs in Vienna. He dealt with the registration, massing and expulsion of more than 150,000 Jews from Austria. He drew on experience in this post when implementing the 'final solution'. In March 1939, he conducted the deportation of Jews to Poland and in September of that year became a special officer for the expulsion of Jews and Poles. In December, he was transferred to the IV Department of the Main Reich Security Office (RSHA), where he took over Department IV B dealing with the expulsion of Jews. In 1941, he visited Auschwitz for the first time. In January 1942, he convened a conference in Wannsee at which his superior, Reinhard Heydrich, officially entrusted him with executing the 'final solution'. In carrying out this assignment, he proved to be a model of bureaucratic efficiency and iron resolve. He zealously carried out entrusted all duties and assignments. From March 1944, he was personally responsible for transporting Jews from Hungary to Auschwitz-Birkenau and earned the nickname of a 'murderer from behind the desk'. After the war he was arrested in the American occupation zone of Germany. In 1946, he was able to escape to Argentina. However, on 2 May 1960 he was arrested by Israeli intelligence on the outskirts of Buenos Aires and secretly transported to Israel, where he was publicly tried in Jerusalem. On 2 December 1961, he was sentenced to death for crimes committed against the Jewish nation and humanity. The sentence was carried out on 31 May 1962.

Abba Kovner testifying at Eichmann's trial, Jerusalem, 1961. Public domain/ National Photo Collection of Israel



**Haim Gouri, an Israeli journalist and poet, describing the testimony of resistance fighters at the Eichmann Trial:**

Day, then night, then day again. They counted the witness stand, one by one. The last remnants of the revolt. Two or three of them I knew personally, as friends. Now, in giving their testimony, they would be entering another realm. We saw them life-size from a distance of, at most, twenty yards, but they did not belong to us, were not our friends. They were strangers. Not from here but from there. From beyond the lost time, the expanses of alien land, the rivers and forests and cities of the shadow of death, they had come here to testify.

<https://perspectives.ushmm.org/item/eichmann-trial-testimony-of-abba-kovner>

**An excerpt from Hannah Arendt's Eichmann in Jerusalem: A Report on the Banality of Evil.**

The trouble with Eichmann was precisely that so many were like him, and that the many were neither perverted nor sadistic, that they were, and still are, terribly and terrifyingly normal. From the viewpoint of our legal institutions and of our moral standards of judgment, this normality was much more terrifying than all the atrocities put together.

Adolf Eichmann went to the gallows with great dignity. He had asked for a bottle of red wine and had drunk half of it. He refused the help of the Protestant minister the Reverend William Hull who offered to read the Bible with him: he had only two more hours to live and therefore no 'time to waste'. He walked the fifty yards from his cell to the execution chamber calm and erect with his hands bound behind him. When the guards tied his ankles and knees he asked them to loosen the bonds so that he could stand straight. 'I don't need that,' he said when the black hood was offered him. He was in complete command of himself nay he was more: he was completely himself. Nothing could have demonstrated this more convincingly than the grotesque silliness of his last words. He began by stating emphatically that he was a Gottgläubiger to express in common Nazi fashion that he was no Christian and did not believe in life after death. He then proceeded: 'After a short while gentlemen we shall all meet again. Such is the fate of all men. Long live Germany long live Argentina long live Austria. I shall not forget them.' In the face

of death he had found the cliché used in funeral oratory. Under the gallows his memory played him the last trick he was 'elated' and he forgot that this was his own funeral.

It was as though in those last minutes he was summing up the lesson that this long course in human wickedness had taught us-the lesson of the fearsome word-and-thought-defying banality of evil.

Hannah Arendt, *Eichmann in Jerusalem: A Report on the Banality of Evil*



Public domain

Defendants at the second Auschwitz trial, 1963–1965. Held from 20 December 1963 until 10 August 1965 before a West German court in Frankfurt, the proceedings concerned German staff members at the Auschwitz-Birkenau concentration camp. Hessen Prosecutor General Fritz Bauer played a key role in preparing for the trial. Among the defendants who exhibited particular sadism when serving at the Auschwitz camp were: Wilhelm Boger (one of the deputies of Max Grabner, head of the camp Gestapo, Josef Klehr (an SS medic and a murderer of thousands of people by means of phenol shots) and Oswald Kaduk (a *Rapportführer* nicknamed 'devil', who committed such a vast number of crimes that the court considered whether he was mentally ill). Also on trial were camp commandant adjutants, doctors and SS medics, as well as members of the *Politische Abteilung* (political unit, namely the Gestapo). Several defendants were excluded from the trial for various reasons. Despite much evidence of the crimes and inspections of the Auschwitz-Birkenau camp itself, the sentences passed were quite mild for which the adjudicating panel was criticised.



Public domain

A view of the courtroom during the second Auschwitz trial in Frankfurt on Main during which 22 SS men were tried.

## EXERCISES:

**Look at the photographs, read the texts and answer the following questions:**

- Who were the prosecution witnesses at the Eichmann trial?
- How important was it for them to be able to testify during the trial?
- How do you understand Hannah Arendt's statement that Nazi criminals were normal and that this 'normality was far more horrific than all their atrocities put together'?
- How can the following statement of Eichmann be interpreted: 'I never claimed not to know about the liquidation, I only said that Bureau IV B4 [Eichmann's office] had nothing to do with it'?

- How did Adolf Eichmann spend his last moments before execution?  
How do you assess his behaviour at the time?
- Why did Hannah Arendt call the Holocaust a lesson in the terrifying banality of evil, defying words and thoughts?
- What was Adolf Eichmann's professional career? What was his role and responsibility for the Holocaust?
- Where and when was the second Auschwitz trial? Who were the defendants?  
What sentences were passed?

### Search for additional information and think:

- Why was Adolf Eichmann called a 'murderer from behind the desk'?
- How was it possible to capture Eichmann and place him on trial in Jerusalem?
- What significance did the capture of Eichmann have for memory of the Holocaust and the sense of justice among surviving Jews?
- Why was it important to Jews for Eichmann to be tried in Israel?
- Read Hannah Arendt's book *Eichmann in Jerusalem* or see the film entitled *Hannah Arendt* and explain why this trial was of such great interest to public opinion throughout the world.
- How did the second Auschwitz trial come about?
- Who was Fritz Bauer and what are his achievements in prosecuting Nazi criminals?
- What significance did the Eichmann and second Auschwitz trial have for preserving the memory of the Holocaust in the world?
- Why could not all Nazi criminals be tried?

## Chart 3. THE MEMORY AND DENIAL OF THE HOLOCAUST

### Unit 1

The entrance gate to KL Auschwitz I, now the Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum in Oświęcim. It was established in 1947 thanks to the efforts of former KL Auschwitz prisoners to 'forever' maintain remnants of the former Nazi concentration and extermination camp Auschwitz-Birkenau as a warning to future generations.

The museum consists of two parts of the former camp complex: Auschwitz I Stammlager and Auschwitz II-Birkenau, together with more than 150 constructions, approximately 300 ruined structures, authentic roads, a ramp, fencing, as well as archives that survived the camp evacuation.

Public domain/Szymon Kaczmarczyk





The monument at the site of the Belzec Memorial Museum at the site of the former Nazi death camp in Belzec. The monument commemorates approximately 450,000 Jews from Poland and other European countries who were killed here in 1942–1943. The camp site was unmarked and vacant for nearly 20 years. The first monument was unveiled only in 1963. In the second half of the 1990s, on the basis of an agreement concluded between the Polish government and the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, work began on a new memorial. On 1 January 2004, the Belzec Memorial Museum was opened as a branch of the Majdanek State Museum. Public domain



Prisoner barracks, fencing and guard tower at KL Dachau (present-day state). A museum was established there after the war at the initiative of former camp prisoners. In the second half of the 1990s, the camp buildings underwent major reconstruction and renewal. In 1984, the camp was entered on a list of sites subject to special protection by UNESCO (not to be confused with the list of UNESCO world heritage sites on which all sites of such type are represented by KL Auschwitz-Birkenau).

Public domain/Kwz – own work



Barracks of the female block at KL Ravensbrück in 2008. In 1959, a museum, the Ravensbrück Memorial site, was established at the site of the former camp. The museum area includes some buildings formerly outside the camp wall, such as the crematorium, the former camp prison and a fragment of a four-metre-high wall. In 1959, remains from scattered graves were placed in a mass grave. In the centre of the memorial is Will Lammert's bronze sculpture The Carrier, the Ravensbrück trademark. The Soviet army used the building of the former SS command until 1977. It now houses a permanent exhibition. Public domain/ Ravensbrück,



The March of the Living, 2007. One form of commemorating Holocaust victims is the annual March of the Living held in Poland since 1988 with the participation of groups of several thousand young Jews from throughout the world as well as Polish youth. March participants travel to Holocaust sites starting from Auschwitz-Birkenau manifesting their opposition to genocide. Public domain

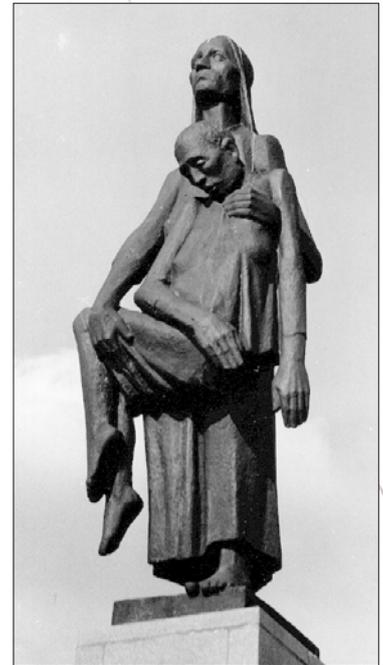
## EXERCISES:

### Look at the photographs, read the text and answer the following questions:

- What authentic Holocaust memorial sites do the photographs show?
- In what countries are they located and when did they appear?
- What forms of commemoration are present on their grounds?
- How do these sites differ from museums created outside camp areas?
- What is the March of the Living? Since when has it been and where?

### Search for additional information and think:

- When and at whose initiative was the Auschwitz Museum established? What area of the former camp complex does it cover?
- What significance does the creation of memorials at former death camps have for maintaining the memory of Holocaust victims?
- Why do thousands of people come to these authentic memorials? What do they look for?
- What is the significance of such commemoration initiatives as the March of the Living?
- What do you think about the idea to organise visits of young people to memorial sites at former camp areas?

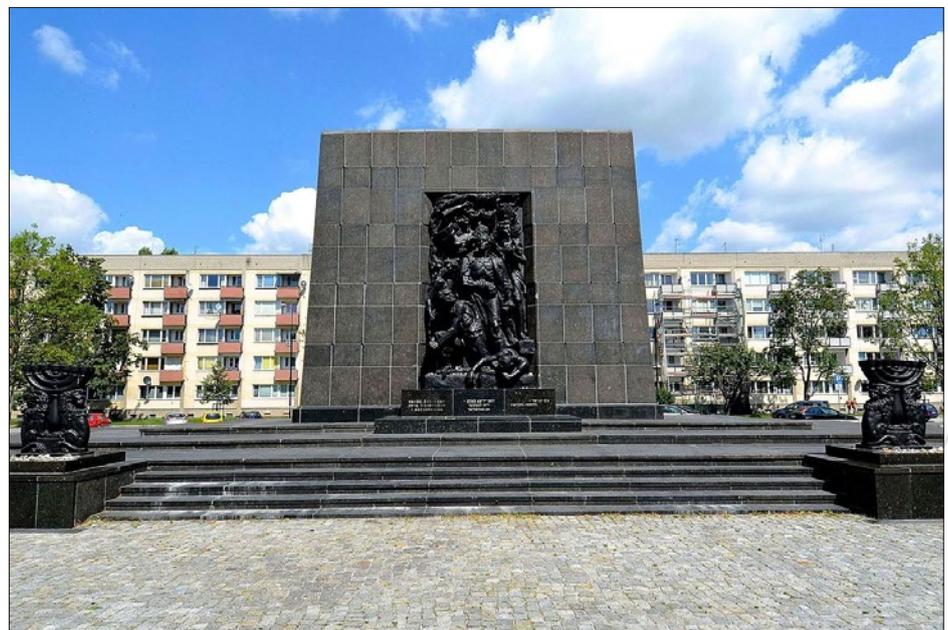


Tragende (The Carrier) monument sculpted by Will Lammert on the shore of Lake Schwedt into which crematorium ashes of female prisoners were thrown.  
Institute of National Remembrance, Poland

## Unit 2



Monument to the Ghetto Heroes in Warsaw. Adrian Gryczuk – Own work



Monument to the Warsaw Ghetto Heroes commissioned to the sculptor Natan Rapaport. It was unveiled on 19 April 1948 on the fifth anniversary of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising. In its overall composition, the monument makes references to the form of the Warsaw ghetto wall, the Wailing Wall in Jerusalem as well as the Communards' Wall at the Père-Lachaise cemetery in Paris. On 7 December 1970, during an official visit to Poland, West German Chancellor Willy Brandt unexpectedly knelt on the steps of the monument after placing a wreath, which was interpreted as a plea for forgiveness for the crimes committed by the German nation on the Jewish nation. Adrian Gryczuk – Own work



The Hall of Remembrance with an eternal flame in the middle. In front of it is a stone crypt with the ashes of Holocaust victims brought to Israel from death camps. Carved into the mosaic floor are the names of the 22 most infamous sites of Nazi crimes. The hall was built in 1961 and is a part of the great museum complex of the Yad Vashem Institute in Jerusalem. The Institute was founded on the basis of the Martyr and Heroes' Commemoration Act adopted by the Israeli Knesset. It is located to the west of Mount Herzl. It consists of the New Holocaust History Museum together with the Hall of Names, where data on Holocaust victims are stored, the Hall of Remembrance, the Righteous among the Nations garden, two art galleries, synagogues, an archive and a library, the Valley of the Communities and the International School for Holocaust Studies. There are more than a dozen smaller or larger monuments at Yad Vashem dedicated to, among others, children murdered during the Holocaust. Trees are planted at Yad Vashem to commemorate the Righteous Among the Nations: non-Jews who rescued Jews during the Holocaust, frequently risking their own lives.



A bird's eye view of the Yad Vashem Institute. Andrew Shiva/Wikipedia



Tree commemorating the Council to Aid Jews Żegota in the Garden of the Righteous at Yad Vashem. MUSEUM OF THE HISTORY OF POLISH JEWS POLIN



The entrance to the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, D.C. The USHMM is the United States' official memorial to the Holocaust. Adjacent to the National Mall in Washington, D.C., the USHMM provides for documentation, study, and interpretation of Holocaust history. It is dedicated to helping leaders and citizens of the world confront hatred, prevent genocide, promote human dignity and strengthen democracy. On 26 April 1993, the Museum opened to the general public. AlbertHerring at en.wikipedia



The Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe (Denkmal für die ermordeten Juden Europas, or Holocaust-Mahnmal) in Berlin, Germany, is a monument commemorating the Holocaust of the Jews during the Second World War. It is the primary site in Germany commemorating Holocaust victims. Designed by Peter Eisenman, the monument was constructed in 2003–2005 in the centre of Berlin on an area of 19,000 square metres. It was unveiled on 10 May 2005 and opened to visitors two days later. It consists of 2,711 concrete blocks (stelae), one for each page of the Talmud, placed in parallel rows with a slight vertical deviation. The highest block is 4.7 m-high. The monument includes an underground museum (Memorial Hall). Jonay CP – originally posted to Flickr as Memoria al Holocausto

The Tower of Faces at the United Holocaust Memorial Museum.  
Dsdugan – Own work



## EXERCISES:

**Look at the photographs, read the text and answer the following questions:**

- What museums and monuments commemorating Holocaust victims do the photographs show?
- When, in which countries and at whose initiative did they appear? Find information on other forms of commemorating the Holocaust in various countries of the world.
- What architectural forms do these museums have? To what do they make references and what do they express?

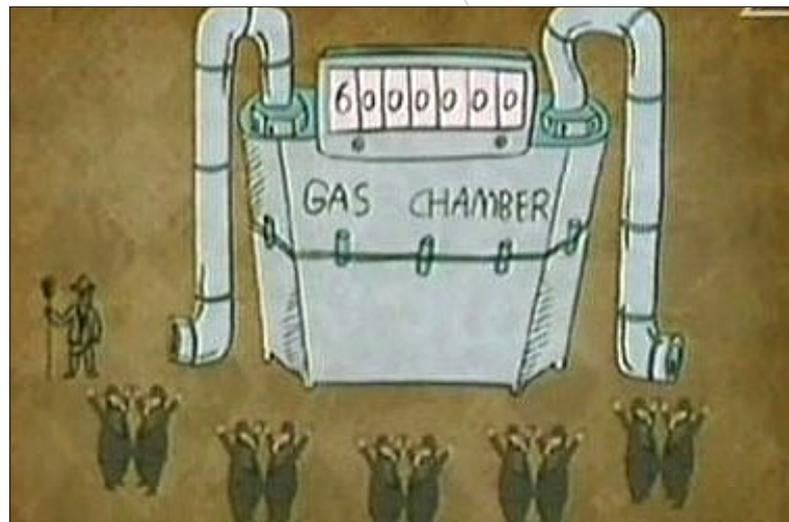
**Search for additional information and think:**

- What is the significance of opening museums and erecting monuments for maintaining the memory of Holocaust victims?
- Why have governments of various countries become involved in commemorating the Holocaust of Jews?
- What international organisations are currently there maintaining the memory of the Holocaust?
- What forms does the commemoration of Holocaust victims in the world take today?

## Unit 3



Two examples of caricatures prepared for Iran's Holocaust Cartoon Competition. <https://www.thedailybeast.com/irans-holocaust-cartoon-competition>



The Iranian cartoons show Jews fabricating stories about the Nazis' atrocities and six million Jewish deaths and then exploiting the Holocaust to enrich themselves and displace the Arabs from Palestine. <https://www.timesofisrael.com/iranian-cartoons-mock-holocaust/>

Holocaust denial is any attempt to negate the established facts of the Nazi genocide of European Jews. Holocaust denial and distortion are forms of anti-Semitism, prejudice against or hatred of Jews. Holocaust denial and distortion generally claim that the Holocaust was invented or exaggerated by Jews as part of a plot to advance Jewish interests.

These views perpetuate long-standing anti-Semitic stereotypes, hateful beliefs that helped lay the groundwork for the Holocaust. Holocaust denial, distortion, and misuse all undermine the truth and our understanding of history.

USHMM/ <https://www.ushmm.org/antisemitism/holocaust-denial-and-distortion>

### **The working definition of Holocaust denial and distortion (International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance)**

The present definition is an expression of the awareness that Holocaust denial and distortion have to be challenged and denounced nationally and internationally and need examination at a global level. IHRA hereby adopts the following legally non-binding working definition as its working tool.

Holocaust denial is discourse and propaganda that deny the historical reality and the extent of the extermination of the Jews by the Nazis and their accomplices during the Second World War, known as the Holocaust or the Shoah. Holocaust denial refers specifically to any attempt to claim that the Holocaust/Shoah did not take place.

Holocaust denial may include publicly denying or calling into doubt the use of principal mechanisms of destruction (such as gas chambers, mass shooting, starvation and torture) or the intentionality of the genocide of the Jewish people.

Holocaust denial in its various forms is an expression of antisemitism. The attempt to deny the genocide of the Jews is an effort to exonerate National Socialism and antisemitism from guilt or responsibility in the genocide of the Jewish people. Forms of Holocaust denial also include blaming the Jews for either exaggerating or creating the Shoah for political or financial gain as if the Shoah itself was the result of a conspiracy plotted by the Jews. In this, the goal is to make the Jews culpable and antisemitism once again legitimate.

The goals of Holocaust denial often are the rehabilitation of an explicit antisemitism and the promotion of political ideologies and conditions suitable for the advent of the very type of event it denies.

Distortion of the Holocaust refers, inter alia, to:

1. Intentional efforts to excuse or minimize the impact of the Holocaust or its principal elements, including collaborators and allies of Nazi Germany;
2. Gross minimization of the number of the victims of the Holocaust in contradiction to reliable sources;
3. Attempts to blame the Jews for causing their own genocide;
4. Statements that cast the Holocaust as a positive historical event. Those statements are not Holocaust denial but are closely connected to it as a radical form of antisemitism. They may suggest that the Holocaust did not go far enough in accomplishing its goal of the 'Final Solution of the Jewish Question';
5. Attempts to blur the responsibility for the establishment of concentration and death camps devised and operated by Nazi Germany by putting blame on other nations or ethnic groups.

<https://www.holocaustremembrance.com/resources/working-definitions-charters/working-definition-holocaust-denial-and-distortion>

Deborah Lipstadt, an American writer and historian. Author of the book *Denying the Holocaust*. In 1998, the Holocaust denier David Irving brought a libel suit against her at a British court alleging that his pronouncements and publications were falsely described in Lipstadt's book as a denial of the Holocaust.

Proceedings ended with a victory for Lipstadt.

A photograph taken shortly after they ended. [theguardian.com](http://theguardian.com),

photo; Sean Smith, *The Guardian*

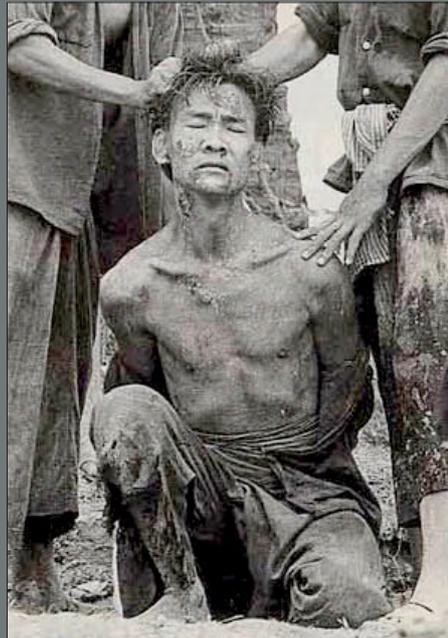


# Chart 4. GENOCIDE AFTER THE HOLOCAUST

## Unit 1

### Genocide in Cambodia

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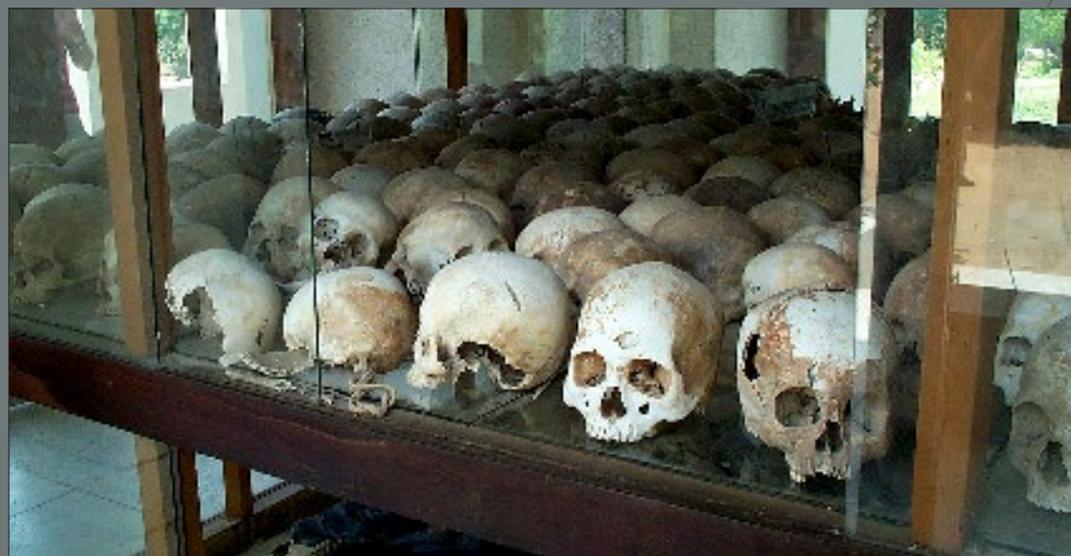


One of the victims of the Khmer Rouge regime, an extremist group linking communist ideology with Khmer nationalism. Its members were drawn from the Communist Party of Cambodia. In 1975, they took power after a victory in a civil war and established Democratic Kampuchea. The genocide was conducted by a fraction headed by Pol Pot.

Public domain

Skulls from the killing fields, the place of carnage in Cambodia, where victims of the Khmer Rouge regime were killed and buried en masse. Genocide in Democratic Kampuchea lasted from 1975 until the overthrow of the Khmer Rouge in 1979 through an intervention by Vietnam. The number of victims of the Cambodia genocide is estimated at 1.7 up to 2.3 million out of approximately 7 million inhabitants in total (i.e. 25–35 Per cent).

Public domain



# Genocide in former Yugoslavia

Exhumations in Srebrenica, 1996. The massacre in Srebrenica (Bosnia) was a mass execution of approximately 8,500 Muslim men and boys by paramilitary Bosnian Serb units. The executions took place from 12 until 16 July 1995 during the war in Bosnia in and around the city. This massacre is considered to be the greatest act of genocide in Europe committed since the end of the Second World War. A photograph provided courtesy of the ICTY



Gravestones at the Potočari genocide memorial near Srebrenica. Radovan Karadžić, former president of Republika Srpska, was found guilty of genocide, war crimes and crimes against humanity on 24 March 2016 and sentenced to 40 years' imprisonment. Ratko Mladić, a former Chief of Staff of the Army of the Republika Srpska, was found guilty of genocide, war crimes and crimes against humanity and sentenced to life imprisonment on 22 November 2017. Michael Büker – Own work

# Genocide in Rwanda

Bodies of victims. Tutsi people were murdered by Hutu extremists in Rwanda over the course of approximately 100 days from 6 April until July 1994. It is estimated that 800,000 up to one million people were killed.

Public domain



Machetes left by the Hutu at the border with Congo. Public domain



The Nyamata Memorial Site in Rwanda. Despite much data that could be collected before the conflict, as well as current media reports, Western countries have made no attempts to prevent the genocide after it began.

Public domain/ I, Inisheer

## Excerpts from a book by Zygmunt Bauman entitled *Modernity and Holocaust*:

The only post-mortem benefit that the Holocaust can provide us is to make us aware of previously unseen “other aspects” of the functioning of social rules liberated by contemporary history. I propose treatment of the Holocaust as a rare but significant and coherent probe into the concealed capabilities of modern society.

[...]

Selection of physical extermination as the proper manner of carrying out the task of *Entfernung* [exclusion] was the product of routine bureaucratic actions. This was the effect of the broadly described tendency of a bureaucratic apparatus to expand its assignment – a phenomenon typical for bureaucratic functioning.

Source: Zygmunt Bauman, *Nowoczesność i Zagłada* [Modernity and the Holocaust], Warsaw 1992, p. 33, 39.

## 10 stages of genocide according to Gregory H. Stanton

	Stage	Characteristics	Preventive measures
1	<b>Classification</b>	People are divided into 'them and us'.	"The main preventive measure at this early stage is to develop universalistic institutions that transcend [...] divisions."
2	<b>Symbolization</b>	'When combined with hatred, symbols may be forced upon unwilling members of pariah groups...'	'To combat symbolization, hate symbols can be legally forbidden as can hate speech.'
3	<b>Discrimination</b>	'Law or cultural power excludes groups from full civil rights: segregation or apartheid laws, denial of voting rights.'	'Pass and enforce laws prohibiting discrimination. Full citizenship and voting rights for all groups.'
4	<b>Dehumanisation</b>	'One group denies the humanity of the other group. Members of it are equated with animals, vermin, insects, or diseases.'	'Local and international leaders should condemn the use of hate speech and make it culturally unacceptable. Leaders who incite genocide should be banned from international travel and have their foreign finances frozen.'
5	<b>Organization</b>	'Genocide is always organized [...] Special army units or militias are often trained and armed...'	'The U.N. should impose arms embargoes on governments and citizens of countries involved in genocidal massacres, and create commissions to investigate violations.'
6	<b>Polarization</b>	'Hate groups broadcast polarizing propaganda...'	'Prevention may mean security protection for moderate leaders or assistance to human rights groups [...] Coups d'état by extremists should be opposed by international sanctions.'
7	<b>Preparation</b>	'Mass killing is planned. Victims are identified and separated out because of their ethnic or religious identity...'	'At this stage, a Genocide Emergency must be declared. Full diplomatic pressure by regional organizations must be invoked, including preparation to intervene to prevent genocide.'
8	<b>Persecution</b>	'Expropriation, forced displacement, ghettos, concentration camps.'	'Direct assistance to victim groups, targeted sanctions against persecutors, mobilization of humanitarian assistance or intervention, protection of refugees.'
9	<b>Extermination</b>	'It is "extermination" to the killers because they do not believe their victims to be fully human.'	'At this stage, only rapid and overwhelming armed intervention can stop genocide. Real safe areas or refugee escape corridors should be established with heavily armed international protection.'
10	<b>Denial</b>	'The perpetrators [...] deny that they committed any crimes...'	'The response to denial is punishment by an international tribunal or national courts/

## EXERCISES:

### Look at the photographs, read the text and answer the following questions:

- *What instances of genocide or crimes against humanity have taken place in the world after the Second World War?*
- *How do you understand Zygmunt Bauman's assertion of the Holocaust being a probe into the hidden possibilities of modern society?*
- *Do you agree with his opinion on the role of bureaucracy in the Holocaust process?*
- *What are the stages of genocide according to Gregory H. Stanton? Characterise selected instances of genocide with their use and the attached map.*
- *What are the forms of preventing specific stages of genocide?*

### Search for additional information and think:

- *In what countries are people presently being massacred?*
- *What countries are presently engulfed in various conflicts that may lead to genocide?*
- *What were the reasons and course of genocide that took place in the world after the war?*
- *What did these instances of genocide have in common? What were their differences?*
- *What mechanisms did the global community create after the Second World War to prevent genocide? Have they proved effective?*
- *What institutions presently deal with the trying of war criminals?*

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