

## XV: Auschwitz I

Auschwitz/Birkenau (Oświęcim/Brzezinka)

Auschwitz I = Concentration camp (*Konzentrationslager*) KL

Auschwitz II (Birkenau) = Extermination Camp (*Vernichtsilager*) VL

Auschwitz III (Monowitz) = Labor Camp (*Arbeitslager*) AL

18 square miles / 25 square miles proposed

404K tattooed

90/10 ration of right to left

Gas chambers operational for 2 yrs. and 10 months.

27 April 1940: Himmler's order to Höss

14 June 1941: 728 Political prisoners arrive

4 May 1942: First *Selektion* of 2500 typhus patients

12 May 1942: First Trains arrive from Sosnowice. 1500 Gassed.

17 Jan. 1945: Nazis Evacuate Auschwitz

27 Jan. 1945: Russians find 7,600 Survivors

### Victims:

Jews (960K)

POW's (15K)

Politicals (75K)

Gypsies (21K)

Religionists

Criminals

Homosexuals

Re-Educationals

### Methods:

Gas

Starvation

Forced Labor

Hypothermia

Disease (Typhus)

Suicide

Shooting

Beating

Hanging

Medical Experiments

Lethal Injections

### The Truth about Auschwitz:

The British heard daily numbers of deportees since 1942.

America had full knowledge since 1944.

### Relativizing the Truth:

1. War Propaganda
2. Consequences of War
3. Guilt for Allied Atrocities
4. Höss' confession coerced
5. Can't do anything during a war
6. Ostrich Syndrome
7. Too Shocking and Horifying to Believe
8. Too Late
9. Best way to stop Auschwitz is to win the War

Trials:

1947 (Warsaw and Krakow)

617 tried → 23 Executed

1951 Federal Republic of Germany suspended all sentences imposed by the allies

1960 Frankfurt trials begin and last into the 1980's

Taboo to speak of Auschwitz in Soviet Union until its collapse in 1991.

Hard Truths:

Intentionalism v. Functionalism is irrelevant from the Victim's point of view.

The Nazi business was Death; their ideology was extermination

There are No Survivors of the Holocaust v. Everyone is a survivor of the Holocaust

Figures, statistics, reports, plans, etc. become crutches, ways to avoid the human component. The figures sanitize Auschwitz and make it a subject to be studied.

In the end, the figures are unimportant because the end is always the same.

The Logic of Auschwitz IS NOT the Logic of the Outside World

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